



Raising Expectations: staying in education and training post-16



department for
education and skills



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Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills
by Command of Her Majesty
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Foreword



Historically as a nation, we have long believed that young people should be in some form of education and training at least up to the age of 18. In 1918, the Education Act not only raised the compulsory school leaving age to 14, but also included a provision

stating that all young people should participate at least part time until they were 18. As the compulsory school leaving age has gradually been raised over the years, the benefits of young people remaining in education or training up to 18 have continued to be widely recognised. These benefits are even more obvious now given the sharp decline in unskilled jobs.

That is why we have been working hard to provide young people with exciting and valuable opportunities to develop skills that will set them up for life. We have made great improvements. Young people have access to a broad and engaging programme of education and training – a programme which will be extended over the next few years to increase choice further still. By 2013 every young person will be able to take a course which is inspiring, motivating, and challenging, and which will give them the skills to be more successful in life.

We have made big improvements at GCSE level, with more young people than ever gaining five good GCSEs. We also have more and more young people choosing to continue their education after compulsory schooling. We are confident that by 2015, some 90% of 17 year olds will be participating in some form


of education or training programme. It is no small accomplishment that so many are aspiring to do more and becoming better prepared for their futures. However, I believe that we need to go further.

It is unacceptable that a young person's background is still a key factor in whether they progress into post-16 education. This inequality is compounded by the fact that participation and attainment post-16 directly impacts upon life chances for young people. The undeniable truth is that if a young person continues their education post-16 they are more likely to achieve valuable qualifications, earn more, and lead happier, healthier lives. It is my goal that every young person is able to make the most of their education and training. I strongly believe that no young person should be outside the education and training system before they even reach their 18th birthday.

The world economy is developing at an ever more rapid pace. If we do not act now, we could be left behind. As Lord Leitch made clear in his recent report, the skills needs of UK businesses are not the same as they were even 10 years ago. In the very near future, those without skills will find it increasingly difficult to find employment. If we cannot supply businesses with the skilled workers that they require, they will struggle to remain competitive and our position as a world leader will be under threat. We have a duty to prepare all young people for a labour market which will be radically different to the one their parents faced. Raising the age until which a young person must participate in some form of education and training would go a long way towards meeting this challenge. It is vital that we act now before the increasing need for

higher skills in the workplace becomes even more urgent. There has never been a more crucial moment to debate this issue.

In this Green Paper, we set out the arguments as to why we think that this is the right time to raise the participation age. There are many implementation issues to consider and I hope that you will share your thoughts on these. Our proposals will have a huge impact on the whole of England. Please get involved in this discussion so that we can bring about the best outcomes for our young people and our country.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending from the top of the "A".

Alan Johnson,
Secretary of State,
Department for Education and Skills

Executive Summary

1. The future of our society depends on the education we provide to our young people. We need to make sure that all young people start adult life with the skills, qualities and attributes they will need to make a success of their lives. Never before has it been as important as it is today for every young person to achieve a good level of skill – for young people themselves, for the economy and for society. As the Leitch Review makes clear, there will be many fewer jobs in future for those who lack such skills.
2. It is no longer a sensible option for a young person to leave education for good at 16 in order to seek work. The great majority of young people already do stay on beyond 16 and there is a risk that it will only be the more vulnerable and lower-achieving who drop out at 16. Yet they are precisely the group who have the greatest need to stay on – so that they can achieve useful skills which will prepare them for life. The time has come to consider whether society is letting these young people down by allowing them to leave education and training for good at 16, knowing that they are not adequately prepared for life.

The benefits of requiring participation

3. There are very significant benefits to young people from staying in education or training until at least the age of 18. They are much more likely to improve their qualifications and skills. This will be valuable to them financially because they will be more likely to be

employed and to get jobs paying higher salaries. For example, on average a young person getting five or more good GCSEs earns more than £100,000 more over their lifetime than one who leaves learning with qualifications below level 2. There are also much broader benefits: they are more likely to be healthy and to have good social skills.

4. More young people staying on will also bring broader economic and social benefits. The Leitch Review shows just how important improving workers' skills is to the economy, as businesses face an increasingly competitive international environment. Increasing post-16 participation is a crucial part of increasing the skill levels of the workforce. And young people who remain in education or training are less likely to commit crime or behave anti-socially.
5. We already have a challenging aspiration to get to 90% participation in education or training among 17 year olds by 2015, and we are confident of reaching this. However, even 90% participation will not put us among the best performing countries in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).
6. Getting beyond 90% requires a new and different approach. We must galvanise the whole education and training system to engage every young person up to the age of 16, preparing them to stay on, and to make available the right provision post-16 to keep them engaged and motivated to achieve. Raising the compulsory participation age could do this.

A new requirement to participate

7. We are clear that introducing compulsory participation for 16 and 17 year olds should not mean forcing them to stay in school or the classroom; we should recognise all forms of valuable learning, including work-based learning. And we are clear that participation is not enough in itself. The learning young

people are doing must be valuable as a preparation for life, which means working towards recognised qualifications which are widely understood and provide a good basis for progression in further learning and to work.

8. The central proposal we want to consult on is that:

- all young people should participate in education or training until their 18th birthday;
- participation could be at school, in a college, in work-based learning, or in accredited training provided by an employer;
- in order to count as participating, young people would be required to work towards accredited qualifications; and
- participation should be full time for young people not in employment for a significant part of the week, and part time for those working more than 20 hours a week.

9. We propose first to introduce a requirement to participate until age 17, then later to require participation until 18. We judge that the best moment to raise the participation age to 17 would be 2013. This is the first year in which we will have in place a national entitlement to the new qualifications we plan to introduce. It would mean that the extended requirement would first apply to pupils who start Year 7 in September 2008 – creating a clear expectation of continued participation for those young people right from the start of their secondary schooling. These proposals would apply to all 16 and 17 year olds resident in England.

10. In order to do this we need to make sure that four key things are in place:

- a suitable route for every young person, which engages them and enables them to progress and achieve;
- the right support for every young person to help them to make the right choice for them and enable them to access provision;

- good engagement from employers to offer young people valuable training opportunities; and
- a means of making sure that everyone does participate and benefit in practice.

11. We believe that all of these things can be done, so that the participation age can be raised in a way that genuinely benefits everyone and makes sure that we no longer have young people who leave education and training before they have prepared themselves for life.

A suitable route for every young person

12. A key requirement is to make sure that every young person is able to undertake a programme of learning that is engaging and valuable. This must mean that for every young person, there is an appropriate type of course available, whether theoretical, applied or occupationally specific, and that it is at an appropriate level of difficulty. We will make sure that this full range is available everywhere, and that each option can lead to further learning at a higher level and on to employment.

13. The first five new Diplomas will be available for teaching from 2008, and all 14 will be available everywhere at all levels from 2013. They will offer a mix of practical and theoretical study for those young people who prefer a more applied approach, and who want to gain an understanding of a particular employment sector. And for those who want to begin working and gain a qualification that will help them to advance quickly in a specific occupation, we will expand the number of Apprenticeships available.

14. The Foundation Learning Tier, which will be introduced from 2010, will bring a more coherent approach to qualifications and training below level 2, helping young people who are on these courses to progress.

15. Of course, young people will still be able to study for GCSEs and A Levels. We are also increasing access to the International Baccalaureate.
16. We will make sure that there are sufficient places on each of these routes to satisfy demand, so that every young person will be able to find an option that appeals to them. As part of this, we will make sure that we train new members of the workforce and build the additional facilities that will be needed.
20. We recognise that some young people will need extra guidance and support. As set out in the *Youth Matters* Green Paper, we will seek to create a system which provides integrated support services to every young person, and which helps young people who have particular barriers to participation to engage in learning, through the targeted youth support arrangements now being introduced.

Enabling all young people to participate

17. Making sure that there is a course available that will suit a young person is obviously essential. Equally important is to make sure that they receive the necessary guidance and support so that they can take up an option that suits them, stay in it and achieve well.
18. We will make sure that young people understand what they can choose to study and what impact different choices might have on their future, so that they are able to make an informed choice. This will include helping young people to experience the range of options open to them before they make a choice, to raise aspirations, widen horizons and increase understanding of what is available. The new standards for advice and guidance services being published in April this year will play an important part in this.
19. We will also ensure that no young person is prevented by financial constraints from participating. We propose to build upon Education Maintenance Allowances (EMAs) to ensure that those from low income backgrounds get the financial support they need, and also strengthen the link between financial support and progression, to provide an incentive to behave well and attain more. Alongside this, we will seek to ensure that all those currently eligible for benefits continue to get support.
21. Young people will still be able to work, as long as they are also engaged in education or training. We recognise that some young people want to start earning and that they can gain valuable knowledge and skills from employment. But we believe it is important for them to continue learning and achieving too. It will primarily be their responsibility to make sure that they do, but employers can also play an important role in helping to make sure that their 16 and 17 year old employees continue to learn.
22. Government currently pays for accredited training and will continue to support employers to get their training accredited where it meets requirements. We understand that not all employers, particularly those in small businesses, will be able to develop their own training schemes so we will continue to support employers to find training opportunities for their employees through Train to Gain.
23. Employers who do not want to provide or arrange training for their employees would be required to release young people from work to undertake training. This release would need to be for sufficient time for their employee to work towards an accredited qualification (around a day a week). We will consider how best to incentivise young people who wish to work to get into education or training first, and will consult with employers on their role in this.

Employers playing their part

Making sure that young people participate

24. Of course, we want young people to participate in education or training voluntarily. We will make sure the right provision is available and young people are offered the right support. But if this duty is to have the impact we want we will need to be clear that it can be enforced if necessary, as a very last resort.
25. A high quality, accurate registration system will enable local authorities and their guidance service providers to know what all young people in their area are doing and find out if they drop out. There will be a duty on providers to notify the system as soon as a young person drops out so that they can be re-engaged as soon as possible.
26. This will mean that when a young person drops out and the training provider has not been able to prevent this or re-engage them, the guidance service will get in touch with them immediately to help them to find an alternative place and resolve any issues there may be. If the young person still does not engage they would be given a final chance to fulfil their duty voluntarily.
27. If they still do not participate at this stage, we propose that the young person would be issued with an Attendance Order specifying the provision they must attend, where and when. This would be a civil, not a criminal, process. Only on breach of this Attendance Order would there be a question of sanctions, through either a civil or a criminal process. We anticipate that it would be very unusual for things to get this far – and we will make sure that there is sufficient local flexibility to make sure that it would not happen inappropriately.
28. We believe that the successful implementation of these proposals could make a profound difference to the levels of education and skill in the population, to the benefit of young people and the nation as a whole. We want to encourage a wide debate about the proposals and to consult widely across England with all interested parties, to make sure that we have heard, understood and found ways to address all the issues.
29. This Green Paper relates to England only.

Chapter 1

Introduction

- 1.1** The well-being of a nation depends upon the education of its young people. Never more so than today. Opportunities and rewards for the educated and skilled are greater than they have ever been: a healthy society depends upon making sure that no-one is left behind, unable to contribute. Businesses find it easier than ever before to move to locations where the combination of costs and skills is most favourable: a prosperous society depends upon making sure that young people's talents and skills are developed, so that the country continues to be an attractive place to do business. The world continues to change, to become more diverse, complex and interdependent: a cohesive society depends upon making sure that all young people have the attitudes and skills to benefit from diversity and change.
- 1.2** For this country, the challenge is a great one. For decades, people talked of a 'long tail of underachievement' in our education system – with opportunity to achieve and succeed strictly rationed at each stage. Many young people dropped out early, without qualifications, which were taken only by a minority as late as the 1960s. Much has changed – with more than 70% now achieving recognised qualifications at level 2 (5 A*-C at GCSE or equivalent) by the age of 19. But it remains a significant challenge to overcome this legacy and to create a system where all young people are prepared by their education and training to make a success of their lives.
- 1.3** Many people alive today grew up in a world where it was compulsory to attend school only until the age of 14. And once school ceased to be compulsory, the overwhelming majority ceased to attend: before the 1944 Education Act, only one child in five received any further full time education after the age of 14. In 1944, the nation decided that it should be unthinkable for 14 year olds to leave school to receive no further education or training and take their chances in the workplace. Creating the peacetime society the country desired would require all young people to continue their education until at least the age of 16. Though it was only three years after that Act that the school leaving age was raised to 15, it took a further 25 for the Act's aspiration to raise the leaving age to 16 to be implemented.
- 1.4** There has been no substantial change to the requirements to participate in education or training in the intervening 35 years. The 1944 Act's aspiration that everyone should participate in at least part time education or training in college until the age of 18 (a measure which had also been enacted in 1918) was never implemented. No further requirements to participate have been introduced. Yet the world has changed a great deal since 1972.
- 1.5** The structure of the economy has changed dramatically, with an ever-growing dependence on more highly skilled workers. In 1972 nearly half of the UK economy was accounted for by sectors such as manufacturing, construction and agriculture, which then contained predominantly low-skilled occupations. By 2004 these sectors made up less than a fifth of total output, and occupations within them had become much more highly skilled.

- 1.6 Between 1984 and 2004 the number of workers in elementary and low-skilled occupations fell by a quarter. Over the same period the number of employees in professional, associated professional and managerial roles increased by 35%. And looking forward to 2014, the number of people working in the lower skilled occupations is projected to fall by almost 20%, while the number in the higher skilled occupations is expected to rise by almost 10%. No longer do we have an economy where a third of school leavers can find a low-skilled job in the manufacturing sector.
- 1.7 The world continues to change rapidly. Where once young people might have expected to find jobs similar to those that their parents had, and for those jobs to be relatively stable for long periods of time, now there can be no such expectation. All around us, technology has changed within a generation the ways in which people interact and communicate with one another, make and sustain friendships, work, shop and do business. Young people growing up now can expect a life of change – and we must equip them not just with the cognitive capacity but also with the personal capabilities, resilience, interpersonal skills and the attitudes that will enable them to benefit from the opportunities this will bring.
- 1.8 Young people themselves know very well that their future depends upon their education and the skills that they can acquire. While in 1972, only 37% of 16 year olds were in full time education, today young people participate in education or training in the year after compulsory schooling in overwhelming numbers (87% of young people do so). Even two years after the end of compulsory schooling, still 76% participate. Yet it is those young people who are least well prepared to thrive in the world they are entering who are most likely to leave education and training early. Those achieving less than five G grades at GCSE are six times as likely to drop out at 16 than those who achieve five or more A*-C grades. Yet it is precisely this lower-achieving group of young people who have the greatest need to continue with their education or training, so that they can achieve useful skills which will prepare them to make a success of their lives.
- 1.9 The world young people are now entering in the 21st century is very different to the world in 1972. No longer can we say to young people that leaving education for good at 16 to seek work is a sensible choice for their future. The time has now come for society to consider whether we are letting young people down by allowing them to leave education and training for good at the age of 16, knowing that they are not adequately prepared for the life they will have to lead.

Chapter 2

The benefits of requiring participation

Summary

We want to stop young people dropping out of education or training before 18, because of the benefits that higher attainment and longer participation bring, to the individual young person, to the economy and to society.

Young people who remain in education or training and improve their levels of qualifications and skills, will find it easier to find employment in jobs that will pay higher salaries. They are less likely to commit crime or behave anti-socially, and more likely to be healthy and have good social skills.

They will also become more productive economically. The Leitch Review shows just how important improving workers' skills is to the economy, as businesses face an increasingly competitive international environment. Increasing post-16 participation is a crucial part of increasing the skill levels of the workforce.

We already have a challenging aspiration to reach 90% participation in education or training among 17 year olds by 2015, and we are confident of reaching this. However, even 90% participation does not put us among the best performing countries in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Getting beyond this requires a new and different approach. We need to galvanise the whole education and training system to engage every young person up to the age of 18. Raising the compulsory participation age could do this.

2.1 There are very significant benefits to young people from staying in education or training until at least the age of 18. We already have ambitious targets and plans to increase participation significantly over the next few years, but the needs of the economy and our ambitions for social justice demand that we go further. Only a significantly different approach can achieve that.

Staying on longer and attaining more brings significant benefits

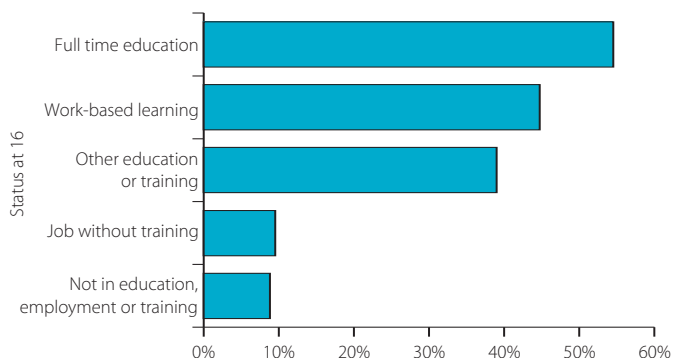
2.2 Continuing in education or training has benefits for individuals, increasing their skill levels and better preparing them to find and succeed in employment. It is also important for the economy, which will increasingly demand more highly skilled employees and benefit from individuals' increased earnings.

There are benefits to individuals

2.3 Participation in education or training is a necessary first step to increasing a young person's skills and level of qualification. Young people who stay on in education or training after 16 are more likely to gain further qualifications by 18 than those who go into employment without training or drop out altogether – as figure 2.1 shows, well over half of those in full time education at 16 without a level 2 qualification (GCSE A*-C or equivalent)

reach level 2 by 18, compared to 10% of those in jobs without training at 16¹.

