



AGENDA

SELECT COMMITTEE - STUDENT JOURNEY

Wednesday, 1 June, 2011, at 1.00 pm

Ask for: **Theresa
Grayell/Gaetano
Romagnuolo**

**Swale 2, Sessions House, County Hall,
Maidstone**

Telephone **(01622) 694277/(01622)
694292**

Tea/Coffee will be available 15 minutes before the start of the meeting in the meeting room

Membership

Mr K Smith (Chairman), Mr M C Dance (Vice-Chairman), Mr A R Chell, Mr I S Chittenden, Mr P J Homewood, Mr R J Lees (co-optee), Mr S Manion, Mr M J Northey Mrs C J Waters

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

1.00 - 1.45 Interview with **Roger Gabriel**, Kent Economic Board Skills
pm Manager, Kent County Council (1 - 4)

2.00 - 2.45 Interview with **Sue Dunn**, Head of 14 - 19 Entitlement Team, Kent
pm County Council (5 - 6)

3.00 - 3.45 Interview with **Lucy Ann Bett**, Social Inclusion Officer, and
pm **Wayne Gough**, Interim County Manager, Supporting
Independence Programme, Kent County Council (7 - 8)

Background Reading for Members (9 - 68)

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)

At the end of the public session, Members of the Committee should remain in the meeting room for 20 minutes for summing up

Peter Sass
Head of Democratic Services
(01622) 694002

Monday, 23 May 2011

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STUDENT JOURNEY SELECT COMMITTEE

BIOGRAPHY FOR INTERVIEWEE ATTENDING SELECT COMMITTEE SESSION

Please provide a paragraph which will give the Select Committee the following information. Thank you.

Name: Roger Gabriel

Current post title: Kent Economic Board, Skills Manager

Current responsibilities: Sector conversations, Skills for business growth, Wind farms – environmental technology skills, Pfizer task force.

Brief outline of previous posts and responsibilities: Adult Education manager, Local skills for Productivity Alliance, Employment and Skills Board, North Kent MAA skills group.

Any additional information you think may be relevant to the review:

Having worked in Secondary, Further, Higher and Adult education sector, and well as running my own business I have a good knowledge of employment from both the education provider side and the business perspective.

My role in the skills for business group, requires a detailed knowledge of business needs both current and future. To achieve this I work closely with business, sector council and networks, to ascertain their needs and concerns. Much of their worries come from the perception that 'education providers' at all levels do not, and are not taking into account the needs of business when they seek to recruit new young staff. In Kent we have some excellent examples of good local practice, which need to be highlighted and replicated for the benefit of young and old people.

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THE STUDENT JOURNEY SELECT COMMITTEE

Hearing 1

Wednesday 1st June 2011

Witness Guide for Members

Below are suggested themes and questions. They have been provided in advance to the witnesses to allow them to prepare for the types of issues that Members may be interested to explore. All Members are welcome to ask these questions or pose additional ones to the witnesses via the Committee Chairman.

Themes and Questions

Roger Gabriel, Kent Economic Board Skills Manager, Business Strategy and Support, Kent County Council

- Please introduce yourself and outline the roles and responsibilities that your post involves.
- Please briefly provide an outline of the current issue of youth unemployment in the UK and in Kent.
- To what extent, in your view, do learning and skills providers in Kent prepare young people for work?
- To what extent, in your view, do vocational training, apprenticeships and work experience schemes meet local labour market needs and the expectations of growth industries in Kent?
- In your opinion, are additional or different training schemes, courses and qualifications needed to prepare young people for work and to meet employers' labour needs?
- Please discuss the effectiveness of current partnerships between local employers, educators and other skills providers in preparing young people for the world of work.
- Please discuss the role and impact that local career education and information, advice and guidance have in enabling young people in Kent to make informed choices about their future education and employment.

- Please inform the Select Committee of any policy changes at national level that have relevance in this review and that can impact on the educational and employment opportunities and choices of young people in Kent.
- Are there any other issues, with relevance to the review, which you would like to raise with the Committee?

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Themes and Questions

Sue Dunn, Head of the 14-19 Entitlement Team, Kent County Council

- Please introduce yourself and outline the roles and responsibilities that your post involves.
- Please provide an overview of the services supplied by the 14-19 Entitlement Team.
- To what extent, in your view, do learning and skills providers in Kent prepare young people for work?
- To what extent, in your view, do vocational training, apprenticeships and work experience schemes meet local labour market needs and the expectations of growth industries in Kent?
- In your opinion, are additional or different training schemes, courses and qualifications needed to prepare young people for work and to meet employers' labour needs?
- Please discuss the effectiveness of current partnerships between local employers, educators and other skills providers in preparing young people for the world of work.
- Please discuss the role and impact that local career education and information, advice and guidance have in enabling young people in Kent to make informed choices about their future education and employment.
- Please inform the Select Committee of any policy changes at national level that have relevance in this review and that can impact on the educational and employment opportunities and choices of young people in Kent.

- Are there any other issues, with relevance to the review, which you would like to raise with the Committee?

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Themes and Questions

**Wayne Gough, Supporting Independence Programme Manager, and
Lucy Ann Bett, Social Inclusion Officer, Supporting Independence
Programme, Kent County Council**

- Please introduce yourselves and outline the roles and responsibilities that your posts involve.
- Please provide an overview of the services supplied by the Supporting Independence Programme.
- To what extent, in your view, do learning and skills providers in Kent prepare young people for work?
- To what extent, in your view, do vocational training, apprenticeships and work experience schemes meet local labour market needs and the expectations of growth industries in Kent?
- In your opinion, are additional or different training schemes, courses and qualifications needed to prepare young people for work and to meet employers' labour needs?
- Please describe the KCC Apprenticeship Strategy 2011-14 and explain its objectives.
- Please discuss the effectiveness of current partnerships between local employers, educators and other skills providers in preparing young people for the world of work.

- Please discuss the role and impact that local career education and information, advice and guidance have in enabling young people in Kent to make informed choices about their future education and employment.
- Please inform the Select Committee of any policy changes at national level that have relevance in this review and that can impact on the educational and employment opportunities and choices of young people in Kent.
- Are there any other issues, with relevance to the review, which you would like to raise with the Committee?

Wolf Review of Vocational Education

Government Response

Wolf Review of Vocational Education – Government Response

In his foreword to the Government's White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching*, the Secretary of State for Education said that it is only through reforming education that we can allow every child the chance to take their full and equal share in citizenship, shaping their own destiny, and becoming masters of their own fate. We will not achieve this ambition if we do not also reform vocational education, so that just as every pupil should have the opportunity to attend an excellent school with excellent teachers, and study a world class curriculum and stay on in learning to age 18 and beyond, every young person should also have the opportunity to take excellent technical and practical courses.

Vocational education is immensely valuable for two, crucial, reasons.

First, it is an essential part of a broad curriculum. Just as much as academic education, vocational learning provides invaluable opportunities for young people to develop their potential and expand what they know, understand and can do; and to gain recognition for that learning which allows them to progress as they move to adulthood. Investigating and developing genuine craft skills, and experiencing the satisfaction of technical accomplishment, has just as important a place in our education system as does mastering an academic discipline. If either academic or vocational study is over-emphasised, to the detriment of the other, we impoverish the opportunities available to young people in this country.

Second, vocational education is a vital underpinning for our economy. The development of young people's skills in areas of immediate relevance to employers and business is a central part of the Government's plans to boost economic growth, and to support higher levels of youth employment. It is a commonplace that technical education in England has long been weaker than most other developed nations. Yet it is also widely agreed that our country's future relies upon building an advanced economy founded on high-level technical skills, and the ability to remain at the forefront of ever-faster technological change. We must, therefore, put in place the reforms needed in our education system to address the long term weaknesses in practical learning. Professor Wolf's review establishes the principles on which we can do that.

As Professor Wolf points out, there are areas of strength in vocational education in this country, and examples of excellent vocational provision for young people. Places on the best Apprenticeships, such as those provided by Network Rail or Rolls Royce, are highly regarded by both employers, and by potential apprentices. They are more oversubscribed than the most desirable course at the best university. There are excellent colleges, highlighted in Professor Wolf's review, like City and Islington College and Macclesfield College, offering specialist education with a national, and international reputation. And there are excellent qualifications available, providing clear routes for progression into full time employment, or further study in higher education.

However, these examples of excellence do not add up to an excellent system, and too often are provided in spite of, rather than because of, the structures that Government has created. In short, the current system of vocational education is failing too many young people.

That failure can stem from a number of different causes:

- Indifferent teaching of highly specialised subjects from teachers who are not well enough versed in the courses they are leading.
- Young people taking courses and qualifications which have been designed to meet the needs of adults, already in employment, seeking to hone the skills they use every day – but which offer no route to further education nor entry to employment for those still in education.
- Perverse incentives, created by the performance and funding systems, encouraging the teaching of qualifications which attract the most performance points, or the most funding – not the qualification that will support young people to progress.
- Students without a solid grounding in the basics being allowed to drop the study of English and maths – the most vital foundations for employment - when these are precisely the subjects that they most need to continue.
- Not enough Apprenticeships for 16-18 year olds and a lack of incentives for employers to be involved in the programme.
- And underlying these problems, an attitude that vocational education is a second choice, easy option for the less able, which has been reinforced, not tackled, by claims of “equivalence” between qualifications which no one has truly believed.

These problems have been laid bare by Professor Wolf’s incisive and far-reaching review. So too have the best means to address them. We must not simply assert the equivalence of vocational and academic education, pretending that all study and every qualification is intrinsically the same, which will in fact serve only to devalue vocational education in the eyes of employers, higher education institutions, parents and head teachers. Nor is it achieved by the wholesale development of new, untried and untrusted qualifications. Rather, we must ensure that we learn the lessons of the excellent practice that exists in this country, and reform the incentives and systems in which schools, colleges and employers operate to that they support such excellence, not hinder it.

