Thematic Overview:

The Thematic Overview of VET in England and the Devolved Administrations of the UK

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UK ReferNet

With extensive peer review, commentary and co-writing by the organisations involved in the UK ReferNet Steering Group.


This document provides an overview of a series of thematic studies published as part of the Cedefop / ReferNet knowledge management project eKnowVET. This document aims to provide background information and statistical data regarding social policy development in relation to initial vocational education and training. It situates the UK education and training system within a broad political, social, economic, and labour market framework.
**ReferNet** is an international network established by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP). It aims to meet the growing demand for comparable information across Europe in Vocational Education and Training (VET).

ReferNet provides a decentralised approach to information exchange, and is based on national consortia in participating countries, made up of VET stakeholders. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) is the UK coordinator. The UK network is funded by CEDEFOP and the Department for Education and Skills.

Network activities are focused on documentation and information collection, exchange, and reporting on developments in VET policy and research.

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- Department for Education and Learning, Northern Ireland (DELNI)
- Joint International Unit, DfES and DWP (JIU)
- Learning and Skills Council (LSC)
- Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA)
- National Academic Recognition Information Centre for the UK (NARICUK)
- National Reference Point for Vocational Qualifications (UK NRP)
- Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA)
- Scottish Executive
- Scottish Qualifications Agency
- Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA)
- Trades Union Congress (TUC)
- Welsh Assembly

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Please note the intended form of presentation for this document is electronic and online; to accommodate this, the following report has been written to a strict template. The reader is asked to bear this in mind when encountering repetitions in content or lapses in continuity.
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The United Kingdom (UK) is a union of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The UK has a devolved system of governance; there are major differences between the systems of Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales and England. This overview reflects the similarities and differences found in the UK’s devolved education and training systems, although there is insufficient space to describe these in full. Scotland, in particular, has an education system with a long history of independence from arrangements found in other parts of the UK.

The Scottish Parliament and Scottish Executive (the administrative organisation for the Scottish Parliament) have wide powers for social policies, including education and training. The Assembly for Wales and the Northern Ireland Assembly also have extensive powers for education and training; currently, due to the political situation, the Assembly in Northern Ireland is suspended.

To understand the overall framework for training in the UK, three factors should be borne in mind:

- Major decisions about workplace training and human resources development are in the hands of employers. The long tradition of ‘voluntarism’ still runs through many aspects of the governance of training today. Employers, for example, tend to oppose levies for training;
- Devolution of power to the ‘home internationals’ of Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and England within the UK has created devolved administrations for education and training, notably since 1997. There is divergence as well as similarity in the UK’s national systems;
- Government has become proactive in developing VET policy – to raise levels of qualification in the population, to increase employability, and to improve the competitiveness and productivity of the UK economy.

Universities, further education colleges and to a lesser extent schools are major training providers, and in the main are publicly funded. Large numbers of private sector training companies exist.

The population is ageing. There are now more people aged over 60 than children under 16. Northern Ireland has the youngest population in the UK with children under-16 representing 24 % of the population compared with 20 % in England and Wales and 19% in Scotland. These dramatic demographic trends have major implications for education and training - for example, the need to raise knowledge and skills levels among the young, to encourage an ageing work force to adapt and train, and to meet the needs of a large and active elderly population.
Projections place the UK population at just under 65 million by 2025. Two-thirds of this increase is attributable to new inward migration. There has been an increase in net inward migration from 28,000 in 1991 to 87,000 in 2000.

0103 - ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS

The table below shows output by industry. It illustrates how the current prosperity of the UK depends heavily on the service sector, such as finance, real estate, retail, and communications, primary and manufacturing industries are in relative decline.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Hunting, Forestry and Fishing</td>
<td>17,272.49</td>
<td>12,097.79</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>-11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining and Quarrying</td>
<td>24,029.69</td>
<td>37,676.22</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>205,210.25</td>
<td>224,797.78</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity, Gas and Water Supply</td>
<td>22,880.25</td>
<td>23,066.68</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>48,451.34</td>
<td>69,476.04</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale and Retail Trade</td>
<td>109,530.42</td>
<td>156,732.49</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels and Restaurants</td>
<td>26,793.94</td>
<td>43,099.01</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>-3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport, Storage and Communication</td>
<td>75,367.12</td>
<td>103,129.94</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>46.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Intermediation (***)</td>
<td>58,850.65</td>
<td>67,577.91</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustment for Financial Services</td>
<td>-34,079.62</td>
<td>-57,790.76</td>
<td>-4.5</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real Estate, Renting and Business Activities</td>
<td>174,768.34</td>
<td>308,040.72</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>37.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration and Defence</td>
<td>58,361.81</td>
<td>61,796.93</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>50,217.34</td>
<td>77,303.41</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Social Work</td>
<td>61,730.87</td>
<td>90,149.88</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Services</td>
<td>39,998.60</td>
<td>66,208.27</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Gross Value Added</td>
<td>939,384.94</td>
<td>1,283,365.24</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The employment rate for the UK for 2001 was 74.6% with unemployment at 4.9%, and approximately 5m people of working age were claiming a key benefit. England enjoyed the highest employment rate 75.3% and the lowest unemployment rate 4.7%. Scotland had the second highest employment (69.9%), and Wales the third highest (67.7%); both had unemployment at 5.9%. Northern Ireland had 64.4% employment, and 6.3% unemployment. For the UK as a whole in 2001 the ILO unemployment rate was 5.3% for men and 4.2% for women.

Overall, there has been a dramatic growth in the employment of women, although some of this growth is in part-time working. On average, male earnings till exceed women's earnings, in spite of equal opportunities legislation. According to the labour force survey the growth in employment in women between 1991 and 2000 was primarily in management and professional occupations and in personal services.

Between 1995 and 1999, although government expenditure on education and training in the UK remained more or less constant, in real terms expenditure on education in the UK declined from 5.1% to 4.5% as a proportion of GDP. This trend has now been reversed, a trend likely to continue with the government’s long-term spending plans: 5.0% in 2001/2 and a forecast of 5.3% for 2003/4.

### 0104 - Educational Attainment of Population

Educational attainment of the population aged 25-64 by ISCED level, % (2002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL OF EDUCATION</th>
<th>ISCED 0-2</th>
<th>ISCED 3-4</th>
<th>ISCED 5-6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EU-15</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ISCED 0-2: Pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education
ISCED 3-4: Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education
ISCED 5-6: Tertiary education

Source: Eurostat, Newcronos, Labour Force Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of the population, aged 18 to 24 years having left education and training with a low level of education (2000, 2002)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Low level of education: pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education - levels 0-2 (ISCED 1997)

Source: Eurostat, Newcronos, Labour Force Survey
Concerns over low levels of productivity in the UK (linked to skills in the workforce), standards in education, low levels of participation in training, and high differentials between social groups caused the newly elected Labour Government in 1997 to develop strategy focused on 1. raising standards and 2. inclusion. This agenda crosses all areas of Government action: education and training policy, social policy, and fiscal and monetary strategy. The standards agenda is focused on education and training, and is being implemented through targeting government funding on areas that raise achievement. It is supported by inspection, by target setting at institutional and local levels and by outcome-oriented funding and performance measures.

In England, commentators highlight tensions between raising standards and ensuring inclusion of all groups in education, training and work. They also suggest that many structural reforms, such as attempts to increase participation in apprenticeships and to establish national occupational standards, have been compromised by an essentially voluntarist approach.

The underlying direction of VET policy has remained broadly in line with that established during the 1990s:

- National targets;
- Government emphasis on qualifications development;
- Employer organisations re-iterating their view that employers should be responsible only for the continuing professional development of workers and that Government should be responsible for initial vocational education and for low-skilled groups.

Policy and reforms are developing at a rapid pace. Alongside this relative continuity, there are significant government initiatives. These include the formation of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), which has 47 local offices in England, and the network of Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) UK wide, underpinned by the Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA).

The Qualifications reform agenda exemplifies the pace of change:

- A National Qualifications Framework (NQF) was introduced in 2000 for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. All VET qualifications are subject to quality control checks for admission to the NQF. The NQF, vocational qualifications and key skills are being reviewed.
- In England, the government sees continuing expansion of Higher Education (HE) as central to lifelong learning, setting a national target of 50% of 19-30 year olds having participated in HE by 2010. The January 2003 White Paper 'The Future of Higher Education' announced that the future expansion of HE would be mainly through two-year work-focused foundation degrees. Higher education funding is being reformed in England. There will also be a marked expansion of higher education in Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- Demanding national targets (not Scotland) have also been set for Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) (level 2 and 3 provision).
- Following the introduction of ‘Curriculum 2000’, the government announced its vision for 14-19 education and training in England. Increased flexibility and
reform of the 14-16 curriculum is planned. In the longer term a transformation of young peoples’ educational experience from 14 to 18 is being considered.

- A strategy for tackling the basic skills deficit. Through the Skills for Life strategy.

**NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK**
The latest objectives and targets for education and training in England are tabulated below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table: Objectives and performance targets for England</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>OBJECTIVE I: SUSTAIN IMPROVEMENTS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise standards in English and maths, so that By 2004 85% of 11 year olds achieve level 4 or above and 35% achieve level 5 or above with this level of performance sustained to 2006; By 2006, the number of schools in which fewer than 65% of pupils achieve level 4 or above is significantly reduced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OBJECTIVE II: TRANSFORM SECONDARY EDUCATION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise standards in English, maths, ICT and science in secondary education so that: By 2004 75% of 14 year olds achieve level 5 or above in English, maths and ICT (70% in science) nationally, and by 2007 85% (80% in science); By 2007, the number of schools where fewer than 60% of 14 year olds achieve level 5 or above is significantly reduced; By 2007, 90% of pupils reach level 4 in English and maths by age 12.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OBJECTIVE III: PUPIL INCLUSION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By 2004 reduce school truancies by 10 percent compared to 2002, and sustain the new lower level and improve overall attendance levels thereafter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OBJECTIVE IV: RAISE ATTAINMENT AT 14-19</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise standards in schools and colleges so that: Between 2002 and 2006 the proportion of those aged 16 who get qualifications equivalent to 5 GCSEs at Grade A* to C rises by 2 percentage points each year on average and in all schools at least 20% of pupils achieve this standard by 2004 rising to 25% by 2006; and the proportion of 19 year olds who achieve this standard rises by 3 percentage points between 2002 and 2004, with a further 3 percentage point increase by 2006.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OBJECTIVE V: IMPROVE THE SKILLS OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS AND RAISE PARTICIPATION AND QUALITY IN POST-16 LEARNING PROVISION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By 2004, at least 28% of young people to start a Modern Apprenticeship by age 22. By 2010, 90% of young people by age 22 will have participated in a full-time programme fitting them for entry into higher education or skilled employment. By 2010, increase participation in Higher Education towards 50% of those aged 18 to 30. Also, make significant progress year on year towards fair access, and to bear down on rates of non-completion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OBJECTIVE VI: TACKLE THE ADULT SKILLS DEFICIT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve the basic skill levels of 1.5 million adults between the launch of Skills for Life in 2001 and 2007, with a milestone of 750,000 by 2004. To reduce by at least 40% the number of adults in the UK workforce who lack NVQ 2 or equivalent qualifications by 2010. Working towards this, 1 million adults in the workforce to achieve level 2 between 2003 and 2006.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The national qualifications framework

The diagram shows examples of qualifications, chosen because they are well known. Many other qualifications will become part of the framework as it continues to grow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of qualification</th>
<th>General qualifications</th>
<th>Vocationally-related qualifications</th>
<th>Occupational qualifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Higher-level qualifications</td>
<td></td>
<td>Level 5 NVQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A level</td>
<td>Vocational A level (Advanced GNVQ)</td>
<td>Level 4 NVQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>GCSE grades A*–C</td>
<td>Intermediate GNVQ</td>
<td>Level 3 NVQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>GCSE grades D–G</td>
<td>Foundation GNVQ</td>
<td>Level 2 NVQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Certificate of (educational) achievement</td>
<td></td>
<td>Level 1 NVQ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

† Responsibility shared with the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education

SCOTLAND

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) differs from the NQF. The SCQF brings all mainstream Scottish qualifications, higher education qualifications and all SQA qualifications including SVQs into a single framework. The SCQF describes qualification levels and their credit value as defined by Scottish Credit Accumulation and Transfer (SCOTCAT) points. SCOTCAT points give all qualifications a common currency. All qualifications in the framework will be credit rated, levelled and quality assured by a recognised organisation. This policy development formally brings vocational and general qualifications into one framework. The SCQF has been developed:

- To help people of all ages and circumstances to access appropriate education and training over their lifetime to fulfil their personal, social and economic potential;
- To enable employers, learners and the public in general to understand the full range of Scottish qualifications, how the qualifications relate to each other, and how different types of qualifications can contribute to improving the skills of the workforce;
- To reflect recent reforms in curriculum and qualifications in Scotland at ISCED levels 1-3. The Scottish Parliament recently undertook an inquiry into lifelong
learning. The report, published in 2002, contains 80 recommendations. The first was for the Executive to develop a strategy for lifelong learning. The strategy ‘Learning through Life: Life through Learning’ was published in February 2003, setting out the five-year plan for lifelong learning, and seeks to consider lifelong learning provision from various perspectives. The report has taken into account the context of the wider UK macro-economic framework and gives the vision for lifelong learning in Scotland (See section 5.1).

### Table: The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework. (*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCQF LEVEL</th>
<th>SQA NATIONAL UNITS, COURSES AND GROUP AWARDS</th>
<th>HIGHER EDUCATION</th>
<th>SVQ5</th>
<th>SCQF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>SVQ5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>Honours degree Graduate Diploma/Certificate</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ordinary degree Graduate Diploma/Certificate</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Higher National Diploma Diploma in Higher Education</td>
<td>SVQ4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Advanced Higher</td>
<td>Higher National Certificate Certificate in Higher Education</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td></td>
<td>SVQ3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Intermediate 2 Credit Standard Grade</td>
<td></td>
<td>SVQ2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Intermediate 1 General Standard Grade</td>
<td></td>
<td>SVQ1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Access 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Access 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Access 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Six Key performance indicators have been identified in Scotland to monitor the achievement of the lifelong learning policies outlined in ‘Learning through Life; Life through Learning’. These are shown in the table below.

### Table: Performance indicators for Scotland

- The reduction in the proportion of 16–19 year olds not in education, training and employment;
- An increase in support to 16–19 year olds from low income families to stay on at school and/or FE college, thereby raising the participation and retention rates of this group;
- An increase in graduates as a proportion of the workforce;
- A reduction in the proportion of the working age adults whose highest qualification is below SCQF level 5;
- A reduction in the proportion of 18–29 year olds whose highest qualification is below SCQF level 6; and
An increase in the proportion of people in employment undertaking training.

One of the changes, which will be implemented, is the merging of the Scottish Higher Education Funding Councils (SHEFC) and Scottish Further Education Funding Councils. The former distributes public money for teaching and research into higher education institutions (HEIs) in Scotland and the latter distributes public money to further education colleges in Scotland. The merger will give greater comparability and transparency in the way that different types of institution and levels of courses are funded in tertiary education.

In general, the devolution of governance in the UK means that the government and institutional frameworks differ between England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales, all of which have extensive autonomy. The institutional framework is complex. The government department responsible for policy on education and training in England (and aspects in Wales and Northern Ireland) is the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is responsible for employment policy. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has a key role in improving productivity and skills.

The National Assembly for Wales has responsibility for education and training in Wales; its education department has recently been renamed as the Department of Education and Training. The Northern Ireland Assembly also has devolved responsibility; the relevant departments are the Department of Education and the Department of Employment and Learning.

For training in England, the national and local Learning and Skills Councils form the link between government and local training provision. Sector Skills Councils are being formed on a UK wide basis, replacing the former National Training Organisations (NTOs). Regions are becoming an increasingly important part of the strategy for achieving economic competitiveness and regeneration, through the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs). In Wales, Community Consortia for Education and Training (CCET) link between the National Council and local learning markets.

For education, the local authorities constitute the intermediate tier of administration between government and schools. Local education authorities (LEAs) are in place in England and Wales, Education Authorities (EAs) in Scotland. In Northern Ireland, education is a central government function and local authorities have a consultative role through the Education and Library Boards (ELBs). The responsibilities of the local authorities have diminished as government has created more central powers (e.g. over the school curriculum and assessment), whilst devolving decisions on such matters as budget management and the appointment of staff to school governing bodies and giving further education colleges independent status.

The regulatory and administrative framework has changed rapidly. The following are important, variously, in the devolved administrations of the UK.

3.1.1. THE QUALIFICATIONS AND CURRICULUM AUTHORITY (QCA)
QCA’s remit covers school curriculum, assessment and qualifications for England only and national vocational qualifications for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. QCA’s remit includes:

- To keep qualifications, the school curriculum and its associated assessments under review and to advise the Secretary of State;
- To quality assure national curriculum tests, external qualifications and awarding bodies;
- To accredit general and vocational qualifications (other than university qualifications) within the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

3.1.2. QUALIFICATIONS, CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY FOR WALES (ACCAC) / AWDURDOD CYMWYSTERAU, CWRICWLWM AC ASESU CYMRU
In Wales, the regulatory authority is Awdurdod Cymwysterau, Cwricwlwm ac Asesu Cymru / the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC). ACCAC regulates all external qualifications except NVQs, which is the sole responsibility of QCA. A large number of schools in Wales have Welsh as the language of instruction.

3.1.3. COUNCIL FOR CURRICULUM, EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT (CCEA)
In Northern Ireland, the regulatory authority is the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), which regulates external qualifications offered to students in full-time education up to the age of 19 except NVQs. CCEA is also an awarding body. QCA, ACCAC and CCEA work with the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) to ensure that vocational qualifications remain aligned.