Figure 2.1: Percentage of those below level 2 at 16 reaching level 2 by 18, by activity at 16



2.4 We know that individuals with qualifications earn more than those without. Achieving at least a level 2 qualification is particularly important as this is considered to be the minimum threshold for employability. By participating for longer, young people are much more likely to achieve a level 2 qualification and consequently earn more in the future. People with five or more good GCSEs earn on average around £100,000 more over their lifetime than those who leave learning with qualifications below level 2.

2.5 In addition to higher wages, better qualified individuals enjoy improved employment prospects and an increased likelihood of receiving workplace training. They are more likely to get promoted and undertake further learning in the future, including progressing into Higher Education. There are also wider benefits associated with higher qualification

levels such as better health and improved social skills. The wide-ranging benefits at the individual level translate into gains for employers and the country as a whole.

There are benefits to the country as a whole

2.6 When individuals achieve higher levels of skill and qualification businesses and the economy benefit. Research shows that up to one fifth of the UK's output per hour productivity gap with Germany and an eighth of the gap with France result from the UK's relatively poor skills². There is compelling evidence that increasing the stock of human capital raises productivity at the macroeconomic level³. And in relation to literacy, for example, a study has found that if a country's literacy scores rise by 1% relative to the international average, a 2.5% relative rise in labour productivity and a 1.5% rise in GDP per head⁴ can be expected.

2.7 Society also benefits from increased participation. Those who participate are less likely to experience teenage pregnancy, be involved in crime or behave anti-socially. A study looking at Offender Index data between 1984 and 2001 showed that an additional year of compulsory schooling decreases property crime conviction rates, and it has been shown that additional schooling lowers the likelihood of committing crime or going to prison⁵. Those who participate are more likely to be healthy, and to develop good social skills, which makes it easier for them to find work and succeed in life⁶. Research on the 1970 British Cohort Study found that young people not

1 Youth Cohort Study.

2 O'Mahoney and de Boer, *Britain's relative productivity performance: updates to 1999*, National Institute for Social and Economic Research, 2002.

3 Sianesi, B., and Van Reenen, J. (2002) *The Returns of Education: Macroeconomics Journal of Economic Surveys*, Vol 17, No. 2.

4 Coulombe, S., Tremblay, F., and Marchand, S. (2004) *Literacy scores, human capital and growth across fourteen OECD countries*, Statistics Canada.

5 Wider Benefits of Learning research report 5 and 14 [Feinstein et al (2002) Quantitative estimates of the social benefits of learning 1: Crime; 5 and Feinstein et al (2005) Education and youth crime: effects of introducing the Education Maintenance Allowance programme].

6 Wider Benefits of Learning research report 3, 8 and 12 [Schuller et al (2002) Learning, Continuity and Change in Adult Life; Feinstein et al (2003) Contribution of Adult Learning to Health and Social Capital; and Sabates et al (2004) Education, Training and the Take-up of Preventative Health Care].

participating between 16 and 18 are more likely by the age of 21 to experience depression and poor physical health⁷. These social benefits to increased participation improve people’s lives, and mean that the Government needs to spend less in the long term.

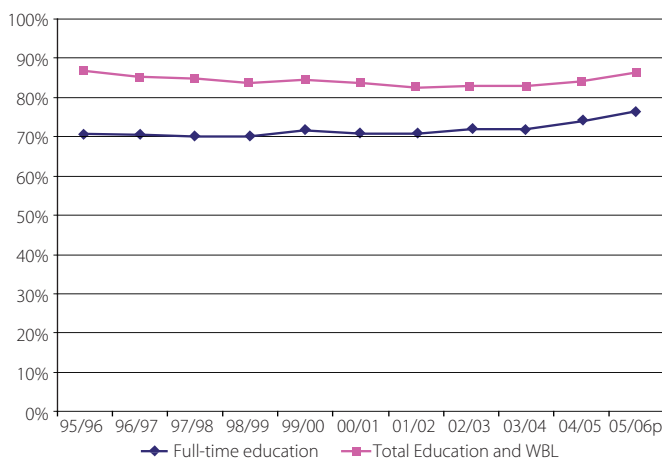
Increasing participation is a priority and we are already making progress

2.8 Given these clear benefits, increasing participation in post-16 education and training is already a high priority for the Government in England. In the *14-19 Education and Skills White Paper* we made achieving 90% participation one of the key aims of the changes we are making to the 14-19 phase.

Post-16 participation is increasing now, but we want to increase it much further

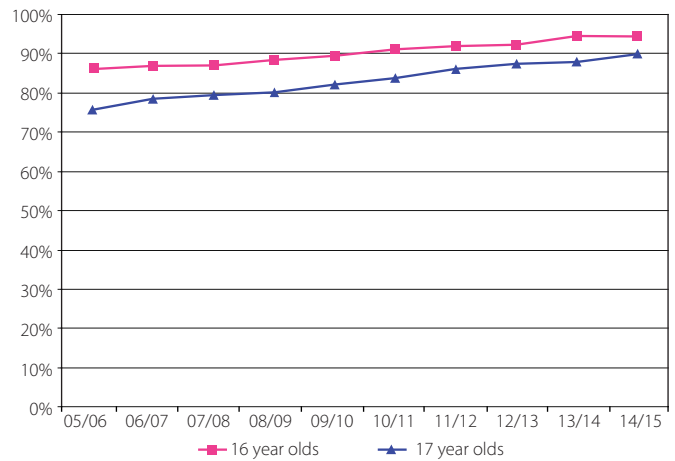
2.9 The participation rate post-16 is now rising, after a decade of effectively no change. At the same time, demographic trends mean that the population in this age group has been increasing. The recent rise in the percentage of the age group participating involves an even bigger increase in the total numbers participating. Figure 2.2 shows the percentages of 16 year olds participating over the last decade.

Figure 2.2: Participation rates at 16 in England



2.10 We want to increase participation much faster. We have set ourselves a target for 90% of 17 year olds (the second year after the end of compulsory schooling) to be participating by 2015, up from 76% now. This will mean even more than 90% participating at 16, in the first year after the end of compulsory schooling. Figure 2.3 shows our projections of participation to 2015.

Figure 2.3: Projected participation rates in education and work-based learning in England

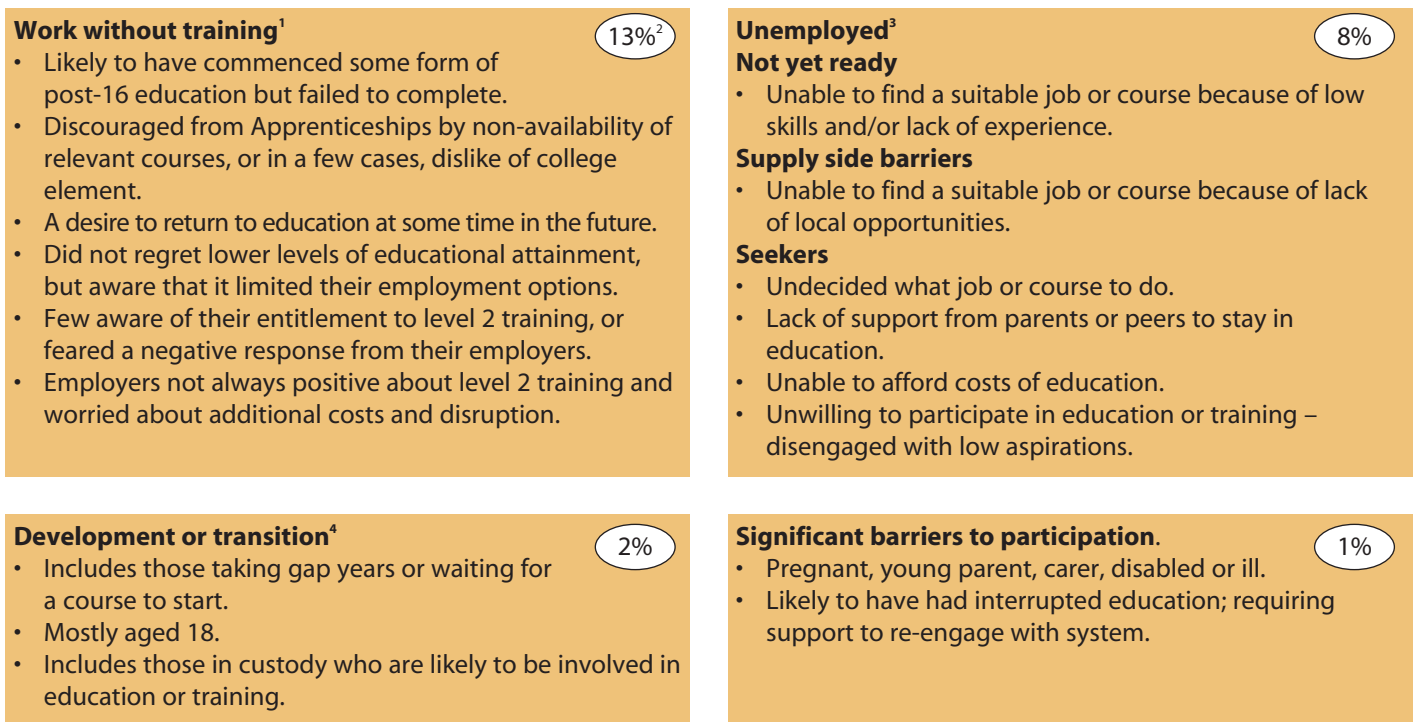


We are implementing change to achieve our stretching targets

2.11 This is a challenging target but one we are confident we can achieve. The steps we are taking start from what we know about the young people who are currently not participating in education or training. This group is of course far from homogenous but there are four major categories: those in work but without training; those who are unemployed; those with major barriers to participation; and those who are participating in alternative development activities or are between activities.

2.12 Figure 2.4 shows how 16-18 year olds currently not participating are distributed across these categories.

Figure 2.4: Main categories of non-participants



Source: (1) Anderson, A et al (2006) 'Understanding Young People in Jobs without Training' DfES RR736 (2) Taken from DfES calculations in the October 2006 presentation 'Reducing the proportion of 16-18 year olds NEET' (3) Youth Cohort Survey sweep 1, cohort 11, YouGov survey for LSC 2005 'Why Drop Out?' (4) Jones, A (2004) 'Review of Gap Year Provision', DfES RR555

2.13 And research can also tell us something about the attitudes, motivations and behaviours of those who are not currently engaged.⁸

Group	Distinguishing feature	Attitudes, motivations, behaviours
'Angry young rebels'	Against the system.	Very hostile to authority and hence teachers. Disruptive in class. Yearn for respect. Can be attracted to college courses that offer opportunities to succeed.
'Quitters'	Believe they have tried and failed.	Any reaction from hostility to passivity. Need to be offered courses at 14-16 at an appropriate level.
'Rebels without a cause'	Impatient to make their own way in the world of work. Believe their personality will be their key to success.	Think school is boring, but not hostile to teachers. Apprenticeships are the only post-16 option of interest. They are keen to get out of learning and start earning money.
'Cool dudes'	Life is predicated on having fun, and school gets in the way of this.	Disengaged, but not hostile. May be seen as lazy by teachers. Their underlying attitudes to work and leisure drive their under-achievement. Need to see links between learning and their interests, and mentoring from older peers can help engage them.

Group	Distinguishing feature	Attitudes, motivations, behaviours
'Hedgers'	Waiting to commit until they get their GCSE results.	Generally positive. Vocational and occupational options may re-engage them. Mentoring can also help to raise their aspirations.
'Settlers'	Have chosen an undemanding life. Sit between 'Cool dudes' and 'Quitters'.	Passive. Need to be offered courses at 14-16 at an appropriate level they can succeed in.
'Escapists'	Dream of being 'discovered'.	Disengaged and disconnected. Vocational and applied options can help engage them and mentoring can help realign their aspirations.
'Strugglers'	Want to do well, have unrealistic aspirations, but have not given up.	Positive and eager to get on. Need to be offered courses at 14-16 at an appropriate level they can succeed in. Mentoring can also help to realign their aspirations.

2.14 Measures already being implemented in England to help us engage the kinds of young people who are not currently engaged, and reach 90% participation by 2015 include:

- reforms to the 14-19 curriculum and the introduction of new qualifications young people can choose at 14 and 16, including much more applied and practical learning to appeal to those not engaged by the current curriculum;
- changes to Key Stage 3 to combat disengagement earlier – freeing up time for catch-up, gifted and talented activities, and more experiential learning;
- a major expansion of capacity in work-based learning to ensure that every young person who wants to start working and developing skills directly related to their chosen career can get a place;
- the Education Maintenance Allowance offering a financial incentive to young people from less well-off backgrounds to participate in education and training;
- a 'September Guarantee' of an offer of an appropriate learning place for every young person leaving Year 11 who wants one – in place in every part of the country from this September;

- the *Youth Matters* reforms, which are providing integrated support services for young people including access to positive activities, improvements to information, advice and guidance and targeted youth support for vulnerable young people; and
- Learning Agreement Pilots in eight areas aiming to motivate young people in jobs without training to participate in learning, and Activity Agreement Pilots, testing different packages of financial support for young people completing agreed activities, to help identify the most effective model for engaging 16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training.

2.15 The combined impact of these measures is to create a system more focused on young people and responding to their needs. There are important roles for everyone in the education system – in schools, colleges, other learning providers, local authorities, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and the Connexions service – in implementing these reforms and focusing efforts on driving up participation.

Achieving world class participation requires us to go beyond this target

2.16 We have a stated priority to increase participation, a clear target and a strategy to get there which is now being implemented. We are confident we can do this, and that it will make a big difference to the life chances of individuals and the skill levels of the workforce.

Even our current targets will not make us world leaders

2.17 But this will not be enough to keep us in a position to compete globally. The UK currently performs poorly on the measure of participation in education at age 17 compared to other countries in the OECD. As figure 2.5 shows, we also have greater drop-out between 16 and 17 than most countries. Achieving our 90% target will not put us among the leaders, where we should be aiming to be, even if all of the others stay still.

2.18 We also lag behind competitor countries on measures of attainment of level 2 qualifications among younger adults, as figure 2.6 shows.

2.19 As the global economy changes, the success of developed countries will depend on building a flexible economy with a highly skilled workforce able to respond quickly to change. The Leitch Review made clear that improving the skills of young people was essential to achieving world class skills in the UK. The Review's projections of the skills needs of the economy suggested that the number of people employed without any qualifications is set to fall from 3.2 million to 600,000 by 2020.

2.20 Reaching our target would also mean 10% of 17 year olds not participating in education or training, which we know leads to poorer educational, employment and social outcomes, and could mean this group being even more marginalised. So we must aspire to get beyond 90%.

Compulsory participation is the best way to get further

2.21 We believe that compulsory participation is the best way to get beyond 90%, accelerating the pace of change by setting a clear expectation. To achieve our target of 90% participation among 17 year olds requires significant change – to curriculum and

Figure 2.5: Net enrolment rates in secondary education at 16 and 17

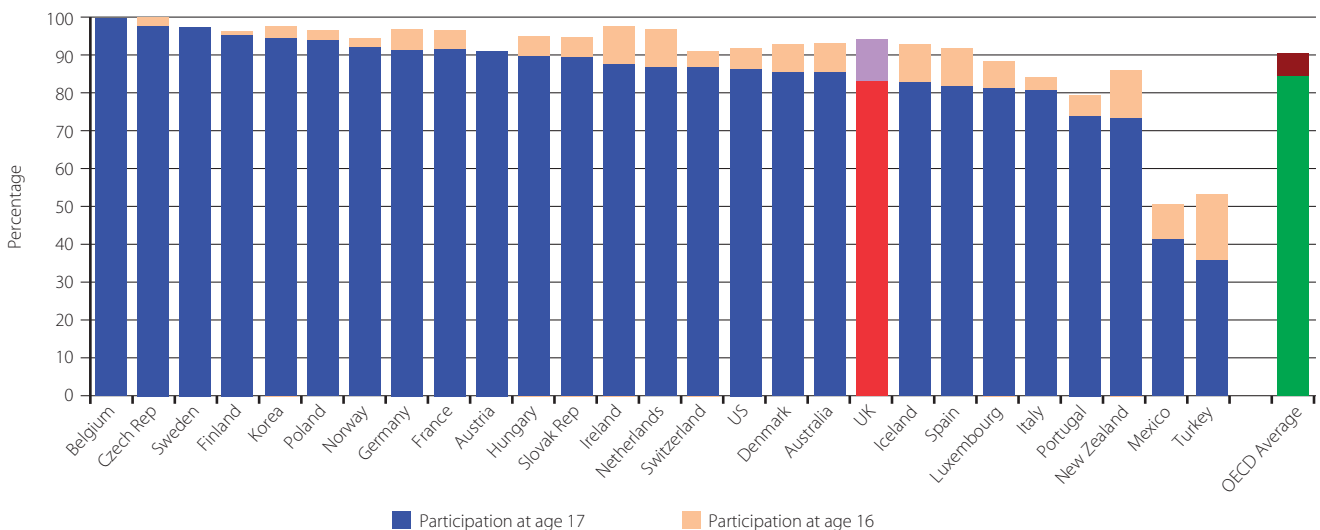
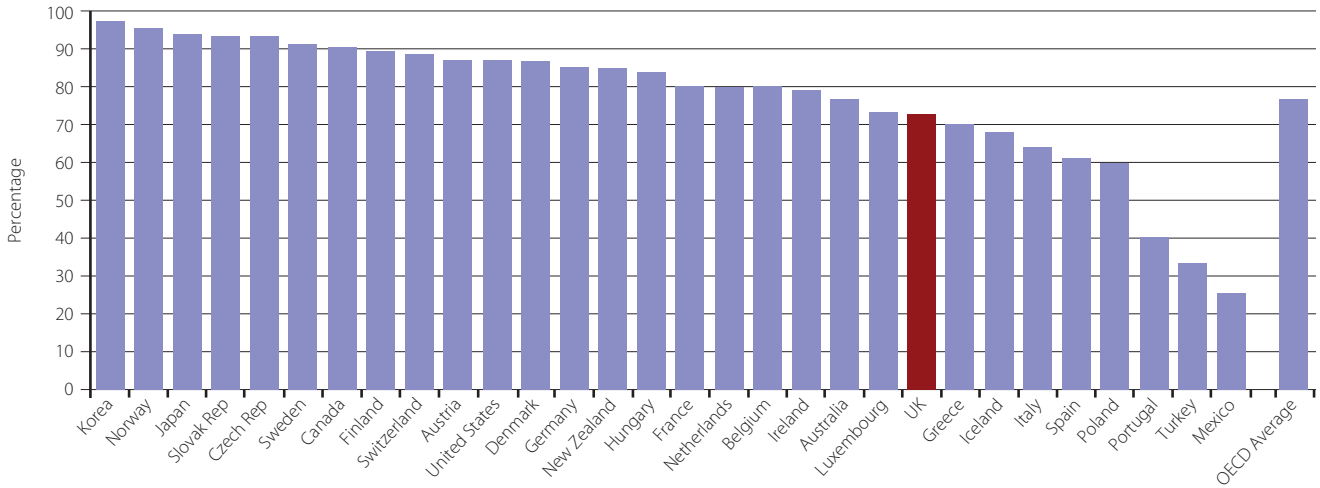


Figure 2.6: Percentage of 25-34 year old population that has attained at least upper secondary education (in UK terms, this is level 2)



Source: OECD, Education at a Glance 2006, Table A1.2a; www.oecd.org

qualifications pre- and post-16, to the support and guidance that young people receive and to the ways in which different services come together around the young person.