As Professor Wolf’s review sets out, we need to ensure that every student studies only the best vocational qualifications, appropriate for their age, which ensure they can progress to further study or into a job. We need qualifications to respond easily to changing labour market demands – and to demand

excellence in ways which are true to the skills and occupations concerned. We need to ensure that the approach for adult learners is different: adults need to have access to programmes that are directly relevant to their immediate or future career needs and be able to measure their skills by the flexible, employer-led qualifications in the new Qualifications and Curriculum Framework.

We will take action on all of Professor Wolf's individual recommendations, and in doing so, deliver on three key themes.

We will:

- Ensure that all young people study and achieve in English and mathematics, ideally to GCSE A*-C, by the age of 19. For those young people who are not immediately able to achieve these qualifications, we will identify high quality English and maths qualifications that will enable them to progress to GCSE later. We will also reform GCSE to ensure that they are a more reliable indicator of achievement in the basics, in particular by ensuring that GCSEs are reformed alongside our current review of the National Curriculum.
- Reform performance tables and funding rules to remove the perverse incentives which have served only to devalue vocational education, while pushing young people into qualification routes that do not allow them to move into work or further learning. Those vocational qualifications that attract performance points will be the very best for young people – in terms of their content, assessment and progression.
- Look at the experience of other countries to simplify Apprenticeships, remove bureaucracy and make them easier for employers to offer.

This is a substantial programme of reform that will transform the lives of young people. While system change on this scale cannot happen overnight, we are determined to act as quickly as possible to ensure that improvements can begin to have a positive impact for young people as soon as possible and urge all delivery partners to do the same.

We are also delighted that Professor Wolf has agreed that she will continue to provide advice to the Government as plans for implementation are developed in more detail and then delivered. Working closely with Government officials, she will ensure the spirit and detail of the review is implemented and will provide Ministers with regular updates on progress.

This document sets out the Government's response to Professor Wolf's recommendations. We accept all of them, and what follows sets out how we will take them forward. Rather than simply take each recommendation in turn, it considers her report thematically and sets out how the Government will implement not just the letter but the spirit of her report, transforming the quality of vocational education for young people in this country.

14-19 Vocational Qualifications

Young people aged 14-16 must have a broad and balanced education that provides the foundation for further learning. We want the vast majority of 14-16 year olds to be taught an academic core, which can then be supplemented by a vocational element. We agree with Professor Wolf that allowing young people to specialise too soon narrows their choices and limits their chance to secure further learning and employment in the longer term.

Pupils must be offered vocational qualifications that are valuable, respected and support progression to further learning and skilled jobs. We therefore agree with Professor Wolf that we should clearly and simply recognise through performance tables those vocational qualifications which are most appropriate for the vast majority of 14-16 year olds, and which are comparable in terms of rigour of content and assessment to other qualifications that will count in the tables.

We want 14-16 year olds to do vocational qualifications that are comparable with the best academic qualifications in terms of content, assessment, and opportunities to progress. We will identify the best vocational qualifications for this age group and will recognise them in performance tables. In this way we will break free from the old equivalency based performance tables and include only a set of clearly defined vocational qualifications which have the greatest benefit for this age group. Preferred qualifications for this age group will:

- Have rigorous assessment, including a percentage of external assessment;
- Provide good progression opportunities to Level 3;
- Be in subjects which are recognised by employers and higher education;
- Offer rigour, breadth and depth;
- Be of an appropriate size to complement the academic core for the majority of students.

We will consult with employers, schools, colleges, higher education, and other experts over the summer in order to refine the attributes of the best vocational qualifications for 14-16 year olds.

At the same time as incentivising take up of these key vocational qualifications, we are clear that young people must take the qualifications that are right for them. We want schools and colleges to be free to choose whatever qualifications they identify as most appropriate for particular students and will enable them to progress, whether they are recognised in the performance tables or not. This may be appropriate where a student has a particular commitment to a specialisation like drama or music, or for those young people who may not be able to complete a full GCSE programme immediately (for example those with English as a Second Language). The most important thing is that the choice of course or qualifications is driven by what is best for the pupil, not the performance table score.

There is a risk that steps to limit the vocational qualifications that can contribute to performance indicators will lead to some schools paying less attention to their less academically successful pupils. It is also true that threshold measures, such as the percentage achieving five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C, can cause some schools to neglect their more able pupils. It is vital that performance indicators do not inadvertently cause schools to concentrate on particular groups of pupils at the expense of others. To avoid this we will continue to include performance measures, like average point scores, which capture the full range of outcomes for pupils of all abilities. In addition, from 2011 the performance tables will show for each school the variation in performance of low attaining pupils, high attaining pupils and those performing as expected.

16-18 Curriculum

Ensuring 16-18 year olds are undertaking a coherent and well considered study programme is vital to ensuring their education has the breadth, as well as the depth, to enable them to respond to changes in the jobs market and in their careers over their lifetime. The rapidly changing labour market and the fact that few 16 year olds know exactly what career they will be in at 22 means that learning up to 18 should provide breadth and keep options open alongside specialisation. We need to make sure that every 18 year old has followed a broad programme, including English and maths where they had not yet achieved to GCSE level by age 16, so that they have a secure foundation with which to progress.

The general principles for such a programme are likely to cover contact time, continuation/achievement of English and maths where appropriate, and qualifications that are of a substantial size, rigorously assessed, and offer good progression opportunities. We will refine these principles and will consult with higher education, learning providers, employers, Ofqual and other experts over the summer. The review of funding for 16-18 year olds will look at how we can fund coherent programmes of learning for 16-18 year olds.

All young people must leave school or college with good English and maths skills. For the majority of young people this should mean the achievement of GCSE maths and English A*-C: we know these qualifications support entry to the labour market and progression to further and Higher Education. However, we are aware that confidence in the GCSE has been undermined in recent years. So we have asked the independent regulator, Ofqual, to consider how to reform GCSEs in order to reduce modularisation and re-sitting and ensure that exams are typically only taken at the end of the course. We have also asked the regulator to consider how spelling, punctuation and grammar can be strengthened in GCSEs. In the coming years, alongside the review of the National Curriculum, these measures will ensure that we restore confidence in GCSEs as rigorous and valued qualifications.

For those who fail to achieve these GCSEs by age 16, we will consider

whether there are other qualifications that provide significant progress towards future GCSE success. Once we have established which qualifications are suitable we will develop new indicators for the performance tables showing the progress made by pupils in English and maths after the age of 16.

The White Paper *The Importance of Teaching* set out the Government's belief that the single most important factor in giving every child a good education is to have good teachers delivering good teaching. The importance, therefore, of attracting and retaining high quality teachers in all subjects, with a particular emphasis on science, mathematics and other high-priority subjects, is paramount.

We will commission a maths continuing professional development support programme, which will be in place by autumn 2011. This will build on the achievements of the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics (NCETM) and draw on Local Leaders of Education and National Leaders of Education as the network of Teaching Schools develops over the next few years. We will also continue to fund schemes which provide existing maths teachers with the detailed subject knowledge to become recognised as specialist teachers.

Lower Attaining Pupils

All young people, regardless of their starting point, should be stretched to their full potential. We want to do more to support the most vulnerable young people who are not able to progress directly to achieve GCSE level qualifications by age 16. Too many young people are failing to reach this critical level, which harms their prospects for progressing in education or training and finding a job. We share Professor Wolf's concern that the proportion of young people in this group is high in England compared to other countries. We must raise the attainment of the lowest performing young people so that more of them are well placed to progress. Post-16 programmes of study need to support students to achieve English and maths, and incorporate valuable work experience. We agree also that foundation learning which presently shapes much of what is taught to this group of young people, is too rigidly structured and qualification driven. We need to understand better what makes a difference, and build on the best examples.

We will find out what schools, colleges and other providers are doing well to support these young people, including the most disengaged, and enable them to progress to GCSE level qualifications at age 16 or soon after. We will examine the evidence here and internationally, and will publish our findings and recommendations by December 2011. We want study programmes for these young people to offer high quality, genuine work experience and focus on achievement of English and maths. This work will be informed by an independent evaluation of Foundation Learning, which will be published in the summer, and by the experiences and views of providers and young people.

A significant proportion of these young people will have special educational needs, and some of those needs will be particularly complex. For those with these more complex needs the Green Paper, *Support and Aspiration: A New Approach to Special Educational Needs and Disability* published in March 2011, sets out our vision for supporting those with special educational needs and disabilities and makes wide ranging proposals that will inform policy in this area. This includes a proposal for new indicators in the performance tables relating to the lowest attaining pupils between Key Stages 1 and 2, and Key Stages 2 and 4 in English and maths. We will consider how we can supplement these indicators with information on pupils' achievements in English and maths post-16, focussing on those who failed to achieve these essential skills by Key Stage 4. Taken together with other plans announced in the Green Paper and the new Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 destination measures (announced in the White Paper *The Importance of Teaching*), which will show how many pupils progress into further education, employment or training, these new measures will ensure that schools and colleges are held accountable for helping all of their pupils to prepare for success post-16 and beyond.

16-18 Funding

We are committed to all 16-19 year olds having individually tailored programmes that enable them to fulfil their ambitions whether that is moving on to employment or further study. As part of this the funding for 16-19 education needs to be radically changed to remove perverse incentives for colleges to accumulate qualifications rather than provide sensible, balanced and broad programmes of study.

We have announced that we are reviewing the 16-19 funding formula. This review will consider how we can move from a formula based on funding qualifications to one based on funding learners. The review will consider value for money and what weightings may be needed to reflect the content-related cost of courses and for particular groups of high-need young people. This latter aspect will consider what the post-16 equivalent of the pre-16 pupil premium may look like. We are aiming to consult on changes to the 16-19 funding formula over the summer alongside the pre-16 funding formula review.

As Professor Wolf says, every young person should be able to take the qualifications they need to equip themselves with the right skills to progress, and schools and colleges should encourage this. Where it is clearly in the young person's best interests to be able to move sideways or down, they should be able to do so, and the funding rules should support this.