3.1.4. THE LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL (LSC)
The National LSC audits 47 local LSCs and is the key statutory body that sets strategy and channels funding for all post-compulsory education training in England (except HE). The National LSC and the 47 local LSCs are responsible for strategic planning for all post-compulsory and continuing education and all work-based training in England, except HE. This includes planning and funding further education (FE) colleges and (since April 2002) funding post-compulsory education in schools, and improving work-based learning for young people, workforce development, adult and community learning, guidance for adults and education/business links. The Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA) provides a research and professional development function for the LSC. In Wales, The National Council (ELWa) are responsible for funding, planning and promoting all post-16 education and training with the exception of Higher Education; its functions mirror the role of the LSC.

3.1.5. THE SECTOR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (SSDA)
SSDA took over responsibility for sectoral workforce skills development across the UK in April 2002, and is setting up and managing the new Sector Skills Council (SSC). SSDA’s remit includes: reducing sectoral skills gaps; improving productivity; increasing opportunities for workforce development and learning supply.

3.1.6. REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES (RDAs)
For England, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has lead responsibility for the 9 English Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), established in 1998. Their role is to co-ordinate regional economic development and regeneration in each region in England, to improve their competitiveness and reduce the competitive imbalance that exists within and between regions. RDAs aim to further economic development and regeneration, to promote business efficiency, investment and competitiveness, to promote employment and skills, to contribute to sustainable development. They are also responsible for leading the development of Frameworks of Regional Employment and Skills Action (FRESAs) with regional delivery partners such as the LSC and SSDA. Developed and agreed with partners, FRESAs contain regional priorities and targets for improving the skills base.

3.1.7. SCOTLAND
The Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Executive have full responsibility for education and training in Scotland. Concordats and Working Level Agreements operate to reflect the relationships between the devolved administrations and UK Government Departments in areas of common interest.

THE SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY (SQA)
In Scotland the Scottish Qualifications Authority is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), responsible to the Scottish Executive. It is responsible for the majority of qualifications available in Scotland’s schools, colleges, and learning centres, excluding degrees and some professional qualifications. The SQA both accredits and awards Scottish Vocational Qualifications. However, the SQA is by statute required to clearly separate its accrediting and awarding functions. The SQA, in conjunction with the
Qualifications Curriculum Authority (QCA), is responsible for the development of SVQs and NVQs through the Projects and Standards Approval Group (PSAG). PSAG fund, and approve, the development of vocational qualifications through national occupational standards. Scottish Enterprise (SEn) and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) are Executive sponsored Non-Departmental Public Bodies, which sponsor Local Enterprise Companies (LECs). LECs have responsibility to promote vocational training (and other Enterprise services) to employers and businesses in Scotland, through advice, funding and promotion of Executive sponsored training schemes. The remit of the SSDA covers Scotland.

0302 - LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

No single piece of legislation provides the basis for the legal framework for education and training in the UK. Governance and system development has been regulated in a series of laws, each tackling different aspects of education and training:

The 1944 Education Act established the post-war settlement for education in England and Wales; not, however, for VET. New legislation was a rarity until the 1980s. This act does not apply to Scotland.

1969 Open University established

1987 Establishment in England of National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) to approve the new National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs), set up as competence based qualifications. NCVQ and its activities did not apply to Scotland.

1988 Education Reform Act

The most fundamental legislation since 1944, which:

- Introduced a national curriculum and a compulsory system of summative assessment of young people’s attainment at each key stage of compulsory education (not in Scotland);
- Established Local Management of Schools (LMS), (not in Scotland);
- Removed polytechnics from local authority control.

1990 Enterprise and New Towns (Scotland) Act

- Established Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

1992 Further and Higher Education Act and the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act

- Removed the ‘binary’ divide, unifying polytechnics and universities into a single system of independent, incorporated universities;
- Gave further education (FE) colleges independence, giving them incorporated status.

1996 Education (Scotland) Act

- Established the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) which replaced the Scottish Exam Board (SEB) and the Scottish Vocational Education Council (SCOTVEC).
1997 Regulations (UK)

- Established the **New Deal**, for unemployed people claiming benefit to actively train and seek work.

1997 Schools Standards and Framework Act (England and Wales)

- Encouraged schools to become ‘specialist’;
- Gave more regulatory powers to the Secretary of State;
- Set up education development plans (EDPs) and targets geared to school improvement;
- Merged the previous SCAA and NCVQ to establish the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and, for Wales, established ACCAC;
- Set up Education Action Zones (EAZs) to encourage multi-agency approaches in deprived areas.

1998 The Education (Northern Ireland) Order

- Sets out the arrangements for assessment and pupils performance, performance and management of schools, financing of schools and establishes the Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment.

1998 Teaching and Higher Education Act (England and Wales)

- Requires students to contribute to university fees, on a means-tested basis;
- Entitles employed 16/17 year olds to time off for training.


- Enacted the elected Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Executive giving Scotland legislative powers, the elected Assemblies for Wales and Northern Ireland, giving extensive responsibilities for education and training to the devolved administrations.

2000 Learning and Skills Act (England and Wales)

- Established the Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs);
- Established the Connexions programme, a new advice and guidance service for young people in transition;
- Reformed funding and inspection arrangements, and changed the basis for the approval of qualifications (pre-19 and post-19).

2002 Education Act (England and Wales)

- Secondary schools are incentivised to become ‘specialist’ schools
- Ministers create powers for curriculum innovation;
- Schools enabled to form companies and federations;
Provision made for private companies to bid to set up new schools.

0303 - ROLE OF SOCIAL PARTNERS

The extent of social partnership in the UK is generally limited and it is not a widely understood concept. Traditionally, training in the UK is employer-led on a ‘voluntarist’ model. Nevertheless, stakeholders’ participation in formulating VET is characterised in the different ways that industrial relations operate, through different models and at different levels of formality.

While the public perception of industrial relations is coloured by conflict-based models, there has in practice been a high level of consensus between social partners on the benefits of training. In spite of different approaches and policies on the part of employers and trade unions, particularly over financing of training and degree of control, vocational training tends to be an area in which there is a high degree of cooperation.

Differences occur within the ranks of employers and trade unions between the concerns of representatives at national level and those at local level. This often relates to the tension between broad issues of labour market policy and the specific interests of particular companies or groups of workers.

Three models represent social partnership arrangements in the UK:

- Collective bargaining;
- Consultation;
- Participation in formal structures.

Traditionally, workplace qualification and training were seen as the domain of the employers. In the past two decades, the state has become increasingly involved and there are strong signs that collaboration between employers and employees’ organisations.

Collective bargaining within the qualifications system tends to be limited to mainly localised negotiations on access to training and qualifications, including apprenticeship arrangements. The last two tend to be a feature of training policy at national or sectoral level and the design, development, implementation and evaluation of the system.

At national level, consultation is the primary mechanism. Participation occurs more at sectoral level. All three models include formal and informal mechanisms. These, and different levels of involvement, come into play in different parts of the system: VET policymaking, strategic planning, design, implementation and evaluation.

Union learning representatives have recently been enacted for workplaces. While it remains to be seen how this innovation will operate, it is clear from a number of recent lifelong learning initiatives that trade unions are, increasingly, seen as an important stakeholder in developing workplace learning.
Diagram of the education and training system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland
Diagram: Pathways of VET for Scotland

PhD/DPhil (SCQF level 12)

↑

MDPhil (SCQF level 11)

↑

Masters Degree (SCQF level 11) Postgraduate Diploma (SCQF level 11)

HIGHER EDUCATION

↑

Honours degree (SCQF level 10) Ordinary MA/Bachelor degree (SCQF level 9)

Applicants to HE with Advanced Highers may gain some advanced standing

Applicants to HE with HNC/D may gain entry to 2nd or 3rd year of degree programmes

Applicants to FE enter at level appropriate to qualifications held

FURTHER EDUCATION COLLEGES providing post-school initial and continuing education and training

←

S6 Advanced Highers (SCQF level 7) and/or Highers (SCQF level 6)

Highers (SCQF level 6)

HND (SCQF level 8) HNC (SCQF level 7) SGA’s (SCQF levels 2-7) National Courses: Advanced Higher (SCQF level 7) Highers (SCQF level 6) Intermediate 1-2 (SCQF levels 4-5) Access (SCQF levels 1-3) National Units, (SCQF levels 1-7)

SVQs 1,2,3,4,5 (SCQF levels 4,5,6,8 and 11)

WORKPLACE

←

Applicants to HE or FE enter at level appropriate to qualifications held and/or relevant experience

Age:

16+ S5

14+ S3

12+ S1

P7

P6

P5

P4

P3

P2

P1

Enter primary education at age 5 years

Note:

- the above diagram shows the main qualifications offered in Scotland’s schools, colleges, universities and workplaces.
Scottish qualifications are not generally tied to mode, place or time of study.
National strategies and targets aim to raise levels of participation, attainment and qualification. Successive governments have prioritised diversity, flexibility and choice.

Schooling is compulsory from age 5 to 16 (4 to 16 in Northern Ireland). In the primary phase, children progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 of the National Curriculum. Annual progression is age related. In most areas, transfer to secondary school is non-selective, although schools do not all enjoy the same degree of reputation in their local community. The selective transfer system in Northern Ireland is under review. Lower secondary education comprises Key Stages 3 and 4 for young people aged 11 to 16. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, pupils sit their General Certificate of Education exams (GCSEs), which are publicly recognised single subject awards, at age 16.

Except in Scotland, ‘A levels’ dominate the post-compulsory phase. Students specialise more narrowly than in other countries. The ‘Curriculum 2000’in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland is a partially successful attempt to address this. A national debate is currently taking place on 14 to 19 curriculum and qualifications.

The following should be noted:

- In England, some 7% of young people attend independent, selective fee-paying schools;
- Successive governments have encouraged the development of specialist secondary schools in England – not so in the devolved administrations of Wales and Scotland;
- Raising the status of vocational education and training is an enduring challenge;
- Dropout, school leavers with low qualifications, and basic skills remain key issues.

In Scotland, in 1999, a new system developed under the Higher Still Development Programme was introduced to provide a range of National Qualifications for learners, whatever their abilities or interests. These qualifications can be gained in both schools and colleges. Students aged 16 normally take Standard Grades and/or National Qualifications, either at Access or Intermediate level. The results are recorded on a Scottish Qualifications Certificate (SQC). A new system has been implemented for all pupils in the fifth and sixth year of secondary education (post 16). Five levels of study are offered to learners: Access, Intermediate 1 and 2, Higher and Advanced Higher. The latter two are direct replacements of the old SCE Higher Grade and Certificate of Sixth Year Studies respectively. National Courses consist of three National Units and an external assessment, which is graded. A Unit usually consists of around 40 hours of study.

Table - Level of Highest Qualification Held by People of Working Age in England

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of people of working age qualified at each level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table - Level of Highest Qualification Held by People of Working Age in England

Highest qualification held by people of working age (1), by gender, age, ethnicity, region and economic activity and for employees of working age (1) by occupation, 2002
### Personal and economic characteristics

#### By gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>All people of working age (thousands) (1)</th>
<th>NVQ Level 5 (2)</th>
<th>NVQ Level 4 (3)</th>
<th>NVQ Level 3 (4)</th>
<th>NVQ Level 2 (5)</th>
<th>Below NVQ Level 2 (6)</th>
<th>No Qualifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>19,410</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>17,588</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### By age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>All people of working age (thousands)</th>
<th>NVQ Level 5 (2)</th>
<th>NVQ Level 4 (3)</th>
<th>NVQ Level 3 (4)</th>
<th>NVQ Level 2 (5)</th>
<th>Below NVQ Level 2 (6)</th>
<th>No Qualifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-19</td>
<td>2,960</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>3,630</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>3,816</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>9,500</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>8,207</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>8,885</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### By ethnic origin (7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Origin</th>
<th>All people of working age (thousands)</th>
<th>NVQ Level 5 (2)</th>
<th>NVQ Level 4 (3)</th>
<th>NVQ Level 3 (4)</th>
<th>NVQ Level 2 (5)</th>
<th>Below NVQ Level 2 (6)</th>
<th>No Qualifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>34,040</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-white of which:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or British Asian</td>
<td>1,474</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or Black British</td>
<td>742</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ethnic group</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### By Government Office region (8)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>All people of working age (thousands)</th>
<th>NVQ Level 5 (2)</th>
<th>NVQ Level 4 (3)</th>
<th>NVQ Level 3 (4)</th>
<th>NVQ Level 2 (5)</th>
<th>Below NVQ Level 2 (6)</th>
<th>No Qualifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>36,977</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>31,023</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>1,770</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scotland 3,170 5 23 21 20 15 16  
Northern Ireland 1,035 4 18 18 23 13 24  

**By economic activity and main Employees (7,9,10) of which**  
Managers & senior officials 3,410 8 34 21 19 13 5  
Professional occupations 2,818 27 56 8 6 3 *  
Associate professional & technical 3,353 6 45 19 17 11 2  
Administrative & secretarial 3,442 2 16 20 30 25 6  
Skilled Trades occupations 2,307 * 7 38 27 17 11  
Personal Service occupations 1,765 1 15 19 29 24 12  
Sales and Customer Service occupations 2,056 1 8 21 30 26 14  
Process, plant & machine operatives 2,038 * 3 17 25 33 21  
Elementary occupations 3,121 * 4 15 25 29 27  
Self-employed (8,11) 3,026 5 22 24 21 15 13  
ILO unemployed (12) 1,498 3 12 15 22 26 23  
Inactive (13) 7,968 2 10 17 20 19 32  

**Time series**  
2000 (14) 36,500 4 19 19 22 20 16  
2001 (14) 36,759 4 19 19 22 20 16  
2002 36,997 5 20 19 22 19 16
Nursery or pre-school education may be full- or part-time until a child’s fifth birthday, when compulsory schooling begins (age 4 in Northern Ireland). It is provided at schools or in playgroups, etc. All four year olds are entitled to a free, part-time pre-school place.

Free nursery education is provided in state-funded nursery schools and classes, and private nursery schools charge fees. There are also both public and private day nurseries providing day care, catering for children for three months old and onwards.

Government is supporting Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships (EYDCPs) which offer wrap-around care, to provide continuity of care and education to young children outside the early education provision.

In January 1999, 98% of the four-year-old population in England were in some form of early years provision. Some 15% were in the private or voluntary sector, 5% were in independent schools, and 78% were in maintained nursery and primary schools. By 2004 all three-year-olds in England and Wales will be entitled to a nursery place, and in 2003 all children in Northern Ireland should have access to one year’s pre-school education.

The Scottish Executive’s policy is to provide a free part-time pre-school education place to every three and four year old whose parents wish it. In 2002: 96% of four year-olds and 85% of three year-olds participated in pre-school education.

Primary education is for pupils between the ages of five (four in Northern Ireland) and 11 years (12 in Scotland). Publicly funded schools are free of charge. Parents can express a preference for the school, and most children are taught in mixed-ability classes with children of the same age. Each year pupils progress to the next class.

The aim is to provide a balanced and broad curriculum suitable to the child’s age, ability, and aptitude and to any special educational needs (SEN). Primary education is organised in phases – Key stage one and Key stage two.

In England and Wales the national curriculum is made up of compulsory “core” and “foundation” subjects, which are compulsory. Although particular teaching methods and learning materials are not usually prescribed, a national framework has been established for the recommended ‘literacy’ and ‘numeracy’ hour.

National testing takes place at ages five, eight and 11. Attainment targets set out the knowledge, skills and understanding which pupils are expected to achieve by the end of each key stage.

**0402 - IVET AT LOWER SECONDARY LEVEL**

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, secondary education is compulsory between ages 11 and 16, and between 12 and 16 in Scotland. Current curriculum debate in England and Wales is framed in terms 11 – 14 and 14-19 education.
Transfer to secondary school marks a clear break in most parts of the UK. Most maintained (state-funded and regulated) secondary schools in England, Wales and Scotland are non-selective comprehensive schools. Usually, they offer general education through the respective national curriculum (in Scotland, curriculum guidelines) with some vocational options for part of the programme of studies for 14 – 16 year olds. In parts of England (but not Wales or Scotland), some schools (known as grammar schools) select all their pupils by ability. In January 2001, there were 159 maintained grammar schools. In Northern Ireland, with the exception of one area, there is currently a selective system of secondary (known as post-primary) education: the selective system is under review, and the tests used for selection are to be abolished.

In England (but not Wales or Scotland) government has encouraged a greater diversity of secondary schools. Specialist secondary schools (specialising, for example, in technology or languages) may select 10% of pupils by aptitude and receive additional funding from Government and sponsors in industry. The current target is 1,500 specialist schools by 2005. In England, the government is encouraging greater diversity in many secondary schools.

Pupils are organised into year groups. They may be grouped by general ability (‘streaming’), in mixed-ability groups or, more commonly, grouped according to ability in a particular subject (‘setting’). Pupils usually progress automatically to the next class.

Secondary education in England and Wales is divided into two 'key stages': key stage 3 for 11-14 year-olds, and key stage 4 for 14- to 16 year-olds. In England, pupils in key stage 3 study the following compulsory subjects:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORE SUBJECTS</th>
<th>English, mathematics, science</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FOUNDATION SUBJECTS</td>
<td>Design and technology; information and communication technology (ICT); history; geography; a modern foreign language; art and design; music; physical education (PE).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Schools also teach key skills, religious education, sex education, citizenship and offer a programme of careers education. Similar subjects are taught in Wales, with the addition of Welsh.