2.22 To get further will require a different approach. We must significantly raise the aspirations of those who at present choose not to participate; and galvanise the system of secondary and post-secondary education to prepare every young person to participate in education or training until at least the age of 18.

2.23 We need every secondary school in England to be preparing every young person to stay within the system – making sure that they have the experiences, opportunities and guidance that will help them to make a successful choice. We want every school to assume that every one of the students joining them at 11 will stay in education or training beyond the age of 16 to achieve worthwhile qualifications that will prepare them to succeed in life, work and further learning – and to work with its pupils to make sure this happens. We want all providers of education and training for 16-18 year olds in each part of the country to know that between them they

must offer something that will engage every young person in their area and lead them to the successful achievement of qualifications.

2.24 We need every school and college in England to be working with all young people to raise their aspirations, to show them that they can succeed and to help them to understand the opportunities they will have in life – and how important success in education and training can be to enabling them to take up those opportunities. And we want every parent, even if they themselves had a poor experience of school, to be able to help their children to understand that for them, continuing in education or training will be essential to preparing for life.

2.25 If we are to achieve this, we believe we should require all 16 and 17 year olds to continue in some form of education or training. Doing this will make sure the system has to provide the opportunities and support for every young person – pre- and post-16 – that will enable them to make a success of their time in education and training so that they will want to continue. It will set an expectation for young people and help to raise their aspirations for themselves; and it will make

sure that all those who work with young people – whether in the education system or in the other professions that work with young people – are focused on raising their aspirations as well. It will make sure that parents feel supported and confident in encouraging their children to stay on – as the overwhelming majority of parents wish their children to do.

Western Australia

Across Australia, there has been concern since the 1990s that young people are not gaining the right skills to compete in the global economy. Responsibility for education rests with state governments and different states have responded in different ways. Four states are raising the education leaving age from 15 to 17. In 2006, Western Australia successfully raised the leaving age from 15 to 16, and in 2008 it will be raised from 16 to 17. A wide range of options is available, including full time school, training in a further education college, apprenticeships, and a combination of part time work and part time training. In a population of 2 million, the cohort of 16 year olds consists of 30,000 young people. Raising the leaving age to 16 appears to have raised full-year participation from 80% to 98%.

2.26 Without compulsion, there is a risk that young people with lower aspirations, who may come from families and communities which have had a poor experience of schooling, are missed as participation increases. These are the young people least likely to continue in education or training, and those with perhaps the most to gain – if they are not currently getting recognised qualifications at level 2, but are able to do so by the age of 19 by staying on, then the gain to them in opportunities, future employment and lifetime earnings is particularly great. The potential economic benefits of this

group achieving well are therefore large – as are the gains in social justice.

2.27 Introducing compulsion would mean that the system would need to focus on the needs of this group who are least likely at present to choose to participate; provide better for them pre-16, including through better qualifications and more opportunities to learn practically; and make sure that there are high quality options post-16 which can engage and interest them. The potential economic gains (as well as the social gains and the benefits to individuals) from doing this successfully are very great – significantly outweighing the costs. We therefore believe that there is now a strong case for requiring participation in education or training up to the age of 18, provided that it can be successfully implemented. In this Green Paper, we set out for consultation this proposition and our proposals for implementing this new requirement.

2.28 This Green Paper applies to England only. We will work with the Devolved Administrations where our proposals may have implications for their systems to consider how these should be managed.

Do you agree that there is a case for introducing compulsory participation to age 18?

Chapter 3

A new requirement to participate

Summary

We are clear that introducing compulsory participation for 16 and 17 year olds should not mean forcing them to stay in school or the classroom; we should recognise all forms of valuable learning, including work-based learning. And we are clear that participation is not enough in itself. The learning young people are doing must be valuable as a preparation for life, which means working towards recognised qualifications which are widely understood and provide a good basis for progression.

The central proposal we want to consult on is that:

- all young people should participate in education or training until their 18th birthday;
- participation could be at school, in a college, in work-based learning, or in accredited training provided by an employer;
- participation should be full time for young people not in employment for a significant part of the week, and part time for those working more than 20 hours per week.

3.1 We believe that the case for requiring young people to participate is strong, provided that we can create a system in which young people who might otherwise choose not to participate can be engaged so that they do achieve. This means that our policy on what constitutes participation must be designed carefully to ensure that a wide range of different forms of education and training are included, so that every young person is able to choose something which is both valuable and engaging.

A variety of different forms of education and training will count as participating

3.2 We are very clear that for those aged 16 and 17, a requirement to participate does not mean a requirement to stay in school or in the classroom. Staying on to continue learning in the classroom will be the right choice for many young people – but not for all. So, our policy should recognise all forms of valuable learning – including in particular learning undertaken by young people who are in work and undertaking appropriate training.

3.3 Equally, the learning young people are doing must be valuable as a preparation for life. This means that young people must be working towards recognised qualifications, which will be widely understood by employers and the public, so that their learning is accredited and provides a good basis for progression in employment and further learning.

3.4 In addition, young people must spend a sufficiently large proportion of their time learning in order to have a realistic prospect of achieving the qualifications they are working towards. We believe that for most young people, this should mean full time education – which is already the option taken by the majority of 16 and 17 year olds. We wish to consult on what precisely the requirement should be – but we suggest that there should be a minimum of 16 hours of guided learning per week.

3.5 Although most will be in full time education, we also recognise the value of employment in itself and as a basis for further learning. This is particularly true of structured programmes – especially Apprenticeships – which are designed to give young people the skills they need for work, the basic skills they need for life and a broader learning experience as a grounding for progression in learning and at work. A new requirement to participate would therefore need to be framed in a way which included young people undertaking an Apprenticeship or a similar form of work-based training.

3.6 We wish to consult on this, but think that this would mean that for young people who are working for a significant proportion of the week, the minimum amount of time they would be required to spend learning would be lower than for young people who are not working. We judge that a suitable requirement would be a minimum of 280 hours per year (the equivalent of around one day per week over the year).

3.7 We recognise that some minority communities may particularly value a return to family life, self employment or working in family businesses when leaving school, and that 5000 16 and 17 year olds are currently self employed⁹. Self employment and work in a family business would still be viable options under these proposals, as long as the young person was also participating part time (280 hours per year) in education or training. We are committed to working with parents and young people in these circumstances to communicate the benefits of continued participation and to make sure they are treated fairly and are able to access the opportunities available.

3.8 We will consider how these proposals will impact on volunteers. The Government is keen to ensure that these proposals do not

discourage young people from taking part in the volunteering opportunities available to them. We expect that those who are volunteering full time will participate part time in education or training in the same way as those who are employed full time.

We are consulting on a particular model for requiring participation

3.9 Therefore, our central proposition is that:

- all young people resident in England should participate in education or training until their 18th birthday;
- participation would include participation at school, in a college, in work-based learning or in accredited training provided by an employer;
- in order to count as participating, young people would be required to work towards accredited qualifications;
- participation would need to be full time (at least 16 hours of guided learning per week) for those who are not in employment for a significant part of the week; and
- where a young person is employed for at least 20 hours per week, participation could be part time – but would need to be the equivalent of at least 280 hours of guided learning per year.

Do you agree that participation should include participation in school, college, work-based learning and accredited training provided by an employer?

Do you agree that the requirement should include a requirement to work towards accredited qualifications?

Do you agree that for those who are not in employment for a significant part of the week, participation should be in full time education? Should full time education be defined for this purpose as at least 16 hours of guided learning per week?

Do you agree that a young person who is employed could participate part time? Is a minimum of 280 hours of guided learning per year appropriate for a young person who is employed?

3.10 The proposition that young people should continue in education or training until their 18th birthday would be the simplest version of this policy to administer and the clearest to young people and their parents. It is the one we favour at this stage. This Green Paper is written on the basis that this would be the policy we would take forward.

3.11 An alternative would be to link the requirement to participate to the achievement of recognised qualifications at a level which would prepare young people for the labour market. So young people could be required to participate until they either reach the age of 18 or achieve qualifications at level 2 – whichever is the earlier. This version of the policy would have the benefit of making clear that the aim is to prepare young people better for life and it would mean, for example, that a few young people who achieve valuable qualifications shortly before reaching the age of 18 would not be required to remain in education for a short period of time thereafter. However, it could be less clear to young people and more difficult to administer and might make it seem to some young people as though the requirement to stay until 18 was a ‘punishment’ for achieving less well before then. We welcome views.

3.12 In either version of the policy, we would expect that for the small number of young people who complete their A Levels or

equivalent level 3 programme before their 18th birthday, participation would not be compulsory once they had achieved that level.

Which version of the policy do you prefer?

3.13 We propose to introduce the requirement in a phased way – moving first to a requirement to participate until age 17, before subsequently requiring participation until 18. We judge that the best moment to raise the participation age to 17 would be 2013. This is the first year in which we will have a national entitlement to the new qualifications we are introducing. It would also mean that the requirement would first apply to young people who start Year 7 in September 2008 – so that there is a clear expectation of continued participation for those young people right from the start of their secondary schooling and so that the whole system can prepare to make sure that it provides suitably for them throughout that time.

Success depends on enabling young people to achieve

3.14 Making a success of this requires not only that young people participate, but also that they achieve. Only if we can implement the policy in a way which means that more young people learn and more achieve well can we secure the benefits for individuals, the economy and society.

3.15 In order to do this, we need to make sure that four key things are in place:

- a suitable route for every young person, which engages them and enables them to progress and achieve;
- the right support for every young person to help them to make the right choice for them and enable them to access provision;
- good engagement from employers to offer young people valuable training opportunities; and
- a means of making sure that everyone does participate and benefit in practice.

3.16 We believe that all of these things can be done, so that the participation age can be raised in a way that genuinely benefits young people and makes sure that we no longer have young people who leave education and training before they have prepared themselves for life. Evidence from previous changes shows that extending compulsory participation has led to increased attainment. When a change in the law was implemented in 1997 so that all young people had to stay in school until the end of the school year in which they turned 16, rather than being able to leave on their 16th birthday, the group whose characteristics suggested they would otherwise have left on their birthday, and were therefore in a sense the group who were ‘forced’ to participate, achieved more than the equivalent group in the previous year¹⁰.

3.17 The remainder of this Green Paper sets out how we propose to go about making sure that all these things are done. In many areas, our proposals build on actions we and others across the system are already taking now to reform education for 14-19 year olds, improve support to young people and reduce the number of 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training. Raising the participation age can help to accelerate all of these things, by galvanising the systems of secondary and post-secondary education and raising the aspirations of young people to achieve and continue in learning.

10 Del Bono, E & Galindo-Rueda, F (2006) The Long Term Impacts of Compulsory Schooling: Evidence from a Natural Experiment in School Leaving Dates, ISER Working Paper 2006-44.

Chapter 4

A suitable route for every young person

Summary

We will make sure that every young person is able to undertake a programme of learning that is engaging and valuable. Young people will be able to choose from a range of options, each offering a different route to attainment and progression.

Of course, young people will still be able to study for GCSEs and A Levels. We are also increasing access to the International Baccalaureate. But we will not expect all young people to be studying towards general qualifications.

The first five new Diplomas will be available for teaching from 2008, and all 14 will be available everywhere at all levels from 2013. They will offer a mix of practical and theoretical study for those young people who prefer a more applied approach, and who want to gain an understanding of a particular employment sector. For those young people who want to begin working and gain a qualification that will help them to advance quickly in a specific occupation,

we will expand the number of Apprenticeships available.

The Foundation Learning Tier, which will be introduced from 2010, will bring a more coherent approach to qualifications and training below level 2, helping young people who are on these courses to progress.

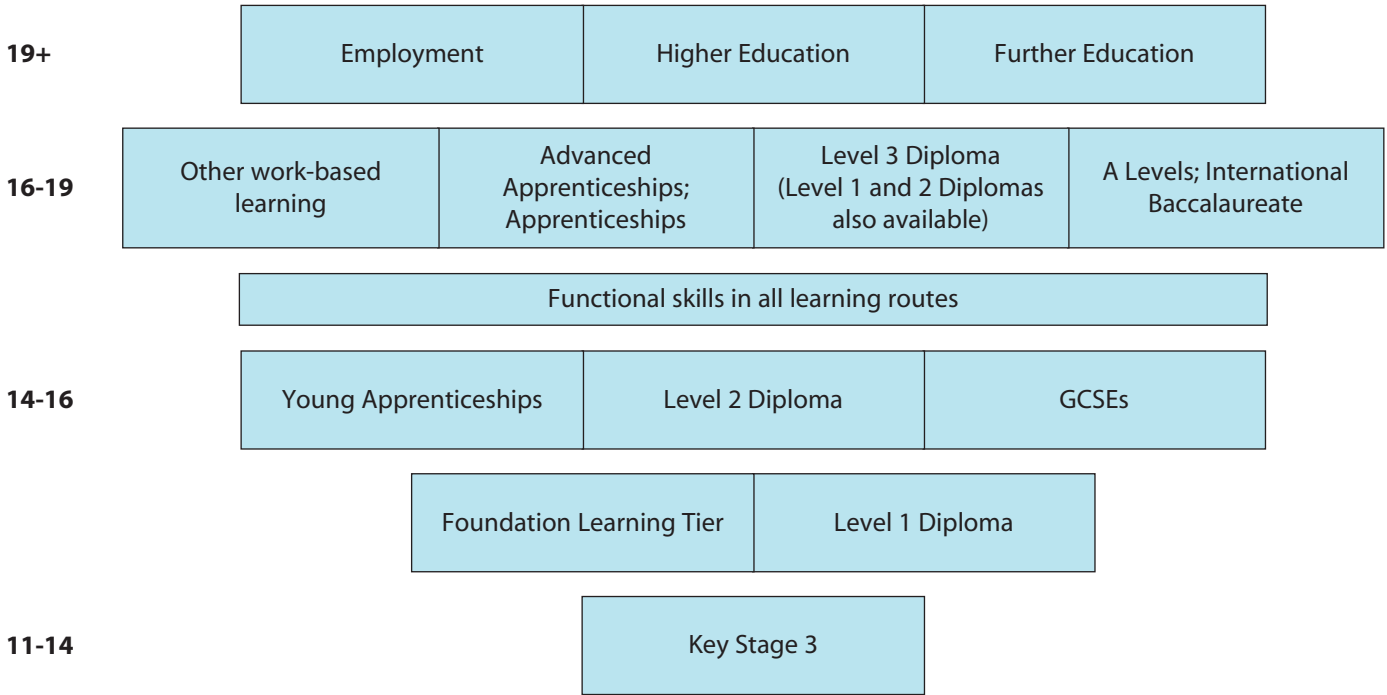
We will make sure that there are sufficient places on each of these routes to satisfy demand, so that every young person will be able to find an option that appeals to them. As part of this, we will make sure that we train new members of the workforce and build the additional facilities that will be needed.

- 4.1 Successfully increasing participation and raising attainment depends on having good provision for all young people. This means the right curriculum, taught in the right way, in the right surroundings, whether in the public, private or voluntary sector – in schools, colleges, work-based learning providers and in the workplace.

