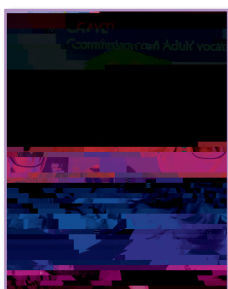


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## Foreword



Theodore Roosevelt

Theodore Roosevelt

A central strand of the government's reform plan for FE and skills, the establishment of an independent Commission on Adult Vocational Teaching and Learning to identify and promote outstanding practice.

It has been a great privilege to be appointed chair to this independent Commission which has drawn on expertise from all the component parts of the skills system: large and small employers, colleges, training providers, academic partners, learned societies, trade unions, the armed forces and students/apprentices/employees. To reflect the diverse and dynamic nature of our sector we have not taken evidence in Whitehall but have gone out to see the work in situ and to draw lessons from practice to theory. We have seen genuinely world-class provision in a whole range of settings, much of which challenged the initial assumptions of commissioners. What we have consistently found is that the best provision is collaborative in nature, what we are calling the **two-way street** between providers and employers, and has a **clear line of sight to work**. It is about relationships not structures, joint responsibility not just vertical accountability.

Our report also makes a contribution to a more fundamental debate as to what we value and hold in high esteem in the world of work. The continuing recession brings a new urgency to this debate. We must ensure that our skills system produces a home-grown pipeline of skilled individuals, who can design, develop and deliver the sophisticated technology and high quality products and services which will enable the UK to compete at the highest level. Such productive work helps build identity and self-esteem, and promotes the wellbeing of communities.

A single report of this kind cannot do justice to the over 250 items of evidence we have received, and the many contributions through our seminars and other events. This report is therefore not the end but the beginning of a process. We have made a series of recommendations which we believe will significantly strengthen our system into the next decade and beyond. Rather than select case studies to illustrate certain points, we intend to share with you – in a supplementary paper to follow – the rich and powerful submissions we have received that have influenced the key recommendations in this report.

I would like to thank all the commissioners who have freely given of their time and energy to support the work of the Commission as we moved between Preston, Bridgwater, Derby, London and Salisbury Plain. I am particularly grateful for the leadership and support given by our Vice Chairs, Graham Schuhmacher MBE, Head of Development Services at Rolls-

## Introductory message

As the title says – ‘it’s all about work’! I welcome the emphasis this report puts on vocational education and training being about work – and providers and employers sharing responsibility for delivering high quality vocational education and training. As an employer, I am in the skills



**Nigel Whitehead**  
Group Managing Director, BAE Systems plc  
UK Commissioner

McKinsey and Company (2007)<sup>1</sup>

This principle was the starting point for our Commission, charged with exploring adult vocational teaching and learning. A focus on excellent teaching and learning lies at the heart of the Commission's work, and our work has reinforced its importance – that is why we start with the principles, characteristics and distinctive features of adult vocational teaching and learning. But what became clear as we went about our work is that the context within which vocational teaching and learning sits cannot be ignored and so our report also considers the key enabling factors that must be in place for excellent vocational teaching and learning to flourish.

This is a report about the future, not about the past, and the role of vocational teaching and learning in supporting individuals, businesses and communities to grow and succeed. A return to prosperity will depend on being much more ambitious about the capacity of individuals, large and small employers, and vocational teachers and trainers to raise their game. Strong advanced economies need high quality vocational education and training (VET) that can respond to and prepare us all for changes in work, advances in knowledge and technology, and the increasing demand for people with higher levels of skill. And it

## It's about work...

Excellent adult vocational teaching and learning

learning, but are engaged at every level in helping to create and deliver excellent vocational



### Four characteristics

Reflecting on our visits, seminars, and evidence submitted to the Commission, we believe there are four characteristics on which excellent programmes of adult vocational teaching and learning depend:

1. a **clear line of sight to work** on all vocational programmes;
2. 'dual professional' teachers and trainers who combine occupational and pedagogical expertise, and are trusted and given the time to develop partnerships and curricula with employers;
3. access to industry-standard facilities and resources reflecting the ways in which technology is transforming work;
4. clear escalators to higher level vocational learning, developing and combining deep knowledge and skills.