The Northern Ireland Curriculum comprises religious education and six compulsory areas of study. A number of cross-curricular themes are also included in the curriculum for all schools.

At age 14 in England and Wales pupils take Key stage 3 tests. At age 16 pupils in England, Wales and Northern Ireland take GCSEs. Five passes at GCSE grade A - C are the usual minimum for access to A level study.

In Scotland, curriculum and assessment details differ from the rest of the UK. Curriculum guidelines are in place, but not a national curriculum. The first two years (known as S1 and S2) of lower secondary education provide a general education as part of the 5-14 Curriculum; the second two years (known as S3 and S4) have elements of specialism and of vocational education for all.

4.4.1. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)
Legislation establishes that pupils with special educational needs should be educated in mainstream schools wherever possible. In England and Wales a teacher with responsibility for co-ordinating educational provision for pupils with the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) ensures that their learning needs are met in the school, and elaborate regulations spell out entitlements and requirements. For pupils with specific needs the most appropriate placement is decided after assessment and consultation.
4.4.2. INTRODUCTING ASPECTS OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Aspects of vocational education are introduced for some students during key stage 4. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, for example, this may include the following.

GNVQs were designed to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in 15 broad vocational areas at Foundation and Intermediate Levels. Part One GNVQs are being phased out. Vocational GCSEs are introduced in eight vocational subject areas, designed to replace the Part 1 GNVQs.

In Scotland, General Scottish Vocational Qualifications (GSVQs) have been replaced by Scottish Group Awards. SGA are made up of National Courses, National Units and core skills that fit together to make a balanced and coherent programme of study, which normally lasts a year of full-time candidates and longer for part-time candidates. Untitled or general SGAs are available at all levels. At Intermediate 2 and Higher, Named SGAs (e.g. SGA in Arts, Sciences, Business or Technology), are also available. All SGA programmes must comply with national design rules and be validated by SQA.

The aim of education–business links is to ensure that young people are better prepared for the world of work. A main aspect is two weeks of work experience for pupils.

4.4.3. 14-16 EDUCATION IN COLLEGES AND WORKPLACES

The Increased Flexibility for 14-16 Year Olds programme has created partnerships between FE colleges, schools and training providers to enhance work-related learning opportunities for local 14-16 year olds. Government intends to expand this programme.

In Scotland, a 2002 Review Group, which looked at Enterprise in Education, recommended that all pupils over the age of 14 would have an opportunity for work-based vocational learning linked to accompanying relevant qualifications. The Scottish Executive will shortly produce a response to this.

In Scotland, there is no formal Initial Vocational Training (IVT) currently available in schools. However, there are examples of this type of activity in two local authorities.

| Table: Achievement by pupils aged 16/17 at GCSE (in full-time education) (*) | 1996 (%), 1998 (%), 2000 (%) |
|---|---|---|
| 5+ GRADES A-C | 57 | 59 | 61 |
| Of which: | | | |
| 8+ A-C GRADES | 41 | 43 | 45 |
| 5-7 A-C GRADES | 16 | 17 | 16 |
| 5+ GRADES A-G INC. 1-4 A-C | 25 | 23 | 22 |
| LESS THAN THIS | 18 | 18 | 16 |
| TOTAL | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| WEIGHTED SAMPLE | 11,391 | 10,359 | 9,753 |

Table: Destination of school leavers by country in the United Kingdom (excluding Wales)(**).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1999 (%)</th>
<th>2000 (%)</th>
<th>2001 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>England</td>
<td>N. Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FULL TIME EDUCATION</strong></td>
<td>68</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GOVERNMENT SUPPORTED TRAINING</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EMPLOYMENT</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNEMPLOYMENT/NOT AVAILABLE FOR WORK</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNKNOWN/LEFT THE AREA</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NUMBER OF SCHOOL LEAVERS (IN THOUSANDS)</strong></td>
<td>553.7</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(*) *Observations on Education and Training*, p. 115

(**) *Observations on Education and Training*, p. 114, & *Education and Training Statistics for the United Kingdom*, p. 95. Data for Wales are no longer collected and are therefore excluded from the UK aggregate.

**0403 - IVET AT UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION (SCHOOL-BASED AND ALTERNANCE)**

Post-compulsory education occurs in school sixth forms and further education colleges. Some students change institution at 16. Both establishments offer general and vocational courses, with FE colleges specialising in the latter. In Scotland, fewer young people aged 16-18 are educated in FE colleges but continue in upper secondary education to age 17-18.

A number of policy concerns dominate:

- Participation and qualification levels lag behind those found in other advanced economies; Social inequality in achievement of qualifications remains marked;
- Vocational courses have low status compared to general qualifications;
- 16 to 19 year olds in the UK study fewer subjects than in most other European countries, and this makes it difficult for the learner to acquire a broad, balanced and coherent range of knowledge and skills. However, in Scotland pupils have traditionally studied a broader based curriculum;
- A persistent systems issue is that 16 to 19 education is driven more by qualifications and assessment issues than by learning needs.

A qualifications drift has taken place, as employers expect higher levels of qualifications from entrants to the labour market and jobs become more complex. Unless specific qualifications are required – e.g. for a career such as nursing, the law, teaching or engineering - general qualifications are often taken as a sign of ‘trainability’. Licence to practice requirements are not common in the UK, so vocational qualifications are often not seen as a necessary requirement for labour market entry.

A review of 14-19 curriculum and qualifications in England is taking place. Whether to establish an ‘overarching certificate’ that can include existing post-compulsory
qualifications or to develop a more unified ‘English baccalaureate’ approach is being debated in England, following the publication in 2002 of a Green Paper on the future of 14 to 19 education.

In Scotland the new system of National Qualifications introduced in the summer of 1999 is well established; the development of a baccalaureate in Wales and policy debates in England are attempting to address these issues.

**ENGLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND**

A levels were set up 50 years ago to educate a small proportion of 18 year olds and select for university entry. In part because of the dominant role and status of A-levels, the lack of a clear and stable school-based VET pathway has remained a characteristic of the system, and there is still uncertainty about the most appropriate way to provide technological and vocational specifications in schools and colleges.

A current development is for FE colleges in England, Wales and Northern Ireland to specialise in particular sectoral areas of VET, such as engineering, as Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) designed to meet local skills needs.

‘Curriculum 2000’ has reformed the post-compulsory programmes that students follow in the school- and college-based general and vocationally related pathways in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. The reforms are summarised below.

**THE NEW A LEVELS (AS AND A2)**

Most students take four subjects in the first post-compulsory year, three in the second year for a qualification at ISCSD level 3. The new Advanced Subsidiary (AS) qualification represents the first year of the full A level study counts 50% of the marks. The AS encourages take-up of more subjects and is intended to reduce the numbers who drop out. It is also designed to encourage more mixing of general and vocational subjects. The second year of A level is called A2, comprising three units - a total of six units including including the AS - assessed either over two years (modular) or as a set of final exams (linear).

Course work can contribute, with a ceiling of 30% in most subjects for A levels. Only subjects such as modern languages have oral components. Results are graded A-E.

**WALES (THE WBQ REFORM)**

Reform is under way in Wales. The Welsh Baccalaureate (WBQ) is at developmental stage. The WBQ will initially be a post sixteen qualification at levels 2 and 3 of the National Qualification Framework (ISCAD 2 and 3). In the future a level 1 qualification may also be developed. It will be awarded to students who complete a programme consisting of the Welsh Baccalaureate Core Certificate, the key skills certification and optional studies drawn from existing qualifications. WBQ comprises three components:

- The Core (comprising those teaching-learning programmes that give the Welsh Baccalaureate its character);
- The Options (which are the students’ main courses and programmes and provide them with a stable base);
- The tutorial/mentoring system that link programme and student.

The optional studies element will be assessed in line with the existing requirements of examining and awarding bodies. The Core will involve students in the preparation of a portfolio of evidence for assessment. The first/second Pilots will begin in September 2003/04.

**SCOTLAND**
A new National Qualifications (NQs) system was introduced in Scotland in 1999. One of the main aims of the new system was to bring together academic and vocational qualifications in a single coherent system that promotes parity of esteem and increased employability. There are five levels of awards (Access, Intermediate 1 and 2, Higher and Advanced Higher). Students usually study NQs in fourth, fifth and sixth year of secondary education though a few schools may offer the qualifications at an earlier stage. Schools will not offer the whole range of NQs at every level but will match provision to the needs of students. Schools will work in partnership with other learning centres. NQs offer progression routes into further and higher education and employment. All NQs will be credit-rated and levelled in the SCQF from 2004.

In 2002, pilot projects commenced in secondary schools operated by two Scottish Local Authorities, which have introduced Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) into the school curriculum. If successful, this development may expand into other Scottish secondary schools.

Vocationally-related qualifications

England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Vocational A levels (AVCEs) have replaced Advanced GNVQs and can be taken on a single subject basis.

Vocational A levels emphasise knowledge, skills and understanding in broad vocational areas and focus on investigative work and assignment writing. They also foster links with employers. Most students undertake work experience. Two-thirds of the work is internally assessed and externally moderated. The basic qualification is the 6–unit Vocational A level, equivalent to one GCE A level. There is also a 12-unit double award, equivalent to two A levels, and a 3-unit award equivalent to AS in a limited number of subjects.

AVCE and A level grades are aligned in terms of grading.

Participation

The Table below provides data on participation levels for 16, 17 and 18 year olds. Notably, participation in the UK is lower than in most comparable countries, and there is considerable dropout at 17.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table: Main activity at 16, 17 and 18 years of age, England and Wales. (*)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>**OFFICIAL (%) 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FULL-TIME EDUCATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOVERNMENT SUPPORTED TRAINING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER EDUCATION/TRAINING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT IN ANY EDUCATION/TRAINING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT IN ANY EDUCATION/TRAINING/EMPLOYMENT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(*) Observations on Education and Training, 114.

Progression

Both A levels and vocational A levels can lead to higher education or employment. Traditionally, A levels carry the higher status. Subjects chosen may be influenced by the student’s choice of HE course.
Other features of the system relate to the broad vocational pathway in schools and colleges:

**Advice and guidance:** The Connexions Partnership (Not in Scotland) is the careers and advice service in England for young people aged 13-19, working on a multi-agency basis. Personal advisers give young people information, advice and guidance mapping out future qualifications and career options. Careers Wales offers a similar service.

**Key skills (England, Wales and Northern Ireland):** Key skills (KS) qualifications are available to students across all post-16 routes. KS qualifications (levels 1-3) comprise communication, application of number and information technology (IT). Also available at levels 1-3 are the wider key skills units: working with others, improving own learning and performance, problem solving. Assessment comprises a portfolio and (except for wider Key Skills) external tests.

**Education Maintenance Awards:** This award makes available grants to 16 to 19 year olds from poorer backgrounds in the UK for participation in post-compulsory (not HE) courses. Pilots have been successful, and the scheme will be national from 2004. This complements policies focusing on widening access and increasing participation. See Section 5.4.

**Earning and Learning:** Many students have a paid, part-time job during their last years of schooling.

**Work experience:** Most students on vocational courses and many on general courses undertake a short period of unpaid work experience, as enrichment and to learn about a particular working environment. This is often facilitated through local education/business partnerships.

**Flexible collaboration between providers:** As small sixth forms can offer only a limited curriculum, local and national initiatives have encouraged partnerships between 16-19 education and training providers.

**Widening Participation:** Collaboration between Higher Education, schools and Further Education colleges aims to encourage young people to commit themselves and prepare for higher education entry. This is closely linked to the Excellence in Cities programme (though not in Scotland), which concentrates on reaching young people in neighbourhoods in inner cities where social exclusion is high.

**Other Vocational Qualifications outside the National Qualifications Framework (NQF):** There are other qualifications that are popular with providers and employers but which do not meet the specification of the NQF. An example of this is the Business and Technical Education Council’s (BTEC) Higher Awards.

**Scotland**
Scottish Group Awards (SGAs) replaced GSVQs from session 1999/2000 with GSVQs starting to be phased out from the summer of 2002 and no further certification after September 2004. A Scottish Group Award (SGA) demonstrates that a learner has achieved success at particular levels of study in a range of courses/units and has a core skills profile that is complete and at a level appropriate to the SGA. These qualifications are designed to prepare people for entry to FE, higher education, training or employment. All SGAs have a credit profile into which points accrued from new National Qualifications may be transferred. Previous achievement at Standard Grade and/or SVQ levels may also contribute credits to the SGA’s credit profile.

At Higher and Intermediate 2 levels SGAs may be either ‘Named’ or ‘General’. Named SGA indicate competence in a particular area of study, for example business or science. General SGAs, which are also available at Access 2 and 3, Intermediate 1
and Advanced Higher levels, indicate an overall level of achievement across a range of subjects.

Scottish Progression Awards (SPAs) are designed to provide some of the skills, knowledge and understanding required for a related SVQ. SPAs are normally subsets of SVQs and offer candidates an opportunity to achieve a group of Units, which encourages progression to a full SVQ.

**Core Skills (Scotland)**

Core Skills (Scotland) help people achieve success in many situations in life and work. They provide a basis for learning throughout life, for working effectively, and for handling problems and dealing with issues. Employers, colleges and universities value, use and develop core skills. Core Skills have been part of the learning experience of pupils and students for many years. All learners can gain recognised National Qualifications for their core skills and these qualifications can gain recognised National Qualifications for their core skills and these qualifications may contribute to Scottish Group Awards. The Core Skills are: Communication; Numeracy; Problem solving; Using information technology and Working with others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students in upper secondary education by programme orientation (general / vocational), 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>UK</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL ENROLMENT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION VOCATIONAL PROGRAMMES (%)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION GENERAL AND PRE-VOCATIONAL PROGRAMMES (%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Upper secondary education: ISCED 97 level 3

Source: Eurostat, Newcronos, Education statistics based on ISCED 97

**0404 - Apprenticeship Training**

**The Policy Context**

By the late 1970s, apprenticeship was in substantial decline as traditional industries declined. They were limited largely to male-dominated, traditional manufacturing industries. In 1981 the New Training Initiative was launched, aiming to reform adult training, youth training and apprenticeship. Government was pre-occupied with rising levels of youth unemployment and associated social unrest, and using qualifications as the major mechanism for reform; apprenticeships were largely overlooked at first. Outcomes-based qualifications notionally independent of the location, duration and mode of learning drove the change agenda.

The design of Modern Apprenticeships in the mid 1990s ran counter to this tendency to focus exclusively on outcomes-based qualifications. It placed curriculum structures as opposed to qualifications structures back on the agenda for initial VET. The frameworks for each occupational area specified the level, duration and nature of learning in each sector. At first, with strong public advertising campaigns, participation in schemes grew. Completion rates were lower than expected.

These problems of non-completion and poor growth persist, even though independent evaluations judge the learning opportunities in Modern Apprenticeships to be rich and potentially of high quality.

**The New Generation of Modern Apprenticeships (MAs)**
The new frameworks for MAs in England are produced by the former National Training Organisations (NTOs) or the new Sector Skills Council (SSC). The revised Modern Apprenticeships are a mixture of work-based training and education, which include the following basic elements:

- A National Vocational Qualification (NVQ);
- Key Skills, e.g. communication and application of number;
- A technical certificate;
- Other mandatory or optional elements as specified by the particular occupation.

NVQs are vocational awards that are gained through assessment of performance and knowledge at work. There are five levels of NVQs, but in practice most NVQs are at levels 2 and 3 leading, respectively to foundation and advanced MAs.

MAs also include technical certificates. These are delivered through off-the-job learning and provide apprentices with the underpinning knowledge of the technical or business areas associated with the job. Technical certificates are qualifications assessing specific occupational knowledge and understanding. They can be taught through off-the-job training, unlike NVQs, which are delivered through on-the-job training.

Key Skills are defined as a range of essential skills needed in common by most employees to operate effectively, and all Modern Apprentices are assessed in the Key Skills: the intention is that learning providers will incorporate the skills into each apprentice’s learning plan.

There is no single set time to complete MAs and they vary widely in content and size. Foundation MAs take a minimum of 12 months while Advanced Modern Apprenticeships take a minimum of 24 months. These minimum durations apply to 16 – 18 year olds and 19 – 24 year olds.

Over 150 types of Modern Apprenticeship exist in over 80 different industries. Take-up varies from sector to sector, and within sectors.

In Wales, the Modern Skills Diploma for Adults was introduced in 2001 to raise skills levels in business, extending modern apprenticeship to those aged over 25. The diploma programme provides structured training for people in or out of employment.

In Northern Ireland, arrangements are broadly similar. Foundation MAs are known as Traineeships and Advanced MAs as modern apprenticeships. Frameworks are designed by the appropriate industry and produced by the Department for Employment and Learning, under its Jobskills programme.

Relative participation in the ten most frequently taken advanced MAs (in England and Wales) is shown in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADVANCED MODERN APPRENTICESHIPS (AMA)</th>
<th>1998/99</th>
<th>1999/00</th>
<th>2000/01</th>
<th>2001/02</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer Service</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel &amp; Catering</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering Manufacturing</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Scotland

Though similar, arrangements in Scotland differ somewhat. Training involves a balanced programme of activity, including on- and off-the-job training, study for a SVQ Level 3 (SCQF 6) or above and Core Skills in Numeracy, Communications, IT, Problem Solving and Working with Others at a minimum level of Intermediate 1 (SCQF 4). Other sector specific qualifications may be included to meet business needs. Training providers must achieve the MA standards defined in the Scottish Quality Management System, the quality assurance mechanism used by the Local Enterprise Companies (LECs). Training providers make a contract with LECs on agreed training provision and related funding.