Professor Wolf notes that not every young person will achieve Level 2 or 3 by 19 and we need to give them opportunities for a second chance. She proposed that there should be no time limit on when young people take up this opportunity. It is presently the case that we provide full Government funding for young adults to support them to achieve their first full level 2 or

first full level 3 qualification up to age 24. The funding is focussed on this age group because it can secure long term economic benefits and maximise the impact of investment from limited resources. It is right to retain this focus, but we recognise that some young people achieve a full level 2 qualification by the age of 19 without reaching this level in the critical areas of English and Maths. We will therefore extend the availability of full government funding for level 2 courses in English and Maths to those 19-24 year olds who have yet to achieve this level in both.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are rightly regarded as the best way to learn in work. Places on the best Apprenticeships are as highly sought after and regarded as places at the most prestigious universities. We want to ensure that all Apprenticeships are as good as the best, and that we learn from international practice. We will remove bureaucracy and make Apprenticeships easier for employers to offer, ensuring that the money spent by Government and employers on Apprenticeships is used to the very best effect.

We support the emphasis placed by Professor Wolf on progression and flexibility within frameworks and recognise that, especially for 16-18 year old apprentices, the general educational component should provide a firm foundation that they can build on through further learning and throughout their career. In this light, we are considering whether and how Apprenticeship frameworks for 16-18 year olds should be adapted or supplemented to reflect the importance for this age group of a broader programme of study; and we will come forward with proposals in autumn 2011. We will consult with employers and delivery partners on any proposed changes.

We agree with Professor Wolf that 16-18 year old apprentices who have not yet achieved GCSE A*-C in English and maths should have the opportunity to do so. Providers can already offer GCSEs as part of their Apprenticeships programmes, and we will phase out Key Skills from Apprenticeship frameworks by September 2012, meaning that Functional Skills and GCSEs will be the only recognised pathways to achieving the compulsory English and maths elements of an Apprenticeship. When taking this recommendation forward we will also consider international models which have general educational content and will publish further research on lessons we can learn from international exemplars by January 2012.

Apprenticeship frameworks can already be drawn up by other bodies, aside from SSCs, and we will come forward with proposals to make this more widespread by autumn 2011, for example through the continued expansion of the Apprenticeship Frameworks Online service. Employers need a credible voice in the design of qualifications, provided through SSCs. It is important that SSCs have a remit which focuses their work on the areas where they can add most value. We will review their role as Issuing Authorities for Apprenticeship frameworks by January 2012.

Payments to employers can be an effective way to encourage them to take on apprentices, as demonstrated by a number of apprenticeship programmes abroad. It is important to ensure that any such scheme will deliver the outcomes we want as well as offer value for money, and further work will be needed to assess the costs and benefits in the context of the cost of the programme as a whole – including any proposed adjustments to the general educational content of the Apprenticeship framework for 16-18 year olds. We will consider this as part of our review of 16-19 funding, and in light of our planned research into employer investment, which will report in autumn 2011.

We will also want to ensure transparency of Apprenticeship funding, and the related benefits employers receive – because intermediaries often receive payments on employers' behalf, many employers are not aware how much money the Government is investing in the training of Apprentices. We will investigate how this might work in practice, with a view to implementing transparency measures for the start of the 2012 academic year.

We believe that as much funding for Apprenticeships as possible should be spent on the programme's delivery, and we will review contracting processes by January 2012, with a view to achieving efficiencies and greater simplification, drawing where possible on lessons learned from international exemplars.

We are looking at what changes can be made to the current apprenticeship system to encourage and enable more, smaller employers to offer apprenticeship places. We are particularly keen to see the current GTA network grow although there are other models, for example Apprenticeship Training Agencies (ATAs) and National Skills Academies, which are also important and can complement GTAs (and vice versa). The National Apprenticeship Service will be publishing an evaluation of the work of ATAs and GTAs by May 2011. We will produce an action plan based on the recommendations of this evaluation. One possible funding route for supporting such collective activity is BIS's new Growth and Innovation Fund.

Strengthening vocational teaching in schools

We believe that schools should be free to appoint the right teachers to deliver the appropriate curriculum for their pupils. For too long highly experienced Qualified Teacher, Learning and Skills (QTLS) holders have been unable to teach the subjects in schools that they already teach in further education colleges. This means that head teachers and governing bodies have not always been able to appoint the right teachers for the delivery of high quality education across the full range of subjects taught in schools. That is why we are giving schools the freedom to select the teachers with the skills and experience that they require.

Recognising QTLS status in schools will require a change in the law. A statement will be made this summer explaining how and when the changes

will apply. Subject to statutory and parliamentary procedure, we intend to implement this recommendation as soon as possible.

We will also clarify the existing rules on the supervision and direction of industry experts in schools. This clarification will be made available in time for the coming academic year.

Enrolling students in colleges pre-16

We believe that it is right for young people to have a choice as to where they take their education. That is why we are supporting the creation of University Technical Colleges (UTCs), which offer full-time technically-orientated courses, with clear progression routes into higher education or further learning in work, including apprenticeships. Studying in UTCs provides opportunities for young people to integrate academic study with practical learning, studying core GCSEs alongside technical qualifications. UTCs specialise in subjects which need modern, technical, industry-standard equipment, such as engineering and construction, and teach these disciplines alongside business skills and the use of ICT. In the March 2011 Budget, Government committed to establishing at least 24 UTCs by 2014.

We are also keen to see many more Studio Schools across the country, an innovative new model of 14-19 provision delivering project-based, practical learning alongside mainstream academic study. Students work with local employers and a personal coach and follow a curriculum designed to give them the employability skills and qualifications they need for work or further education.

For some young people at age 14, college will offer a better learning option than schools, subject to ensuring that appropriate safeguards are in place. This will enable them to access good quality vocational provision, alongside the core academic Key Stage 4 programme. Students are currently able to enrol in colleges pre-16 and we want to see more young people being offered this opportunity. We will communicate this to all schools and colleges directly to ensure they are aware before the end of the summer term. We will also work with colleges in the autumn term to better understand the existing barriers to enrolling 14 year old learners.

Work Experience

We need to ensure that all young people are able to gain real experience and knowledge of the workplace. Genuine work experience is an important part of a student's programme of study while remaining in education, and we are committed to supporting schools and colleges in achieving this aim.

Local authorities are already under a duty to encourage work experience for students 16-19 and we have begun working with partners to promote this. A group of local areas and training providers are also developing Work Pairings models, which offer young people training and intensive work experience with local employers. These will help to inform thinking on future work experience models for all 16-19 year olds. The review of lower attaining pupils will consider how work experience and internships can support progression for these young people. We will consider how local employers could be reimbursed.

We will seek to remove the statutory duty to provide every young person at Key Stage 4 (14-16 year olds) with work-related learning. This will be achieved through secondary legislation and will involve, amongst other things, a public consultation in autumn 2011 and parliamentary debates in early 2012. We anticipate that the duty will be removed from the start of the academic year 2012/13 and release support for more work experience for older pupils. However, schools will still be free to determine whether and how work experience for young people at Key Stage 4 is provided.

Ofqual and Qualifications Design

Regulation of the qualifications market needs to be efficient, risk-based, maintain standards and support effective teaching. Ofqual is already changing the way it regulates: recently it consulted on how it will regulate awarding bodies rather than their qualifications. Ofqual will publish its new qualification regulatory framework, including new conditions of recognition, to make a reality of this ambition in May 2011. Each awarding body will need to meet these conditions from July 2011. Ofqual will continue to intervene in individual qualifications if necessary, based on an assessment of risk, notably to secure that standards are maintained.

It is and will remain our general policy that only qualifications regulated by Ofqual will be eligible for use in the maintained sector, so that schools, colleges and young people can have confidence in their quality. These qualifications will not have to be compliant with the Qualifications and Credits Framework, though this does not lessen the importance of offering qualifications which will encourage and facilitate progression to further study post-19. Ofqual will expand further on this in its own response to be published in parallel with this Government response.

The Wolf Report identified some recent changes to the funding processes that have meant that a number of trusted qualifications are no longer available, which is causing concern with some colleges and employers.

In April the following qualifications were reinstated on the approved qualifications list and will be available for teaching in September:

Awarding Organisation	Name of Qualification	Code
Edexcel	BTEC National Diploma in Aviation Operations (Level 3)	50012101
Edexcel	BTEC National Award in Aviation Operations (Level 3)	50012095
Edexcel	BTEC National Certificate in Aviation Operations (Level 3)	50012113
City and Guilds	Level 2 Certificate in Electrotechnical Technology	10035692
City and Guilds	Level 3 Certificate in Electrotechnical Technology	10036027
City and Guilds	Level 2 Certificate in Basic Plumbing Studies	10033567
City and Guilds	Level 3 Certificate in Plumbing Studies	10033579
City and Guilds	Level 2 Certificate in Heating and Ventilation	10035126
City and Guilds	Level 3 Certificate in Heating and Ventilation	1003514x

Ofqual will consider the extension or reinstatement of qualifications re-presented for accreditation, as it has done for childcare qualifications where there was a lack of provision.

It will continue to be acceptable for accredited QCF units and qualifications to be used where doing so meets learner needs.

Young people should be able to take courses which provide them with the skills they need to progress into employment. Ensuring that national and local employers can contribute to the development of National Occupational Standards will help secure this. National Occupational Standards will, however, remain a crucial part of professional qualifications for adults. By the autumn Government will consult on the future of National Occupational Standards, including the best way of using them to inform vocational qualifications, working with UK Commission for Education and Skills, national employers' bodies, Sector Skills Councils, Ofqual, and other key partners.

Ofqual and the Secretary of State have crucial and complementary parts to play in ensuring that qualifications are of the highest quality. Ofqual is the guardian of qualification standards and the legislation makes clear its veto over anything that would compromise standards. Ofqual is accountable to Parliament for securing its objectives, including the qualifications standards objective. However, Ministers have a democratic mandate over education policy, and consequently a legitimate interest in many aspects of how Ofqual regulates, for example, where this affects: how qualification structures drive learning; progression to further and higher education; incentives on providers and pupils; and cost, to name just a few. Ofqual too need to ensure that the way they regulate does not impede the delivery of Government's policy objectives. The legislation needs to provide a firm basis for that relationship.