We will ensure that there is an engaging curriculum

- 4.2 If we introduce a requirement for all young people to participate in education or training post-16 we must ensure that every young person has access to an appropriate, engaging and valuable programme of learning that meets their needs and aspirations. The reforms to the curriculum and qualifications for 14-19 year olds that were announced in the *14-19 Education and Skills White Paper* and are now being implemented are central to achieving this.
- 4.3 These reforms will create a system which provides a full range of different types of provision, to suit different interests and

Figure 4.1: Future qualifications pathways



learning styles at all levels. There will be general, classroom-based learning; applied, work-related learning involving more opportunities to learn practically; and work-based vocational learning. A national entitlement will mean that all young people have access to all of these options at an appropriate level for them. Local 14-19 partnerships are planning how to deliver this in their local area, to make sure they can offer the full range of opportunities to all young people who live there.

We are introducing new Diplomas

4.4 We want to see all young people participating and achieving in learning through enjoyable, challenging and relevant learning programmes – taking qualifications that are widely recognised and valued because they prepare young people for success in employment and further learning and provide clearly understood progression routes into employment, Higher Education (HE) and on to other qualifications. So we are developing a new range of qualifications for the 14-19 phase.

4.5 There will be Diplomas in 14 lines of learning covering all the major sectors of the economy, available at level 1, level 2 (the equivalent of GCSEs at grades A*-C) and level 3 (A Level standard). The Diplomas will give young people a fully rounded education through a mix of theoretical and applied learning, enabling them to develop skills and underpinning knowledge in a work-related context. At each level, each Diploma will incorporate:

- generic learning common to all Diplomas – the generic skills relevant to successful learning and future employment, such as skills in English, maths and ICT and personal learning and thinking skills;
- principal learning, which will develop knowledge, understanding and skills relevant to a broad economic sector; and
- additional or specialist learning which will allow learners to tailor their programme to their own interests and aspirations.

- 4.6 Diplomas will be an attractive learning route for young people at all levels of ability who find practical learning related to the world of work more motivating and engaging than purely theoretical learning, but who want to keep their options open through taking an educational programme rather than training for a specific occupation. They will give young people first hand experience and insight into the world of work, including experience in a real workplace, preparing them to make informed choices of career or further study. The recent Leitch Review stated that the Diplomas will be 'critical to increasing participation in education and training for all young people'.
- 4.7 The design of these new qualifications is being led by employers, HE, schools and colleges. This means that the Diplomas will be widely recognised and valued across the labour market and across HE as a mark of a young person's achievement of a valuable combination of skills, knowledge and attitudes. Young people with a Diploma will have developed essential skills in maths, English and ICT, and also in the wider attributes that employers and HE look for, like problem solving and teamwork. They will also have the subject and sector specific skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in HE and employment. Diplomas will therefore create new, easy to understand, opportunities for progression; from one level of achievement to the next, from school or college to Further or Higher Education and ultimately to adult and working life.

Example: level 2 Diploma in Engineering

Carly had always been interested in cars and had enjoyed Design and Technology throughout secondary school. Following advice from her teachers and school careers adviser she chose to do the level 2 Diploma in Engineering.

Carly's principal learning programme introduced her to different options and skills across engineering, including engineering design, engineering applications of computers, electronic and electrical systems, manufacturing engineering, maintenance, and innovation in engineering. Her school had good links with local businesses and was able to organise work experience for her with the local Jaguar dealership. This enabled her to find out about the technical side of working with cars and about vehicle sales. Carly was concerned about green issues, and through her project she was able to investigate hybrid cars and developments in alternative fuels.

During her course Carly was able to find out more about career options in the motor industry, and when she completed her Diploma, she was well placed to take up an Apprenticeship in vehicle sales or vehicle technology, or to go on to further study in engineering.

- 4.8 The introduction of the Diplomas means that, for the first time, alongside higher levels, we will have a national educational qualification which comprehensively recognises achievement at level 1. The modular structure will mean that young people will be able to follow personalised learning programmes which enable them to achieve as soon as they are ready. This more tailored approach will be attractive to some of those who currently may be at risk of dropping out.

4.9 The new qualifications are being developed in phases. The first five, in Creative and Media, Construction, Engineering, Information Technology and Society, Health and Development, will be available for teaching from 2008. The next five Diplomas will be available from 2009 and all 14 will be available for teaching from 2010. A new statutory national entitlement to study the new Diplomas will be in place for all 14-19 year olds from September 2013. From that point, any 14-19 year old, wherever they are in England, will have the right to take one of the Diplomas at the level appropriate to them. No single provider acting alone will be able to achieve this for all of its students; local 14-19 partnerships are working together to identify how the entitlement can best be delivered in their area.

There will be an Apprenticeship entitlement

4.10 Apprenticeships offer young people the opportunity to earn money while they learn, get excellent vocational training and build a sustainable career. They help employers to build a professionally skilled workforce, equipped with the knowledge and experience that their business needs to succeed and compete. There are currently 160,000 16 to 18 year olds amongst a total of 250,000 apprentices in training, up from 75,000 in 1997, and over 130,000 businesses are involved.

4.11 There are around 180 Apprenticeship Frameworks, across 80 sectors, developed under the direction of employers, through the Skills for Business network, to ensure that they provide learners with the skills and knowledge that employers need. As well as an NVQ at level 2 – a work-related, competence based qualification assessed in the workplace – an Apprenticeship Framework also includes a technical certificate assessing the knowledge and understanding that underpins the competences required in the sector, key skills in numeracy and communication, and learning about employer rights and

responsibilities. Progression from an Apprenticeship can be onto an Advanced Apprenticeship or directly into full employment.

4.12 An Advanced Apprenticeship is designed for progression into craft, technical and supervisory occupations and consists of a minimum of NVQ level 3, a level 3 technical certificate and Key Skills in Application of Number and Communication at level 2.

4.13 We recognise that at the moment there are more young people who would like to take an Apprenticeship than there are places available. And we believe that every young person who wants to continue learning on a work-based route should be able to do so. We will therefore create a system where there can be an Apprenticeship place for every young person who wants one and meets the entry requirements for the sector. This will apply from 2013, in line with the national entitlement to study one of the 14 new Diplomas. Measures to generate additional places will include developing new frameworks in sectors where they do not currently exist and working with group training associations to engage more small employers. Through the Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network, employers who already provide Apprenticeships are promoting the programme to other businesses.

4.14 Central to the delivery of the Apprenticeship entitlement will be an effective method of matching young people to employers willing to offer training. Various IT solutions are being considered. We will seek to learn from and build on effective approaches being developed in local areas.

4.15 Of course, an Apprentice has to be employed, so if a young person wants to undertake an Apprenticeship in a particular sector not represented in their local labour market, they may have to either travel to find an Apprenticeship place, begin a college-based

programme-led Apprenticeship and look for a placement later, or choose instead to follow a college course such as a Diploma in the same sector in preparation for employment later. The public sector also presents opportunities. Public sector Apprenticeships are already promoted within central government and we are considering how to promote them more within local government. Careers advice will need to give young people up-to-date information on their local labour market to help them make informed choices.

4.16 For young people who want to follow a work-based route but do not meet the entry criteria, there will be a place on a pre-Apprenticeship programme to help them progress quickly onto an Apprenticeship.

4.17 In some highly skilled traditional craft occupations, such as jewellery and allied industries, woodworking crafts and stonemasonry, some young people are employed under traditional 'contracts of apprenticeship'. Through case law, these are recognised as apprenticeships for the purposes of the National Minimum Wage. These are long term (typically four or five year) on-the-job training programmes, leading to highly skilled employment and valued across each sector. These programmes are clearly valuable for the development of highly skilled craftspeople and while they are undertaken by relatively small numbers of 16 and 17 year olds, the training they provide is crucial in those sectors and provides a good basis for future skilled employment for the young people involved. We value such contracts of apprenticeship and clearly participation in such a programme should meet in full the requirements of the duty to participate.

We will introduce the Foundation Learning Tier

4.18 Around one fifth of the young people who currently drop out at 16 have achieved fewer than five D-G grades at GCSE and are not yet ready to progress onto a level 2 course post-16. It is important that there are worthwhile

and engaging options for these young people which will help them progress to level 2. Level 1 Diplomas will be part of the answer to this but not sufficient on their own.

4.19 As announced in the Further Education White Paper in March 2006, the Foundation Learning Tier (FLT) is being developed to replace and rationalise the current complex range of provision and qualifications below level 2, to create a system of units and qualifications that is easier for learners and employers to navigate. It will be focused on skills for life and work, subject and vocational learning, and personal and social development.

4.20 Only those units and qualifications that enable progression to the next level will be included within the FLT, and in time this will be the only provision below level 2 that the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) will fund. Clear progression pathways will be described, focusing on the skills and learning needed to progress from Entry and level 1 to level 2. We are currently working with key stakeholders, including a large number of providers, to develop 'progression pathways' – the combination of units and qualifications which lead to attainment and enable progression to the next level.

4.21 We expect that from 2008 the main offer within the FLT for 14-19 year olds at level 1 will be one of the Diplomas. Until all the Diplomas are available everywhere, a FLT programme composed of other qualifications might include a vocational element relating to a particular sector, a basic skills element and a personal development or employability skills element. The different elements of the programme could be at different levels to suit the needs of an individual learner.

4.22 Also at level 1 within the FLT will be a pre-Apprenticeship route for those young people who want to pursue their learning in a work-based setting but who do not yet meet the entry requirements for the sector in which they want an Apprenticeship. The pre-

Apprenticeship programme will be designed to prepare these young people for rapid entry to an Apprenticeship. It will include personal and social development and will address Key Skills issues as well as learning relating to an occupational sector and any initial tests or specific preparation required for particular frameworks. It will build on the current Entry to Employment (E2E) pre-Apprenticeship pathway which helps at least 2500 young people a year to progress onto an Apprenticeship.

- 4.23** For learners who are not yet ready for level 1, subject specific Entry level qualifications will remain available for now. New, broader unit-based qualifications will be developed for Entry level learners combining subject knowledge, vocational skills, basic skills and personal and social development.
- 4.24** We are currently trialling these approaches in schools and other providers, and the FLT will be in place across England from September 2010.

Young people will be able to work and train

- 4.25** Under our proposals for raising the participation age, young people would still be able to enter employment at 16 as long as their employer provided training towards an accredited qualification or agreed to release them for at least a day a week to attend training at another provider. We believe that Apprenticeships should be the preferred route for young people in employment as they lead to the best outcomes. For example, the recent cost benefit analysis of Apprenticeships estimated wage returns to Apprenticeships to be around 16% compared to individuals whose highest qualification is at level 1 or 2¹¹.
- 4.26** Outside this, accredited training for those in employment would be most likely to be towards an NVQ 2 or 3 qualification – occupationally specific vocational training to develop the skills needed to do a particular
- job. We think this training would need to fulfil a requirement of a specified minimum number of guided learning hours per year in order to be worthwhile and would need to be working towards an Apprenticeship Framework. We will consider whether there should be other curriculum requirements on this kind of training alongside employment, such as the inclusion of basic skills.
- 4.27** Of course some employers are already providing training for their 16 and 17 year old employees. We estimate that around 3.5% of all 16 and 17 year olds are involved in some form of employer funded training. Some of this is already towards accredited qualifications, and some is very short term or specific, which would not be sufficient for these purposes. A small proportion of this group are therefore likely already to be receiving substantial training from employers that is not currently accredited. Where this is of good quality we will work with employers to find a low-burden way of accrediting it and to ensure that we recognise existing high quality training such as 'contracts of apprenticeship', even where they are in niche sectors where national occupational standards do not exist.
- 4.28** Our existing programme of reform for vocational qualifications has the important aim of ensuring a more flexible qualification system in future, meeting the needs of employers. As part of this reform we are working with employers to establish the most effective and low-burden mechanisms for recognising existing employer or customised training programmes within the developing Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). These projects with employers form part of a wider programme of tests and trials that will evaluate how the QCF can support skills acquisition and vocational learning.

11 McIntosh, S. (2007) 'A Cost-Benefit Analysis of Apprenticeships and other Vocational Qualifications', DfES RR834.

Dollond and Aitchison

Following de-regulation of opticians in the late 1980s, all workers were permitted to dispense glasses, no matter what level or business area they worked in. Dollond & Aitchison's training was not set up to meet the flexibility of a de-regulated market, and the company set out to create an innovative new in-house development programme.

In 2002 D&A began work with the LSC, City & Guilds and Skillsmart to develop their in-house training programme to a nationally recognised scheme. D&A's training programme was mapped against the Apprenticeship Framework, which incorporates an NVQ, technical certificate and key skills. In 2005, D&A became the first optical retailer to deliver a level 2 NVQ qualification in optical retailing through their in-house programme. The industry later adopted an NVQ level 2 based on D&A's existing programme.

Business benefits of the training programme have been closely monitored since 1999 and include a year-on-year increase in sales of 4% in an increasingly competitive market between 2004 and 2006 and staff turnover at 10% less than the retail industry average (Source: Skillsmart Retail Ltd, Retail Sector Skills Council. May 2006). D&A wants all staff to progress to a level 3 and is currently working with the LSC and Skillsmart to develop an accredited NVQ level 3.

Wendy Albutt, Learning & Development Manager for D&A commented: "Whilst D&A's training programme already met many of the requirements of an NVQ level 2, the LSC has enabled us to develop a well rounded nationally accredited programme that covers key skills as well as technical expertise."

announced changes that we will be making to these qualifications to ensure they continue to be a high quality route and prepare young people well for further study and employment.

- 4.30** We are developing new functional skills qualifications in English, maths and ICT, defining the elements of these subjects that people need to participate effectively in everyday life, including the workplace. We plan for these to be incorporated into GCSEs, and it will not be possible to achieve a C in these subjects without mastering these elements.
- 4.31** We are making changes to A Level that build upon the strengths of the existing qualifications to increase stretch and challenge and reduce the burden of assessment. We are introducing an extended project which will require a high degree of planning, preparation, research and autonomous working and helps students develop skills for work and further study. We are reducing A Level from six assessment units to four, which will reduce the assessment burden and allow for more questions with an emphasis on making links across the whole subject area, and we are introducing an A* grade to increase stretch and challenge for the most able students.
- 4.32** In addition, in the autumn we announced an expansion of opportunities to study the International Baccalaureate, with a commitment that by 2010 there will be at least one maintained institution (a school or college) offering the IB in every local authority area in England. This will offer a further choice for young people post-16, and will appeal in particular to those who want to study a broad range of subjects.

Changes to the secondary curriculum will reduce disengagement pre-16

Young people will still take general qualifications

- 4.29** GCSE and A Level qualifications will of course remain and many young people will continue to choose this route. We have already

- 4.33** Tackling disaffection early and keeping young people engaged with their learning up to age 16 is an essential prerequisite if they are to

stay in education and training until they are 18. As set out in the *14-19 Education and Skills White Paper* we are making changes to Key Stages 3 and 4 to address disengagement earlier and ensure more young people get to 16 engaged and well-equipped to choose which route they want to follow.

4.34 At Key Stage 4 pupils will be able to choose to study one of the new Diplomas at level 1 or 2 as well as continuing to follow the core requirements of the national curriculum, which will give them the opportunity for more practical experience and applied, work-related learning. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) is also currently consulting on a new secondary curriculum which will allow a more flexible approach to teaching. Schools will be able to focus more on literacy and numeracy for pupils who are struggling to master the basics and offer more stretching opportunities to all pupils.

4.35 The current Key Stage 4 engagement programme is investigating the impact work-focused alternative approaches to learning can have on those who are not engaged by the standard curriculum. By providing a different learning environment and demonstrating the relevance of their learning for their future careers young people are motivated to continue in education and

training. Around 6,000 young people are involved in 2006/7 and there will be 15,000 in 2007/8. The pilots are developing a wide range of good practice in work-related learning approaches which will be disseminated to learning providers across the country.

We will ensure there is enough of the right provision

4.36 In order to ensure that there is an engaging curriculum offer for everyone we must ensure there are enough places in each kind of provision and that young people can learn in an appropriate setting with high quality buildings and facilities.

There will be sufficient places

4.37 We are confident that we can meet our aspiration of 90% participation at age 17 by 2015 and are already planning on this basis. Beyond this, if we introduce compulsory participation, our modelling suggests that the majority of the additional learners would be based mainly in the FE sector, although some would be in schools. Demographic changes (with the total number of 16-17 year olds in each year group decreasing after 07/08) mean that although the proportion of all young people participating will increase, the overall numbers will not increase as significantly.