Skillseekers (Scotland) training includes on- and off-the-job training and study up to Level 3 (SCQF level 6), for 16-24 year olds in employment or on a training placement. Funding is provided by government and is paid to training providers as a contribution towards training costs, on the young person’s achievement of specific milestones. The enterprise network sets funding levels that reflect the age of the individual and importance of occupational sector to local economy.

(*) Education and Training Statistics for the United Kingdom, p.58

0405 - Other Youth Programmes and Alternative Pathways
0406 - Vocational Education and Training at Post-Secondary (Non Tertiary) Level

This section should be read in conjunction with the section that follows.

It is accurate to think in terms of the ‘massification’ of higher education in the UK, which is to say that participation has grown rapidly and is no longer limited to an elite. Key policy concerns include:

- Raising participation levels;
• Widening participation on the part of under-represented social groups;
• Difficulties of funding the expanding sector;
• Developing a clear link between HE learning and the skills needed in employment;
• The expansion of short, foundation degrees (n.b. not in Scotland).

The sector includes universities, colleges of HE, art and agriculture and – increasingly- the further education colleges. All universities in the UK have independent governance as chartered institutions, benefit from state funding through national funding councils and are subject to quality control for both teaching and research activity. The UK has 91 universities and England has 411 Further Education Colleges.

The Open University (OU) operates on a different basis compared to other universities. It has been offering degrees and other qualifications through distance learning since the 1970s. The OU is a major national institution that has also developed non-traditional pathways to HE qualifications.

Research demonstrates that a university degree or diploma enhances earnings. Some professions such as law and engineering, have specific qualifications requirements, though in fewer cases than in many other countries.

Qualification usually takes between two and four years. Increasingly, part-time courses over a longer period are offered. Shorter courses often accept Access Certificates for entry. In applied subjects such as art and design, a foundation diploma is a common qualification. Each HE institution and department establishes its entry requirements, and these vary from course to course.

Non-degree HE qualifications are usually vocational. Higher National Certificates and Diploma (HNCs and HNDs) are vocational qualifications in their own right. Well developed articulation arrangements are in place for HNC/D students to progress to degree courses. A wide range of HND courses are on offer, particularly in Scotland, with some involving a combination of college and workplace learning.

Some HEIs provide foundation courses for students who do not possess the relevant entry qualifications.

FOUNDATION DEGREES

Introduced in 2001 in England and Wales, Foundation Degrees are a key part of the government’s strategy for higher education. They are shorter than the usual three or four year degrees, mainly in applied and vocational subjects, and are to be taught largely in further education colleges. They are intended to solve skills shortages, preparing more HE students for the world of work and widen participation. Features are:

• Employer involvement;
• Skills/knowledge application in the workplace;
• Credit accumulation and transfer;
• Progression within work and/or to an honours degree.

WIDENING PARTICIPATION

Widening participation is a key aspect of UK policy. Universities are funded for work that broadens their social intake. Access programmes prepare mature students who lack the necessary educational background for entry into HE. There is renewed interest in extending access arrangements to younger entrants. Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) awards credit for demonstrated learning that has occurred outside formal qualifications. APL can apply to university entry, as well as to other forms of learning.
See Section 5.5. The University for Industry (Ufi), trading as learndirect/learndirect scotland, is a source of accessible information and advice about learning opportunities, with a target to create a demand for up to one million courses a year by 2003 (England only). Their role is to act as a broker rather than a provider of learning opportunities.

The table below indicates the number of students gaining HE qualifications, including sub-degree qualifications, by type of course and subject group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Group</th>
<th>Sub-degree</th>
<th>First Degree</th>
<th>PhDs &amp; Equivalent</th>
<th>MASTERS AND OTHERS</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>TOTAL HIGHER EDUCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medicine &amp; Dentistry</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjects Allied to Medicine</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>47.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological Sciences</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vet. Science, Agriculture &amp; Related</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Sciences</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematical and Computer Sciences</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering &amp; Technology</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture, Building &amp; Planning</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>55.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business &amp; Administrative Studies</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>65.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarianship &amp; Info Science</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative Arts &amp; Designs</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>29.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>45.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined, General</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>53.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Subjects</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>265.3</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>116.5</td>
<td>128.1</td>
<td>470.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(*) National Statistics & DfES. *Education and Training Statistic for the United Kingdom*. p. 88
Over 850,000 people in the 18 - 21 age group are currently engaged in HE and the Government is committed to raising this figure to 50 % of future age cohorts in England and Wales (a threshold already achieved in Scotland and Northern Ireland). There is no formal designation of courses as vocational or professional. Many are, in practice, professional or vocational.

In England and Wales (but not in Scotland) students pay a € 1,614.80 yearly tuition charge; most students only pay a proportion of the charge on a means-tested basis; tuition is free for students from lower income families.

The UK offers a wide range of HE courses. Some 50,000 degree and non-degree courses are available through the common application body (UCAS), which covers most of the sector. Government funding for universities is channelled through The Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE) and Scottish Higher Education Funding Council (SFEFC), to support teaching programmes and a core of research funding. Much research is separately funded across the UK by the Office of Science and Technology and through research Councils.

The UK higher education sector has a three-level system higher education of graduate qualifications: Bachelor, Master and Doctorate.

In Scotland, a merger of the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council (SHEFC) and the Scottish Further Education Funding Council (SFEFC) is planned. Currently, SHEFC distributes public money for teaching and research into higher education institutions (HEIs) in Scotland and SFEFC distributes public money to further education colleges in Scotland. The merger will give greater comparability and transparency in the way that different types of institution and levels of courses are funded in tertiary education.

**Bachelor degree**

Bachelor of Arts (BA), Bachelor of Education (BEd) and Bachelor of Science (BSc) courses usually last three years. Entry is subject to A level and vocational A level results (or Scottish equivalents), or in some cases satisfactory completion of a relevant access/foundation course. Widening participation is a national priority. Some courses last four years, involving placements in industry or periods abroad; these have the same academic standing as three-year courses. Most courses are modular in structure, with a compulsory common core. Courses usually include a project or dissertation based on independent research. In Scotland several of the older universities award the MA as a first degree instead of the BA.

In Scotland it is normal for students to achieve an Ordinary Degree after three years and a more specialist Honours Degree after four years.

**Masters degrees (MAs and MScs etc)**

These are post-graduate courses and may take one year full time or two years part time. They are usually self-funded; entry is dependent on results at bachelor level. There is a greater component of independent working, including a dissertation or thesis based on independent research. Some Masters degrees, such as MEng, are first degrees available for more able students. They are at a level between honours degree and Masters degree.

**Doctorate (PhD)**

Entry onto a PhD is dependent on results at either Masters or Bachelor level. PhDs are funded but it is up to the student to gain that funding. They take at least three years to complete, the first year of which may consist of an MPhil (Masters of Philosophy) qualification. Part time PhDs may take the candidate considerably longer to complete.
Access to education and training beyond the statutory requirements of school attendance and entry to jobs that have entry qualification requirements is left in most respects to individuals (an individualistic approach) and, as far as training is concerned, to employers (the voluntarist approach). In recent years, adult learning has become more targeted and government in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have become more involved in identifying priorities. For example, the Lifelong Strategy for Scotland published in Spring 2003 emphasises the ‘cradle to grave’ idea of Lifelong Learning and widening access to learning for all citizens.

The UK government, at prime ministerial level, has declared its commitment to lifelong learning, which it sees as central to all policies for education and training. The government describes its role as helping to create a framework of opportunities for people to learn and to overcome the barriers to learning. The approach may vary according to the national, regional and local priorities of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

UK priorities for Lifelong Learning are defined as:

- Developing skills and knowledge for a productive workforce and globally competitive economy;
- Fostering greater creativity, innovative thinking and enterprise;
- Increasing and widening participation in learning;
- Raising standards in teaching and learning, including support for learning facilitators in non-formal and informal learning;
- Improving basic skills in the adult population.

Beyond this, moving to a clear strategy and a coherent set of policies for implementation is more problematic. In the national debate, several approaches compete to define what lifelong learning means and ought to become. This is well reported in the Economic and Social Research Council’s (ESRC’s) Learning Society research project.

Recent developments in UK government policies are marked by Green and White Papers, as well as legislation. This includes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Link</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skills for Life - Strategy for improving adult basic skills</td>
<td><a href="http://www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus">http://www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Scotland the strategy Lifelong Learning Strategy ‘Life though Learning: Learning though Life’ (February 2003) envisions “The best possible match between the learning opportunities open to people and the skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours which will strengthen Scotland’s economy and society”. There are five people-centred goals aiming to realise the vision of a Scotland where people:

- Have the confidence, enterprise, knowledge, creativity and skills they need to participate in economic, social and civic life;
- Demand that providers deliver a high quality learning experience;
- Have their knowledge and skills are recognised, used and developed to best effect in their workplace;
- Are given the information, guidance and support they need to make effective learning decisions and transitions;
- Have the chance to learn, irrespective of their background or current personal circumstances.

Recent developments in Scottish government policies are marked by Green and White Papers, as well as legislation. This includes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Policy Title</th>
<th>URL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sep 01</td>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>The Learning Country - A Comprehensive Education and LLL Programme to 2010</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wales.gov.uk/subieducationtraining/content/learningcountry/tlc-contents-e.htm">http://www.wales.gov.uk/subieducationtraining/content/learningcountry/tlc-contents-e.htm</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CLASSIFICATION OF TYPES OF ADULT LEARNING

Lifelong learning in England, Wales and Northern Ireland is often taken to refer to learning that takes place after the young person has finished formal education and training. In Scotland lifelong learning has a broader ‘cradle to grave’ definition. The usual definition of ‘continuing’ in the UK context refers to learners over 19 years of age. Classifications vary. The table below shows commonly used classification. The National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS) identifies several different forms of learning under two headings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TAUGHT LEARNING</th>
<th>SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>leading to qualifications</td>
<td>studying without taking part in a course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leading to skills that can be used in jobs</td>
<td>supervised training while actually doing a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>courses for driving, arts, crafts or leading to any practical skill</td>
<td>time spent keeping up to date with developments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evening or other adult classes; learning from packages provided by a provider;</td>
<td>deliberately improving skills or knowledge without taking part in a course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>any other taught instruction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A distinction is often made between formal, informal, and non-formal learning, whether in the workplace or community or using ICT as the medium. For workplace learning, the usual IALS etc. categories are used.

As the different sections of this overview indicate, a plethora of learning opportunities are available to the motivated learner. The Internet is increasing the possibilities exponentially. Access, however, remains unequal.

In Scotland, the main pathways for continuing education and training include undertaking work-based vocational qualifications or Professional Qualifications (such as Continued Professional Development). Many Scots undertake learning in the
community; through the library services of local authorities, and in voluntary organisations. Adult Education can be undertaken either in the community, through voluntary organisations, in companies and businesses, further education colleges and in higher education institutions.

**0502 - PLANNING AND ORGANISATION OF LEARNING**

**GENERAL/LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AND COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS**

Training in the UK has traditionally been 'voluntary' on the part of employers, rather than 'regulated' by the state, or 'negotiated by' the social partners, thus there is little legal obligation for employers to train staff, except where licensing of organisations or individuals is a requirement. Except in the construction and engineering industries, firms do not pay training levies. Although government places increasing importance on up-skilling the workforce, training policies are left to individual employers. The UK performs well comparatively on short, workplace training courses, but overall levels of qualification compare unfavourably with a number of other advanced countries.

The extent of collective agreements vary by industry and sector, although training has tended to be a matter left more to the employer. Unions are taking a stronger interest in training than previously. But the link between training, access to a job, salary level and progression is less clearly defined or regulated than in countries where a social partnership approach structures these arrangements.

**AIMS AND TARGETS TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION FOR SPECIFIC TARGET GROUPS OR SKILLS**

The National Skills Task Force Final Report: Skills for All (DfEE 2000) (not Scotland) identified the following as the main UK skills gaps and shortages:

- Basic skills – literacy and numeracy;
- Transferable skills;
- Mathematical skills;
- Intermediate level skills – specific occupational skills in many craft and associate professional occupations;
- Specialist ICT skills;
- Major adult skills gaps – notably, the large proportion of the adult workforce with no level 2 qualification.

The Report proposes the following targets for 2010:

- To reduce the proportion of adults with low numeracy and literacy levels from 20% to 10%;
- To increase the proportion of 25 year olds with a level 3 qualification from 41% to 70%;
- To increase the proportion of the adult workforce with a Level 2 qualification form 68% to 80%.

For current government targets see section 2.

**ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES**

The main bodies responsible for developing and implementing national policy for training are undergoing major reforms, with the creation of the national and local Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs) (in England only) and the Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA), (UK-wide), which leads and licenses the emerging Sector Skills Councils (SSCs). Each is referred to elsewhere in this overview. The main bodies involved include:
PARTICIPATION RATES, WITH REFERENCE TO GENDER/AGE/EDUCATION BACKGROUND

The government’s National Adult Learning Survey (in England and Wales), conducted in 1997 and 2001, provides the clearest picture of current trends.

76% of adults are estimated to have participated in learning activities in 2001, a 2% increase on 1997. The proportion of taught learners has remained static, just below 60%. A small increase in self-directed learning has taken place – from 57 to 60%.

Participation in vocational learning has changed little – at two thirds of the population. In fact, about 80% of the learning that takes place on taught courses is vocational. Vocational courses tend to be short, with some 60% provided by an employer and 40% of provision made by education and training institutions. Use of ICT has increased rapidly, particularly for vocational courses. Work is also a strong motivator in self-directed learning.

Participation varies between different groups:

- Participation declines with age: 80% participation is found among 20-49 years olds, and only 25% among people aged 70+;
- Women are less likely to engage than men (73:79%);
- Disability is associated with lower participation;
- There is a strong correlation between educational background and participation: 55% of those who left full-time education with no qualifications reported some kind of learning, compared to 95% of those with a qualification at level 3 or above;
- Those least qualified at leaving full-time education were most likely to achieve a qualification subsequently; 71% of those who left school with no qualification subsequently achieved one;
- Highest participation rates are found among those in paid work. 89% of full-time, 82% of self-employed and 81% of part-time workers had engaged in learning over the year. Those outside the labour market recorded considerably lower participation: 68% of unemployed and 52% of those looking after a family. The proportion Earnings correlate with participation in learning: 91% of high-income households report participating in learning compared to 53% in the lowest income bracket.
While much initial training is government-funded, the employer funds most workplace continuing training. Much continuing training is provided in-company or through specialist consultants or agencies. Most community and leisure learning provision, while it may be part-funded by a body such as the local authority, carries a financial cost to the individual. At the same time the public further and higher education establishments are major training providers. A wide range of private training organisations is involved. The following list of mechanisms and providers indicates many of the important ones, but is not exhaustive.

**Employers**

The IES Report on Adult Learning in England indicates that over 80% of firms with 25+ employees provide off the job training, and over 90% of those with 200+ employees. Much of this training concerns induction, health and safety – and four out of five employers provide job specific training. The most common form of trainers is training companies, followed by further education colleges, then equipment providers. Most on the job training is provided by a line manager, supervisor or an experienced colleague, followed by specialist training staff. Increasingly, IT based packages are used for training.

Considerable differences exist between employers in the same industry or sector. The type and quality of training also varies. About 40% of employer-funded training leads to qualification or part qualification, and a considerable proportion related to induction rather than medium term skills development.

The above Report categorises employers by their approach to learning as: non-trainers; ad hoc or informal trainers; formal, systematic trainers; and, learning organisations.

**Investors in People (IIP)**

IIP is a nationally recognised business standard that encourages employers to invest in training. IIP UK is an executive non-departmental public body set up in 1993. The award maintains a national standard. The IIP award indicates that a company or workplace has a high commitment to develop all employees, reviews training for all employees regularly, takes action to train and develop employees effectively, and evaluates the outcome of training and HR development.

Training is available through a wide range of private and public providers. This includes:

- further education colleges;
- higher education providers;
- local authority adult provision;
- open university;
- national extension college;
- national open college network;
- BBC education and other TV media;
- Home Office, National Health Service and other major public sector players;
- private consultancies and training agencies;
- trade unions;
- churches and voluntary organisations;
- the growing availability of web-based provision.

**0504 - Access to Learning Opportunities and Programmes**

The strategy of government relies on encouraging individuals to take up learning and training opportunities, with a strong focus on the learner’s needs rather than on the institutional interest of the providers. The ‘New Deal’ system of placing requirements
on young jobseekers is the clearest exception to this rule, where conditions must be met before there is an entitlement to benefit.

The following is an illustrative list of initiatives and priorities that are intended to improve access to continuing training, but is not intended to be exhaustive:

**EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCES (EMAs)**
Trials in England and Scotland suggest that education maintenance allowances (EMAs) targeted at young people from less well-off backgrounds and linked to course attendance requirements can be a factor in improving levels of participation, particularly in deprived areas. Recent legislation has prepared the way for EMAs to become a national scheme across the UK, from 2004/5.

**RIGHT TO TIME OFF TO STUDY**
(UK-wide) gives a statutory right to certain 16 and 17 year olds who are in employment (part or full-time, permanent or temporary) to paid time off work for study or training. The employer must provide 'reasonable' paid time off for the young person to study or train towards an approved qualification.

**ENCOURAGEMENT OF COMMUNITY LEARNING**
The UK's devolved administrations sponsor initiatives and schemes to encourage learning in the community. Research suggests that many such schemes may overcome the barriers that more formal learning raises.