Already, Ofqual has to have regard to Government policy, as directed by the Secretary of State. We will consider over the summer, with Ofqual, how to make the relationship between Ofqual and Ministers as clear as possible and whether any further changes to the legislation would help this.

Young people should be able to undertake courses which provide them with the skills they need to progress into employment. Involvement from local employers is vital to ensure that qualifications are relevant. While Sector Skills Councils currently play a key role in making sure this is the case, we agree that Government should not be unduly prescriptive about the ways employers input to qualifications. By autumn we will consult with Ofqual, Sector Skills Councils and other employer representatives to work out how best to take this forward.

Performance Indicators and Published Information

More information needs to be available to inform choice of provider post 14 and to support accountability.

The Government is committed to reducing the regulatory burdens placed on educational institutions and ensuring that they have as much flexibility as possible to decide for themselves how to deliver a high quality education that meets the needs of their pupils. We will therefore encourage the publication of more information, but not insist on it, and will re-visit the issue in future to see how many institutions have responded.

Key milestones for implementing Wolf recommendations

Recommendation	Action	Date
23	List of trusted qualifications reinstated and available for teaching from September	May 2011
17 and 18	Announcement clarifying the rules around professionals teaching in schools	May 2011
22	New qualification regulatory framework published by Ofqual	May 2011
19	Communicate to schools and colleges on pre-16 enrolment in colleges	June 2011
4	Publication of Foundation Learning evaluation	June 2011
22 and 25	New Ofqual conditions and criteria to regulate more strategically come into force	July 2011
4 and 7	Consultation period on Special Educational Needs Green Paper ends	July 2011
11	Review of 16-19 funding formula	Summer 2011
1-3	Consult on core attributes for 14-16 qualifications in performance tables	Summer-Autumn 2011
5 and 6	Consult on study programmes for 16-18 year olds	Summer-Autumn 2011
9	Consult on English and maths qualifications for 16-18 year olds	Summer-Autumn 2011
19	Complete investigation into barriers to pre-16 enrolment in colleges and make recommendations	Autumn 2011
10	Maths CPD support programme	Autumn 2011
8	Development of Proposals on Apprenticeship framework	Autumn 2011
4 and 7	Review of provision for lowest attaining learners complete and recommendations made.	December 2011
8	Review role of SSCs as Issuing Authorities for Apprenticeship frameworks	January 2012
11	Implementation of new 16-18 funding formula	March 2012 onwards
21	Statutory Instrument commences removing statutory requirement for work-related learning at Key Stage 4	September 2012

14-19 Vocational Qualifications

Recommendation 1: The DfE should distinguish clearly between those qualifications, both vocational and academic, which can contribute to performance indicators at Key Stage 4, and those which cannot. The decision criteria should be explicit and public. They will include considerations of depth and breadth (including consultation with/endorsement by relevant outside bodies), but also assessment and verification arrangements which ensure that national standards are applied to all candidates.

Recommendation 2: At Key Stage 4, schools should be free to offer any qualifications they wish from a regulated Awarding Body whether or not these are approved for performance measurement purposes, subject to statutory/health and safety requirements.

Recommendation 3: Non-GCSE/iGCSE qualifications from the approved list (recommendation 1 above) should make a limited contribution to an individual student's score on any performance measures that use accumulated and averaged point scores. This will safeguard pupils' access to a common general core as a basis for progression. At the same time, any point-based measures should also be structured so that schools do not have a strong incentive to pile up huge numbers of qualifications per student, and therefore are free to offer all students practical and vocational courses as part of their programme.

Recommendation 26: DfE should introduce a performance indicator which focuses on the whole distribution of performance within a school, including those at the top and bottom ends of the distribution.

Lower Attaining Pupils

Recommendation 4: DfE should review current policies for the lowest-attaining quintile of pupils at Key Stage 4, with a view to greatly increasing the proportion who are able to progress directly onto Level 2 programmes at age 16. Performance management indicators and systems should not give schools incentives to divert low-attaining pupils onto courses and qualifications which are not recognised by employers or accepted by colleges for progression purposes.

Recommendation 7: Programmes for the lowest attaining learners - including many with LDD as well as those highly disaffected with formal education - should concentrate on the core academic skills of English and maths, and on work experience. Funding and performance measures should be amended to promote a focus on these core areas and on employment outcomes rather than on the accrual of qualifications.

16-18 Curriculum

Recommendation 5: The overall study programmes of all 16-18 year olds in ‘vocational’ programmes (i.e. currently everything other than A levels, pre-U and IB, and including ‘Foundation Learning’) should be governed by a set of general principles relating primarily to content, general structure, assessment arrangements and contact time. Provided these are met (and see recommendation 6 below), institutions should be free to offer any qualifications they please from a recognised (i.e. regulated) awarding body, and encouraged to include non-qualifications-based activity.

Recommendation 6: 16-19 year old students pursuing full time courses of study should not follow a programme which is entirely ‘occupational’, or based solely on courses which directly reflect, and do not go beyond, the content of National Occupational Standards. Their programmes should also include at least one qualification of substantial size (in terms of teaching time) which offers clear potential for progression either in education or into skilled employment. Arrangements for part-time students and work-based 16-18 year olds will be different but the design of learning programmes for such students should also be considered.

Recommendation 9: Students who are under 19 and do not have GCSE A*-C in English and/or maths should be required, as part of their programme, to pursue a course which either leads directly to these qualifications, or which provide significant progress towards future GCSE entry and success. The latter should be based around other maths and English qualifications which have demonstrated substantial content and coverage; and Key Skills should not be considered a suitable qualification in this context. DfE and BIS should consider how best to introduce a comparable requirement into apprenticeship frameworks.

Recommendation 10: DfE should continue and if possible increase its current level of support for CPD for mathematics teachers, and give particular attention to staff who are teaching post-16 students in colleges and schools. DfE and BIS should discuss the possibility of joint funding for post-16 CPD activities in English and Mathematics, especially as they relate to apprentices and to general FE colleges recruiting adults as well as young people

16-18 Funding

Recommendation 11: Funding for full-time students age 16-18 should be on a programme basis, with a given level of funding per student. (This can and should be adjusted for differences in the content-related cost of

courses, and for particular groups of high-need student.) The funding should follow the student.

Recommendation 12: There should continue to be no restrictions placed on a young person's programme in terms of which level or type of qualification they can pursue. If it is appropriate for a student or apprentice to move sideways (or indeed 'downwards') in order to change subject or sector, that is their choice.

Recommendation 13: Young people who do not use up their time-based entitlement to education (including apprenticeship) by the time they are 19 should be entitled to a corresponding credit towards education at a later date. The existing system of unique student numbers plus the learning accounts being developed by BIS should make this straightforward.

Apprenticeships

Recommendation 8: The DfE and BIS should evaluate the extent to which the current general education components of apprenticeship frameworks are adequate for 16-19 year olds apprentices, many of whom may wish to progress to further and higher education. It does not appear appropriate, given this Government's commitment to progression through apprenticeship that frameworks should, as at present, be drawn up entirely by Sector Skills Councils (SSCs), who conceive their role in relation to current employers, and current, occupationally specific job requirements. The review of frameworks should also consider ways to increase flexibility and responsiveness to local labour markets and conditions.

Recommendation 14: Employers who take on 16-18 year old apprentices should be eligible for payments (direct or indirect), because and when they bear some of the cost of education for an age-group with a right to free full-time participation. Such payments should be made only where 16-18 year old apprentices receive clearly identified off-the-job training and education, with broad transferable elements.

Recommendation 15: DfE and BIS should review contracting arrangements for apprenticeships, drawing on best practice internationally, with a view to increasing efficiency, controlling unit costs and driving out any frictional expenditure associated with brokerage or middleman activities that do not add value.

Recommendation 16: DfE and BIS should discuss and consult urgently on alternative ways for groups of smaller employers to become direct providers of training and so receive 'training provider' payments, possibly through the encouragement of Group Training Associations (GTAs).

Strengthening vocational teaching in schools

Recommendation 17: At present teachers with QTS can teach in FE colleges; the FE equivalent - QTLS - should be recognised in schools, which is currently not the case. This will enable schools to recruit qualified professionals to teach courses at school level (rather than bussing pupils to colleges) with clear efficiency gains.

Recommendation 18: Clarify and evaluate rules relating to the teaching of vocational content by qualified professionals who are not primarily teachers/do not hold QTLS. Many schools believe that it is impossible to bring professionals in to demonstrate/teach even part of a course without requiring the presence of additional, salaried teaching staff. This further reduces the incidence of high quality vocational teaching, delivered to the standards that industries actually require.

Enrolling students in colleges pre-16

Recommendation 19: Make explicit the legal right of colleges to enrol students under 16 and ensure that funding procedures make this practically possible. Colleges enrolling students in this age group should be required to offer them a full KS4 programme, either alone or in collaboration with schools, and be subject to the same performance monitoring regime (including performance indicators) as schools.

Work Experience

Recommendation 21: DfE should evaluate models for supplying genuine work experience to 16-18 year olds who are enrolled as full-time students, not apprentices, and for reimbursing local employers in a flexible way, using core funds. Schools and colleges should be encouraged to prioritise longer internships for older students, reflecting the fact that almost no young people move into full-time employment at 16; and government should correspondingly remove their statutory duty to provide every young person at KS4 with a standard amount of “work-related learning”.

Ofqual and Qualifications Design

Recommendation 22: DfE should encourage Ofqual to move as quickly as possible away from regulating individual vocational qualifications and concentrate on regulating awarding bodies. When there is reason for concern about a particular qualification, Ofqual should continue to intervene.

Recommendation 23: DfE should confirm and clarify that qualifications offered to 14-19 year olds and funded through YPLA will not in future

need to be either QCF-compliant or belong to a specified group with additional approval criteria (GCSE, A Level, Diploma etc). They should, however, be offered by a regulated awarding body. As an immediate and temporary measure the Secretary of State should use his powers, under Section 96, to approve the funding of key established qualifications which have not been approved by SSCs, and have therefore not been accredited, but which are recognised by DfE as playing an important role in the country's vocational education system, and which are clearly valued by employers and/or higher education.