Provision that demonstrates these characteristics stands a good chance of being vocational and effective. But if these characteristics are missing or weak, then, in the Commission's view it will not be vocational, and is unlikely to be good.

### Eight distinctive features of vocational pedagogy

Flowing from the four characteristics on which excellent vocational teaching and learning depend, the Commission has identified eight distinctive features of adult vocational teaching and learning:

1. that through the combination of sustained practice and the understanding of theory, occupational expertise is developed;
2. that work-related attributes are central to the development of occupational expertise;
3. that practical problem solving and critical reflection on experience, including learning from mistakes in real and simulated settings, are central to effective vocational teaching and learning;
4. that vocational teaching and learning is most effective when it is collaborative and contextualised, taking place within communities of practice which involve different types of 'teacher' and capitalise on the experience and knowledge of all learners;
5. that technology plays a key role because keeping on top of technological advances is an essential part of the occupational expertise required in any workplace;
6. that it requires a range of assessment and feedback methods that involve both 'teachers' and learners, and which reflect the specific assessment cultures of different occupations and sectors;
7. that it often benefits from operating across more than one setting, including a real or simulated workplace, as well as the classroom and workshop, to develop the capacity to learn and apply that learning in different settings, just as at work;
8. that occupational standards are dynamic, evolving to reflect advances in work practices,

## **B: Enabling factors**

In addition, there are four enabling factors (which we describe in more detail in chapter 3) that

## Chapter 1: Introduction

[The challenge for vocational teaching and learning professionals is]

to create a learning environment that is both challenging and supportive, and that enables learners to develop the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the workplace.

Nancy Hoffman<sup>4</sup>

We are living in a period of profound economic turbulence. Establishing a sound economic footing for future generations will require us to value and develop, as never before, people with the creative ability to combine technical, professional and personal skills. Businesses are operating in increasingly demanding and dynamic environments – their needs for skills and knowledge change with every new technology, every new product, and every significant new customer who comes along. And with job growth likely to be greatest in small companies, we need a strong VET system to support those businesses, and to recognise and nurture entrepreneurial talent.<sup>5</sup>

Changes in demography and technological advances are also impacting on the ways we work and learn. Working lives are being extended, different patterns of work are emerging, and younger people are taking longer to settle into adult careers.<sup>6</sup> Vocational learners are not passive recipients – they bring their own experiences, knowledge and expectations of life and work to the process of vocational learning. And technology increasingly enables learning to be different – personalised, collaborative, and 24/7, including across time zones.

In order for adult vocational teaching and learning to respond to and prepare us all for changes in work, advances in knowledge and technology, and the increasing demand for people with higher levels of skill, we need a VET infrastructure that combines quality standards with a locally responsive system; one that enables us to build on the expertise we have, to make it more relevant, more visible, and replicate it more widely.

That is why this independent Commission is so important. It was established as part of the government's strategy to enable the FE and skills sector to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Excessive control and interference have characterised developments in the last decade, to the extent that they now risk limiting people's energy, confidence and ambition. We have welcomed the opportunity to break from the culture of being 'done to', and encourage government to continue the more collaborative approach to accountability that it has started, including the move away from central policy initiatives to determine the role of the FE and skills sector.

<sup>4</sup> Hoffman, N. (2011) *Creating a Culture of Learning*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

<sup>5</sup> ECORYS (2013) *Skills for the Future 2012: A Skills Strategy for the UK*, London: ECORYS; O'Leary, D. and Wind-Cowie, M. (2012) *Everyone's Business*, London: DEMOS.

<sup>6</sup> Furlong, A. (ed) (2009) *Working Lives: A New Agenda*, London: Routledge;

UKCES (2010) *Skills for the Future: A Skills Strategy for the UK*, London: UKCES.

<sup>7</sup> Plans for a new Guild for the learning and skills sector are currently being developed. See <http://www.feguild.info/index.htm>

<sup>8</sup> Holt, J. (2012) *Learning to Earn: The Apprenticeship Revolution*, London: BIS.