Figure 4.2: Projected 16-17 year old participation in education and training (snapshot percentages)

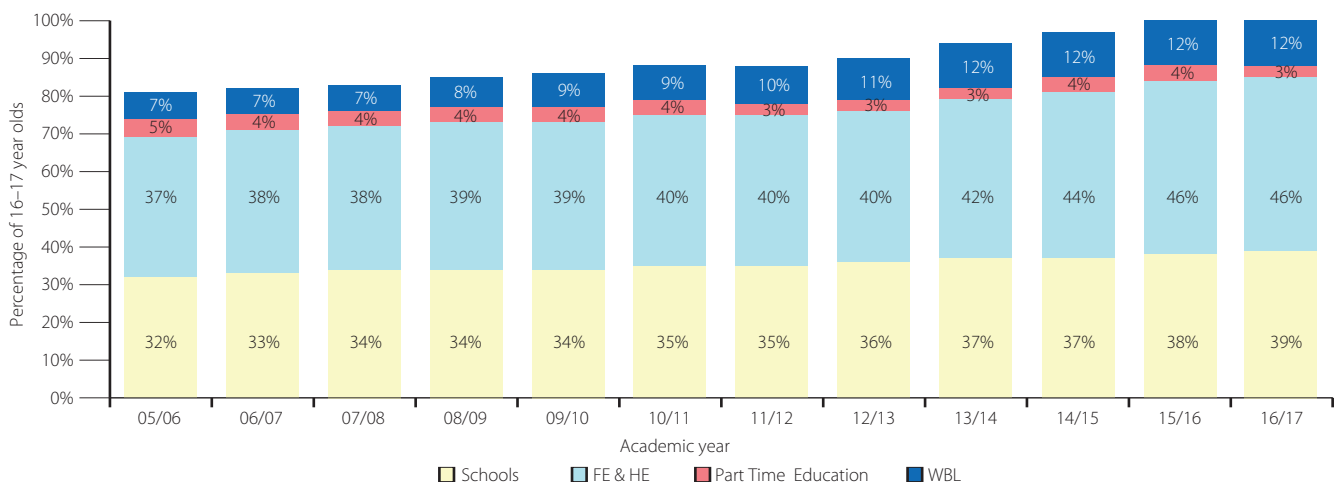
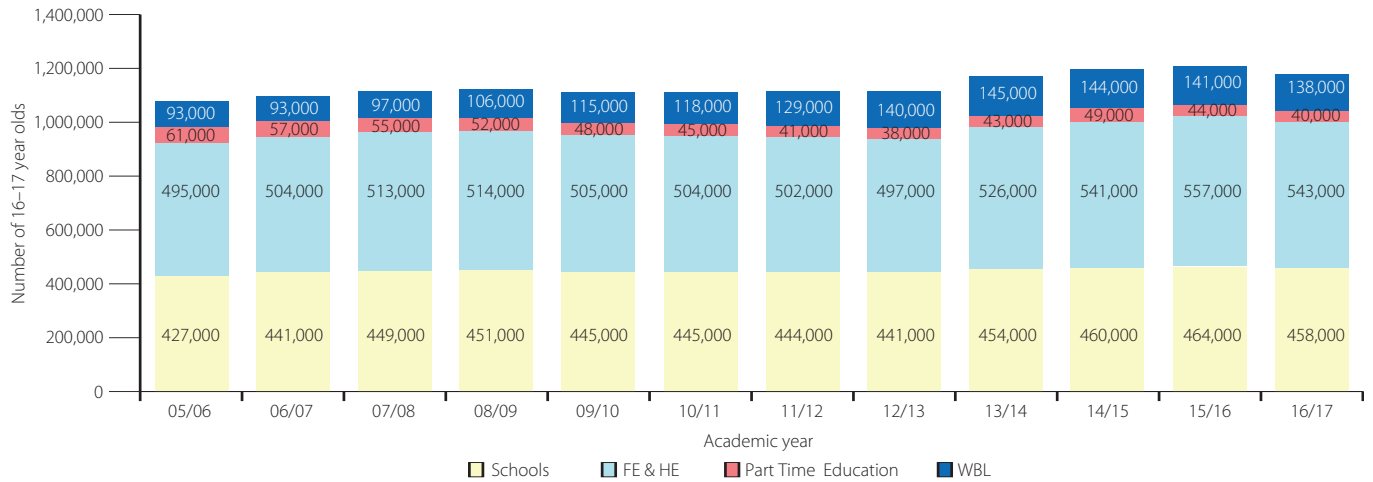


Figure 4.3: Projected 16-17 year old participation in education and training (snapshot volumes)



4.38 Figure 4.2 shows the proportion of all 16-17 year olds we would expect to be participating in each learning setting if we introduce compulsory participation to age 18. We expect the proportions in FE and work-based learning to increase more than in school.

4.39 Figure 4.3 shows learner numbers in each type of provision. Although the proportion of young people participating increases significantly, demographic changes mean that there will not be as many 16 and 17 year olds overall, and that the increases in numbers are therefore not as great.

4.40 The LSC has an existing duty to secure the provision of proper facilities for education (other than HE) and training for 16-19 year old learners, and will therefore continue to consider likely patterns of demand and plan provision accordingly. Introducing a new duty to participate would mean the LSC would need to pay particular attention to ensuring availability of a wide range of provision, including in the voluntary sector where this is of good quality and meets the needs of young people in the local area.

We will ensure that the right facilities are in place

4.41 It is crucial that all young people are able to learn in appropriate and high quality facilities and that these are carefully planned in order

for enough to be ready in the right places at the right time.

4.42 As set out in the *14-19 Education and Skills Implementation Plan* we are already creating 50,000 additional 16-19 places to accommodate current demographic growth and planned increases in participation. We have already combined school and FE resources in a 16-19 capital fund to support coherent investment in new 16-19 provision. The fund is administered by the LSC and includes £180 million in 2007/08 to support the post-16 expansion of high performing schools and colleges and local competitions for new 16-19 places. In addition, we have made available £40 million in 2007/08 for successful consortia preparing to deliver Diplomas in 2008 in order to support wider curriculum choice and to make high quality facilities available.

4.43 Beyond this, we estimate that if we introduce compulsory participation to age 17 in 2013 there would be around 5000 more 16 and 17 year olds in schools that year than there will be next year (the 07/08 academic year), and in 2015, when the age would be raised to 18, there would be around 15,000 more in schools than in 07/08. All of this growth is accounted for by the already planned growth in Academies, most of which will have sixth

forms. Outside Academies therefore, there would be little difference in the total numbers in maintained schools compared to next year. Nationally, therefore, although more places will be required than without raising the participation age, there is no net increase required compared to next year, beyond that already planned through Academies.

- 4.44** Demographic changes and relative increases in numbers will of course vary between local areas, however. Local authorities will need to use their own projections of year group sizes and modelling of choices young people are likely to make to plan provision in their area. Local authorities may need to take account of this in their plans for new schools under the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme.
- 4.45** And in relation to FE we estimate that if we were to introduce compulsory participation to 17 in 2013, 13,000 additional places would be needed compared to next academic year (07/08), and then on raising the age to 18 in 2015 another 31,000 more would be needed on top of that. These additional places might be in a combination of new buildings at existing colleges, and new providers. We would start preparing these additional buildings from 2010. We will ensure that 16-19 policies are aligned with other initiatives, including BSF and the Academies programme, to offer a coherent approach to providing sufficient places and facilities for the successful delivery of the new entitlement.

We will ensure that the workforce is trained

- 4.46** The support of teaching staff plays a key role in a young person's decision to stay on in education and training. The reforms set out in the *14-19 Education and Skills White Paper* and Implementation Plan, which we are now implementing, already include measures to prepare the school and FE workforce for the changes happening to the curriculum and the new qualifications that are being developed. We will make sure that no-one has to teach

new subject content or manage the introduction of new qualifications without adequate training, so we are working with a number of partner organisations to develop programmes of professional development to prepare, for example, for the introduction of Diplomas and functional skills. We will consider how existing professional development programmes would need to be adjusted if we raise the participation age, to reflect the different context and help equip the workforce to motivate all young people including those who might not have chosen to participate voluntarily.

- 4.47** Introducing compulsory participation would mean recruiting and training additional teaching staff to reflect the additional learner numbers, predominantly in the FE sector. We will begin this process from 2010, including continuing to provide bursaries and Golden Hellos to help attract enough additional recruits in the sectors and subject areas where they are most needed. By 2010, we will be using a range of new recruitment schemes to attract people to lead and teach in the FE sector, particularly those with industry experience and skills, and the new mandatory requirement for continuing professional development will ensure staff maintain their professional and occupational skills.

We will ensure that the accountability system supports a new duty

- 4.48** Our reforms to the education and training system for 14-19 year olds and our ambitions for post-16 participation and attainment at 19 mean that already, many of the changes that would be needed to deliver the provision and opportunities necessary to raise the participation age are underway. Across the country, 14-19 partnerships of schools, colleges, local authorities, employers and the LSC are working together to plan and provide a much wider curriculum choice for young people – including the new national entitlement to Diplomas. The first areas to offer Diplomas, from September 2008, are

gearing up from March 2007 to provide them. A national system of 'progress checks' holds local areas to account for progress towards a reformed system.

4.49 We intend to continue to refine the accountability system for schools and colleges, to make sure that it places real emphasis upon the importance of progression to further learning and the provision of a full range of choices to young people. This year we are beginning a pilot of a new 'progression measure' which will be included in the new school profile. This will set out what proportion of young people from each school goes on to participate in education or training post-16, and how well they have achieved by the age of 19. It will be an incentive to schools (whether they have a sixth form or not) to take care to support every young person to find the right education or training option for them at 16, and will recognise the contribution of those schools which have made this an important part of their mission. If this pilot proves successful, we expect that this measure will become an important part of the accountability system, and we will continue to look to refine the accountability arrangements in the education and training system to promote participation and achievement among 16 and 17 year olds.

4.50 We would propose to implement the extension of compulsory education or training starting from 2013, the first point in the implementation of these reforms when we can be confident that there will be an appropriate and engaging route in place for every young person. The national entitlement to one of the 14 Diplomas at every level and the Apprenticeship entitlement will both be in place from then. This would mean that the cohort of young people starting Year 7 in September 2008 would be the first to benefit. So we will galvanise the whole system to get behind the expectation that these young people will be staying in education or training, and to gear up to make this offer a reality.

Do you agree that, taken together, the routes outlined here mean that there will be an appropriate and engaging option for all 16 and 17 year olds by 2013?

Should there be requirements for young people who are training to do more than just an accredited occupational qualification? (For example, should they be expected to do functional English or maths and/or wider technical education?)

Chapter 5

Enabling all young people to participate

Summary

We will offer the support that young people need to enable them to participate. This includes giving young people the right advice and guidance, as well as offering financial support where it is needed.

We will make sure that young people understand what they can choose to study and what impact different choices might have on their future, so that they are able to make informed choices. This will include helping young people to experience the range of options before they have to make a choice, in order to raise aspirations, widen horizons and increase understanding of what is available. The new information, advice, and guidance (IAG) standards being published in April this year will play an important part in this.

We will also ensure that no young person is prevented from participating due to financial constraints. We propose to build upon Education Maintenance Allowances (EMAs) to ensure that those from low

income backgrounds get the financial support they need, and also strengthen the link between financial support and progression, to provide an incentive to behave well and attain more. Alongside this, we will seek to ensure that all those currently eligible for benefits continue to get support.

We recognise that some young people will need extra guidance and support. Through the reforms set out in the *Youth Matters Green Paper*, we will seek to create a system that provides integrated support to every young person, and appropriate targeted support for young people who are experiencing particular barriers to participation in learning.

- 5.1 It is of course crucial to have the right curriculum opportunities in place, but making them available will not be enough on its own. The system needs to work for young people, so they need to be helped to make the right choices for them, and to have access to the right support to enable them to make the most of the opportunities available.
- 5.2 We will ensure that there are opportunities for every young person to engage in education or training, whatever their circumstances. And we will ensure that they have the right support to make it easy for them to engage. We would want enforcement of a new duty to participate to be the very last resort of course. So it will be crucial to give young people as much support as possible to participate or re-engage voluntarily before they get to this point.

We will ensure that young people know what is on offer and are helped to make the right choice for them

- 5.3 For a young person to stay in their post-16 learning programme and achieve, they need to be on an appropriate route for them: a route which suits their needs and interests. To be able to make a good choice, they need to be aware of the full range of what is on offer and have good quality, up-to-date information about what those options involve.

We will make sure that schools focus on post-16 participation and young people have information on all the options

- 5.4 The first cohort of young people to whom the new duty to participate post-16 would apply would be those entering Year 7 in September 2008. They will start secondary school with a clear expectation of continued participation and achievement and this creates a real opportunity for the whole education system to raise and support the aspirations of this group of young people. There will be a focus on preparing every young person throughout their school career for successful progression post-16 on a route that suits their individual needs and interests, as well as achievement within school.
- 5.5 Secondary schools have a crucial role to play right from the start of Year 7 in raising aspirations and creating an expectation of staying in education and training. In schools with high post-16 participation rates, academic and pastoral systems focus not only on achievement at 16 but also on continued participation and achievement post-16. Young people are encouraged from the start of secondary school to think about what they want to do later, what that will involve, and what they will need to do to get there, and helped to get direct experience of their preferred options.
- 5.6 Young people should be given information on the full range of options available to them post-16, not only those offered at their

existing institution. Other providers should have opportunities to come and speak to school students about their programmes. The post-16 progression measure that we are developing is designed to recognise the efforts of schools to help all their students to make good choices that will enable them to progress and achieve post-16. Our proposals for the development of this measure were published for consultation in January 2007. As we develop the measure and refine the data we will consider whether stronger incentives could be attached to it in future.

- 5.7 There is also of course a crucial role for integrated support services for young people, including those currently provided through the Connexions service. From 2008 funding for Connexions will be transferred to local authorities who will decide how best to commission integrated support, as set out in the *Youth Matters* Green Paper. Every young person should have access to confidential, impartial, comprehensive and accessible advice and guidance to help them make well-informed decisions about their post-16 options. In addition there will be further targeted youth support for those finding it difficult to make a choice, at risk of disengagement or facing additional barriers to continued participation. Information, advice and guidance (IAG) services also have an important role to play in ensuring schools receive up-to-date information on the opportunities available through other providers and intelligence about the local labour market.

We are introducing IAG quality standards and will make sure that they are applied everywhere

- 5.8 It is important that all young people are given high quality careers advice. This is not only about provision of information and one-to-one careers interviews with guidance professionals. It is about a whole range of experiences to raise aspirations, increase awareness of the opportunities available and promote understanding of what they involve

in practice. As set out in the *Youth Matters* Green Paper we are already developing a set of quality standards for young people's IAG. The aim of the quality standards is to describe clearly the key elements and minimum standards we expect of IAG everywhere. The draft standards have been developed, working with young people and IAG professionals, and were published for consultation in December 2006. The final version will be available in April.

- 5.9 The standards have been designed so that they can be used by local authorities, who will be responsible for commissioning IAG from April 2008, and by the providers of IAG, for self-evaluation of their strengths and areas for improvement. Ofsted will inspect against the standards in school and college inspections and Joint Area Reviews. We are also considering the development needs of the workforce to enable them to deliver in line with the standards.

Young people will have opportunities to try things out before making choices

- 5.10 The IAG quality standards are about more than face to face guidance provided by professionals. They are about making sure that young people are exposed to the widest range of choices and experiences. Seeing for themselves what different options are really like can have a more powerful effect on young people than simply being given information. Exposure to a range of different experiences needs to start early in order to raise aspirations and address preconceptions.
- 5.11 'Tasters' – short experiences of post-16 options a young person is considering – are one example of this. They provide an opportunity to try things out and see what they are really like before making decisions, and can increase motivation and improve both staying-on rates at 16 and retention within post-16 options. A study into Year 9 taster sessions for the Young Apprenticeship programme found, for example, that after this

experience retention on vocational options was nearly 100 percent, because young people understood more about what was involved, made better choices and were better prepared before starting the courses. Tasters can also help to promote diversity where they are used to encourage pupils to try out non-traditional choices.

- 5.12 From the experience of the Young Apprenticeship programme and schemes in some of the 14-19 Pathfinders we know that this approach works particularly well when sessions are offered across an area or a group of providers to promote a wide range of options. Young people first receive some advice and guidance, then choose an option and try it out. They can then reflect on the experience and decide whether to try something else before having to commit to a choice of post-16 route.
- 5.13 Peer guidance is another example of how different approaches to advice and guidance can help give young people a good understanding of the options available to them. Young people like getting information about courses from peers who are currently following or have recently completed them; this can happen, for example, on visits to providers or by young people who are studying post-16 going back into schools to talk to pupils. This, too, can be effectively organised across an area.

Parents will have an important role

- 5.14 Of course, parents also play a central role in supporting and advising their children. We know that parents are the single biggest influence on young people's decision making about what to do post-16. As part of academic and pastoral systems that are geared to progression and attainment right up to 18, schools will need to involve parents. IAG services will need to help make sure parents are given up-to-date and practical information on the options available locally and the opportunities they lead onto.

5.15 In our recent *Every Parent Matters* strategy, we set out our plans to make sure that parents have access to a full range of information, advice and support about children's services. We will make sure that as part of this, parents understand the full range of options available to young people, and are able to help them to make good choices at 16, and to remain in education and training until the age of 18.

We will ensure that young people can access the provision

5.16 Young people must be able to access appropriate provision and pursue their learning in the way that they want, wherever they live in the country. We know that transport can be one of the biggest barriers to participation and is one of the main costs young people cover using their Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

5.17 Currently, in relation to pre-16 education, the local authority is required to provide free home-to-school transport for young people where it considers this necessary to facilitate the young person's attendance (generally where they travel more than three miles to their nearest suitable school). From September 2008 young people from low-income families will be entitled to free travel to one of their three nearest schools, where this is between two and six miles from their home. Currently, local authorities must publish a transport policy statement in respect of people of sixth form age – this means people over compulsory school age but under 19, or over 19 if they are still on a course they began before reaching 19 – which sets out the transport arrangements considered necessary to facilitate attendance at schools and Further Education institutions.

5.18 As part of these proposals to introduce compulsory participation, we will consider

whether changes to the post-16 transport policy would be required, including meeting the cost of any new burdens on local authorities. We will consider and consult on, for example, whether to extend and adapt the current pre-16 school transport regulations, and could also investigate the feasibility of providing subsidised transport to 16-18 year olds who are in education or training, as is already happening in London and West Sussex.