Recommendation 24: DfE and BIS should discuss and consult on the appropriate future and role of National Occupational Standards in education and training for young people, and on whether and how both national employer bodies - including but not only SSCs - and local employers should contribute to qualification design.

Recommendation 25: The legislation governing Ofqual should be examined and where necessary amended, in order to clarify the respective responsibilities of the regulator and the Secretary of State

Recommendation 27: At college and school level the assessment and awarding processes used for vocational awards should involve local employers on a regular basis. Awarding bodies should demonstrate, when seeking recognition, how employers are involved directly in development and specification of qualifications.

Performance Indicators and Published Information

Recommendation 20: All institutions enrolling students age 16-18 (post-KS4), and those offering a dedicated entry route for 14-year old entrants, should be required to publish the previous institutions and, where relevant, the qualifications and average grades at the time of enrolment of previous entrants. (This should be done on a course-related rather than an institution-wide basis.)

You can download this booklet online at: <http://www.education.gov.uk/publications>
Search using the ref: DfE-00038-2010

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Avoiding a lost generation -

Preparing young people for work now and in the future
Recommendations of the REC UK Youth Employment Taskforce



Avoiding a lost generation - preparing young people for work now and in the future

Foreword

Baroness Margaret Prosser

Employers, recruiters, welfare providers, Trade Unions and educationalists have a critical role to play in addressing this issue.

We know from previous recessions that significant periods of unemployment early in a young person's working life can have serious consequences on their future job prospects.

This is an issue which should concern us all. The direct cost of youth unemployment is substantial: the Prince's Trust has put a figure at £4.7 billion a year after taking into account productivity loss and the cost of benefits. If a generation of young people is scarred by unemployment then this is not only damaging for them, it undermines the development of the UK's future workforce.

Employers, recruiters, welfare providers, Trade Unions and educationalists have a critical role to play in addressing this issue. It is not just about government programmes, although these clearly have a crucial role to play. In the current climate, we cannot expect any increase in public funding. What we can expect is for funding to be effectively targeted and to deliver real progress.

Many schemes have not delivered the desired outcomes. We need to take stock and learn from these in order to improve what we do over the next few years.

One thing that stood out during the meetings of the Youth Employment Taskforce was the amount of activity that employers and recruiters are already taking forward. There is a genuine commitment within the business community to play a leading role in helping to build bridges into the world of work and to address one of the greatest challenges facing our society.

Addressing youth unemployment has been identified as a major priority for the new coalition Government. This report pinpoints a number of specific actions that can help make a real and lasting difference.

Baroness Margaret Prosser

Chair

REC Youth Employment Taskforce

Foreword

Kevin Green

The UK has a big problem. There are nearly one million young people who are not in education, employment or training.

The driver for the REC establishing the Youth Employment Taskforce was the urgent need for some fresh thinking from employers, recruiters, business bodies and educationalists with a real desire to make a difference.

The future generation of workers are not getting the skills and experience they need to take the crucial first step onto the jobs ladder. Many will be faced with repeated episodes of unemployment. This is bad news for the UK labour market with many young people not participating nor contributing. The implications for the UK economy as a whole are important – we are not building the talent pipeline that we need to compete over the next decade.

The UK labour market – while it has performed better than in previous recessions and than our international competitors – remains fragile. Spare capacity in companies and anaemic economic growth means that the predicted 'jobless recovery' is a possibility. There were still 500,000 vacancies in April 2010; there are opportunities but there is no doubt that young job-seekers are facing an increasingly competitive jobs market.

These young people risk becoming a 'lost generation' unless action is taken by all those with a role to play.

Government does not have the resources or all the answers. The Taskforce uncovered some systematic and deep-rooted issues. These too need to be addressed to best prepare our young people for a working life which is likely to be close to fifty years!

Recruitment professionals are well versed at facilitating the job search process and so are ideally positioned to highlight what hinders young people getting their first job. Employers must be central to the debate on youth unemployment as they are the end-users of the education and training pipeline.

This report is not an end in itself; it is part of an ongoing process. The recruitment industry is committed to working with employers, business bodies, Government Departments and third sector organisations to build opportunities for a generation of young job-seekers.

Kevin Green

Chief Executive

Recruitment & Employment Confederation

The driver for the REC establishing the Youth Employment Taskforce was the urgent need for some fresh thinking from employers, recruiters, business bodies and educationalists with a real desire to make a difference.



Executive Summary

One of the key challenges we face is the 'expectation gap' that currently exists between job-seekers and employers.

Increasing unemployment levels are having a disproportionate effect on those aged between 16 and 24. Nearly a million within this age group are currently out of work, a whole generation of young people risks being scarred by long-term unemployment.

This is not just an issue for Government, the business community and for the recruitment industry in particular are committed to enhancing opportunities for young job-seekers and helping to build bridges into the world of work. In order to do this, we need to highlight how the employment landscape in the UK is evolving and of how attitudes to work are also changing. One of the key challenges we face is the 'expectation gap' that currently exists between job-seekers and employers.

The evolving employment landscape

There has been much debate on so-called 'jobs of the future' – particularly those linked to the green economy and technology. More needs to be done to raise awareness of what the future employment landscape will look like and to develop the kind of skills and knowledge that will be needed to compete for these new jobs. We also need to raise awareness of current shortage areas – for example, care and social work – where opportunities exist.

Key findings from the Taskforce are that:

- The current careers service does not adequately prepare our young people for the world of work. We need to ensure that the young people in the UK have an understanding of the world of work by the time they are 14. This should then be built upon during the years from 14 to 21 when young people are preparing to enter the jobs market.
- In order to drive real progress in this area, schools/education establishments should be given specific targets and incentives to develop employer-led careers guidance.
- Businesses and recruiters have an important role to play by investing time and resources in partnering with education providers to create the world-class career guidance services that we need.
- In addition to a deep-rooted reform of careers guidance services, priorities for Government are to ensure that funded training schemes reflect the current and future skills needs of employers and to encourage entrepreneurship through better programmes of support and mentoring.

Executive Summary Cont...

- Improving the quality of vocational training for 14-19 year old was identified by the Taskforce as a major priority. The creation of new 'Technical Academies' to offer vocational training and qualifications in growth industries would send a powerful signal and further enhance perceptions of vocational options.

Changing attitudes and overcoming barriers

There has been much - perhaps too much - debate about the changing attitudes of young people to the world of work. What is clear is that more needs to be done to raise awareness of the world of work amongst future generations of workers and to understand some of the practical barrier that exist both now and in the future.

There is a real mismatch in terms of what young people think employers want and what employers are really looking for. Students perceive employers as principally wanting skills and knowledge. However, employers said their goal was to find people with the right attitude and ability to work with others. This mismatch can be addressed by improving links between business and academia on both a national and local level.

There is not 'a' youth unemployment issue, there are several. The challenges facing university graduates are very different to those facing those looking to enter the jobs market straight from school. The issues for those with no qualifications or experience are very different to those who have some academic or vocational achievements. Effective 'segmentation' is needed to understand and address different barriers – this is an area that the Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is already focusing on.

Key findings from the Taskforce are that:

- Adapting the content and structure of courses to help young people develop work-place skills and occupational experience must be included in all qualifications – GCSEs, A levels and degrees. This will address the 'expectations gap'.
- Alongside this, employers must be prepared to adapt to changing priorities and attitudes to work. Young job-seekers are looking for different things from their work – variety, flexibility, a sense of purpose and the opportunity to take on new challenges. There are real benefits for employers who are prepared to innovate and 'tap into' different skills and mind sets.
- The fact that not enough people are studying subjects in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM subjects) is well documented. Making progress on this is crucial in order to drive UK competitiveness and to provide opportunities for young people.

More needs to be done to raise awareness of the world of work amongst future generations of workers and to understand some of the practical barriers that exist both now and in the future.



Avoiding a lost generation - preparing young people for work now and in the future

REC data highlights commercial awareness, project planning and analysis skills as increasingly sought-after competencies.

Executive Summary Cont...

- At the same time we also need to raise the generic skills that employers are looking for. As well as the 'usual suspects' such as effective communication and teamworking, the latest REC data highlights commercial awareness, project planning and analysis skills as increasingly sought-after competencies.
- The feedback from employers on the Taskforce is that customer skills are becoming more critical. Workers in a wide variety of jobs need to be able to relate to the customer even if they are not operating in a customer focused role.
- Effective 'segmentation' is needed so that actions are properly targeted. This must include a focus on equality of opportunity for young people from all sections of society – for example, the specific barriers facing young job-seekers with disabilities.
- There are opportunities to 'tap into' existing expertise to help overcome specific barriers to employment. For example, professional recruiters can provide value-added expertise to job centres and careers services such as CV writing and interview skills.

Building bridges into work

The lack of practical experience is a major barrier for young job-seekers entering a competitive jobs market. Building bridges into the world of work must be a shared responsibility between Government, business and academic institutions, if we are to avert the threat of a lost generation.

- Addressing youth unemployment also means making it easier for employers to recruit. The Taskforce welcomes the coalition Government's commitments to cut red tape, simplify taxation, promote small business procurement and end the 'gold-plating' of EU rules.
- Government must continue to look at practical measures for stimulating employment - for example, through a two year National Insurance holiday for each additional young person employed in the private sector.
- Employers have been forced to become increasingly 'lean', there is little spare capacity to manage internship or apprenticeship programmes. Providing assistance to employers – especially SMEs – on how to run these schemes would be a cost-effective use of limited public resources.

Executive Summary Cont...