Richard, D. (2012) *The Apprenticeship Revolution*, London: BIS.





For learners, employers and providers, this approach is more likely to ensure provision that demonstrates our four characteristics of excellent adult vocational teaching and learning:

1. a **clear line of sight to work** on all vocational programmes;
2. 'dual professional' teachers and trainers who combine occupational and pedagogical expertise, and are trusted and given the time to develop partnerships and curricula with employers;
3. access to industry-standard facilities and resources reflecting the ways in which technology is transforming work;
4. clear escalators to higher level vocational learning, developing and combining deep knowledge and skills.

A key factor in enabling this re-focusing on curriculum development and programme design is our recommendation for a **core and tailored approach** to vocational qualifications, which we consider in chapter 3.

## Vocational pedagogies

We need to strengthen and make more visible the distinctive pedagogies of vocational teaching and learning. At its best, vocational teaching and learning exhibits the characteristics of good and outstanding general teaching and learning practice. Ofsted has been supportive of the Commission, and in their evidence summarised the thirteen characteristics of outstanding provision of all kinds from the new Common Inspection Framework.<sup>14</sup> We accept all of these, but in addition, define some distinctive features of excellent adult vocational teaching and learning.

Crucially, vocational teaching and learning is dependent on the real work context. Tests may be assessed, exams passed, but the ultimate goal is the ability to perform in the workplace, and to continuously raise standards by deepening and connecting knowledge and skill. This can be helped or hindered by the way the workplace is organised, as well as the classroom, and by workplace supervisors as well as teachers and trainers.

In the best examples we have seen, teachers and trainers situate theory in practical examples. They embrace and put to use the 'live' knowledge that apprentices and trainees bring from their workplaces into the classroom and workshop. The best vocational teaching and learning combines theoretical knowledge from the underpinning disciplines (for example, maths, psychology, human sciences, economics) with the occupational knowledge of practice (for example, how to cut hair, build circuit boards, administer medicines).<sup>15</sup> To do this, teachers, trainers and learners have to recontextualise theoretical and occupational knowledge to suit specific situations.<sup>16</sup> Both types of knowledge are highly dynamic. So individuals need to carry on learning through being exposed to new forms of knowledge and practice in order to make real the **line of sight to work**.

<sup>14</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>15</sup> Young, M. (2008) *Building a Better Education*, London: Routledge.

<sup>16</sup> Guile, D. (2010) *Learning to Work*, Rotterdam: Sense.

Vocational teachers and trainers have to try and replicate in the learning environment the way people are assessed and given feedback on their performance in the workplace, so that their learners build the resilience they will need to cope and move on. This means enabling their learners to cope with tough criticism of the sort you might receive in a busy kitchen, performing arts venue or hairdressing salon. It also means learning how to evaluate your own work and developing strategies for improvement. And it means learning to judge your colleagues' performance through peer assessment, give constructive feedback, and to be assessed as part of a team, not just as an individual.

The Commission has identified eight distinctive features of adult vocational teaching and learning:

1. that through the combination of sustained practice and the understanding of theory, occupational expertise is developed;
2. that work-related attributes<sup>17</sup> are central to the development of occupational expertise;
3. that practical problem solving and critical reflection on experience, including



## Sectors, stages and levels

All occupations (even within sectors) have their own vocabulary, rules, histories and traditions. Apprenticeship is the classic model of vocational learning, which is why it is understood around the world and transcends occupational boundaries and hierarchies (for example, doctors, lawyers, artists, musicians are trained in this way).<sup>18</sup>

Other forms of vocational teaching and learning use some of the elements of apprenticeship, but vary according to circumstance. In the best provision, the features described above combine in different ways in each stage and level of vocational learning:

- Initial vocational formation (full-time college/workshop) – includes ‘situating’ the curriculum in its occupational context, the use of simulated environments to create work conditions, access to up-to-date equipment, and keeping teachers/trainers’ vocational expertise up-to-date.
- Apprenticeship – combines job-specific training, vocational education and everyday work experience – challenges include: establishing an effective relationship between on and off-the-job components (does the off-the-job curriculum map onto the workplace curriculum?); the quality of the workplace environment; and the capacity of the workplace to provide exposure to a sufficient range of tasks.
- Continuing vocational formation and the further refinement of expertise – key factors