5.19 We will continue to encourage the development of innovative teaching methods that exploit new technologies and enable distance learning. This is crucial to the successful delivery of the national entitlement to all 14 Diplomas, particularly in rural areas, and once post-16 participation is compulsory will play an important role in ensuring that all young people have access to a good choice of routes, whatever their individual circumstances.

We will ensure that the right financial support is in place

5.20 It is important that there are no financial barriers to participation in education and training and that all young people, whatever their background, are able to benefit from the opportunities available.

5.21 Currently 16-19 year olds in education or unwaged training who come from a household with an income of less than £30,810 are eligible for EMA. Weekly payments are made directly to the young person, subject to satisfactory attendance. Payments are stopped for absenteeism and there are bonus payments to reward achievement of agreed learning goals.

5.22 EMA was extensively tested through a range of pilot schemes and the evaluation of these showed increased participation in full time education among eligible 16 year olds in the pilots by 5.9 percentage points¹². EMA has the

greatest effect on young people from the lowest socio-economic groups and those who were moderate or low achievers at the end of Year 11¹³.

We will provide financial support

5.23 We think that EMA should continue until compulsory participation is introduced in 2013. After that, we propose that financial support will need to be restructured. In doing so, we would build on the reforms from the Government's review of financial support for young people, and the views we gathered in the public consultation on *Supporting young people to achieve*. EMA is designed to be an incentive to encourage young people from less well off households to participate in education or training; this support also helps young people to meet some of the costs of post 16 learning, such as transport, books and specialist equipment. There would no longer be the same role for an incentive payment if participation was made compulsory. But it would still be vital, of course, to make sure that financial circumstances are not a barrier to participation, so we would still expect to provide financial support to the most disadvantaged young people.

5.24 EMA is currently means tested, and we propose that means testing should continue. We believe it is important that those facing the greatest barriers receive the most support, and that resources should be targeted where they are most needed. EMA has delivered wider social benefits in enhancing the income of the poorest young people, which we would want to protect in a future system. However, participation is not enough or an end in itself – it is important that young people succeed in their learning too. EMA is strongly linked to attendance. We will now strengthen the link to behaviour and to attainment, to provide an added incentive to improve and to achieve. We are already beginning to implement this

principle, by ensuring that behaviour is taken into account in deciding whether a young person should receive an EMA bonus payment in January. We are exploring how to ensure that bonus payments are better linked to a young person's progression in learning, and we will continue to consider how these resources can be targeted most effectively.

5.25 We will consider whether, if we introduce compulsory participation, we should continue to pay financial support to a young person who has dropped out of learning because a particular course has not worked for them, if they are actively seeking an alternative. The advice and guidance service that would help the young person to find a suitable option and re-engage would be able to authorise payments if the young person was actively engaged in seeking an appropriate alternative option. This would include for example attending guidance appointments and interviews at college, completing application forms, and attending 'taster' courses. If the young person was not fulfilling this requirement, financial support payments would be stopped – in the same way that EMA payments are currently stopped when a young person does not fulfil their attendance requirements.

5.26 In developing these proposals we will learn from the Activity Agreement pilots, which are testing different packages of support for young people completing agreed activities, to help identify the most effective model for engaging 16-17 year olds currently not in education, employment or training (NEET). The 2006 Pre-Budget Report announced that we would consider extending these pilots. We will look to ensure that any extension of the pilots contributes to driving down the numbers who are NEET before the introduction of compulsory participation.

13 Middleton, S., et al (2003), *The Evaluation of Education Maintenance Allowance Pilots: Three Years Evidence, A Quantitative Evaluation*. Department for Education and Skills Research Report 499.

We will ensure that the benefits system is aligned with the requirement to participate

5.27 After raising the participation age, it would still be important for the benefits system to continue to support those young people who are most in need but at the same time to be consistent with the expectation that all young people should be in some form of education or training until they are 18.

5.28 Currently 16 and 17 year olds who are estranged from their parents and facing particular hardship may be eligible for benefit, as are 16 and 17 year olds in a few other specific circumstances. Benefits provide an important support function for these young people – and for some of them are conditional on seeking work. If compulsory participation is introduced, we believe that there would still need to be support for similar cases, and will consider the best way of providing this. If conditions are attached to this support in some circumstances, the conditions should require young people to be actively seeking education or training.

5.29 Child Benefit is currently paid to the parents of young people who stay on in education or unwaged training, and we propose this will continue. Likewise, but subject to household income, Child Tax Credits are currently paid to parents. These benefits are designed to help provide support for a young person who continues to be financially dependent on their family. We will explore how we might strengthen the link between this support and the condition that the young person is participating in education or training.

5.30 We will consult on what the right model of financial support would be if participation in education or training is compulsory to age 18. We will look carefully at benefits issues across the UK as this policy develops.

We will explore other incentives

5.31 We will consult on whether there might be other incentives that could encourage young people to participate. For example, some

provinces in Canada have withheld driving licenses from young people not participating in education or training. We will explore and seek views on whether there may be similar incentives that could work in this country, as part of the consultation on this Green Paper.

Every young person will be supported

5.32 If we introduce compulsory participation we will take into account young people's individual circumstances and ensure that everyone receives the right personal support to be able to participate.

We will ensure that all young people are supported to make a good transition to post-16 learning

5.33 Transition from school to post-16 education or training can be difficult for some young people. Often a lot of things change at once: young people may be learning in a different location, in an institution that may be much bigger than they are used to, and where they are treated differently by staff; they may be beginning a new subject which involves new ways of learning; and their friends may be doing different courses in different places. We know that some young people really like the difference from school, but for others it can be a struggle. Making a good transition and a successful start to learning is key to continuing with the course and attaining.

5.34 We know there are effective practices that schools, colleges and other providers are already working together to implement. For example induction into post-16 courses that begins after exams in Year 11 means young people go on their summer break having already made a start and understanding how the new institution works and what is expected of them.

5.35 Transition mentors are another form of effective practice. In this model an adult who has been supporting a young person in school stays with them across the transition, continuing to work with them at the start of

post-16 learning. The mentor is aware of the young person's individual needs and circumstances and can help to resolve any issues that arise with the new provider as well as continuing to support the young person's learning. This provides continuity and an element of familiarity when a lot of other things are changing. A number of areas are already employing this approach – the mentor can be based in the school, college, Connexions service, a local business or the community. We will consider this and other effective practices and look to spread them more widely.

- 5.36** Schools already know a great deal about how to help pupils make a successful transition at key points. A lot of attention has been paid in recent years to the transition from primary school to secondary school and improvements have been made. We know that practices such as induction visits, units of learning that are begun before the transition and continued in the new institution, and effective systems for sharing knowledge about pupils between schools are important. We are seeking to learn the lessons from this work to improve transition at 16.

Young people with SEN will be supported

- 5.37** We must ensure that there is appropriate provision and support in place to enable those with Special Educational Needs (SEN) to continue in learning. This can be a particular issue at the point of transition. The system of support that has been in place stops when the young person leaves school and sometimes there can be a gap before new arrangements are made in the post-16 provider they transfer to. We want to create a better fit between the post-16 and school systems of SEN to promote successful transition for these learners and ensure the right support is in place as soon as possible.
- 5.38** The LSC is consulting on changes to SEN provision in FE and work-based learning post-16, following the recommendation of the

Little Review that it should develop a national strategy for the collaborative delivery of provision for this group of learners. And in relation to schools, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools has been asked to conduct a review of school SEN provision in 2009. We will ask both of these reviews to take account of our proposals to raise the participation age, and will consider their recommendations carefully.

Young people in or leaving care will be supported

- 5.39** Transition at 16 can be particularly challenging for young people in care. Many of them currently move out of care at this age, at the same time as making the transition to a new learning environment. The recent *Care Matters* Green Paper set out what needs to be done to improve the transition into education or training and increase participation amongst young people in care, and ensure that fewer leave care at age 16. We must focus on implementing these changes before introducing a requirement to participate, to make sure that young people in and leaving care can really benefit from the new arrangements and the opportunities available.

We will support all young people to stay in post-16 provision, particularly those facing barriers to participation

- 5.40** Learners are more likely to succeed where teaching and pastoral systems work closely together to focus on achievement. It is inevitable that some young people will encounter problems that interfere with their learning and which might lead them to disengage if not addressed. Young people therefore need access to and good information about support to help them deal with problems that occur. We are working to improve the quality of pastoral support in post-16 provision. As announced in the Further Education White Paper, the Quality Improvement Agency (QIA) will produce new guidance on pastoral support for the FE sector in April 2008. This will be based on pilots in a

number of areas starting this year, which will trial different models of support and identify effective practice.

5.41 Without extra help it can be hard for some young people to take part and succeed in learning. This includes those facing particular barriers or difficulties, such as substance misuse, insecure housing, family problems, or poor mental health. *Youth Matters* set out a programme of reform for young people's services, to ensure agencies work effectively together to provide all young people with the right mix of support and opportunities tailored to their individual needs. By 2008 Integrated Youth Support Services in each local area will bring together:

- Improved IAG to help young people make positive choices about learning and avoid risky activities such as drug taking. This includes supporting parents to help them to raise young people's aspirations and guide their choices.
- Improved opportunities for young people to develop their social and emotional skills through positive activities and informal learning – such as volunteering.
- Better ways through targeted youth support to identify vulnerable teenagers as soon as possible and provide the right support to turn around their lives, stopping their problems from becoming more serious. Youth and community workers, social workers, educational staff, Connexions personal advisers, youth justice professionals and volunteers will work as a team in a range of settings to support vulnerable teenagers, responding to their individual needs. Bringing it all together will be the consistent support of a trusted adult – the young person's lead professional, who will organise the right kind of support and opportunities for them and help them stay on track.

- Ways to enable all young people, but particularly the most disadvantaged, to have a real influence over provision of services and be actively involved in delivery.

5.42 Integrated Youth Support Services will enable the most vulnerable young people to remain in learning, by:

- helping learning providers and employers to identify and respond effectively to young people's needs and know how to draw in extra support;
- bringing a range of support services, advice and guidance services and providers of positive activities to work in and with schools and other learning providers, to address young people's needs, develop their social and emotional skills and help them make positive choices;
- providing a diverse range of positive activities outside school that build skills and attitudes that support learning and young people's wider development; and
- providing a lead professional for young people with multiple needs, to co-ordinate interventions and provide one-to-one support. This includes support during transition at 16 to prevent disengagement from learning.

5.43 If we introduce a requirement to participate in education or training until 18, and a young person being supported in this way drops out of learning, the lead professional will have a central role in re-engaging them. They will have an understanding of the young person's needs, and be able to assess which of these need to be addressed before re-engagement in learning can be successful, and what kind of education provision would be appropriate to the individual's circumstances.

5.44 We want to support teenage parents to engage in learning. This depends on their being able to access childcare and provision that fits their circumstances. Programmes

have to be flexible and teaching personalised in order to cater for a range of different ability levels. Provision also needs to include access to other services, and support to address issues that may otherwise be barriers to engagement. The Sure Start Plus programme has piloted a way of supporting teenage parents through a dedicated specialist adviser, who makes sure that young parents have advice on health, parenting, education and training, housing and benefits. Independent evaluation has shown that where these advisers are based in educational settings, there has been significantly higher participation in post-16 education and training. We have set out our expectation that all areas should provide specialist support for young parents.

- 5.45** The Care to Learn scheme supports childcare costs, with funding paid directly to the childcare provider. This will continue and we will consider what else needs to be done to ensure teenage parents have real opportunities to participate. Of course expectant mothers will need some time off before and after the birth. There would need to be flexibility in this to respond to individual circumstances, and we would need to ensure enough local discretion to allow this. For mothers of compulsory school age guidance sets out that the normal period of time is maximum 18 weeks, but we know that sometimes where good provision is in place they are able to engage earlier than this. For example, within specialist units the expectation is often six weeks. We will consider what guidance we should set for local authorities about this.

Provision for teenage parents in Staffordshire

Newcastle under Lyme College has been running a learning programme for teenage parents for four years at a local Children's Centre, where childcare is provided. The college has established close links to a network of professionals working with teenage parents, who advised on the set-up of the programme and refer young women to it. Participants in the programme study literacy, numeracy and ICT – teaching is provided by a tutor and learning support assistant from Newcastle College and is personalised to reflect the different levels of prior attainment represented in the group. The programme also helps participants access other support services for themselves and their children – a health visitor attends the centre regularly, for example. The programme helps re-engage teenage parents in learning by providing the right support framework, and most participants progress onto further learning at the college's main site, such as level 1 and level 2 vocational programmes and A level courses.

- 5.46** We will explore how best to provide similar support to young people with caring responsibilities, to help them to participate.
- 5.47** Homeless young people should be supported to find an appropriate learning place, but may have other needs that need to be addressed more urgently before they can successfully re-engage. We propose to enable local authorities to exercise discretion to allow for this to happen first. The enforcement system would not be applied as long as the young person was doing what was expected of them to work towards re-engaging in education in a way appropriate to their circumstances.

5.48 We will work with the Youth Justice Board, the National Offender Management Service and the Prison Service to ensure that young offenders in custody receive good quality provision, and support in preparation for release. All 16 and 17 year olds in Young Offender Institutions (YOIs), Secure Children's Homes (SCHs) and Secure Training Centres (STCs) will be expected to undertake some form of education or training, and as far as possible they should be offered a choice of learning opportunities which is consistent with those offered in the community. This should include opportunities for work-related training, in line with our commitment in *Reducing Re-Offending through Skills and Employment – Next Steps* to make prisons increasingly places of work with training where appropriate.

5.49 All young people in custody should receive appropriate support to enable them to re-engage with learning in the community as soon as possible on their release – there should be a plan for their re-settlement that includes a learning and employment plan. As with other young people with barriers to learning, provided they are doing what they are expected to do in order to re-engage, they will not enter the enforcement system. We will make sure they are getting the support they need to re-integrate before there is any question of enforcement.

5.50 Young people serving community sentences will be expected to take part in education or training in the same way as other young people, and we will work with the Youth Justice Board and Youth Offending Teams to make sure this happens.

5.51 Ensuring the right support systems are in place for all young people will mean that they are able to access the opportunities available, stay in learning and benefit from the advantages this brings. We welcome views on whether the measures outlined here are the right ones to ensure everyone could participate in education or training until 18. We will seek the views of young people themselves about what kind of support would help them most.

Do you agree financial support should still be provided to young people from low income households if participation is compulsory?

What would be the right financial support arrangements for young people required to participate to age 18?

Should we consider other incentives, such as withholding driving licences from 17 year olds who are not participating in education or training?

Would the proposals outlined here about support and guidance be enough to ensure that all young people are able to participate, regardless of their personal circumstances?

Chapter 6

Employers playing their part

Summary

The primary responsibility for being engaged in education or training is that of the young person. We also believe that employers can play an important role in helping to make sure that their 16 and 17 year old employees continue to learn.

Young people who are 16 and 17 will still be able to work, as long as they are also engaged in training. We recognise that some young people want to start earning and that they can gain valuable knowledge and skills from employment. But we believe it is important for them to continue learning and achieving too.

Government currently pays for accredited training and will continue to support employers to get their training accredited where it meets requirements. We understand that not all employers, particularly those in small businesses, will be able to develop their own accredited training schemes so we will continue to help employers find training opportunities for their employees through Train to Gain.

Employers who do not want to provide or arrange training for their employees would be required to release young people from work to undertake training. This release would need to be for a sufficient time for their employee to work towards an accredited qualification (around a day a week).

6.1 Government, individuals and employers should share responsibility for improving skills in England. The primary responsibility for education and training of 16 and 17 year olds should lie with the Government and individuals; however, businesses can play an important role with regard to their young employees. We propose that every young person employed full time should be in a programme of learning that will enable them to attain an accredited qualification, studying for at least one day per week.

We will encourage employers to offer jobs with training

6.2 A job with training is a powerful and effective way to engage many young people, helping them to develop skills that relate directly to their chosen career. Many employers already recognise this and the associated benefits of accredited training opportunities for their employees. The role employers can have in the education and training of our workforce has been widely recognised both by policy makers, for example in the Leitch Review, and by industry representative organisations.

6.3 It is essential that we build on existing employer engagement to enable young people to achieve even more and develop better employability skills. This will be best achieved by encouraging employers to offer jobs with training, recognising high quality work-based training and helping employers to access the best accredited training opportunities. Government will continue to

fund accredited training for 16 and 17 year olds, and will continue to engage constructively with business to realise these opportunities.

- 6.4** Where employers want to offer this training themselves, we will encourage and support them to do so. This would be our preferred option for young people who are employed and not in full time education, as it provides them with training that is directly relevant to their chosen career and real working life. Where employers do not want to or are unable to offer training themselves, they would be required to release their employees for a day a week to undertake training elsewhere.
- 6.5** These proposals would not involve additional costs for employers in relation to the training provision. The Learning and Skills Council's existing duty to secure the provision of proper facilities for education for 16-19 year old learners will continue.

We will recognise all good quality work-based learning

- 6.6** We appreciate that many employers already offer good quality work-based learning. We are particularly committed to increasing the number of young people on an Apprenticeship, as we see this as the best way for a young person to combine the benefits of working and training. Already 160,000 young people are following this route and we want to see this figure grow substantially as part of our commitment to deliver an Apprenticeship entitlement from 2013.
- 6.7** Some employers offer training through another form of accredited work-based learning such as an NVQ. We will continue to support employers who are already involved in these routes.