- The Taskforce underlined real concerns over funding for apprenticeship schemes in different sectors. For example, employers in construction are facing increasing costs rather than increased incentives to provide apprenticeship opportunities. More needs to be done to promote apprenticeships to older age groups and to develop models across an increasing number of sectors, particularly for service sector jobs. Sector Skills Councils must play a leading role here.
- Government action is needed to promote temporary employment as a stepping stone into the labour market by streamlining the benefits system and removing disincentives for job-seekers to take on short-term assignments that can often lead to other opportunities.
- Business and recruiters must play a role by developing more internship programmes and developing frameworks and standards for the running of these schemes; business organisations and trade bodies must take a lead on this. Recruitment agencies need to do more to actively promote internships to their clients.
- Careers advisers and Jobcentres have a primary role to play by promoting alternative routes into employment, such as temporary work, internships, apprenticeships and self-employment.

There are a huge number of schemes already in place and one of the aims of the Taskforce report is to highlight what is working well. Many of these are not Government sponsored but have been developed by employers or academic institutions.

There is a genuine commitment within the business community to play a more active role. Employers and professional recruiters are in daily contact with young job-seekers and have a wealth of expertise in addressing barriers and bridging the 'expectations gap'. The priority for Government is to develop targeted and cost-effective measures to facilitate this engagement in order to increase opportunities for the next generation of young people.

Only by working together can we provide today's young job-seekers with the support and opportunities needed to avoid the threat of a 'lost generation' of young people.

Government action is needed to promote temporary employment as a stepping stone into the labour market by streamlining the benefits system.



Avoiding a lost generation - preparing young people for work now and in the future

The Taskforce focused on key areas where employers and recruitment professionals can add real value to the debate.

Background

The Youth Employment Taskforce was set up in November 2009 by the REC under the chairmanship of Baroness Prosser, Deputy Chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC). The initiative brought together employers, recruiters, welfare providers and representative bodies with additional input from educationalists and organisations such as the CBI and Jobcentre Plus.

Members of the Taskforce:

Baroness Prosser, Deputy Chair Equality and Human Rights Commission (Chair)

Martin Fallon, Operations Director, Reed in Partnership

Chris Bishop, Wing Commander, RAF

Jayne Mee, Group HR Director, Barratt Developments PLC

Sej Butler, European Recruitment Manager, IBM

Angela O`Connor, Chief People Officer, NPIA

Amanda Fone, Managing Partner, F1 Recruitments

Jes Ladva, Director, Synarbor

Sarah Gordon, Associate Director, Sammons Group

Andy Robling, Public Sector Director, Hays

Ruth Harper, Head of Corporate Affairs, Manpower PLC

David Yeandle, Deputy Director of Employment Policy, EEF

Gerwyn Davies, Public Policy Advisor, CIPD

Clare Normanton, HR Director, Eurostar

Kevin Green, Chief Executive, REC

The Taskforce heard specific evidence and representations from:

Ruth Spellman, Chief Executive, The Chartered Institute of Management (CMI)

Dr Philip Frame, Director of Work Based Learning Programmes at Middlesex University

Paul Marshall, Executive Director of the 1994 group

Guy Bailey, Senior Policy Advisor, Confederation of British Industry (CBI)

Remit:

The Taskforce focused on three key areas where employers and recruitment professionals can add real value to the debate:

1. How is the employment landscape in the UK evolving – what are the jobs of the future for young job-seekers?
2. How are the attitudes of young people towards the world of work changing and what skills do they need to succeed?
3. How can we build effective bridges into the world of work and help young jobseekers succeed in a highly competitive job market?

Chapter one

1.1 The current job market for young people

During the recession the economy contracted by over 6% and unemployment rose to 2.51 million by April 2010—a million of whom were aged between 16 and 24.

While unemployment has not peaked at the levels originally feared, it is clear that employers retained capacity and that improvements in economic demand will not lead to significant job creation, at least for young people.

Many companies were able to avoid or minimise redundancies programmes in 2009 by reducing salary costs through encouraging short- or part-time working, salary freezes and sabbaticals. As a result, when demand returns their first step will be to increase working hours of existing staff rather than recruiting new staff. Employers also perceive that recruiting young jobseekers is more expensive due to the need for training required. When the economy is growing, employers hire for potential, but when times are tough practical skills and experience, that can be deployed immediately, are more in demand.

Given this, it is going to remain difficult for young people trying to establish a foothold in the labour market at least for the next 18 months.

The previous Government's plans to tackle youth unemployment were outlined in a white paper published at the end of 2009, *Building Britain's Recovery: Achieving Full Employment*. This included proposals to offer employers a subsidy for taking on 16-17 year old apprentices and to double the advanced apprenticeship system for young adults. Internships were recognised for their value in allowing young people to build up practical experience to help them find a route into work.

But these positive steps - which the new Government may or may not continue - will not alleviate the problem faced by young jobseekers. A whole generation of young people risks being scarred by long-term unemployment – and potentially lost to the workforce altogether

For all the above reasons, it is crucial for the business community as a whole and for the recruitment industry in particular to put forward practical proposals for enhancing the employment outlook for young job-seekers.

It is going to remain difficult for young people trying to establish a foothold in the labour market at least for the next 18 months.



Avoiding a lost generation - preparing young people for work now and in the future

Chapter one Cont...

More needs to be done to raise awareness of what the future employment landscape will look like.

1.2 The changing employment landscape

What are the 'jobs of the future'?

There has been much debate on the so-called 'jobs of the future' – particularly those linked to the green economy and technology.

But there are already severe shortages in areas such as social work where approximately 1 in 9 positions remain unfilled. In the care sector, many roles are filled by overseas workers and demographic change will further increase the need to attract a new generation of workers to this area. Even teaching roles can be difficult to fill as a large number of teachers are moving overseas.

If we do not generate an effective pipeline of young people with the right skills to perform these roles in the future, it is likely that employers will have to import talent. As a partner in a major UK pharmaceuticals company remarked: 'I am more likely to go abroad to fill graduate vacancies as they tend to display a wider range of skills. I can get scientists with sound business and financial acumen.'

More needs to be done to raise awareness of what the future employment landscape will look like. As a country we need to develop the kind of skills and knowledge that will give young people the ability to compete for these new jobs. This in turn means that employers must be given the opportunity to help education providers align their programmes to those future requirements.

For example, EEF, the industry body for engineering and manufacturing employers in the UK, confirmed that whilst the 'jobs of the future' will vary from sector to sector, there is a general desire from employers for effective communication skills. Products and services are becoming increasingly customer centric and so require staff who are able to relate to the customer. There is also a need for more commercial and organisational awareness amongst young people.

It is clear that the current careers service is inconsistent and poorly funded, and in need of a major overhaul. As CBI Director General Richard Lambert said 'if you want to break the cycle of youth unemployment you need to start with the way the education system works'¹.

1. Quote by Richard Lambert, speaking at a conference organised by Deloitte, the business advisory firm (February 2010).

Chapter one Cont...

There is clearly a need to ensure that those at the front line of advising young job-seekers are provided with the latest data on employers' needs and understand the employer agenda. This is a shared responsibility between those providing the advice (Jobcentre Plus, careers services etc...) and business organisations. One way to ensure that those delivering career guidance are in touch with employers' needs and the evolving jobs landscape would be by being members of employer bodies such as the Institute of Recruitment Professionals (IRP).

Jobs of the future

Taskforce members identified some of the sectors and roles where we will see growth in demand over coming years.

Thousands more **engineering and technical workers** will be needed in the UK over the coming years. The RAF is just one of the organisations on the Taskforce reporting a growing need for young people who have high level technical skills.

In the **construction** sector, changes in the use of materials and new methods of consultation will mean changes in the knowledge and skills required from the workforce. Opportunities for young people will also come with the need for compliance with Government regulations to promote sustainable construction.

Technology is another sector which will see a substantial growth, with employers looking for specific digital skills such as network support and web development, as well as knowledge of social media, commercial awareness and the ability to manage information.

Of course, not all future jobs will be highly skilled. The Ambition 2020 report by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (2009)¹ underlined the fact that we will continue to see significant demand for jobs at the bottom end of the labour market. The issue is whether these relatively low-skilled jobs can be filled by young UK job-seekers and the extent to which workers can subsequently progress within the jobs market.

1. The Ambition 2020 Report was the Commission's first annual assessment of progress made towards the UK being a world leader in employment and skills by 2020.

There is clearly a need to ensure that those at the front line of advising young job-seekers are provided with the latest data on employers' needs and understand the employer agenda.



Avoiding a lost generation - preparing young people for work now and in the future

Chapter one Cont...

There is a need to ensure that the UK's young people have a robust understanding of the world of work by the time they are 14.

1.3 A deep-rooted reform of careers guidance services is essential

The current careers service does not adequately prepare our young people for the world of work. Recruiters regularly confirm this lack of awareness. There is a need to ensure that the UK's young people have a robust understanding of the world of work by the time they are 14. This should then be built upon during the years from 14 to 21 when 50% of our young people are preparing to enter the jobs market.

One way of building this awareness is to encourage those providing careers guidance to become members of employer bodies such as the CIPD or the Institute of Recruitment Professionals (IRP) and to ensure that the training and qualifications for careers guidance professionals are regularly reviewed.

The Careers Profession Task Force (CPTF) that was established to review current guidance and support procedures has already consulted with employers. On the back of the recommendations of the Youth Employment Taskforce, the REC will provide a further submission before the CPTF publishes its report in the Autumn.

The 'Staying On' report by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) looks at practical ways to optimise the benefit of the additional years of education. One of the key optimising factors identified in the report is the availability of careers guidance and support. The question then becomes how effective is the guidance currently being provided. As a result, the EHRC will later this year be publishing a follow-up report into the effectiveness of the careers advice given to young people.

Enhancing this support and guidance will deliver immediate benefits. It can help orientate young job-seekers towards employers with high volume recruitment needs in sectors such as retail, leisure and hospitality and building. In the longer-term, it will also help to raise awareness of job opportunities in some of the high-skills growth areas of the future.

Chapter two

How are attitudes to work changing?

There has been much—perhaps too much—debate about the changing attitudes of young people to the world of work. However, it is clear that more needs to be done to raise awareness of the world of work amongst young job-seekers.