**A RANGE OF APPROACHES TO WORKPLACE LEARNING**
Government, the CBI and the trade unions are encouraging a range of approaches to workplace learning. To raise the profile of workplace learning and to involve the trade unions in a more focused way, legislation now enables the election or appointment of learning representatives by trade union branches. The Union Learning Fund has been set up with government funding through the TUC, to encourage an innovative approach whereby unions extend the training they give, for example to tackling basic skills weaknesses among their members. In Scotland the Scottish Executive funds the Scottish Union Learning Fund (SULF) as part of the strategy to tackle skills issues.

**ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING**
See section 0505.

**BRINGING LEARNING CLOSER TO THE LEARNER**
BECTA is responsible for ensuring that providers make maximum use of ICT, and to ensure that opportunities to learn are tailored to the needs of a wide range of people. ‘UK on line’ is a government-funded campaign to ensure that organisations and individuals make best use of Internet learning, and to encourage people to make maximum use of the learning potential of ICT.

**BUSINESS LEARNING ACCOUNTS (BLAs)**
The Scottish Executive intends to launch a new scheme of Business Learning Accounts (BLAs) to stimulate learning in small businesses. The scheme will provide businesses with the tools to link training needs with business growth and funding to support the businesses’ own investment. The pilot scheme is being developed with key Scottish stakeholders and will be launched late 2003.

**INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS (ILAs)**
This initiative was an innovative scheme intended to widen participation in learning and encourage individuals to take responsibility for their own learning. An individual could open an ILA and access a range of discounts on the costs of learning provided they make a contribution of at least €37 themselves. A wide range of learning was eligible for support under the initiative giving account holders the broadest choice possible. There were, however, concerns about the quality of some of the learning receiving
support and following allegations of fraud the scheme was closed in November 2001. A similar scheme of Bursaries is available to teachers in their third and fourth year: they decide how to spend the money on their own personal/professional development. The ILA scheme is expected to resume in 2003/4.

**UNIVERSITY FOR INDUSTRY/LEARNDIRECT, AND SCOTTISH UNIVERSITY FOR INDUSTRY/LEARNDIRECT SCOTLAND**

learndirect and learndirect scotland stimulate demand for learning by providing easily accessible advice to potential learners about all kinds of opportunities. learndirect Scotland provides learners with advice on learning opportunities available throughout Scotland, including information on childcare facilities. Its network of over 370 learndirect scotland branded learning centres take learning into the community, making access to learning easier and more flexible. These learning centres are located in libraries, shopping centres, leisure centres and other locally based facilities.

**HIGHER EDUCATION TUITION FEES IN SCOTLAND**

Tuition fees have been abolished for Scottish domiciled and EU students studying full-time higher education courses in Scotland which have been validated by an UK University or a national examining body. This support is not repayable and is available to all eligible full-time students to undertake one first degree, or comparable course of higher education, provided they have not previously undertaken such a course with assistance from public-funds. Scottish students studying elsewhere in the UK will be liable to an income-assessed contribution to tuition fees.

All eligible students are entitled to receive the same basic level of support through a combination of a student loan from the Government and a contribution from their parents or spouse. For students from wealthier families a higher proportion of this support will be provided by their parents or spouses and for students from less well off backgrounds a higher proportion will be in the form of a student loan. The Student Support system also takes into account the additional financial needs of some students, which is why students who have dependants or who have a disability are entitled to additional help through non-repayable supplementary grants. All support for living costs for higher education students, except for Disabled Students’ Allowance, is means tested. EU and EEA nationals who meet the residence criteria can be offered full student support.

**ADULT LITERACY AND NUMERACY IN SCOTLAND**

While research suggests that in Scotland 800,000 adults may have low levels of literacy and numeracy, the report ‘Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland’ contains recommendations for transforming Scotland’s literacy service.

A new Development Centre within Communities Scotland is being created to help drive forward the literacy and numeracy initiative. The centre will focus on the development of a national training programme; the commissioning, and monitoring of pathfinder projects; the development of a new curriculum, e-learning options and other materials; and the sharing of best practice and innovative approaches to engaging learners.

**0505 - BRIDGING INITIAL AND POST INITIAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

Flexibility exists at many points in the UK education systems, such that people who are highly motivated to learn and to gain qualifications can usually find a way into the systems. In school-age qualifications and, increasingly, degrees and other higher education qualifications, access is open irrespective of age. There is a long tradition of people who lacked formal qualifications or training earlier in life achieving qualifications flexibly later on. Nevertheless, barriers to learning are strong for many people, particularly those who are socially excluded or at risk, and distribution of qualifications and access continue to show marked inequalities. Bridging the Gap, (not Scotland) published in 1999, is an influential research study showing how patterns of social deprivation and exclusion from access to initial and continuing education and training are closely linked.
Considerable research into the individual, social and economic aspects of barriers to continuing participation have highlighted the need for a major change. This has had some influence on government policy. In a scenario where approximately 9% of each age cohort still leaves school unqualified and without progressing to further education, training or a job with training, and where some seven or eight million adults are identified as lacking in basic skills, finding ways that encourage large numbers of people to be involved in learning remains a key policy issue.

Access courses to HE are recognised by the Quality Assurance Agency for higher education (QAA) through their inclusion in a national scheme. A Student who successfully completes an Access course is awarded a certificate bearing the QAA Access logo.

QAA regulates the national recognition of Access courses. It is responsible for assuring the quality of recognised Access courses, and the adequacy of standards of student achievement on these courses. QAA has established a scheme through which it can meet these responsibilities, The QAA Recognition Scheme for Access to Higher Education in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (the recognition Scheme).

The QAA Recognition Scheme is not applicable in Scotland. The Scottish Wider Access Programme (SWAP) initiative works in partnership with further education colleges and higher education institutions within Scotland, to co-ordinate their access initiatives and develops progression pathways. Students who successfully complete SWAP programmes – and gain a positive tutor reference – are guaranteed a place on an appropriate higher education course (HNC/D or degree) either in either in a Further Education College or Higher Education Institution.

This overview indicates elsewhere many of the initiatives that government and others have taken. Five such policies are cited below:

- ‘Work-Life Balance’ policies;
- The expansion of higher education;
- Emphasis on developing Foundation Degrees (n.b. not in Scotland);
- The reform of management and administrative frameworks for VET;
- An emphasis on e-learning, community and workplace learning. The intention is to put the learner at the centre.

The UK's system allows for flexible access, although the evidence is that many experience the barriers to learning as strong. In terms of workplace learning for example, there is little emphasis in several sectors on progression beyond qualifications at level 2 or 3. Even qualifications included in the National Qualifications Framework often lack units that would of themselves encourage successful applicants to progress to more advanced qualifications, or to preparation for management.

0506 - RE-EDUCATION AND RE-TRAINING NEEDS DUE TO LABOUR MARKET DEVELOPMENTS AND MOBILITY

Retraining is more accurately understood as part of the national skills agenda, than as a specific response to decline in particular areas or industries. The recent establishment of the national and local Learning and Skills Council (England only), the development of the UK-wide Sector Skills Development Agency and the new Sector Skills Councils, the strengthening of the role of the Regional Development Agencies is intended to herald a more conscious and strategic approach to linking the skills agenda to regeneration.

Large-scale retraining programmes tend not to be the approach taken by government, nor in the regions or localities. Again, the UK approach tends to be to encourage rather than to enforce participation, both in training and in retraining. Very large numbers of people have retrained to participate in tertiary occupations rather than manufacturing,
as the latter has continued to decline. The labour market tends not to be highly regulated, thus people can move from occupation to occupation in a more fluid way than in countries where labour market entry is regulated for most occupations.

The Regional Development Agencies have an important role. England has 9 RDAs, and devolved government in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland also leads on regional development. The role of RDAs is to provide effective and well co-ordinated regional economic development and regeneration, and to enable each region to increase its competitiveness. London now has an elected mayor, though the powers are limited, and the North East may experiment first with an elected regional assembly.

In England, the Learning and Skills Council leads on the national, regional, and local skills agenda. The National LSC has two main committees: an adult learning committee and a young people’s learning committee. It has a clear responsibility to develop the national skills strategy and to lead strategically in each local area to raise skills levels, participation in education and training for those aged 16 and over, and to improve local provision.

Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) focus on meeting employers’ skills needs at craft and technical level. Initially aimed at further education colleges, the programme has been extended to include work based learning providers. There is a developing network of over 150 CoVEs across the English regions, covering a wide range of key economic sectors. CoVEs should demonstrate links with schools and progression to employers to ensure that the developing network is tightly focused on meeting local employers’ skills needs.

**THE NEW DEAL**

New Deal is a key part of the Government’s Welfare to Work strategy. It is an active labour market policy designed to move people into work quickly, and provide those who need it with extra help to improve their employability.

The New Deal has its supporters and its critics. In 2002, the National Audit Office reported that the majority of the 300,000 young people who had claimed had found jobs through the New Deal would have found jobs anyway in the buoyant economy. Each New Deal job costs up to €11,744, and many of the jobs turn out to be short-term. On the other hand, the New Deal brings an economic benefit rather than a cost to the wider economy, and has had an impact on reducing unemployment to the current UK levels. The New Deal has strong support from organisations such as CBI and TUC.

The New Deal for Young People (NDYP) and New Deal 25+ are mandatory programmes for those who are unemployed for six and eighteen months respectively. New Deal for Partners, New Deal 50+, New Deal for Disabled People and New Deal for Lone Parents are voluntary programmes. In Scotland adult training and responsibility for New Deal 25+ is devolved to the Scottish Parliament.

As well as providing unemployment benefits, the New Deal consists of:

- Activation through incentives, e.g. working family tax credit;
- Activation through sanctions, e.g. young people must meet criteria for seeking and applying for jobs and taking training opportunities;
- Help through training and improving vocational skills;
- Help through job search support/counselling and improved job matching;
- Help through subsidies, including subsidised placements.

Since April 2002, state provided work-based learning for long term unemployed adults has been delivered through the Jobcentre Plus, under the responsibility of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1997-98 OUTTURN</th>
<th>1998-99 FORECAST</th>
<th>1999-00 PLANS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure (*) (£ million)</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>741</td>
<td>864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First time entrants (000's)</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of leavers gaining an NVQ (**)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of NVQs (***)(000's)</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit price (****)</td>
<td>2,925</td>
<td>2,832</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of trainees in employment (***** )</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost per NVQ (******)</td>
<td>6,141</td>
<td>6,611</td>
<td>5,947</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:

(*) Includes expenditure on Youth Training, Modern Apprenticeships, National Traineeships, and other training.

(**) Percentage of total leavers in year with at least one NVQ. The 1998-99 forecast is based on the planned figure for that year.

(***) Includes NVQ Level 2s gained within Modern Apprenticeships en route to NVQ level 3.

(****) Figures are available for past years only. Planned figures will depend on numbers and targets agreed in TEC business plans prior to the start of the operating year.

(***** ) Estimated figure.

(******) These figures allow for the length of time participants are on the programme training towards NVQs.
Previously, there were few if any requirements in the UK for trainers and other VET teachers to have formal training or hold qualifications to teach, unless they worked in the state-funded school sector. However, the growth of certificated, state-validated VET qualifications and an emphasis on pedagogy (training the trainers) is now leading to recognition and requirements for trainers to be properly trained. The main policy priority in this area across the UK is to increase the number of lecturers in the Further Education Sector who hold the teaching qualification in further education [TQ (FE)]. Broadly, arrangements are similar for England, Wales and Northern Ireland; there are some differences in Scotland, and they are referred to throughout.

In 1997, government signified a major move in the training of trainers for the further education of the Further Educational National Training Organisation (FENTO). FENTO is the national body for the development, quality assurance and promotion of national standard for the training of trainers and teachers in the public FE colleges and private training sectors. As a new Lifelong Learning Sector Skills Councils planned to come into existence, FENTO will merge into the new body. Training of lecturers and trainers will be an identifiable priority.

ENGLAND, WALES, AND NORTHERN IRELAND

The Government is committed to ensuring that all those who perform a teaching role in England are qualified to teach, regardless of context. The Success for All strategy, published in November 2002, sets out the Government’s commitment to reform the Further Education sector. Improving the skills qualification of lecturers, trainers and other VET teachers is an important part of the strategy. In September 2001, it became mandatory in England for new FE teachers to hold or work towards a recognised teaching qualification. This follows the EU drive to establish a professional base and raise quality within the training of trainers sector. Fractional (permanent part-time) appointees must attain an appropriate qualification within four years of the first available and relevant course. No deadlines have been set in England for existing (i.e. those employed before 1 September 2001) FE teachers. However, funding for flexible, tailored professional development activity is available as part of a college staff development plan agreed with the college’s local Learning and Skills Council. Recent developments have seen a target produced for a fully qualified workforce.

Previous guidance limited legitimate contexts for teaching practice. Workplace teaching is now acceptable as teaching practice in situations where the participant is clearly leading the learning and is teaching groups of learners within the workplace context. The government’s complementary commitment to professionalise the English literacy, numeracy and English as a Second Language (ESOL) teaching workforce and improve the quality of teaching provision is set out in its Skills for Life strategy, published in 2001. The qualifications recognise discrete roles, responsibilities and skills needs required by those who teach and support the learning of adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL. Since 1 September 2002, all new entrants to the teaching profession who wish to specialise in teaching or supporting the learning of adult literacy and numeracy [ESOL] have been required to enrol on approved programmes that lead to qualifications at the appropriate level of the subject specialist qualifications framework. From September 2003, this has applied to those entering the ESOL teaching profession.

SCOTLAND

To support this drive for increased professionalism, the Scottish Further Education Funding Council (SFECF) has set a target that aims to ensure that 90% of full-time lecturing staff has a teaching qualification for further education or its equivalent. Assessment of lecturers in training is carried out by members of staff in the teacher education institutions in co-operation with the supervising staff in the lecturer’s workplace.
Trade Unions also play a key role in developing staff in the workplace. Unions can bid for money from the Scottish Union Learning Fund (SULF), which funds unions to develop specific work-based projects. Many of these projects have created a network of training facilitators to encourage staff development.

The main pathways for continuing education and training in Scotland include undertaking work-based vocational qualifications or Professional Qualifications (as Continued Professional Development). Emphasis is placed on learning in the community, through the library services of local authorities, and in voluntary organisations. Adult Education can be undertaken either in the community, through voluntary organisations, in companies and businesses, further education colleges and in higher education institutions.

0602 - TRAINING OF TEACHERS/TRAINERS IN EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS
Arrangements governing the training of FE lecturers are set out in the ‘National Guidelines on Provision Leading to the Teaching Qualification (Further Education) and Related Professional Development, which were published in 1997. The guidelines made provision for all the competencies required by a FE lecturer to be included in a National Index of Initial Teacher Training and Continuing Professional Development Units. These units are intended to cater for the induction, initial teacher training and continuing professional development of all FE lecturers, irrespective of the type of course or level at which they teach.

The national guidelines also provided for the establishment of the Professional Development Forum (PDF) for teaching staff in FE colleges. The PDF is responsible for the content of the National Index and for developing new units. The PDF is also responsible for approving applications from FE colleges, or other training providers who wish to deliver training in particular initial or continuing training units which are included in the National Index. To date the PDF has approved applications that allow 32 FE colleges, either alone or as part of a consortium with other colleges, to deliver training on various units.

Units can stand-alone or be grouped together to form a Professional Development Award (PDA). Lecturers who complete individual units or gain a PDA can accrue credits that count towards a full TQ(FE).

0603 - TRAINING OF TRAINERS/TEACHERS AT THE WORKPLACE (APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING AND CVET IN ENTERPRISES)
Word-based in-company learning has lead to the devolution of training responsibilities from traditional training departments (where these existed) to a variety of supervisors and work-based trainers/assessors. Many of these are not full-time trainers or even formally designated as trainers as they combine their training functions with other roles.

Those involved in delivery and assessment of workplace qualifications must meet requirements for occupational competence and have or be working towards nationally-recognised qualifications in assessment and/or quality assurance. In the case of National Vocational Qualifications (or Scottish Vocational Qualifications), the requirements for occupational expertise are developed by the Sector Skills Council which has developed the qualification. The qualifications in assessment and quality assurance are awarded by most awarding bodies and are also delivered in the workplace.

0604 - TRAINING OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING (OUTSIDE ENTERPRISES)
A wide range of qualifications typifies those working in adult education, from lecturers in universities and other higher education institutions, lecturers in FE colleges and schoolteachers to some without formal certification, and including personnel from industrial and management backgrounds.
Initial qualifying training for full-time community education workers now normally requires three years of study up to degree level. Degree-level courses for community education workers are provided by, for example, the teacher education institutions. The training involves both academic and practical work. The current guidelines on training are contained in the report: Pre-service Training for Community Education Work (1990) prepared by the Community Education Validation and Endorsement (CeVe) Committee. This body must endorse all courses of training for community education workers.
MECHANISMS FOR SKILLS ANTICIPATION

The UK’s Qualifications Frameworks (see section 2) include vocational qualifications – National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and, for Scotland, Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs). The introduction of the UK-wide Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) in 2002 heralded the intention on the part of government that the anticipation of training and qualifications needs should be driven largely by labour market demanded consideration: what skills balance is likely to be needed in future? How may occupational profile changes lead to new training qualifications / needs? How best can the needs of employers be met? Traditional labour market forecasting techniques have been refined and more holistic approaches are being adopted.

NVQs and SVQs are vocational qualifications based on National Occupational Standards through a process of functional analysis, developed by the National Training Organisation Sector Skills Council (SSC). Standards are specified in the form of units, aggregated to meet qualifications needs of specific occupations, which are identified by a parallel process of occupational mapping. SSCs are required to take into account future labour market requirements. The recent shake-up of sectoral arrangements aims to improve their capacity for undertaking labour market analysis in anticipation of emerging sector skill requirements.