- 6.8** Some employers currently offer high quality training that is not accredited. This training does not count towards a qualification, but does improve the skills of a young person and help to prepare them for life. It is important that this training is recognised in the national system both to give the employer recognition for the quality of their training, and to ensure that the individual can use the skills they have learned in the future. We will work with employers to make sure that where a programme of training is of high quality, such as effective 'contracts of apprenticeship', it is fully recognised. We will also seek flexible and low burden ways to help employers get effective training accredited. The developing Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) will make it possible to accumulate credits towards nationally recognised qualifications, through acquiring and demonstrating skills learned with a particular employer.

The Armed Forces

The challenges facing the British Armed Forces are increasingly sophisticated, demanding personnel who can adapt and develop. The Armed Forces provide opportunities to continue with constructive training and education for all recruits from every level of ability and achievement. They are the largest single supplier of Apprenticeships – in 05/06 alone, 8245 Apprenticeships were completed. Those with few or no qualifications are given the chance to acquire new skills and qualifications that not only prepare them to succeed in their chosen career, but are recognised outside the Armed Forces. While some stages of training and education are conducted in formal training establishments, much of the emphasis is on work-based learning.

Continued overleaf

Sam, a Private in the 1st Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment, joined the Army in 2005 with no qualifications at all. He had poor literacy and numeracy skills, partly as a result of leaving mainstream secondary education at 14 and spending time at a school support unit in Leeds. Since joining the Army, Sam has achieved Entry Level 3 in both literacy and numeracy, which in turn has enhanced his ability to succeed in the very demanding training expected of an infantryman. Sam is now serving in Iraq until April 2007, where the opportunity for support with his educational and training needs continues, as it will throughout his Army career. When he eventually leaves to re-enter civilian life, Sam will be well prepared to make his contribution to the evolving skills base of the UK.

We will provide incentives to encourage employers to train young employees

6.9 Where employers are providing training, we acknowledge that there are costs associated with this and that the employer is offering a valuable opportunity for a young employee to improve their skills and gain a qualification. In recognition of this employer contribution and the inherent value of the training to the young person, employers providing an Apprenticeship are exempted from paying the National Minimum Wage to the young employee. Currently, a rate of £80 per week is allowable, although many employers choose to pay more than this. We will consider whether, where an employer is offering another form of accredited training short of a full Apprenticeship, we should recognise the value of the employer investment in training and the benefit that training brings to the individual.

We will support employers to find the right training opportunity, for them and their employees

- 6.10** We recognise that government will need to support employers to find training opportunities for their young employees which meet their business needs, and which will benefit the young person. To do this, we propose to build on the existing Train to Gain brokerage service to help employers to find training for the young people they employ.
- 6.11** Train to Gain brokers work with an employer to understand the business needs, identify training in the local area that meets these needs, and arrange for this to be delivered in a way that suits the employer. 16 and 17 year olds are not currently excluded from the service, but we would propose that the service should take a more systematic approach to brokering training for this age group if compulsory participation was introduced.
- 6.12** We recognise that some businesses have no experience of providing training leading to recognised qualifications. Although Train to Gain is open to all employers, its brokers already have a particular focus on these 'hard to reach' businesses (defined as those who are not Investors in People and who have not provided any publicly funded training leading to a recognised qualification in the past 12 months). Train to Gain is aiming to engage around 45,000 of these employers in the next two years.
- 6.13** Learning Agreement Pilots, currently running in eight areas, are testing how financial incentives and structured Learning Agreements can help young people who are employed in jobs without training to re-engage in learning. As part of this approach, a Connexions Personal Adviser contacts the young person to see if they would be interested in accredited training, and then contacts the employer to seek their agreement. Suitable training is then identified via the LSC. We will use the findings from these pilots to inform the development of the most effective brokerage service. The

brokerage service would have one contact point, so that employers only deal with one broker.

- 6.14 We will consult on what kind of support and incentives would encourage employers to employ young people and offer training rather than choose not to take on people from this age group.

We will work with business to minimise any potential burdens

- 6.15 Our overarching aim is to help young people improve their skills. Government will work to ensure that the right level of high quality training is available for young people and the primary responsibility for being engaged in education or training is with the young person. Alongside this, we think that businesses can play a positive role in helping their employees to learn and achieve. We will consult with business on ways in which this objective can be achieved while meeting the principles of better regulation.
- 6.16 We want to work with business to determine how employers can play their part. Some potential options are set out in the Regulatory Impact Assessment. This policy would not require all employers to offer training. We accept that some industries and businesses may find it more difficult to offer training, or may be unable to sufficiently realise the benefits of training.

Where an employer is not providing training, we will require them to release the young person

- 6.17 Employers have an existing obligation to release employees requesting time off for training in certain circumstances. If the participation age were extended employers would need to release young people so they could meet their requirement of attending at least a day of training a week on average – a minimum of 280 hours of guided learning over the course of a year. This could be

achieved by having a maximum number of hours that employers can employ young people for. Although some employers may choose to, we would not require them to pay young people for this study leave.

- 6.18 If the education participation age were extended, responsible employers would begin to discuss training obligations and opportunities with employees at the outset of employment. We would expect employers to accommodate reasonable requests for young people to attend their structured training. We would expect the employer to release the young person to undertake this formal learning during the daytime, in the week – to study at a local college for example. A young person could make the choice to study in the evenings if the right provision was available and they wanted to do so, but an employer should not force them to fulfil the training requirement outside normal working hours.
- 6.19 Training would preferably be linked to the young person's chosen career, and the minimum time off should provide sufficient time for a young person to undertake a worthwhile programme of learning – to gain a level 2 qualification for example.
- 6.20 We will also consider how we can introduce incentives to encourage young people who wish to work also to be in education or training. We are interested in engaging with employers to share ideas on the best way of doing this. For instance, we could explore ways for young people to demonstrate they are in training before they start a job. We will consult with employers on their role in this.
- 6.21 Raising the compulsory participation age would affect some employers and sectors more than others. Figures from 2005/06 show that 27% of 16-17 year olds – around 359,000 – were in full time education and working as well, for example at the weekend¹⁴. In comparison, only 6% of young people –

around 79,000 – were engaged in jobs without training and not studying elsewhere. As figure 6.1 shows, of this 79,000, the largest employment sector is retail, accounting for 30% of all jobs without training. However, the retail sector also accounts for 54% of young people who are studying full time and have jobs – a much larger number of young people¹⁵.

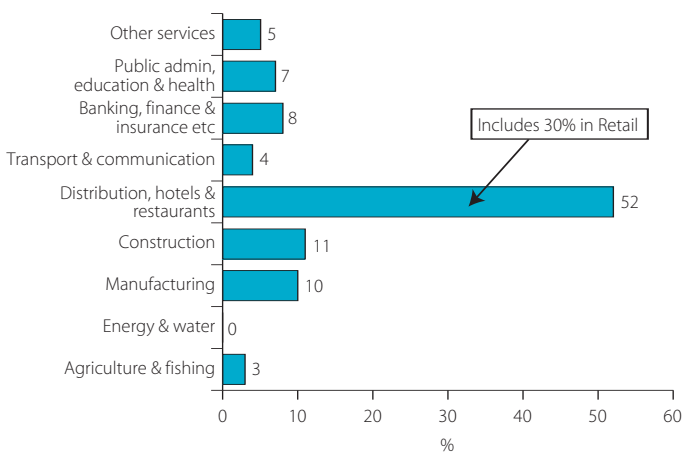
- 6.22 We will undertake further work to increase our knowledge and understanding of the characteristics, needs and aspirations of the group of young people who are currently in jobs without training at 16 and 17.
- 6.23 We will consider whether there could be a role for Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) through their Sector Skills Agreements (SSAs), particularly those in sectors that currently employ significant numbers of young people in jobs without training, to help employers provide training, so that they can continue to offer opportunities to this age group and do not necessarily turn to other forms of labour instead.

6.24 We believe that employers have an important role to play in making sure that young people receive education or training up to the age of 18. Already, many employers are offering Apprenticeships or other training to young people. We want to make it as simple as possible for more employers to do the same. And we will work to ensure that employers can support this policy in the least burdensome way possible.

Would the proposals outlined in this chapter provide employers with the right framework to help make sure all 16 and 17 year olds are participating in valuable learning, including those who want to learn as they work?

Given the benefits of a better skilled workforce, what responsibilities should employers have to encourage young people to participate in education and training?

Figure 6.1: The proportion of the jobs without training group that works in each sector



Chapter 7

Making sure that young people participate

Summary

Of course, we want young people to participate in education or training voluntarily. Previous chapters have set out how we will make sure the right provision is available and young people are offered the right support. But if this duty is to have the impact we want we will need to be clear that it can be enforced if necessary.

A high quality, accurate registration system will enable local authorities and their guidance service providers to know what all young people in their area are doing and find out if they drop out.

When a young person drops out and the training provider has not been able to prevent this or reengage them, the provider will let the guidance service know. Guidance professionals will get in touch with the young person immediately and help them to find an alternative place and resolve any issues there may be. If the young person still does not engage they would be given a final chance to fulfil their duty voluntarily.

If they still do not participate at this stage, we propose that the young person would be issued with an Attendance Order specifying the provision they must attend, where and when. This would be a civil, not a criminal, process. Only on a breach of this Attendance Order would there be a question of sanctions through either a civil or a criminal process.

- 7.1 Effective local implementation will be essential to raising the participation age. That begins, of course, by making sure that the right provision is available in each area, is well taught in good facilities, and by making sure that all young people have the guidance and support that they need to take advantage of this provision. Equally essential is making sure that the planning of provision is systematically informed by what young people want and that local systems are capable of identifying and meeting the needs of each young person.
- 7.2 Making sure that there are such systems in each area will be important in putting in place the right courses and the right individualised support. It can also be the basis for an effective system of enforcement. We have seen from other examples internationally that a willingness to enforce an increased participation age is an important part of successful implementation – but we also want to make sure that the focus is on meeting the needs of individuals so that they can and do participate and benefit, not on punishment.

We will make sure that local systems which identify the needs of young people are used to plan provision

- 7.3 In every area of the country, considerable effort is being put into identifying where young people currently are and what they are doing (whether studying, working or disengaged) from 16 onwards, and to

understand pre-16 what they want to progress onto. This information is being collated and used to organise provision in each local area, with a view to making sure that the right opportunities are being made available to each young person. It is also used as the basis for guidance to the young person about what they could do next. This work is key to our work to drive up participation and reduce the number of young people who are Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET).

7.4 The system that is currently being used to gather this information is operated by Connexions and called the Client Caseload Information System (CCIS). Responsibility for this will transfer to local authorities as part of the transition of Connexions, and we will be transferring funding of £476m per year to local authorities to deliver support and guidance services. If we introduce compulsory education or training to 18 we will continue to make sure local authorities are properly resourced to deliver the new requirements.

7.5 We will look to build on CCIS to create a comprehensive information system to ensure that we have full information on the education and training experiences, needs and wishes of every young person. This will ensure that providers and local authorities can offer the best possible information, advice, and guidance to young people. It will enable the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to plan provision in each local area so that there are enough places on the courses that young people want to take. It will also help guidance professionals to spot when a young person has dropped out of education or training so that they can contact the young person and help them to re-engage. We will keep the functionality of this system under review to ensure that it can deliver what is required. We will also look to other data collection systems to ensure that data is shared effectively, that we do not place excessive data collection

burdens on providers and that we do not ask for the same information more than once.

- 7.6** The information recorded by this system will include, amongst other things:
- where each young person is studying or training and on what course;
 - what other programmes of learning the young person might have engaged in;
 - contact details of the young person so that they can be followed up if they drop out;
 - notification that a young person has dropped out of learning; and
 - what action has been taken to re-engage each young person.
- 7.7** All of this information is already gathered about young people in many cases, but coverage is not yet universal, and not all this information is gathered on a statutory basis, nor shared well between providers and areas.
- 7.8** Before completing Year 11, young people's choices, applications and offers are captured either through contact with schools, colleges, the LSC, or through direct contact with the young person, and entered into the CCIS. This is central to the delivery of the September Guarantee, which will be in place in every area of the country from this September. This aims to guarantee an offer of learning to every young person by the end of the September after they complete Year 11. To deliver this, guidance services need to know which young people have not applied for, been offered or accepted places, and which have not turned up to places they have accepted. And the LSC needs information on young people's preferences to help to inform provision planning.

September Guarantee in Coventry

The Coventry September Guarantee has been successful in ensuring that every Year 11 student receives an offer from a local provider. Begun four years ago, and originally led by the Connexions Service, the approach now also involves the LSC, local authority, and learning providers.

Essentially, the September Guarantee is a tracking process. The Connexions Service helps pupils in Year 11 to choose what to go on to post-16 – a process facilitated by the local 14-19 electronic prospectus. This choice is logged, and followed up until an offer of a place from a provider is confirmed. This information also helps the LSC and the local authority ensure that they are offering the right provision at the right levels. The September Guarantee has contributed in 2006 to a 2.5% increase in the number of young people continuing in school or college.

7.9 We will need to make sure that this information system covers all young people, and that it is kept up to date, so that young people's learning activities can be accurately tracked. In particular, the system will need to know if young people drop out of their education or training programme.

7.10 A key duty will therefore be placed upon providers to inform the system as soon as a young person drops out. This duty will apply to schools, colleges, work-based learning providers, and employers where they are providing training. This will enable swift intervention and re-engagement. This is essential for our existing ambitions to increase participation and reduce the numbers who are NEET – evidence suggests that the sooner a young person is contacted after dropping out, the more likely they are to re-engage. The LSC is currently consulting on how to introduce this duty.

Young people who drop out will be given support to re-engage

7.11 Young people drop out for a variety of reasons, and need advice and support to re-engage. Providers and local authorities should, and already do, help young people to understand their options, and provide tailored support according to the specific needs of each young person.

7.12 We recognise that there are particular groups of young people who may be more vulnerable to the factors that can lead to a young person dropping out. We must make sure that these groups are properly supported, and Chapter 5 sets out our proposals in more detail. Additionally, the individual circumstances of every young person need to be taken into account, so that advice and guidance can be tailored to their needs.

7.13 Where young people show signs of disengagement, encounter personal problems that interfere with their learning, or are at risk of dropping out of education, the first step of course is for the provider to attempt to resolve the issues through learning support and pastoral systems. Where a range of different learning programmes are offered, for example in a larger FE college, the provider will attempt to re-engage the young person in an alternative course.

7.14 Every provider will have an attendance policy. These will vary between different providers, but will include a clear statement of what is expected of every young person enrolled with a provider. In particular, they will explain how a young person should report absence, what would be regarded as an acceptable reason for absence, and what action the provider will take in cases of unauthorised absence. They will also tell the young person how to get help if there are any problems with a course, or personal issues. In larger providers, this may be a central learning support unit, or it might be a named member of staff. Each provider will develop their own attendance policy and

we will provide examples of good practice that they may decide to draw upon. We propose that attendance policies should be checked as part of the normal inspection arrangements for each provider. Naturally, as is currently the case with compulsory education up to 16, there will be legitimate reasons for absence, such as illness.

Managing attendance at Preston College

The college recognises that some students lead chaotic lives, and can sometimes find it difficult to attend courses due to issues such as financial problems, fragile mental health, lack of confidence, disrupted previous education or behavioural difficulties.

The college has developed an electronic reporting system which brings together electronic register data and performance/progress information. The reports and the data are a focal point for progress reviews, helping tutors identify issues and discuss progress and attendance with students.

The college has also set up a dedicated Pastoral Care team which has developed close links with personal tutors, Heads of Provision, student counsellors and external agencies, to support young people. The personal tutors use registers, reports, progress reviews and tutorials to identify 'at risk' students, referring them to the Pastoral Care team, who can then intervene, mentor the students, and offer and broker support. Sometimes temporary intervention enables students to access appropriate support and successfully address issues. Other students require multi-agency, longer-term support.

During 2005/06, over 180 'at risk' students were referred to the Pastoral Care team. By the end of the year, 144 students had stayed on courses, improved attendance and achieved. For 2006/07, the team has developed closer links with the Additional Learning Support team so that students with learning difficulties are supported effectively.

- 7.15** If a provider is unable to engage a young person, or if the young person refuses to attend, the provider will be required to inform the local information system that the young person has dropped out. The local authority's guidance service will then contact the young person and try to find a place on a new programme of learning.
- 7.16** As soon as the guidance service is made aware of a young person dropping out, they will make contact. The young person will be invited to a meeting to talk through other programmes of study that might be suitable, and to try to address any issues which might have contributed to the young person dropping out in the first place. The local authority will make sure that any potential barriers to participation have been addressed, including helping the young person to apply for financial support, responding to any SEN issues, and making sure that any personal factors are addressed. The personalised nature of the local information system will allow the local authority to offer targeted advice and support, which is sensitive to an individual's circumstances.
- 7.17** Active encouragement and practical support to re-engage will be provided. This will include for example working with the young person to: identify their needs and preferences; encourage them to make a choice; help them complete application forms; ensure they are submitted; and support them to attend interviews. Where Connexions currently has targets to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), the guidance service in future might have targets relating to the re-engagement of young people who drop out, or there might be targets for improving attendance as there currently are in schools, pre-16.