Vocational learning has always involved technologies – some are age old, some are being invented as this report is written. The challenge for vocational teachers and trainers is that the speed at which businesses and learners will adapt to and adopt new technologies is outstripping the way that teaching and learning changes. And this is happening on three fronts: in information technology, which is increasingly used to communicate across time and space; in learning technologies, for instance supporting blended learning and digital simulations; and in workplace technology, which supports and transforms vocational practice.

We need to bring together technological advances in the workplace with those in teaching and learning to drive forward leading edge vocational practice. The best vocational provision the Commission has seen has been up-to-date with, and had access to, new technologies and equipment being used in the workplace. This is a further dimension of the **two-way street** – sometimes employers will be leading the use of new technologies, other times colleges and

Knowledge Lab to further support the continuing professional development of vocational teachers and trainers in order to build their pedagogical knowledge of the optimal use of learning technologies. We also propose the further exploration of approaches to organising and sharing digital content for vocational teaching and learning.<sup>20</sup>

We have been particularly struck by the potential of digital simulations to complement real work experience and to offer a pedagogically valuable way for vocational learners to practise and be assessed safely. They require significant initial investment and ongoing resources if they are to keep pace with changes in work, learning programmes and technologies. But they provide a powerful interactive and adaptive pedagogy and once developed, require less teacher time. However, the time and expertise needed for designing and testing such resources is considerable – greater than the time teachers and trainers spend on preparation for classes. This has implications for the way VET professionals' work is organised, which we consider in chapter 3.

But it also has implications for the **two-way street**, and, potentially, for the supportive role of government. The investment needed to develop effective powerful digital simulations is beyond the reach of most single VET providers. However, the Commission believes there could be significant advantages and economies of scale to joint investment in, and co-ordination of, the development of shared resources across the VET system. It would enable us to harness what employers are already doing to extend leading edge vocational practice through the application of technology. This might be the VET equivalent of massive open online courses (MOOCs) in academic learning. And the development of digital simulation (or haptics) resources and software to support vocational teaching and learning could become an export earner for us too – as part of the government's education sector industry strategy.

The Commission regards this as a very serious problem. It is time for a concerted effort to ensure everyone involved in publicly-funded VET programmes can achieve the level of English and maths they need to progress within their occupational fields and to change jobs in the future. In order to achieve this, we need to create a cadre of specialist English and maths tutors in every college to be available as a resource shared between all vocational education



- Establish a National VET Centre that includes a new research and development capacity focused on vocational pedagogy and the development of VET more widely. The VET Centre would also take responsibility for the development of a regional 'Network of Centres' to showcase and experiment with new ideas for excellent vocational teaching and learning, and to act as focal points for employers and other partners to evaluate its impact.
- Collaborate with the London Knowledge Lab to further support the continuing professional development of vocational teachers and trainers in order to build their pedagogical knowledge of the optimal use of learning technologies.
- Develop the role of technology in VET by exploring the feasibility of national investment in, and co-ordination of digital simulation (or haptics) resources and software to maximise the potential for UK-wide VET gain, but also as a potential export.
- Create a cadre of specialist English and maths tutors in every college. An intensive programme of training must be funded and organised to develop specialist tutors with the specialist pedagogies required to support young people and adults and to support vocational teachers and trainers. Each cadre would then be available as a resource shared between all VET providers within a specified locality.
- Revise and strengthen the education and training arrangements for VET teachers and trainers – from initial teacher training through to continuing professional development, to develop 'dual professionals' – with a new priority on professional updating.
- With specific reference to the **Teach Too** scheme, the Guild is asked to work with teacher educators in HE and employers to establish a feasibility study and pilots to explore the potential to encourage occupational experts from industry to become involved in vocational teaching and learning.