2.1 Is there an 'attitude gap' as well as a 'skills gap'?

The feedback from employers and recruitment professionals is that young jobseekers can often lack awareness of what employers require. They say young people have inflated expectations in terms of both the type of work and the remuneration that they can aspire to initially. This is especially true of new graduates, where recruitment agencies increasingly need to manage expectations and give guidance on the building blocks for a chosen career path.

Employers should also recognise that attitudes to work are constantly evolving and to ensure that recruitment strategies reflect these changes. In many cases, there are real benefits for employers who are prepared to innovate and 'tap into' different skills and mind sets.

Professional recruiters and employers know that young job-seekers are looking for different things from their work – whether it be variety, flexibility, a sense of purpose and the opportunity to take on new challenges. This trend has been confirmed by the work of the REC's Future of Employment Working Group (FEWG). As reported in its White Paper Gateway to Success, employers must therefore meet the next generation of workers at least half-way to develop working environments that reflect the needs of 'Generation Y'.

Professional recruiters and employers know that young job-seekers are looking for different things from their work – whether it be variety, flexibility, a sense of purpose and the opportunity to take on new challenges.



Avoiding a lost generation - preparing young people for work now and in the future

Chapter two Cont...

Workers in a wide variety of jobs need to be able to relate to the customer even if they are not operating in a customer focused role.

2.2 The skills needs of employers

Although employers and policy makers need to acknowledge and reflect changing aspirations and attitudes, it remains crucial to raise understanding amongst young job seekers of what employers actually want, and what skills are needed to succeed in a constantly evolving labour market.

The fact that not enough people are studying subjects in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM subjects) is well documented. Making progress on this is crucial in order to drive UK competitiveness and to provide opportunities for young people. At the same time, we also need to raise the generic skills that employers are looking for from young people both now and in the future.

The REC's Jobs Outlook survey¹ provides monthly feedback on short and long-term hiring intentions and on the main skills and competencies that employers are looking for. The latest survey shows these to be:

- Effective communication
- Teamworking
- Commercial awareness
- Project planning
- Analysis skills

Globalisation means that organisations are increasingly working across geographical borders. Knowledge of foreign languages and being open to working in different cultures are therefore becoming important assets. There is clearly a pivotal role here for education. Business organisations operating in an increasingly global market place must continue to provide specific feedback on how this impacts on the skills needs of the future.

The feedback from employers on the Taskforce is that customer skills are becoming more critical. Workers in a wide variety of jobs need to be able to relate to the customer even if they are not operating in a customer focused role.

A challenge for educationalists will be how to build the development of 'emotional intelligence' and commercial awareness and planning skills into the content of courses and academic programmes. But it is clear that schools and academic institutions must adapt the content and structure of their learning to help develop work-place skills.

1. Jobs Outlook is published each month by the REC Industry Research Unit (IRU).

Chapter two Cont...

2.3 A culture of learning

The ability to adapt to change is a crucial employability skill in modern workplaces. As well as developing skills, we must develop a culture of learning. For example, the 2007 Skills at Work Survey found that the proportions of those strongly agreeing to the statement 'my job requires that I keep learning new things' was substantially increasing.

The feedback from employers and academics during meetings of the Youth Employment Taskforce confirmed that there is a real need to instil a culture of continuous development and learning amongst the next generation of workers. Career development programmes such as the one developed by Middlesex University (see case study below) can play a role in raising awareness amongst young job-seekers about what employers are looking for but also about how they will need to take responsibility for their own learning and development throughout the course of their career.

The ability to adapt to change is a crucial employability skill in modern workplaces. As well as developing skills, we must develop a culture of learning.

Case Study – Middlesex University

Middlesex University have a range of initiatives to promote work-placed learning and provide students with a grounding in the world of work. The emphasis is on employability skills, designed to ensure the attitudes, skills, knowledge and emotions of students meet the expectations of employers. One example is the current pilot programme called the 'Employability Factor' which is aimed at final year students and involves:

- Teaching students about the role networks can play in finding jobs;
- Understanding how to use recruitment agencies;
- Tips on how to write a CV, how to fill out online job application forms and how to perform at interview;
- Presentation and communication skills;
- Advising students about cyber-identity;
- Allowing students the opportunity to meet with alumni.



Avoiding a lost generation - preparing young people for work now and in the future

Chapter two Cont...

There is not 'a' youth unemployment issue, there are several. It is therefore crucial to identify the different challenges facing different categories of young job-seekers.

2.4 Effective segmentation and targeting

There is not 'a' youth unemployment issue, there are several. It is therefore crucial to identify the different challenges facing different categories of young job-seekers. The challenges facing university graduates are very different to those facing job-seekers looking to enter the jobs market straight from school, and the issues for those with no qualifications or experience are very different to those who have some academic or vocational achievements.

The Youth Employment Taskforce has therefore underlined the need for effective 'segmentation' so that actions are properly targeted. This must include a focus on equality of opportunity for young people from all sections of society – for example, the specific barriers facing young job-seekers with disabilities. There is also a very real need to ensure that programmes address the diversity of unemployed young people, not just in terms of ethnicity but by region and socio-economic background, and ensure that no groups are excluded.

Recent publications such as the Integration in the Workplace¹ report by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) have shone the light on specific barriers facing different categories of job-seekers. There are a number of practical solutions for breaking down barriers. For example, offering flexible working options to young job-seekers with disabilities can greatly facilitate the route into work.

The Department for Education (DfE) has undertaken specific research to build the evidence base on those not currently in employment, education or training (NEETs). However, the evidence is focused on a younger age group, with very little research currently available post-19 years of age.

1. The EHRC's 'Integration in the Workplace' report was published in 2009 with the input of Edinburgh Napier University and London Metropolitan University.

Chapter two Cont...

The coalition Government's work programme includes a specific commitment to improve opportunities for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities. Proposed measures include providing internships for underrepresented minorities in every Whitehall department and funding a targeted national enterprise mentoring scheme for BAME people who want to start a business.

Although there are huge challenges for young job-seekers with no academic qualifications or from specific disadvantaged groups the Taskforce also recognised the employment challenge facing recent graduates. There is a need to manage the expectations of young people and to ensure that 'employability' is not simply a bolt-on but is imbedded into university education. In the US, and to an increasing extent these universities and further education colleges are using 'job outcomes' of recent graduates as a key part of their marketing to potential new students. Career support programmes and work placement schemes should not only focus on final year students but should also be aimed at second year students.

The Government therefore needs to review and define the different barriers and challenges facing different groups. Government-funded analysis and benchmarking of different career programmes would help to identify best practice and innovative approaches. Employers and recruiters can also make a real difference by engaging with universities and other academic institutions on their career development programmes.

Career support programmes and work placement schemes should not only focus on final year students but should also be aimed at second year students.



Chapter three

Addressing youth unemployment also means making it easier for employers to recruit.

Building bridges into the world of work

The lack of practical experience is a major barrier for young job-seekers entering a competitive jobs market. Building bridges into the world of work must be a shared responsibility between Government, business and academic institutions, if we are to avert the threat of a lost generation of workers

3.1 Boosting demand by incentivising employers

An urgent priority for the new administration will be how to encourage employers to take on more staff over the next 18 months. For example the Taskforce proposes a two-year National Insurance 'holiday' for young jobseekers taken on in permanent roles over and above their normal recruitment. This would be extremely cost-effective compared to paying benefits for the same period. Lower business taxes generally will stimulate growth and the demand for jobs.

Addressing youth unemployment also means making it easier for employers to recruit. The Taskforce therefore welcomes the coalition Government's commitments to cut red tape, simplify taxation, promote small business procurement and end the 'gold-plating' of EU rules.

The case is made below for apprenticeships as an important route into work. However, the Taskforce underlined real concerns over funding for apprenticeship schemes in different sectors. For example, there was a reduction in CITB (Construction Industry Training Board) funding for apprenticeships of 30% this year. The funding for an Apprentice 16-18 year olds was £12,275 over 3 years. As from 1st August 2010 this will reduce to £9,900 over three years.

Employers in the construction sector who are actively involved in apprenticeships will lose £237,500 of funding over 3 years based on 100 apprentices. At NVQ Level 3 Supervisory and Advanced Craft Qualifications (which equates to Site Manager level) the grant was £875 per person but has now been reduced to £302 per person.

The above examples underline that fact that despite commitments from Government to promote apprenticeships, employers are facing increasing costs rather than increased incentives to provide apprenticeship opportunities.

Chapter three Cont...

3.2 New routes to work: internships, apprenticeships, temporary work and entrepreneurship

Internships and temporary assignments provide an important route into work, a 'way in' to a chosen sector. In both of these areas urgent action is needed if we are to maximise opportunities for the next generation of workers.

The concept of internship is more established in other European countries; more needs to be done to raise awareness and increase the number of employers offering internship programmes in the UK. Business organisations and trade bodies must take a lead on this, with over-arching organisations such as the Trade Association Forum (TAF) and the Professional Associations Research Network (PARN) playing a 'cascading' role.

One priority is to develop a framework for internships that benefit both the employer and the job-seeker. The CIPD has already developed some practical tools in this area, while organisations such as the British Institute of Facilities Management (BIFM) have been working with the Department for Business (BIS) on a set of agreed standards for internships. These cover areas such as health and safety, working relationships and pay.

Recruitment agencies are playing a role in actively promoting internships to their clients – particularly in highly competitive sectors such as media and PR. For example, the scheme run by f1 recruitment (see case study overleaf) not only provides opportunities for young jobseekers to develop their skills but also allows clients to tap into the expertise and skills of new graduates. A further example of an effective mechanism into work is the scheme run by Bedfordshire Police and the Princes Trust which provides initial training and work experience followed by opportunities for apprenticeships.

In order to establish a coherent framework for internships in the UK, we must recognise and pre-empt factors that may preclude employers from paying a role. For example, the economic downturn has resulted in employers becoming increasingly lean. This means that there is often little spare capacity to manage internship programmes.

Providing assistance to employers – especially SMEs – on how to run apprenticeship and internship schemes may be an area for Government action. This would be a cost-effective use of limited public resources as the barrier for many employers is simply the lack of awareness and capacity to put the right measures in place.