- 7.18** This support process will of course need to be matched by increased flexibility in the way provision is organised, as we would not want a young person in this situation to have to wait until the following September to start a new course. Having courses available to start in January or Easter is already important now, before any extension of compulsory education, in our efforts to increase participation and reduce the number of young people who are NEET. We know that some providers are already successfully offering flexible start dates on a wide range of programmes and will consider urgently how we can encourage more to do so.
- 7.19** This flexibility will also be important to make sure that young people whose families have to move location, including those from traveller communities, for example, can continue to participate. Similarly it will be central to making appropriate provision for migrant young people – if introduced, a duty to participate until 18 would apply to everyone resident in England, so would apply to 16 and 17 year old migrants in the same way that new arrivals are bound by other laws. By 2013 all vocational qualifications will be unitised and part of a credit and qualifications framework. This will make it much easier to recognise achievement when people move location – they will be able to carry the credit from completed units with them and continue to take further units elsewhere.

Flexible start dates at City of Sunderland College

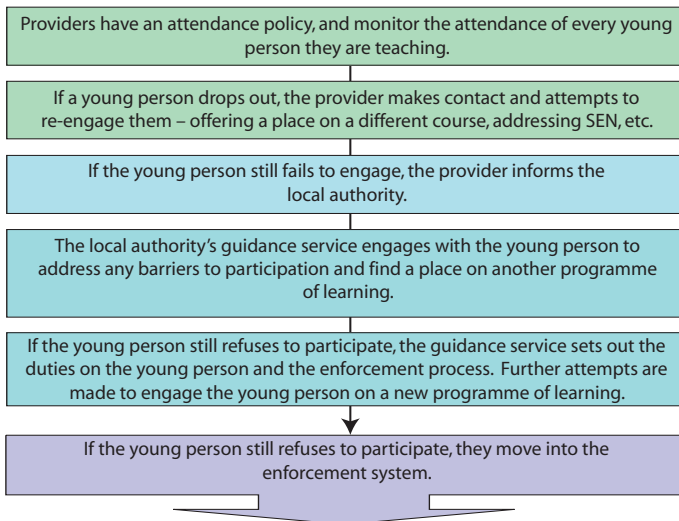
The City of Sunderland College, working with the LSC, has been successful in engaging learners in January and at Easter, on programmes including Art & Design, Brickwork, Catering, Engineering, Hairdressing and ICT. These are accompanied by a robust tutorial, enrichment and wider key skills programme.

The college has worked very closely with Connexions in arranging this provision. The young people have a variety of backgrounds. Some did not take up any type of employment, education or training on leaving school, while others have dropped out of other learning programmes or short-term employment.

On leaving school Kayleigh started an apprenticeship in business administration, but dropped out in November and then found seasonal temporary work until just before Christmas. She attended Connexions and found out about the opportunities to start at City of Sunderland College. Kayleigh decided to come to the college, feeling it was her only option at the time, but now she is really glad she took the chance to be learning again. She says, 'I would recommend it to anyone'.

- 7.20** If a young person continued to refuse to engage when there was nothing preventing them from doing so, we would expect the local authority to make sure the young person understood their duty to participate, and explain the consequences of continued non-compliance. This would include informing a young person that financial support will be withdrawn if they refuse to re-engage. If a young person had been offered and accepted a learning place and was simply waiting for the course or placement to begin, the registration system would record this and they would not of course enter the enforcement system.

7.21 We will consider how we could best use the intervening time before introducing the new requirement to test out in more detail how this model will work in practice.



7.22 A range of different forms of provision will be needed to accommodate young people who will not be able to engage in school or college, such as those who were excluded from school in Key Stage 4 or who have had to leave a post-16 programme of learning due to unacceptable behaviour. Some of this would be work-based provision, and we think there would be an important role for voluntary sector providers here, as many of these already specialise in provision targeted at the hardest to engage young people. This kind of provision might involve a significant element of personal development, as part of a programme that enables achievement and progression. This provision would be one thing that could be specified in an attendance order but would not only be for those on such orders and would not be the only thing that could be specified in an order. We will explore ways in which we can adjust funding mechanisms to help voluntary providers focus on progression to further learning as well as delivery of qualifications. We do not propose to extend the remit of Pupil Referral Units to include the post-16 sector.

Fairbridge

Fairbridge is a national charity that supports young people outside education, training and employment to re-connect with formal learning. The young people it supports often have low-self esteem and chaotic lifestyles which may mean that they find it difficult to engage in learning programmes and sustain commitment.

The charity combines individual support with challenging learning experiences to build self esteem, raise aspirations and develop a range of personal, social and life skills. Despite working with an extremely challenging client group, around half of the 16-18 year olds involved progress into further learning a year after starting their programme.

Catherine, aged 17, arrived at Fairbridge in 2005 having not engaged with formal education for over two years. She lacked qualifications and the confidence to return to the classroom or college. Having been out of education for so long, she had lost touch with friends and became increasingly isolated. As a result, she found Fairbridge difficult at first but soon warmed to the informal environment.

Fairbridge gave Catherine a safe place to be and the opportunity to meet new people. She also engaged with a range of courses offering her practical challenges and learning experiences from cookery to drama. All these courses were part of a personal development plan and Catherine was delighted when her achievements were formally recognised through an ASDAN gold award. Fired up by this success she has recently enrolled on a NVQ work placement in childcare. She comments: *'I hated school, but Fairbridge showed me that it was really important to get some qualifications under my belt. If I hadn't been at Fairbridge I wouldn't have gone back to college – they helped me to make a new start'*

We will enforce the duty

- 7.23** We will expect every young person to participate. Young people will be able to choose from a broad range of provision and we will make sure that they are well-informed about the routes available so that they can make good choices. We will provide financial and additional support to those who need it. We believe that, with this combination of choice, funding, and support, there will not be significant numbers of young people who refuse to participate.
- 7.24** But we also believe that if we introduce a requirement to participate, we will need to be clear that the duty could and would be enforced if necessary. International evidence from other countries that have extended compulsory participation suggests that if there is no intention ultimately to enforce the requirement, as has been the policy in some US states and provinces in Canada, it has only a small effect. In Western Australia, however, where a clear enforcement system was set out, comprising different levels of fines for young people, parents, providers and employers, participation has increased from 80% before compulsion to 98% afterwards. Setting out a clear enforcement system seems to be important in making a new requirement have the desired effect on behaviour.

Attendance officers in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands full time education or training is compulsory until the end of the school year in which a young person is 16, and part time education or training is compulsory until the end of the academic year in which a young person is 17. The law is currently being changed to make full time education or training compulsory until age 18.

If a young person who should be in education is absent for more than three days in the same week, the director of their educational institution must inform the *gemeente*, similar to a local authority here. The local authority's attendance officer then contacts the young person to identify whether there are barriers to participation that need to be addressed, and to discuss with them and their parents how to re-engage them in learning. The attendance officer can exercise their discretion in applying the requirement, depending on individual circumstances. Until a young person is 15 their parents can be fined; from the age of 15, young people who refuse to participate can also be fined. School and college principals can also be fined if they do not notify the authority when young people drop out.

We will introduce an enforcement system for young people

- 7.25** It will be important for the enforcement process to continue to attempt to re-engage the young person in education or training, and we would want to make sure that, as far as possible, we avoided criminal penalties for young people.
- 7.26** We propose that, if a young person continued to refuse to participate, despite the efforts of providers and the local authority to help and support them onto a programme of learning, they could be issued with a new type of civil Order called an Attendance Order. The process of issuing an Attendance Order would be initiated by the local authority. We will

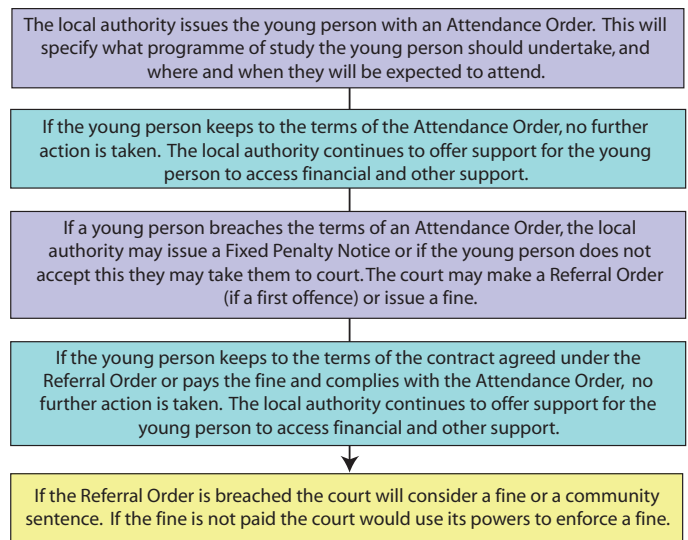
consider exactly what the involvement of the local authority and the civil court should be in this process. We want the process to be quick and not to be costly, but to maximise re-engagement and provide a sufficiently strong deterrent. We would not propose to specify precise timescales for this process but allow local discretion to respond to individual circumstances.

7.27 The Attendance Order would specify exactly what was expected of a young person. It would state where, when, and how frequently a young person should attend. This judgement would be initiated by a local authority attendance officer, who would seek advice from the guidance caseworker or lead professional who had been dealing with the young person, to ensure that the provision specified in the Attendance Order would be appropriate to the young person's aptitude and needs. In drawing up an Attendance Order the authority would have discretion to order attendance beyond the minimum – for example, specifying full-time attendance rather than one day a week. This might help to deter some from waiting until they are issued with an Attendance Order before engaging.

7.28 We want to make sure that if Attendance Orders are made they are followed. This requires some kind of sanction for breach of the Order. One way of doing this is to propose that breaching the terms of an Attendance Order would be a criminal offence and subject to prosecution and an appropriate penalty. This would mean a criminal penalty for breach of a civil Order. However, provision could be made for the young person, on breach, to accept a Fixed Penalty Notice instead of prosecution.

7.29 The offender would have the choice of paying the fixed penalty, or challenging it in court. An FPN that was neither paid nor challenged could be registered as an unpaid fine and enforced via the criminal courts. A young person who breached an Attendance Order,

but would not accept a FPN, would be prosecuted in the youth court. The court may be able to make a Referral Order provided that the general conditions for Referral Orders were met (for instance this would have to be a first offence) or impose a fine. If a Referral Order is imposed, the young person will meet a Youth Offending Panel to agree a contract containing an appropriate intervention designed to address the behaviour which led to the court appearance.



7.30 Breaching a Referral Order or not paying a fine will lead a young person further into the youth offending system. We expect that very few, if any, young people would reach this stage of the enforcement process, particularly in light of the support and guidance arrangements we have set out, and a significant proportion of these young people are likely to have other concerns and issues that may have already brought them within the criminal justice system.

7.31 Of course, we recognise that putting a young person into the youth justice system is not a good outcome. This is why it is absolutely essential to create a system that will support and engage a young person, and will provide ways to help them overcome barriers to participation. At the same time, we think it will be important to be clear that we are serious

about enforcing the requirement if necessary. We are very clear that a young person would only find themselves subject to criminal proceedings if they had determined to ignore the requirement to participate, not if they had unaddressed barriers preventing them from participating.

7.32 An alternative approach to the Attendance Order with the breach arrangements described above would be for the Attendance Order to be enforced through non criminal measures. Following breach of an Attendance Order, a civil penalty notice could be served on the young person requiring payment of a financial penalty, with the right to be heard in a civil court if the young person disagrees with the notice. The notice would be enforceable in the civil court in the event of non payment. Other civil or administrative sanctions might also be capable of being triggered in the event of non compliance.

7.33 Views are invited on the feasibility of civil and administrative sanctions, and on whether criminal sanctions or civil and administrative sanctions should be pursued on breach of an Attendance Order.

7.34 The enforcement system would need to be capable of proceeding quickly, so that it did not last longer than the requirement to participate, but we would not specify timescales for each stage, allowing local authorities discretion to respond to individual circumstances.

Parents must support young people to comply

7.35 This is different to the duties that apply during the years of compulsory schooling, where the parent of a child is held responsible for ensuring attendance. We believe that once a young person moves beyond compulsory school age, they should take responsibility for their attendance. The overwhelming majority of parents will want to support their children to engage. In a few cases, parents may be part of the problem.

7.36 We would expect parents to encourage and facilitate their child's participation, and if there is evidence that a parent of a young person is helping them to break to law (for example, by employing a 16 or 17 year old full-time in a family business without accredited training), it should be possible to hold them accountable as well. As part of the Respect Action Plan, Family Intervention Projects have been developed in 50 local authority areas, and from March 2007, we will be training over 1000 practitioners to deliver a parenting programme and one-to-one support in these areas, working with the parenting experts who have been appointed since November 2006 in 77 local authority areas. This support should ensure that more parents are more effective in supporting young people to engage.

Employers will help to support the duty on young people

7.37 The primary duty would be on the young person to participate. We would not hold employers responsible for young people's attendance at training. We would expect the local authority's advice and guidance service to use the registration system to monitor what young people are doing and act when they drop out (following notification from the provider). We think that the employer should be informed when a young person drops out of education or training, so that they can help to re-engage the young person. There will be no formal requirement here, but an employer is often seen as a respected source of advice by a young employee and could play an important role in helping a young person to re-engage.

7.38 The vast majority of employers are keen to help to ensure that young people develop the skills needed to be productive in the future. This is why we are committed to supporting employers to offer jobs with training. Those who choose not to do so would be under a duty to release 16 and 17 year olds for education or training elsewhere. We would not expect to be required to take significant action to enforce this or other related duties on employers. Only in extremely rare cases – for example, where an employer has simply denied time off or where an employer and a young person collude to mislead the system – would we expect action to be taken.

7.39 We will keep the overall burden on employers as low as possible, while also ensuring a robust system. We will investigate whether there is scope to build on existing checking and enforcement arrangements, to minimise additional burdens. We would expect simply to ask any employer who had been found breaking the law to put the situation right. In any rare case of an employer failing to respond to such a request, a formal enforcement notice would detail exactly what action needed to be taken and by when. Only where such a notice was ignored would there be a fine, but we would expect very few if any cases to reach that point.

Do you agree that there should be a system of enforcement attached to any new requirement to participate, used only as a last resort?

Is it right that the primary responsibility for attending at age 16 and 17 should rest with young people themselves?

Do you agree that if a parent of a young person is helping them to break the law, it should be possible to hold them accountable as well?

Is the process outlined here the right way to re-engage young people and enforce the requirement?

On breach of an Attendance Order, should criminal sanctions be pursued, or civil/administrative ones?

Glossary

Accredited qualification – a qualification listed on the National Qualification Framework. The proposed Qualifications and Credit Framework will replace this in due course.

Apprenticeships – a structured programme of training which gives young people the opportunity to work for an employer, learn on the job and build up knowledge and transferable skills. A successful Apprentice will achieve an occupationally specific qualification alongside qualifications in basic skills and in a broader vocational area.

BSF – Building Schools for the Future. The major capital programme renewing school buildings in England.

Care to Learn – a scheme to pay the costs of registered childcare for teenage parents. More information can be found at <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/caretolearn/>

CCIS – Client Caseload Information System. An operational database used by Connexions to manage its workload.

Connexions – the national provider of information, advice and guidance for 13-19 year olds.

Diplomas – new qualifications for 14-19 year olds that will give young people a real alternative to traditional learning styles by offering an imaginative, high quality blend of general education and applied learning. The first Diplomas will be taken from September 2008, and by 2013, all 14 Diploma lines will be available across England.

EMA – Education Maintenance Allowance.

E2E – Entry to Employment: a level 1 learning programme for young people aged 16-18.

Foundation Learning Tier (FLT) – this will replace and rationalise the current complex range of provision and qualifications below level 2 to create a coherent system of units and qualifications (drawn from the proposed Qualifications and Credit Framework) that are easier for learners and employers to navigate, and are focused on skills for life and work, subject and vocational based learning and personal and social development.

GDP – Gross Domestic Product.

IAG – information, advice and guidance.

International Baccalaureate (IB) – a broad, general qualification at advanced level.

JWT – jobs without training.

Leitch Review – In 2004, Government commissioned Lord Leitch to undertake an independent review of the UK's long term skills needs. The Review published its interim report *Skills in the UK: the long term challenge* in December 2005. It committed the Review, in its final report, to identify the UK's optimal skills mix for 2020 to maximise economic growth, productivity and social justice, set out the balance of responsibility for achieving that skills profile and consider the policy framework required to support it. The final report of the Leitch Review of Skills, *Prosperity for all in the global economy – world class skills*, was published on 5th December 2006.

LSC – Learning and Skills Council for England.

NET – Not in education or training.

NEET – Not in education, employment or training.

NVQ – National Vocational Qualification.

NMW – National Minimum Wage.

OECD – Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

QCA – Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

QFC – Qualifications and Credit Framework.

QIA – Quality Improvement Agency.

SEN – Special Educational Needs.

September Guarantee – a guarantee of an offer of a place in post-16 learning to every young person who wants one by the September after they complete Year 11. This will be introduced across England from September 2007.

SSC – Sector Skills Council.

Targeted Youth Support – coordinated delivery of action to help young people who have additional needs that cannot be met by universal services and who are at high or growing risk of poor outcomes, such as substance misuse, offending, or dropping out of education and training.

Train to Gain – a service to help businesses and employees get the training they need. It offers employers impartial advice and easy access to quality training, matching training needs with training providers and ensuring that training is delivered to meet employer's needs. The free skills brokerage service will engage with employers, to provide advice and source any training provision employers may need at all levels.

Work-based learning (WBL) – Government supported training: Advanced Apprenticeships, Apprenticeships, Entry to Employment (E2E), and NVQ learning.



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