Health and social care employer



The Commission's enquiries have highlighted the importance of understanding, valuing and supporting the sophisticated practice of vocational teaching and learning. But it became clear as we went about our work that the context within which vocational teaching and learning sits cannot be ignored. There are four key enabling factors that must be in place for excellent vocational teaching and learning to flourish.

This chapter therefore explores how adopting the **two-way street** and a **core and tailored approach** to the design of vocational qualifications; and supporting strong leadership, management and governance of VET, and a collaborative approach to accountability would create a cultural and systems shift to strengthen our VET arrangements.

### The two-way street

The **two-way street** is about the relationship between colleges and training providers, and employers. In the best examples the Commission has seen, employers are not just customers of vocational teaching and learning, but are engaged at every level in helping to create and deliver excellent vocational programmes.

This may seem an obvious statement, but it is fundamental to good vocational teaching and learning. There was a time when every curriculum area in a college would have industry representation from employers and sometimes unions too. The importance of the **two-way street** is that it is meaningful, based on providers' and employers' recognition that there is added value in working together. Each makes a distinctive contribution for mutual benefit and to nurture individuals' talents. The best colleges and training providers demonstrate clearly to employers the added value of working with them. And fully involve (employers the added value of working with them)

employers demonstrate clearly to providers the added value of working with them.

We have already made recommendations to: reinstate employers' involvement in vocational curriculum development; support opportunities for vocational teachers and trainers to regularly update their occupational expertise; and to introduce **Teach Too** – a new scheme to encourage working people to teach their occupation for a few hours a week.

We also ask government to consider the levers it has available to drive employer demand and engagement, including investigating how public funding for vocational teaching and learning can be made dependent on (a) employers acting as sponsors for vocational learning programmes; and (b) colleges and providers demonstrating a **clear line of sight to work** on their vocational programmes.

However, the diversity of employers, colleges and training providers – large and small, means that **two-way street** approaches will vary, depending on a whole range of factors. £Commissioners have seen a spectrum of the ways in which the **two-way street** can operate in practice:

- employer representation on groups responsible for the governance of VET, in colleges and training providers, as the basis for understanding how strategic partnerships can drive skills development and growth in communities;
- through joint vocational course teams that are responsible for curriculum development, programme design, review and evaluation, in order to ensure there is **clear line of sight to work**;
- wherever possible, ensuring that vocational programmes include a substantial, meaningful work placement;
- a range of other activities through which employers can contribute to the **two-way street** and provide **line of sight to work**, including mentoring, running workshops, seminars, demonstrations, and through alumni networks. The key is to make it meaningful so that the mutual benefit is clear and valued;
- through local arrangements (which may link to the **Teach Too** scheme) to encourage working people with vocational expertise to go into their local college or training provider and teach their trade or profession for a few hours a week;
- vocational teachers and trainers working in collaboration with employers on projects that add value to their organisations: developing new products, processes or markets, or providing technical support to small or start-up firms;
- joint investment in research and development centres, and leading edge technology, to support the development and application of deep vocational knowledge and skills, and encourage entrepreneurial ambition;
- through the development of new financing models in which colleges, training providers and employers are clear about the core level of vocational learning service that can be





## **Strong leadership, management and governance of VET**

Whatever the purpose of an organisation (for example whether it is a college, a training provider, a care home, an aerospace manufacturer or a jewellery maker), workforce development is central to the functioning and development of its business. Leading and

One consequence of the increasing sophistication of VET professionals’ roles is the need to rethink the way their work is organised. The time needed to develop curricula, talk to employers, review learners’ progress in personalised ways, and develop digital resources and blended pedagogies means that the traditional model of class contact hours as the basis of work organisation is no longer sufficient on its own. Modelling the way work is organised in other workplaces, would suggest a stronger emphasis on team working for vocational teachers and trainers. This could include for example, having English and maths experts within vocational teams, rotating a lead employer engagement person for the team on an annual basis, or the development of learning programmes based on multi-disciplinary projects for which multi-disciplinary teaching teams are needed. This wouldn’t always be appropriate, but could be a way to encourage innovation. We need to support the role of leaders and managers in rethinking how work is organised so that vocational teachers and trainers can maximise their impact with learners and employers.