In England, the Treasury has moved recently towards placing a requirement on Government Departments to evaluate as well as implement all major initiatives. Evaluation is now frequently included in the development plans, with international tendering for major evaluations. Routine monitoring of qualifications is undertaken by the QCA. The developing Sector Skills Councils and awarding bodies respectively review the labour market need and uptake of qualifications. The amount of data in the system is increasing, with national databases increasingly being refined by the DfES. This allows routine monitoring of trends in the system, as well as the uptake of specific qualifications. The renewal of qualifications admitted to the national qualifications framework is determined by a ‘re-accreditation cycle’ in which qualifications are subject to review on an agreed cycle - typically 3 years. On average, new qualifications are developed over an 18 month cycle.

The Adult Learning Inspectorate is responsible for appraising and reporting to Government on the quality of training provision; this is done through visits to training settings and can include commentary on the performance of specific initiatives and reforms.

Major reforms have been subject to periodic special review - led by specially-convened, Government-nominated review groups. Such reviews have included the Capey Review of the broad Vocational Qualifications; the Beaumont Review of NVQs; and the Cassels Review of Modern Apprenticeships. These reviews take place after a reform has operated for some years, and make recommendations direct to government.

Relevant labour market data comes from a variety of national sources including the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the Annual Employment Survey (AES), and from national, regional or sectoral surveys, and skill audits. Strong emphasis is now placed on identifying and planning skill development programmes to meet local labour market needs. Quantitative methods include mechanistic/extrapolative techniques, behavioural/econometric models, surveys of employers’ opinions and skills audits. Qualitative approaches include Delphi techniques, case studies, focus groups and holistic modelling approaches, such as scenarios. The Skillsbase database provides a wide range of labour market information.
In Scotland, Futureskills Scotland (which is managed by Scottish Enterprise in collaboration with Highlands and Islands Enterprise) conducted a survey in 2002 to provide evidence about skill shortages, skill gaps and training, based on information from more than 8,500 Scottish workplaces. There are 2.1 million employees in Scotland. During the 2002 survey there were 65,000 vacancies, a vacancy rate of 3.1%. The Research Branch in the Scottish Executive Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Department manages a programme of research in support of policy development and review in further and higher education, vocational education and training and lifelong learning. For the corresponding agencies in Wales and Northern Ireland, see Section 3.1.

THE FRAMEWORK FOR, AND EVALUATION OF, REFORMS

The QCA is the government agency responsible to DfES for implementing qualifications reform in England (and for certain vocational qualifications, in Wales and Northern Ireland also), through mechanisms such as the design of the review of national framework and the criteria for inclusion, and the approval of awarding bodies. QCA is leading a review of the UK’s vocational qualifications, in partnership with the Learning and Skills Council, the Sector Skills Development Agency and the relevant bodies in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

In Scotland, SQA developed the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework in partnership with the Scottish Executive. The Research Branch in the Scottish Executive Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Department manages a programme of research in support of policy development and review in further and higher education, vocational education and training and lifelong learning. The programme is focused on 6 main themes, youth transition from education to the labour market, widening access to further and higher education, learning and employability, participation in adult education and lifelong learning, the New Deal in Scotland, and learning and teaching in post-school sectors. Research organisations, universities, HM Inspectorate, Scottish Enterprise, and other national bodies also make an important contribution to educational research and evaluation of reforms.

While public education and training policy falls under the responsibility of government there is some participation by other stakeholders (employers, trade unions, education and training interests) in the structures established for purposes of consultation, scrutiny and review. In Scotland the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Executive make it a priority to involve other stakeholders.

0702 - BRIDGING PATHWAYS AND NEW EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

7.2.1. STRATEGIES TO MAKE THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM AND MODES OF DELIVERY MORE FLEXIBLE

The UK’s VET system is largely outcomes-based. Training providers have flexibility to plan learner-centred delivery systems to meet users' needs. The same qualifications are offered in both the initial and the continuing VET and the flexibility offered by the outcomes approach has been greatest in providing adult learners with access to individually targeted learning and assessment. Young people, increasingly since the advent of modern apprenticeships (MAs), tend to follow more standardised learning programmes.

The modular or unit structure of N/SVQs and most other vocational qualifications provides a high degree of flexibility, opening up possibilities for modular delivery and credit transfer. The number of people gaining individual units, often through job-focused in-company training, is increasing in some sectors. Many providers of education and training use mixed-mode delivery incorporating elements of conventional and open or distance learning.

In theory candidates may be awarded qualifications on the basis of accreditation of prior learning (APL) evidence alone. In practice this has proved difficult because of the
substantial requirements for verification. However, the availability of direct access to assessment for those able to show that they have sufficient learning to be assessed without having to follow a complete learning programme is another factor contributing to flexibility.

7.2.2. STRATEGIES TO BRIDGE DIFFERENT TYPES AND LEVELS OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING
Governments in England have sought to bridge the gap between general education and vocational training by achieving parity of esteem between different types of qualifications. In the early 1990s the government sought to define three pathways in which a clear relationship was traced between three separate types of provision – traditional general education provision, school and college-based vocationally-related education, and work-based vocational provision – with an emphasis on the complementary nature of the different types of provision and similar progression openings for those following all three routes.

This policy has encountered a number of problems, and increasingly public policy has recognised a need to enable young people to be able to choose learning programmes combining elements of general and vocational education rather than having to follow one learning pathway to the exclusion of others. Currently a major review of vocational qualification is under way across the UK. Working in partnership with LSC, SSDA, and the regulatory and funding agencies for Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland, QCA is leading the development of a joint programme of work to improve the vocational qualifications system to ensure it meets future needs. In Scotland, reforms such as the new National Qualifications system introduced in 1999, are designed to achieve a more unified approach to different types of education and training. The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), in particular, brings together general and vocational pathways by introducing arrangements for credit accumulation and transfer. The framework is designed to widen educational opportunities and encourage ‘parity of esteem’ for academic and vocational qualifications. It will make the qualifications available more understandable and show their relative value.

0703 - RENEWAL OF CURRICULA

7.3.1. STAKEHOLDERS’ INVOLVED IN CURRICULA DEVELOPMENT
In the UK, NVQs and SVQs are largely based upon national occupational standards, or statements of the outcomes to be achieved to meet the requirements for certification. These are mainly developed by Sector Skill Council (SSC). These are employer-led bodies, in many cases based on employer groupings such as trade associations, and normally include trade unions representatives on a minority basis together with representatives of relevant professional bodies and training organisations from the sector.

Because curricula are not usually nationally prescribed (the assessment requirements for qualifications normally being independent of delivery), curricula tend to be developed mainly by the organisations providing the education and training, for example by colleges, training organisations and employers at a decentralised level. However, for programmes such as modern apprenticeship, SSCs are increasingly involved in developing and disseminating curriculum models.

7.3.2. THE PLACE OF BASIC SKILLS AND KEY COMPETENCES IN THE LEARNING CULTURE
Key or core skills units are available at all levels of the NQF and SCQF in communication, number, information technology, problem solving, working with others, and developing own learning/skills. Key skills units in communication, number, information technology, problem solving, working with others and developing own learning skills are available at all levels of the NQF. They may be certificated as freestanding key skill qualifications. Key and core skills were widely seen as a potential bridge between different types of qualification provision and are a compulsory element of all modern apprenticeship programmes. Implementation of key skills programmes and assessment remains problematic.
In Scotland the core skills, communication, numeracy, information technology, problem solving and working with others can be gained at different levels up to and including SCQF level 6.

7.3.3. INTEGRATION OF NEW METHODS AND TECHNOLOGIES INTO CURRICULA

NVQ and SVQ criteria required national occupational standards to reflect the ability to respond to new technologies and innovations in working methods and forms of work organisation. This reflects the high degree of emphasis placed on facilitating flexibility and mobility in employment and ensuring that qualifications do not become out-dated too quickly. Standards for vocational qualifications are generally reviewed at 3 to 5 yearly intervals.

Curricula must be based upon the standards, and it is a matter for VET providers to ensure that curricula are kept up-to-date in line with industry requirements. In practice the close relationship between providers and employers is often assumed to ensure that training delivery keeps pace with industry requirements, although there is some evidence that training tends to follow, rather than lead, innovative practices in industry.

The SCQF will also assist in making clear the relationships between Scottish qualifications and those in the rest of the UK, Europe and beyond, thereby clarifying opportunities for international progression routes and credit transfer.

The Scottish Further Education Unit aims to support key developments and innovations in teaching and learning in the further education sector in Scotland. In England the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA) provides a base for developing and disseminating best practice and innovation to the Learning and Skills Councils and to the further education sector. Both place strong emphasis on engaging professionals with the outcomes of research, and creating a research culture that meets practitioners’ needs.

The National Grid for Learning, and National Grid for Learning Scotland, seek to use ICT to the maximum to raise standards and achievement, extend opportunity, create a highly ICT literate workforce and to ensure that ICT learning opportunities are of a high standard.
National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) are similar, though the qualifications frameworks in which they are located differ. See section 2. A review of vocational qualifications in the mid-1980s recommended the introduction of NVQs (developed as SVQs in Scotland) to address weaknesses in the then current systems of vocational qualifications.

The original policy objectives associated with the implementation of NVQs were:

- Improving the coherence of the national system of qualifications by removing duplicate qualifications, which were similar in aim and function but were expressed in a different form. The NVQ criteria proposed that all vocational qualifications should meet standard quality criteria in their design and operation and be clearly located in the five-level framework for NVQs;
- Improving the availability of qualifications in sectors which previously lacked them – e.g. retail and distribution, the lower level occupations in health and social care;
- Allowing competence to be recognised independently of the location, duration and/or nature of learning, thus allowing assessment of existing competence in the labour force.

The solution adopted was to establish a clear and coherent system of vocational qualifications that were to be directly relevant to the needs of employment and the individual. These National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs and SVQs) should be a statement of competence clearly relevant to work and intended to facilitate entry into, or progression in, employment, further education and training. Assessment would cover:

- Skills to specified standards;
- Relevant knowledge and understanding;
- The ability to use skills and to apply knowledge and understanding to relevant tasks.

More than 750 NVQs are available across the eleven defined areas (such as transportation, providing business services). They vary by title and level. NVQs cover levels 1-5, which equates approximately to the ISCED levels. In May 2003 the government announced 4 million NVQs had been awarded.

Although the development of NVQs and SVQs has not brought the envisaged coherence to the system of vocational qualifications, it has provided a framework of competence-based qualifications. A review of vocational qualifications in the UK is currently under way (May 2003).

The main institutions involved in regulating and administering NVQs are:

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA): QCA ensures that NVQ qualifications meet particular criteria and are broadly comparable across different sectors. QCA accredits (formally recognises) proposals for NVQ awards developed by sector bodies and awarding bodies, and quality assures and audits the activity of awarding bodies.

Sector bodies: The new Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) overseen by the Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) will identify, define and update employment-based standards of competence for agreed occupations. These are approved against criteria by a group made up of the regulatory authorities and the UK administrations. National Occupational Standards form the basis for NVQs. NVQs are accredited against NVQ criteria by QCA.
Awarding bodies: Awarding bodies have a dual role. With sector bodies, they are jointly responsible for the assessment methods of NVQs based on the assessment strategy of the sector bodies, and they are also responsible for the implementation of individual NVQs. They approve centres that wish to offer assessment for NVQs. Awarding bodies monitor the assessment process and award NVQs and unit certificates. They undertake external verification to ensure that candidates are being assessed fairly and consistently across all centres.

Assessment centres: Organise the assessment of people seeking to qualify for an NVQ. Training Providers and Further Education Colleges: Many candidates pursuing the NVQ route to qualifications will gain their qualification at work or through a programme provided by a further education college or some other training provider.

Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA): In Scotland the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) accredits all Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs).

**NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (NVQs) – A ‘CLOSED’ CREDIT FRAMEWORK**

NVQs are based on national occupational standards that are designed in a unit format. When a key occupational function is described and analysed it is broken down into the smaller functions of an occupation. A function is described in a unit of a standard. Some functions appear in several different occupations and therefore when qualifications are designed the same unit may appear in different qualifications. This creates a unit credit that can be transferred from one qualification to another. Units can also be accumulated from different awarding bodies as NVQ units are based on the same national occupational standard. This is a closed system in as much as only unit credits can be accepted. There is no strong incentive for describing each unit by level nor for ascribing size, because there is a common understanding that a unit represents competence in a named occupational function. The precise function is the only piece of information necessary for employment purposes.

The objectives geared to the development of NVQs have not yet been fully realised, and some of the design specifications for NVQs have been adjusted as implementation has progressed. The original uncompromising outcome-focus of the NVQ qualifications persisted from 1986 to the mid-90s, when evaluations and feedback from users highlighted the problems of a lack of emphasis on knowledge and understanding.

The focus on outcomes was throughout the 90s re-enforced by outcome-related Government funding for Further Education – i.e. colleges and training providers received a substantial proportion of the funding for VET on the basis of the attainment by candidates of the qualifications. In the 80s and 90s, Government reform in VET was dominated by qualifications reform. The New Training Initiative included three objectives: reform of adult training, reform of youth training and reform of apprenticeship. With the emergence of severe youth unemployment in the mid-80s - coupled with youth-oriented social unrest - the development of specifications for learning programmes for adults and apprentices was given low priority in favour of the development of national qualifications and the development of short-duration training programmes for unemployed young people. The emphasis on qualifications-led reform of training arrangements has remained, although the late 90s saw emphasis placed on the development of apprenticeships, with Modern Apprenticeships at levels 2 and 3 being strongly emphasised in the reports of the National Skills Task Force (1999-2002), the Cassells review of apprenticeship (2002) and the recent Green Paper on 14-19 Education and Training. Unlike the qualifications-oriented reform dominating policy in other parts of the system, Modern Apprenticeships have been built around programme specifications, which include both qualification requirements (completion of Key Skills, Technical Certificates and NVQs at the appropriate level), and requirements relating to duration, and locations of learning.

**0802 - VALIDATION AND RECOGNITION OF NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING**
Arrangements for the recognition of non-formal learning are linked to the outcomes-orientation of NVQ qualifications and outcomes-based non-N/SVQ qualifications. Since the design philosophy and assessment model for these qualifications emphasise assessment approaches and content which are notionally independent of the mode, duration and nature of learning, the use of prior achievement/learning to gain credit is intended to be both intrinsic to the assessment approach and easily done. Any learner, employed or not, who can provide evidence which meet the demands of the evidence requirements for a qualification can be awarded credit. However, the burden of providing evidence and the practicalities of assessment of non-formal/informal learning are considerable. Examples of good practice do exist but the problems of cost and complexity are widely reported. The importance of non-formal and/or informal learning is, however, clearly acknowledged in employers' increasing use in selection of accounts of experience, rather than formal qualifications, as evidenced in QCA research on trends in the use of qualifications.

In Scotland national standards-based vocational qualifications are based on pre-determined standards that are publicly available. They focus on what the individual can do and are therefore a means of certificating positive achievement. They do not depend on fixed syllabuses, fixed location or fixed time. Therefore they fit with the development of a flexible and coherent qualifications framework that can give recognition to non-formal/informal learning. The accreditation of prior learning enables individuals to gain recognition and certification based on evidence of what they know and can do, often acquired without the benefit of formal instruction. Recognition of both formal and informal learning is important to aid progression into both further or higher education and further learning.

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) assists students to gain vocational, academic or continuous professional development recognition or credits for prior learning and experience. APL was strongly promoted in the early 1990s, and became established as a non-traditional entry route to further and higher education, though often not to the most prestigious courses.

Typically, a portfolio evidencing the learning is produced, indicating the level and areas of expertise, then the level and content of the learning that will be assessed. APL is most likely to apply to a mature applicant.

Most recently, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has begun to take a Strategic interest in the recognition of informal and non-formal learning. Pilots are being conducted, for example, to develop ways in which the informal learning at youth centres can be recognised, thus helping social excluded young people on a pathway towards achieving qualifications. Also, LSC is experimenting with a system for providing informal recognition of the learning outcomes of adult part-time courses that do not of themselves lead to a qualification.

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Implementation Plan (October 2002) details the future developments of the SCQF. One target is to develop and agree a set of guidelines on recognition of prior learning and experimental learning (APEL) which would then allow credit rating and levelling on the framework.
The aim of government policy is to develop careers services available to all and to provide an easily accessible source of information, advice and guidance (IAG) to both young people and adults. ICT is considered to be an effective medium providing that ways can be found to provide equal access to disadvantaged and excluded groups. The government has also recognised the importance of providing effective training for providers of IAG services.

The reform of the framework IAG operates within is intended to provide a more effective level of service. The principles underlying the reforms are that:

- Local services should be free of charge at the point of entry;
- The initial priority for public funding is the provision of a basic information and advice service. Other services may be provided, but they may need to be offered on a fee-paying basis;
- New services will be built on the basis of what already exists;
- Delivery will be through 75 partnerships, drawing together as far as possible all relevant organisations on a local level;
- Particular attention is being given to the engagement of socially disadvantaged, the disabled or otherwise excluded groups.

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland the government's approach is concentrated on one set of provision for young people, another for adults. The government funds Ufi Ltd to develop and maintain the learndirect national information and advice service. Mainly targeted to adults, and advertising widely on TV etc. learndirect is accessed via a telephone helpline or on-line. The national Learning and Skills Council has an Adult Learning Committee and takes, inter alia, responsibility to oversee and part-fund effective guidance services for adults. The Connexions service, an amalgamation of local careers services, is geared to providing a more unified approach to meeting the advice and guidance needs of young people in the years of transition between schooling and the labour market. In addition, all secondary schools must provide a careers programme for all their pupils as part of the national curriculum, and further education colleges and universities have advice centres and careers programmes available for their students.