Strong leaders of colleges and training providers also have a clear sense of the overall role and purpose of their organisations to serve employers and the local community.<sup>33</sup> For college leaders and governors in particular this focus on service to the community is underpinned by a tradition of responsible stewardship of public assets for the benefit of businesses and local people. Our proposal in chapter 2 to develop a cadre of specialist English and maths tutors in every college to be available as a shared resource within a given locality is one example of the role that colleges can play as public assets. Others include opening up access to specialised resources and equipment, and encouraging community use of college libraries and IT facilities.

However, there is not always an easy fit between being a genuine community partner and responding to the latest policy directives or funding and regulatory requirements. The Commission has witnessed how strong leaders, with their boards and governors, provide anchorage against the continuous buffeting from the policy environment, but a clear message to the Commission from employers, leaders of colleges and training providers, and teachers and trainers has been the need for fewer policy initiatives and a framework of collaborative accountability, in which institutions demonstrate they have the partnerships and the capacity to innovate and improve.

### **A collaborative approach to accountability**

We need to build a framework for a collaborative approach to accountability to deliver the very best VET that we have described. As we said earlier in our report, excessive control and interference have characterised developments in VET, to the extent that the Commission has heard they now risk limiting people’s energy, confidence and ambition. We welcome the more collaborative approach to accountability introduced in the 2016-2020 funding cycle.

<sup>33</sup> Sharp, M. (2011) *A College of Excellence: A Report for the National Institute for Research in Vocational Education and Training*, Leicester: NIACE.

will be valued in the labour market. Ian Stone argues that governments need to deploy a range of levers and incentives, particularly with micro businesses and SMEs, but there is no magic bullet.<sup>34</sup>

In our section on the **two-way street**, we have asked government to consider the levers it has available to drive employer demand for, and engagement with, adult vocational teaching and learning. We also recognise the UK Commission for Employment and Skills' ongoing work to identify and develop levers and incentives that most effectively stimulate greater employer ambition and investment, including the Employer Ownership Pilots.<sup>35</sup> We believe raising employers' ambition for, and expectations of, a strong and responsive VET system is essential to securing their contribution to a collaborative approach to accountability.

### Direct accountability to the local economic community

All organisations in receipt of public funds must be properly accountable for them. The Commission believes that accountability for excellent adult vocational teaching and learning should, in the first instance, be to the local economic community. We need to shift from the old model of vertical accountability to funding bodies, awarding bodies and inspectorates, to a framework based on horizontal accountability, directly to employer and community partners within frameworks of local economic development currently supported by local enterprise partnerships. The same is true for provision supported through the Employer Ownership Pilots. Whatever way the public money flows, the issues are the same.

Robust governance is critically important here. If accountability is not considered sufficiently robust, or colleges and training providers are not seen to be responding effectively to priority VET needs, the primary focus should be on strengthening direct governance arrangements including, as we have suggested, through employer representation on groups responsible for the governance of VET. The Commission has heard how too many intermediate bodies inhibit the effectiveness of the direct **two-way street** approach and, thereby, risk limiting the effectiveness and impact of adult vocational teaching and learning.

Alongside strengthening approaches for collaborative accountability, therefore, we need to review the arrangements for intermediation in VET, and ask whether they enable or restrict the concept of a VET system operating as a **two-way street**.

### Regulation

We recognise the earned autonomy that is already built into the system, and acknowledge the need for further improvement in order for more colleges and training providers to be able to take advantage of this. In relation to inspecting adult VET, we ask Ofsted to consider the distinctive features of vocational teaching and learning identified in our report as an additional lens through which to review vocational provision. Over time, the Commission also asks Ofsted to consider giving VET partners a role within future inspection frameworks, in order to support Ofsted inspectors to develop their understanding of the distinctive features of vocational pedagogy.

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<sup>34</sup> Stone, I. (2010). *Employer Ownership Pilots: A New Model for Vocational Training*, PRAXIS No.5, London: UK Commission for Employment and Skills.

<sup>35</sup> The Employer Ownership of Skills pilot is a competitive fund open to employers to invest in their current and future workforce in England. Employers are invited to develop proposals that raise skills, create jobs, and drive enterprise and economic growth. Government will invest in projects in which employers are also prepared to commit their own funds in order to make better use of combined resources. It is run by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills.

## Recommendations

In order to enable excellent adult vocational teaching and learning to flourish, we make the following recommendations:

- Adopt the concept of a VET system working as a **two-way street**, not further education and skills operating as a separate 'sector'.
- Test the spectrum of ways the **two-way street** can operate in practice – VET partners to collaborate to review their current arrangements for collaboration and include systematic plans to adopt the concept of a VET system working as a **two-way street** within their future arrangements.
- Consideration by the Adult Vocational Qualifications for England review of a **core and tailored approach**, alongside other options, to enable vocational qualifications to meet the shared aims of employers and individual learners.
- Support the development of VET leaders and managers to enable them to both lead the process of improvement of vocational teaching and learning, and build the **two-way street**.
- Encourage government and its agencies to continue the more collaborative approach to accountability introduced in the *Education and Skills Funding Review*. In particular to:
  - consider how government can use the levers it has available to drive employer demand and engagement, including investigate how public funding for vocational teaching and learning can be made dependent on (a) employers acting as sponsors for vocational learning programmes; and (b) colleges and providers demonstrating a **clear line of sight to work** on their vocational programmes;
  - support VET partners to develop stronger arrangements for evaluating the impact of vocational teaching and learning with employers, individuals and community partners;
  - review the role of intermediaries and where they add value or create barriers;
  - ask Ofsted to consider the distinctive features of vocational teaching and learning identified in our report as an additional lens through which to review vocational provision;
  - encourage Ofsted to consider giving VET partners a role within future inspection

## Chapter 4: Recommendations

This final chapter draws together all our recommendations from chapters 2 and 3, and makes proposals about who should take each of them forward.

### 1. Adopt the two-way street

Adopt the concept of a VET system working as a **two-way street**, not further education and skills operating as a separate 'sector'. The **two-way street** is about genuine collaboration between college and training providers, and employers.

Test the spectrum of ways the **two-way street** can operate in practice – VET partners to review their current practice and include systematic plans to adopt the concept of a VET system working as a **two-way street** within their future arrangements.

**Who should take this forward?** This is a recommendation for everyone – individual colleges and training providers, the new Guild, employers, trade unions supporting workforce development, the UK Commission for Employment and Skills through its work on stimulating demand, and government by supporting other recommendations such as **Teach Too**.

### 2. Develop a core and tailored approach to vocational qualifications

Consider the development of a **core and tailored approach** to enable vocational qualifications to meet the shared aims of employers and individual learners. There should be a nationally specified core and a tailored element to meet local demand.

**Who should take this forward?** We ask that the Adult Vocational Qualifications for England review considers this recommendation as part of its work.

### 3. Revise the education and training arrangements for VET teachers and trainers including introducing Teach Too

Revise and strengthen the education and training arrangements for VET teachers and trainers – from initial teacher training through to continuing professional development, to develop 'dual professionals' – with a new priority on professional updating.

With specific reference to the **Teach Too** scheme, establish a feasibility study and pilots to explore the potential to encourage occupational experts from industry to become involved in vocational teaching and learning.

**Who should take this forward?** A role for the new Guild, working with teacher educators in HE and employers in taking forward **Teach Too**, as part of its overall proposed remit to define, develop and enhance the professionalism of the FE and skills sector workforce and its providers.

Leaders and managers should have a lead role in supporting the development of vocational teachers and trainers with a particular emphasis on ensuring that occupational expertise is the leading characteristic for recruitment, continuing professional development and reward.

For teacher educators in HE, a role to review their programmes against the characteristics and distinctive features of adult vocational teaching and learning.

#### 4. Reinstate employers' presence and influence across VET providers starting with curricula panels

This is very much about the **two-way street** and ensuring a **clear line of sight to work**, for example ensuring that every curriculum area in a college or a training provider should have at least one employer sponsor, and preferably an employer panel involving trade unions.