For employees, advice and guidance may be part of the human resource function. This is particularly the case for the growing number of organisations that have a system of professional or performance appraisal, and is likely to be linked to professional development and in-service training. ‘Investors in People’ is a scheme that has government support – it coaches and badges firms and organisations in both the public and private sector, encouraging best practice in staff development and training.

In Scotland, the UK’s first all age guidance organisation Careers Scotland was established in April 2002. This organisation brings together the role previously undertaken by some 80 organisations, and it provides careers and training advice, information and guidance to people of all ages across Scotland. Careers Scotland’s services can be accessed via office based throughout the country or through the interactive website [www.careers-scotland.org.uk](http://www.careers-scotland.org.uk).

Guidance and counselling can also be provided in the workplace, by Trade Unions or through Learndirect Scotland who act as brokers between learners and learning providers.
Deal, young unemployed are given guidance and must demonstrate a quota of job applications to qualify for benefit. Emphasis is placed on ‘one-stop shops’ in the local community and through Internet access – either through the home or through facilities in local libraries, etc.

While a variety of sources of advise and guidance are available, we can summarize the main sources of advise and guidance for different target groups as follows:

Young people in Education - Connexions/school or college

Young people at risk of exclusion - Connexions/New Deal

Young people at work - Connexions/Human Resources provision, etc.

Adults at work - Human Resources, etc. / University for Industry

Adults not in employment - University for Industry

The following are the main UK measures.

**SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**
All have career programmes for guidance services, working with the Connexions service.

**CONNEXIONS**
The Connexions service is an integrated support service for all 13 –19 year olds in England. The aim of this initiative is to improve advice and support to young people in transition. As well as direct delivery of advice and guidance, Connexions is intended to improve the responsiveness of other agencies delivering services to young people: the emphasis is on involving young people. Connexions Direct is a pilot to develop an online version, with access to advice on a help line.

**THE JOBCENTRE PLUS**
The Jobcentre Plus provides jobseekers with access to any vacancy held by Jobcentre Plus, anywhere in Britain (currently around 300,000 at any one time) and to vacancies held by others, including private employment agencies and other European Employment Services. This service has made progress in delivering a modern e-business service to jobseekers and employers, service delivery partners and Jobcentre Plus staff.

**CAREERS SCOTLAND**
Careers Scotland’s services are accessible to people of any age. Key target groups are secondary school aged children, disadvantaged young people aged 16-19 who are not in education, employment or training, and the unemployed. Information, advice and guidance is available from Careers Advisers or via the interactive website.

**LEARNDIRECT/LEARNDIRECT SCOTLAND**
learndirect is the brand name for services offered by Ufi Ltd. which has developed from the concept of the University for Industry. The learndirect national advice line uses trained and qualified advisers offering free, impartial advice using a database of over 600,000 UK learning opportunities. learndirect also offers access to learning at a time, place and pace to suit the individual learner through a range of bite-sized, mostly online courses available at a network of around 2,000 learning centres, at home or in the workplace. learndirect scotland (the brand name for SUfI) provides learners with advice on learning opportunities available throughout Scotland.

**EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES**
A wide range of employment agencies is to be found on the high street, or through electronic links. Some of these serve a general function as employment agencies, while others operate in particular sectors or labour market niches.

**0903 - GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PERSONNEL**

A wide range of professionals are involved in guidance and counselling.

This ranges from teachers in schools, most of whom will specialise and undergo in-service training and trained careers advisers at school, college or HE, to Jobcentre Plus personnel, and to advisers in small agencies whose training and credentials may vary.

The sectoral body with responsibility for standards and qualifications in this field, is the former Employment NTO, has developed professional development packages and competence frameworks. These are now operational. All providers of IAG services that are funded through Connexions partnerships are required to be accredited against the National Quality Standards for Learning & Work. This applies to both public and private sector organisations. The Guidance Council (GC) has developed the standards. The GC promotes and advises on the provision of good quality guidance and the Guidance Accreditation Board (GAB) handles the accreditation process. The Common Inspection Framework through inspections by the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) (not Scotland) provides a quality assurance for standards and provision of guidance services.

The professional standards cover a range of issues:

- The breadth of content - information at local, national and international level covering as appropriate housing, child care, health including sexual health and substance misuse, benefits and other financial support, discrimination, learning entitlement, job search, job vacancies and the labour market, occupations, education and training, and other career and personal development opportunities and leisure opportunities;
- The range of formats and languages;
- Other access issues;
- Impartiality;
- The need for a range of support to be available for those young people needing it in order to gain benefit from the information e.g. translation services.

Full qualification links academic study with vocational, evidenced based practice, through the NVQ level 4 in guidance. The guidance qualifications framework is still developing.

In Scotland, Careers Advisers must have a post graduate qualification (part 1) and successfully complete on the job assessment (part 2) to achieve the Qualification in Careers Guidance.

No specific targets have been set, in Scotland, for the training of other non-teaching educational staff. However, Further Education colleges are required to submit strategic plans, which include information on the action they intend to take to develop staff, to the Funding Council each year.
In the UK, funding of VET has undergone substantial changes in the past decade, especially due to the increasingly proactive role of government. A government aim is to encourage individuals and employers to take more responsibility for training to improve competitiveness and productivity.

As a result of the government’s investment, education and training spending in the UK as a proportion of gross domestic product rose from 4.7% in 1996-7 to 5.0% in 2001-02, and is forecast to rise to 5.3% in 2003-04. Government’s expenditure on education accounted for 11.43% of public expenditure in 1999 compared with 10.99% in 1996 (ONS, 2001a). In England in the period of 2000 to 2004, capital expenditure on education and skills is expected to rise by 18% a year in real terms. By 2003-2004, spending in England on education and skills will be over €16.7 billion more than in 2001-2002.

Government funding is mostly provided from general tax revenue, alongside other sources, in particular, the recent concentration on private funding initiatives (PFI). Also, students contribute to the cost of higher education and to the cost of general adult education.

In 1997-98, tax revenue money funded 3.5 million students to study at colleges of further education in England at a cost of €4.5 billion. Though funding has risen since then, further education (FE) colleges receive lower funding compared with similar general school courses. In 1999, publicly funded work-based training cost €2.1 billion a year and covered some 500,000 individuals (DfEE, 1999a). Taken together these sources of funding give Government an important influence on the supply of skills. The way in which Government designs and implements funding systems has a major impact on curricula, qualifications, learners, providers, employers and communities.

The Government is modernising local government finance, looking at the distribution of government grants, the control of capital expenditure and taxes, and the use of the three-year Strategic Spending Reviews.

In England the Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs) are now responsible for funding all government-supported VET, with the exception of Higher Education, and the education of all post-compulsory education in the public sector. The LSC is also responsible for provision of adult and community learning (ACL). The LSC passes on funding to FE colleges and local authority adult education centres for the purpose of providing general and vocational-related courses which are available for adults. Different funding arrangements are in place for different courses.

The LSC uses both formula and bid mechanisms to allocate capital and other funds to institutions. Colleges of further education may also finance capital investment with the proceeds from the sale of land and through commercial borrowing.

While employers are largely responsible for their own CVT, public funding is available through LSC, i.e. for basic skills and learning which is generated by trade unions.

In Scotland, financing of post-education differs depending on whether it is classed as vocational training, further or higher education. The distinction between training and the other two forms of post-school training is that, in training, the funding is used to provide courses, while in the other cases the funding supports the colleges and universities themselves. FE colleges are funded directly by through the Scottish Further Education Funding Council (SFEFC), using financial resources made available by the Scottish Executive. HE institutions are funded through the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council (SHEFC). One of the changes to be implemented following the publication of the new Scottish lifelong learning strategy is the merger of SFEFC

and SHEFC. The merger will give greater comparability and transparency in the way that different types of institution and levels of courses are funded in tertiary education.

In Wales, Education for Learning for Wales is funding body with a similar coverage to LSC and includes funding for school 6th forms. The National Council ELWa represents a partnership between FE and HE funding regimes and operates from a virtual head office with regionally based offices.

For funding purposes the Department for Education approve qualifications for schools and supply the funding. Colleges are funded the Department for Employment and Learning (DELNI).

**Figure: Simplified chart of flows of funding in England**

Direct payments to individuals and business: grants, discounts, accounts and loans

These can play a major role in stimulating and focusing demand. For instance, discounts on course fees have been provided through Individual Learning Accounts in the past, and loans are available for both individuals (career development loans) and small business (small firm training loans) for WfD.

**TAX RELIEF FOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING**

Since the early 1990s the government has given tax relief on payments (such as fees) for training, which can count towards a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ), or a General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ). Since 1996, people aged over 30 or over are entitled to tax relief for training, which does not involve NVQs, if it provides skills or knowledge, which are relevant to, paid employment or self-employment.

Individuals may also be entitled to financial support through Career Development Loans – a deferred repayment loan from a bank to help an individual pay for vocational learning or development. The DfES pays the interest on the loan whilst the individual is training and repayments begin one month after the end of learning.

**1002 - FUNDING FOR INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**
In England, funding flows from the DfES to LSC and then to training providers. The LSC funds post-16 education in secondary schools, via the LEAs, and funds directly all other state-funded programmes. The LSCs consult with the range of partners regarding the most appropriate mode of delivery for training provision, taking account of quality, access and strategic planning priorities.

While the VET framework in the UK may now begin to shift from the market driven training focus towards more planned learner-centred investment in learning, the Government and private enterprises rather than individual users are the main providers of funding for VET. For example, in 1996-7, enterprise paid, both in real funds and in-kind, the biggest portion of the overall VET bill (88 % of Continuing Vocational Training (CVT)), while the state was the major fonder of Initial Vocational Training (IVT) (78%). Individuals contributed (through fees) less than 1% of IVT and CVT.

In 2001-02 the Department for Education and Skills allocated €11 billion to the LSC to support the delivery of post-16 training to around 6 million learners through some 400 colleges and 2,000 training providers. In 2003-04 the LSC will manage a budget of over €11.2 billion, reflecting its new responsibility for school sixth form funding (1,800 schools).

### 10.2.1. FURTHER EDUCATION FUNDING

Further education (FE) is funded by the DfES through the LSC. In 2002-2003, funding for FE allocated to LSC is €6.2 million, which is paid out to colleges as grants based on the unit of funding per full-time equivalent student in further education.

The key elements in the national funding formula are as follows:

- **Programme core costs** – reflecting the length of the learning aim and the basic cost of delivery; Achievement;
- **Programme weighting** – reflecting that some learning aims of similar length or leading to an equivalent qualification but in different programme areas are more costly to deliver than others;
- **Disadvantage** – an uplift supporting the policy intention and reflecting the costs of widening participation and also reflecting that some learners come from disadvantaged backgrounds;
- **Area costs** – a weighting factor reflecting the significantly higher costs of delivering provision on London and related areas.

Comparing 1996-7 and 2002-3, the participation funding for each FE student has remained constant in real-terms.

### WORK-BASED LEARNING

There are two types of funding available through the LSC for work-based learning for young people aged 16-24 in England: formula-based provision and non-formula funded provision. Formula-funded provision is available for:

- Foundation Modern Apprenticeships (previously known as National Traineeship);
- Advanced Modern Apprenticeships;
- NVQ Training.

There are two levels of funding for Modern Apprenticeships - 16 to 18 and 19 to 24 age groups. The older age group attracts a lower level of funding on the assumption that they will learn more quickly and complete the programme more quickly than those coming straight from school at the age of 16.

The national formula for all MA and NVQ training is based on the following:
• Core funding – the length of the programme and the cost of providing that programme;
• Weighting – calculated on factors such as the necessity of any particular costing equipment;
• CORE+WEIGHTING = the basic national rate;
• The new knowledge-focused technical certificates for revised Modern Apprenticeships attract revised rates, now included in 2002/3 funding.

**PRE-16 EDUCATION AND BUSINESS LINKS**
The local LSCs work with the Education and Business Link (EBL) Consortia whose aim is to prepare young people more effectively for adult and working life. In 2001/2 EBL schemes attracted €42.5 million funding.

**10.2.2. FUNDING IN THE DEVOLVED ADMINISTRATIONS**
In Wales, the National Assembly has devolved responsibility for the funding of education and lifelong learning. Although the key objectives are broadly consistent with those for England, there are a number of significant differences in structures and the way that programmes are offered and funded. Education and Learning Wales (ELWa) has a responsibility for post-16 education and training in Wales.

Skillseekers – all work-based learning programmes for young people between 16 and 24 years of age come under this brand name

In Northern Ireland, the Department for Employment and Learning is responsible for funding Jobskills, the training scheme for young people. The programme comprises three strands: Access, for young people with essential skills or special skills needs that require additional support; Traineeship (the equivalent of FMA in England); and Modern Apprenticeship, (the equivalent of AMA in England).

Training in each of the strands focuses on the delivery and attainment of national vocational qualifications at levels one, two, or three respectively. Training is provided by approved Training Organisations (TOs), which can include further education colleges, local and national employers and community organisations, and is funded by the Department. Trainees receive a training allowance, paid through the Training Organisation.

Colleges’ of Further Education in NI main recurrent funding is provided through the FE Funding Formula, which is based on the measurement of student activity and achievement called a Student Powered Unit of Resources (SPUR). This ensures that all colleges are funded on the same basis.

In Scotland, there is no formal IVT currently available in schools.

The Review Group looking at Enterprise in Education in 2002 recommended that all pupils over the age of 14 would have an opportunity for work-based vocational learning linked to accompanying relevant qualifications. The Scottish Executive will shortly produce a response to this and the other recommendations made by the Group.

Examples of this sort of activity currently being delivered and funded by two Local Authorities. Glasgow City Council's Schools Vocational Programme, which allows 14 year olds to embark on a programme combining study for a SVQ with employer-based training in a range of occupations. It includes employer placements and summer schools and offers progression to Modern Apprenticeship. Dundee City Council's Pre-Apprenticeship offers a 3-year programme allowing 14 year olds to attend college for work tasters in construction trades, followed by full-time college attendance to complete SVQ and off-the-job training and employment to undergo Modern Apprenticeship.
Skillseekers in Scotland is the funding route for all publicly funded vocational training for young people between 16 to 24 years of age. It is aimed at helping young people to achieve a relevant Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ). Funding for a Skillseeker MA is available through the Local Enterprise Companies (LECs), each of which has its own funding allocation from the Scottish Executive based on regional economic and labour market priorities.

1003 - FUNDING FOR CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING, AND ADULT LEARNING

The LSCs in England allocate funds for aspects of CVET. Local education authorities allocate fund for general adult education.

The Learning and Skills Act 2000 reformed the funding and planning of further education in England and Wales. Every fiscal year, assumed funding for further education are allocated to the Learning and Skills Councils which were set up to manage funding for all post-16 education and training with the exception of Higher Education. The funding for 2002-2003 of €6.243 billion represents a €459 million increase over 2001-02. That is a real-term year-on-year increase of 5 % in 2002-03. This is in addition to a 10 % real-term increase in 2001-02, compared to 2000-01. In 2003-04, LSC has managed a budget of €11.2 billion.

In Wales, since April 2001, the National Council for Education and Training for Wales with the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales has responsibility for funding all post-16 education and training. Education and Learning Wales (ELWa) has assumed the functions previously performed by the Further Education Funding Council for Wales, National Assembly, and the Training and Enterprise Councils in Wales with regards to post-16 and further education in Wales.

In Northern Ireland, the Department for Employment and Learning, Northern Ireland (DELNI) is responsible for the funding of both further and higher education. Apart from direct financing, Funding is provided to colleges and students through a number of special initiative “Earmarked” budgets, which are designed to widen access, increase participation, address skills shortages and enhance the role of the sector in supporting economic development.

The network of 101 Learning partnerships, currently under the Government’s revision, are non-statutory, voluntary groupings of local learning providers. They are supported and influenced by the DfES through the annual Partnership Fund of €14.6 million, agreed through to 2002-3. From April 2003 funding for Learning Partnerships, currently channelled through Government Offices, will transfer to LSC and become part of the Local Initiative Development Fund.

The University for Industry (UfI)/Learndirect in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Although independent of the Government, Learndirect is supported by the Department for Education and Skills. A parallel body, Scottish UfI/Learndirect, has been established in Scotland and is funded by the Scottish Executive.

In Wales, local education authorities (LEAs) are responsible for a provision of an Assembly Learning Grant for full and part-time courses in further or higher education, and those returning to education.

In Scotland, financing for training of 16 to 24-year-olds is the responsibility of the Minister for Enterprise and Lifelong Learning. Funding is provided through Scottish Enterprise (SE) and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) to Local Enterprise Companies (LEC), which are independent of the education system but buy in training from it.

Scottish Local Authorities have adopted different approaches in the provision of community education services. In some cases, responsibility for the different services
remains in the education department, in others it has been split across a number of
departments.

General responsibility for promotion, development and oversight of community learning
resides with Youthlink and Communities Scotland. It provides, jointly with the Scottish
Further Education Unit (SFEU), support to the Scottish Adult Learning.

Because of local variations the expenditure by local government on community
learning is difficult to assess, but it is in excess of €117m. In addition, the Scottish
Executive’s Education Department (SEED) and Enterprise and Lifelong Learning
Department (SEELLD) together spend over €4.4m annually on community education in
grants to voluntary bodies, capital grants for local facilities and on a direct grant to
CLS.

There is no mechanism regulating enterprise-based CVET in England, neither there is
comprehensive up-to-date information on what UK employers spend on VET.
According to “Adult Learning in England: a review” (IES, 2000) in the UK employers
make the biggest financial contribution to learning at work. The In 1993 survey,
employer-funded training amounted to €15.6 million whereas in 1998, the DfEE
estimated that employers spent between €22 and €29 billion on training their
employees.