**Who should take this forward?** This will involve individual VET providers, employers and trade unions working together.

#### 5. Establish a National VET Centre to take responsibility for research and development of VET

Establish a National VET Centre that includes a new research and development capacity focused on vocational pedagogy and the development of VET more widely. The VET Centre would also take responsibility for the development of a regional 'Network of Centres' to showcase and experiment with new ideas for excellent vocational teaching and learning, and to act as focal points for employers and other partners to evaluate its impact.

**Who should take this forward?** This will require a shared commitment from colleges and training providers, cutting-edge employers, the new Guild, and the government to DVET CeSTJEence tleo8(etechnol)18(J.uld rtneands 1 Tf11 0 0 18o704ETBT/T11 1 Tf11 0 0 11 87.5355 544.0 and to act a710ocal points for employers and other partners to evaluate its impact. om Labpartneands 1

The exploration of the feasibility of national investment in, and co-ordination of, the development of digital simulations to support vocational teaching and learning requires government support.

#### **8. Create a cadre of specialist English and maths tutors in every college**

An intensive programme of training must be funded and organised to develop specialist tutors with the specialist pedagogies required to support young people and adults and to





## It's about work...

Excellent adult vocational teaching and learning

The Commission's remit has led it to focus on 'vocational' teaching and learning at the boundary

## Appendix B: Ofsted Common Inspection Framework

- U The very large majority of learners consistently make very good and sustained progress in learning sessions.
- U All staff are highly adept at working with and developing skills and knowledge in learners from different backgrounds.
- U Staff have consistently high expectations of all learners.
- U Drawing on excellent subject knowledge and/or industry experience, teachers, trainers, assessors and coaches plan astutely and set challenging tasks based on systematic, accurate assessment of learners' prior skills, knowledge and understanding.
- U They use well-judged and often imaginative teaching strategies that, together with sharply focused and timely support and intervention, match individual needs accurately. Consequently, the development of learners' skills and understanding is exceptional.
- U Staff generate high levels of enthusiasm for participation in, and commitment to, learning.
- U Teaching and learning develop high levels of resilience, confidence and independence in learners when they tackle challenging activities.
- U Teachers, trainers, and assessors check learners' understanding effectively throughout learning sessions. Time is used very well and every opportunity is taken to develop crucial skills successfully, including being able to use their literacy and numeracy skills on other courses and at work.
- U High quality learning materials and resources including information and

## Appendix C: Commissioners

**Frank McLoughlin CBE**

Chair, and Principal, City and Islington College

**Fiona McMillan OBE**

Vice Chair, formerly Principal, Bridgwater College, and former President of the Association of Colleges

**Graham Schuhmacher MBE**

Vice Chair, and Head of Development Services, Rolls-Royce

**Bill Alexander**

Head of Training and Skills, National Skills Academy – Railway Engineering

**Richard Atkins**

Principal, Exeter College

**Professor Mariane Cavalli**

Principal, Warwickshire College

**Rob Hammond**

Managing Director, Direct Training Solutions Ltd

**Professor Matthew Harrison**

Director of Education, The Royal Academy of Engineering

**Sue Hill**

Head of Teaching and Learning, West Herts College

**Gary Hughes**

Director of Curriculum and Developments (Adults), Hull College

**Colonel Carolyn Johnstone**

Ministry of Defence

**Roshni Joshi**

National Union of Students

**Martina Milburn CBE**

Chief Executive, The Prince's Trust

**Shauni O'Neill**

National Apprentice of the Year 2011, Transport for London

**Jacqui Ramus**

Practice Development Manager, St Monica Trust

**Mike Smith**

Curriculum Development Manager, Eagit Training

**Alastair Taylor**

Quality Advisor, Landex

**Tom Wilson**

Director, unionlearn

**Dereth Wood**

Director of Operations, learndirect



## Appendix D: Commissioners' meetings/visits

**June 2012** – BAE Systems, Lancashire – an opportunity to meet apprentices, their tutors,



CAVTL  
Commission on Adult Vocational Training