The Industrial Society (now the Work Foundation) has conducted regular surveys of
UK employers’ training budgets and spending. Latest data (Industrial society, 1999)
suggests that organisations spend around 1.1 % of their turnover on training. Spending
per employee, which is difficult to calculate on a consistent basis, averaged €513 in
1999 – declining by size of organisations, with an average of €337 per head in
organisation with over 2,500 employees.

Another survey of mainly larger UK employers (Institute of Management, 1999)
indicates that on average employers spend 4.7 % of their payroll on training.

In a survey of small firms in 1995, 43 % said that the cost of training was the main
factor discouraging involvement (DfEE, 1995).

The Government is committed to engage employers across the UK in boosting skills,
productivity and employability. A newly established Sector Skill Development Agency
underpins a network of Sector Skill Councils (SSCs). SSCs work under a licence
issued by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills and the Lifelong Learning
Minister in the devolved administrations. SSCs receive up to €1.48 million a year each
from the DfES. All SSCs need to find additional funding from other sources.

The Government has set up a cross-departmental scheme totalling €59 million to
promote Workforce Development (WfD). Currently there are six regional pilots to
reward employer for giving their employees time off to improve their qualifications to
level 2.

Trade unions are encouraging a number of approaches to workplace learning. The
Union Learning Fund has been set up with the Government funding through TUC.

In Scotland, there are a range of Government funded national training programmes,
which are managed and delivered by Scottish Enterprise (SEn) and Highlands and
Islands Enterprise (HIE) through the enterprise network. These include Skillseekers,
Modern Apprenticeships, Training for Work and Get Ready for Work, all of which are
designed to promote and encourage access to education, training and employment
and are available across a broad range of occupational sectors. The programmes are
funded by the Scottish Executive as part of the block grant-in-aid provided to the
enterprise network. A contribution towards the individual candidates’ training costs is
paid by the enterprise network to training providers on achievement of specific milestones. In 2001-02, approximately €179m was spent on these programmes."

### Cost of CVT courses as % of total labour cost (all enterprises), by type of cost (1999)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TOTAL COSTS</th>
<th>DIRECT COSTS</th>
<th>LABOUR COSTS OF PARTICIPANTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EU-15</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total costs**: sum of direct costs, staff time costs and balance of contributions to national or regional training funds and receipts from national or other funding arrangements

**Direct costs**: costs of CVT courses

Source: Eurostat, Newcronos, 2nd continuing vocational training survey in enterprises (CVTS)

### 1004 - FUNDING FOR TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE AND OTHER GROUPS EXCLUDED FROM THE LABOUR MARKET

Active Labour Market Policy is an integral part of provision for long term unemployed adults. Since April 2001, work-based learning for unemployed adults and the New Deal have been delivered through the Jobcentre Plus across the UK (with slight regional variations, i.e. in Scotland, training is fully funded through Jobcentre Plus or Scottish Enterprise, who have responsibility for all adult training (aged 25 or over).

Jobcentre Plus is part of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Independent studies show that the New Deal for Young People (NDYP) reduced long-term youth unemployment by 45,000 and raised national income by €734 million annually. Lower benefit payment and higher tax revenues attributed to New Deal for Young People are worth about €4.4 for every €7.3 spent, reducing the programme’s net cost to €220 million a year.

NDYP is the most important of the six New Deal Programmes, in terms of budgeted spending:

#### 10.5.1. BUDGET SPENDING FOR 2001-4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NEW DEAL FOR YOUNG PEOPLE</td>
<td>€1,335 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW DEAL 25 PLUS</td>
<td>€880 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW DEAL FOR LONE PARENTS</td>
<td>€778 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW DEAL FOR DISABLED PEOPLE</td>
<td>€279 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW DEAL FOR PARTNERS OF UNEMPLOYED</td>
<td>€117 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW DEAL 50 PLUS</td>
<td>€88 m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As part of the New Deal for young people and unemployed over 25, employers are offered a subsidy for six month and receives €88 a week towards the cost of training the trainee for the job; the employer is expected to pay the trainee the going rate for the job. The employers meet the remaining cost of training themselves.

Those who are not ready to move into work may spend up to 12 months in full-time education on training leading to a recognised qualification and job experience. In 2000, about 28% went into unsubsidised employment and nearly 33% into the ND options, with only 5% of the total going into subsidised employment. The ND for long-term unemployed appears at first glance less successful than the ND for young people in
getting people into work, which is to be expected. Only 13% went into unsubsidised employment and only 4% went into subsidised employment.

Two more active labour market programmes have been launched in the UK since the New Deals – Employment Zones and Action Teams to run from 2000 to 2003. Eligibility is confined to unemployed people over 25 living in a Zone (EZ). Some EZ are run by private organisations, others by the “Working Links” Partnership of recruitment and consultancy firms and Jobcentre Plus. The budget for 200-02 was €164 million, €79 million of which was accounted by the job seeker allowance participants would otherwise have received. The other funds come from New Deal for People Over 25 allocations, Work based training for Adults channelled through LSCs, other Jobcentre Plus programmes.

Action Teams for Jobs were established in areas with high levels of unemployment and large ethnic minority population. With a budget for 2001-4 of €179 million, their initial brief is to run till 2004. The performance indicator set for this group is judged by the rise in employment among deprived groups in the areas and whether the employment is sustained.

StepUp is a €59 million intermediate labour market programme, launched in April 2002 and focuses on getting people into jobs in the open labour market by providing skill training, and including a continuing job search element.

1005 - PERSPECTIVES AND ISSUES: FROM FUNDING TO INVESTING IN HUMAN RESOURCES

The national priorities for funding training are closely linked to the government’s priorities and the devolved administrations’ main objectives for education and training. Amongst others, the government includes the following into its objectives:

- Raise attainment at 14-19
- Improve the skills of young people and adults and raise participation and quality in post-16 learning provisions
- Tackle the adult skills deficit

All these policies fit within an overall strategy that emphasises developing the human capital as a resource and as a means of achieving higher levels of productivity and competitiveness. Access to education and training beyond the statutory requirements of school attendance and entry to jobs that have entry qualification requirements is left in most respects to individuals (an individualistic approach) and, as far as training is concerned, to employers (the voluntarist approach). In recent years, adult learning has become more targeted and government in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have become more involved in identifying priorities. The UK government, at prime ministerial level, has declared its commitment to lifelong learning, which it sees as central to all policies for education and training. The rationale emphasises the benefits accruing to individuals, businesses of all sizes, communities and the nation. For individuals: improving life chances, particularly in the labour market. For business: an investment in the future, adding value, generating ideas and modernising. For communities: promoting social cohesion. For the nation: a strong, competitive economy in a global marketplace.

The government describes its role as helping to create a framework of opportunities for people to learn and to overcome the barriers to learning. The approach may vary according to the national, regional and local priorities of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Therefore state-provided funding is geared to contributing to the achievements of the UK priorities for lifelong learning. The funding regime and mechanism is used as a
conscious system driver to achieve system goals. The funding mechanisms adopted by the LSC continue the practice of targeting and rewarding.

On the other hand, the government has explored the possibility of increasing the responsibility of individuals and families for funding their own education and training in some circumstances and to see it as an investment rather than another expense. The developments over the funding of higher education and the requirements that students (except in cases of family financial hardships) contribute towards the costs of higher education tuition.

The coda to the Lisbon statement invites the member states to set national benchmarks for substantial increases in per capita investment in human resources (i.e. in education and training), without setting out specific benchmarks.

In the early years of the Labour Government in the UK, after 1997, it appeared that a rationalisation of the institutions steering and managing the systems of education and training was taking place, while levels of funding expressed as a proportion of GDP were at best static. Thus, between 1995 and 1999, although government expenditure on education and training in the UK remained more or less constant, in real terms expenditure on education in the UK declined from 5.1% to 4.5% as a proportion of GDP. However, this trend has now been reversed, a trend likely to continue with the government’s long-term spending plans: 5.0% in 2001/2 and a forecast of 5.3% for 2003/4. UK policy on the investment in human resources is moving in the direction that the Lisbon agreement proposes. However, it is well below the 7+ percent of GDP that the Lisbon agreement points out is achieved in the three highest performing countries. Furthermore, it is often the case that high skills is seen in the culture and tradition of the UK as an individual rather than a social or economic good.
The UK and each of the devolved administrations of the UK are prominent in participating proactively in the full range of European policies, initiatives and programmes relating to education, training and lifelong learning.

It should be noted that there are economic, social and cultural differences between regions and the countries of the UK. The European dimension is conducive to both devolution and regional developments, and this is reflected in the way that different parts of the UK participate in and gain from activity generated through the EU. For example, one EURYDICE unit covers England, Wales and Northern Ireland; Scotland has a separate EURYDICE unit.

The UK government and the devolved administrations all support the aims of the EC Memorandum on Lifelong Learning. Priorities include creating the freedom of movement for citizens between learning settings and jobs, opportunities to maximise their knowledge and competences, widening access to skills at all levels (including basic skills) and combating social exclusion. The Scottish Executive published its lifelong learning strategy in 2003. The Welsh Assembly published its policy in 2001, and reforms under discussion in England as predicated on a developing approach to lifelong learning. (See section 0501.)

DfES, in consultation with the devolved administration, has the key responsibility to ensure the UK’s full investment in the working groups set up to work towards the targets agreed in Lisbon 2000. The UK is, thus, participating in the ‘Open Method of Co-ordination’. Each of the devolved administration of the UK is responsible for identifying and achieving its own approach to lifelong learning. An aspect of VET at the European level is likely to be a theme of the UK presidency of the EU later in 2004.

The UK government Skills White Paper (21st Century Skills) sets out the agenda whose aim is closely in line with the overall aim of the Lisbon declaration. Similarly, the UK participates in defining and implementing its objectives in relation to the European Employment Guidelines, which also relate to training and lifelong learning. The UK Employment Action Plan 2002 was produced after extensive consultation and the devolved administrations of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales have made their own separate contributions. To date, the UK has exceeded the Lisbon and Stockholm employment targets. (See section 1.2.) The revision of the EES in 2003 will tie it into the goal set by the Lisbon European Council to achieve an overall employment level of 70% by 2010. The UK believes that vocational education and training will help deliver this end as one means to expand and extend the opportunity to work.

European support for employment and lifelong learning measures is channelled largely through the European Social Fund, which is the main tool for implementing the European Employment Strategy and National Action Plans at member state level. In Scotland, the Objective 3 programme in lowland Scotland (and its counterpart in the Highlands and Islands) was developed with reference to the lifelong learning agenda in Scotland and the appraisal process for individual applications assesses fit with national strategic priorities. Official strategy for Scotland may be summarised as being to:

- Support and foster the development of the European/international dimension in Scottish education and training generally;
- Communicate information, both internally and to the field, about education and training developments across the European Union and more widely;
- To raise the profile of Scottish education and training abroad; and
To advise on policy and development strategy in Scotland in relation to the European/international dimension.

A review of vocational qualifications used in the UK is in progress. The VET reform agenda, which initially focused on NVQs as the major instrument for increasing access to certification and for rationalising the system of qualifications, shifted fundamentally with the development and implementation of the National Qualifications Framework in 2000. This directed the reform agenda away from turning all qualifications into NVQs – with a strict adherence to restrictive design criteria – to using admission to the framework (through ‘accreditation procedures’) as a means of ensuring coherence, coverage and access to qualifications (See section 2). The framework includes occupational, general vocational, and general qualifications. In the VET domain, this was designed to bring into scope of national quality assurance those qualifications which had not become NVQs. The main lever remained approval for Government funding; those qualifications not approved to the framework would not qualify for Government funding. This incentive arrangement still leaves untouched those qualifications for which employers or other organisations were not seeking Government funding. The five level, three ‘track’ system of the National Qualifications Framework is currently under review, with the review examining:

- The need to align the framework with the levels framework being used in Higher Education;
- The number of levels;
- The need for and definition of different categories of qualifications; and
- The alignment of the framework with emerging credit systems across the UK and with EU frameworks.

The creation of devolved administrations in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland has increased any previous tendency towards divergence in the systems in these different parts of the UK. The administrations are committed to collaboration and development of coherence – not least because of labour migration and movement of higher education students – but there is an emerging tendency towards distinctive policy solutions to specific issues. This tendency is exemplified in the development of credit systems (described below). Northern Ireland and Wales have produced separate credit frameworks. However, recent close liaison between England, Wales and Northern Ireland has meant that their approaches are closely aligned.

Credit systems in England have been under discussion since the early 90’s, but have not featured until recently in national policy directed to structuring the qualifications system.

During 2001 and 2002 QCA submitted to the Government advisory reports on the further development of unitised qualifications and a credit-based framework of qualifications for England. About 80% of qualifications in the National Qualification Framework (NQF) are unitised including the AS, A2, the Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (the successor to the Advanced GNVQ), most vocational qualifications and all NVQs. Unitisation is associated with flexibility and choice in meeting individual needs related to pace of learning and progression. In February 2003 the Government agreed a plan to ensure that all unitised qualifications were assigned a level of the NQF and a size indicator. The intention is to encourage learning programmes for adults tailored to their needs and to provide clearer information on the accumulation of units. There is much interest in using unit-based programmes in secondary education where the achievement of whole qualifications remains government policy partly because of concerns about the fragmentation of the curriculum and potential administrative chaos.

The Government also responded to advice about a credit-based system by asking the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) to develop draft credit principles and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to set up a national working/steering group for
credit. This national group will report to the Government in March 2004 on the feasibility of developing a national credit system in England. It will be important that developments in England harmonise with the progress in credit developments in Wales and Northern Ireland where the same qualifications operate. The consultation will include debate on the use of credit outside the NQF and in non-formal learning, issues already being explored by both Wales and Northern Ireland.

SCOTLAND

Scotland has a separate Qualifications and Credit Framework (SCQF; see section 2). In SCQF two measures are used to place qualifications in the framework. These are the levels of the outcomes of learning and the volume of these outcomes, described in terms of SCOTCAT (Scottish Credit Accumulation and Transfer) points. The SCQF has 12 levels. Increases in level of demand relate to changes in factors such as:

- Complexity and depth of knowledge and understanding;
- Links to associated academic, vocational or professional practice;
- The degree of integration, independence and creativity required;
- The range and sophistication of application/practice;
- The role(s) taken in relation to other learners/workers in carrying out tasks.

Levels are not directly related to years of study. Over a lifetime of learning individuals will move from higher to lower levels or across levels of qualifications as they take on new learning and acquire new skills.

Each level is described in terms of its characteristic general outcomes under five broad areas:

- Knowledge and understanding - mainly subject based;
- Practice (applied knowledge and understanding);
- Generic cognitive skills, e.g. evaluation, critical analysis;
- Communication, numeracy and IT skills;
- Autonomy, accountability and working with others.

The descriptors are designed to allow broad comparisons to be made between outcomes of learning. It is not envisaged that every qualification will or should have all the characteristics set out in the level descriptors.

The SCQF Implementation Plan (October 2002) details the next stages of development and includes the publication of guidelines on determining the level and credit value of particular programmes of learning (Spring 2003) which will form the basis for further work by bodies other than SQA and Scottish HEIs when undertaking credit rating activity.

The Scottish Qualifications Certificate (SQC) is Scotland’s certificate for recording achievements in qualifications awarded by the Scottish Qualifications Authority. The SQC records all the qualifications achieved, individual units, courses and group awards. Every time an individual achieves a new qualification at school, college, and in the workplace, the SQC is updated. Therefore, the SQC provides an accurate and comprehensive record of all the learning success achieved throughout lifelong learning. It also records levels of achievement in the five Core Skills (basic skills/key competencies).

1102 - IMPACT OF EUROPEANISATION/INTERNATIONALISATION ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Over the course of the last 15 years, people involved with education and training across the UK have played an increasingly prominent role in European programmes, and these have impacted on practice and ways of thinking in many spheres. The Erasmus and successor programmes, for example, contributed to a substantial internationalisation of higher education – in terms of course content, the movement of
students and teachers - and the internationalisation of the research agenda. In the policy discourse, this has led to the use of concepts that have an accepted international currency – such as social inclusion and more holistic ways of analysing education and training systems.

Programmes such as Leonardo, Socrates and Youth (for Europe) have helped to both develop and re-examine approaches to learning – notably in VET and aspects of teaching and learning such as modern foreign languages. Mobility has increased, and the exchange of ideas and information between countries that the Internet permits has been facilitated by these European links. Organisations ranging from national agencies to further education colleges generally have an international officer, to promote links and European understanding, and to manage access to funds. The devolved administrations and regional bodies with an involvement in VET now routinely develop the European dimension.

Examples are many and varied. These range from the development of parts of London University as major centres attracting European research to a European curriculum centre serving a group of schools near Bristol. UK partners participate in the credit transfer network, to ensure that the UK’s credit frameworks support the effective development of European credit transfer systems; and in a range of transparency initiatives, such as the development of vocational reference centres and networks.

One area in which the UK has yet to meet EU aspirations is in the teaching and learning of modern foreign languages.

International benchmarking comparisons (such as PISA, TIMMS and PIRLS) are established as features of the landscape that planners and managers look at carefully to gauge the progress of the UK and the devolved administrations towards meeting objectives for competitiveness, productivity and social inclusion.

In Scotland a wide range of initiatives involving links with the EU have been engaged, including the creation of databases, the issue of case studies of good practice, materials for use in schools to develop pupils’ and students’ understanding of Europe, and the introduction of certificated courses of European Studies. All levels of education have been involved: schools, vocational education and training, higher education and community education.