Providing assistance to employers – especially SME's – on how to run apprenticeship and internship schemes may be an area for Government action.



Avoiding a lost generation - preparing young people for work now and in the future

Chapter three Cont...

Approximately 1 in 4 young people placed in internships go on to full time employment within three months of completing their placements.

Case study – Developing talent through work placement programmes

Specialist recruitment consultancy f1 recruitment runs an internship programme for young people looking to pursue a career in the marketing or media sectors. The scheme provides young people and career changers with an opportunity to gain a foothold in their chosen field. Approximately 1 in 4 young people placed in internships go on to full time employment within three months of completing their placements.

The company receives no grants or subsidies but the goodwill that the internship programme generates amongst clients and candidates is priceless. Employers participating in the scheme welcome the chance to develop the talent of graduates and prepare them for the world of work. The initiative also helps to identify mature, committed young people with initiative and drive who may be suitable candidates for a permanent job.

Case study – Bedfordshire Police/Princes Trust 'Get Into Scheme'

Bedfordshire Police works with the Princes Trust on a 'Get Into' programme. Disadvantaged youths attend a two week course to build confidence and life skills, followed by two weeks work experience. At the end of this the group are assessed and as many as possible are given the opportunity to become an apprentice within the organisation. Bedfordshire Police also release police staff to work on 12 week youth programmes run by the Princes Trust.

Chapter three Cont...

Vocational qualifications and apprenticeships can lead directly to employment in sectors and job categories where employers and recruiters are reporting shortages. Improving the quality and awareness of vocational training for 14-19 year olds was identified by the Taskforce as a major priority. The creation of new 'Technical Academies' to offer vocational training and qualifications would send a powerful signal, as would communications campaigns to enhance the perception of vocational qualifications by individuals and employers.

Although the upper-age limit of 25 for funding support was scrapped in 2006, more needs to be done to promote apprenticeships to older age groups. Progress has already been made - last year 85,000 aged 19-24 started an apprenticeship in England with a further 56,000 25s and over starting. By way of comparison, the number of 16-18 starting an apprenticeship in England last year was 99,000.

As well as continuing to raise awareness amongst employers and different age-groups, a priority is to develop the apprenticeship model across an increasing number of sectors, particularly for service sector jobs. Sector Skills Councils must play a leading role here.

As well as continuing to raise awareness amongst employers and different age-groups, a priority is to develop the apprenticeship model across an increasing number of sectors.

Case study – AGMA and The Future Jobs Fund

Although the coalition Government would be putting in place its own employment initiatives, it is useful to look back at previous schemes that generated positive input from employers. For example, the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) and the Greater Manchester Police signed up to the Future Jobs Fund - the Department of Work and Pensions scheme intended to create around 150,000 new jobs for young job seekers in deprived areas. Under the scheme, the Greater Manchester Police recently recruited the first cohort of 12 young job-seekers to work for 6 months as trainee administrators, supporting the work of the neighbourhood policing teams.



Avoiding a lost generation - preparing young people for work now and in the future

Chapter three Cont...

The recruitment industry is already working with Jobcentre Plus to promote the positive role that temporary work can play.

A further means of developing experience of the world of work is through temporary assignments, either as a route into permanent employment or a career choice in itself. The nature of temporary work is increasingly gravitating towards higher-end disciplines and a high proportion of workers go for flexible working options as a career choice.

The recruitment industry is already working with Jobcentre Plus to promote the positive role that temporary work can play. In 2009, Jobcentre Plus signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC), which formalised the longstanding practice of sharing vacancies and of Jobcentre Plus advisers signposting customers to recruitment agencies. Building on this kind of co-operation will play an important role in helping young job-seekers break into the labour market.

An urgent priority for the new Government is to address barriers in the benefits system that deter jobseekers from taking on the kind of short-term temporary assignments that can build their skills and lead to the next job opportunity. Young people have legitimate concerns if the risk is that they could end up with weeks of no income if the assignment ends and they go back on benefits.

Pilots aimed at speeding up the process of coming on and off benefits have already taken place, but these must be built on to enhance the temporary work option. On this issue it is encouraging to note that the coalition Government's programme includes a commitment to investigate how to simplify the benefits system in order to improve incentives to work.

Whatever the support and guidance provided to jobseekers there are a finite number of jobs for people to move into. It is therefore more important than ever to actively encourage more young people to set up their own businesses, which can in turn become an important source of new jobs. The new Government has committed to support for would-be entrepreneurs through a new programme – Work for Yourself – which will give the unemployed access to business mentors and start-up loans.

Chapter three Cont...

3.3 Enhancing the input of employers and professional recruiters

School leavers are likely to spend nearly 50 years in some form of employment, but at present we are not preparing our young people for their first job let alone for the 10 to 20 that may follow.

Schools must therefore work in partnership with the business community to bring the world of work into the classroom. The Education and Employers Taskforce includes a specific focus on employer engagement in schools and are due to publish a report shortly.

A good example of employers and recruiters playing a pro-active role is the 'Ignition' programme led by the recruitment firm Hays (see case study overleaf). Young Enterprise is another initiative where volunteers from businesses are brought into the classroom and work with young people.

These innovative approaches now need to come into the mainstream through the formal backing of leading business organisations and trade bodies.

Schools must therefore work in partnership with the business community to bring the world of work into the classroom.



Avoiding a lost generation - preparing young people for work now and in the future

Chapter three Cont...

The feedback from Taskforce members confirmed that one of the barriers facing young people is a lack of basic job-search skills such as CV writing and interview techniques.

Case study – Hays Ignition programme

Coleshill School is an 11-18 comprehensive school in North Warwickshire. Students come from a range of backgrounds from inner-city estates to rural farms. The school approached Hays for to help raise awareness of the world of work, so that students could make more informed decisions about future careers. The programme has also helped to develop practical job-search skills – for example though interview skills training.

The Ignition Programme is in its second year and has provided support and guidance to students taking BTEC qualifications as well as to A-Level students who had not decided whether to attend university or enter employment.

The feedback from the school is that the scheme has been extremely positive in helping students to prepare for the world of work, and that students who wanted to go straight into employment were successful in finding suitable work.

Employers and recruiters must also have more input into providing practical guidance and support for young job-seekers.

The feedback from Taskforce members confirmed that one of the barriers facing young people is a lack of basic job-search skills such as CV writing and interview techniques.

The expertise of recruitment agencies has already been used by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to provide practical support and guidance during the recession to jobseekers from the higher-end of the jobs market. This scheme has helped thousands of older job-seekers into work and illustrates the value and cost-effectiveness of tapping into existing structures and expertise. Given the success and relative cheapness of this programme, the Taskforce encourages the Government to develop a similar scheme aimed at supporting young job-seekers.

Chapter three Cont...

In the longer-term, there is a need for more feedback from employers and business organisations into the content and structure of academic and vocational courses. This is the only way to ensure that the specific skills that employers are looking for both now and in the future are developed. We need to build on the foundation of current business-led working groups to create more specific groups operating at a regional and sector level. Existing government schemes such as the Young Person's Guarantee need to be enhanced to ensure that training provided is linked to specific job outcomes and reflects employers needs.

There is a real mismatch in terms of what young people think employers want and what employers are really looking for. An internal survey conducted by Middlesex University showed that students saw employers as principally wanting skills and knowledge. However employers said their goal was to find people with the right attitude and emotional intelligence. This mismatch between the expectations of young people and employers can be addressed by improving links between business and academia on both a national and local level. An example (see case study below) is the employability programme developed by the 1994 group of universities, which made a tangible difference to enhancing the employability of students through part time work and voluntary activities.

There is a real mismatch in terms of what young people think employers want and what employers are really looking for.

Case study – The 1994 group

The 1994 group represents 19 of the smaller research based universities in the UK and includes institutions such as York, East Anglia, Durham and St Andrews. Many of their members are relatively new institutions who do not have the same contacts with multinationals as members of the more-established Russell Group of universities. However, the group is increasingly proactive in working with its members to promote schemes designed to improve the career prospects of students.

Fourteen of their 19 members have developed certified programmes to recognise the employability skills students develop through part time work and voluntary activities whilst they pursue their studies.

These programmes have been developed from the bottom up, based upon feedback from specific employers. However, they are often heavily oversubscribed and there is a limit on the resources available to deliver these programmes. The 1994 group is now working with the Government to ensure there is sufficient funding and are working closely with the NUS, the IOD and the CMI to improve recognition of the programme.



Chapter four

There are a plethora of schemes and initiatives already in place that are helping young people enter employment.

Conclusion

The issue of youth unemployment is both immediate and one which will pose severe problems in the future, in terms of social cohesion, economic performance and individual wellbeing.

However, during the discussions and investigations of the Youth Employment Taskforce, we have discovered that the problem is neither monolithic nor intractable. There are a plethora of schemes and initiatives already in place that are helping young people enter employment. Many of these are not Government sponsored but have been developed on their own initiative, and often without outside support by employers, recruiters, schools and universities, and professional and trade bodies.

But the scattered and fragmented nature of these schemes in itself demonstrates how much more we as a country could be doing. Firstly, best practices need to be disseminated and applied in more contexts. Secondly this work needs to be used as a foundation to develop broader, more imaginative and better-targeted schemes to prevent today's young job-seekers becoming a 'Generation Lost'.

Recommendations

Government clearly has a pivotal role to play: we believe it should be:

1. Stimulating direct employment with a two year National Insurance holiday for each additional young person employed in the private sector;
2. Promoting temporary employment through careers advisors and JobCentres and supporting it by streamlining the benefits system to encourage young people to work;
3. Encouraging entrepreneurship among young people through better programmes of support and mentoring;
4. Ensuring that training schemes genuinely reflect the skills needs of local employers;
5. Launching a wide-ranging review to identify the specific barriers facing different groups of young job-seekers and use this to better target future provision;
6. Promoting the growth of apprenticeships and internships by broadening existing schemes, developing standards and supporting businesses, particularly SMEs in offering them;
7. Initiating a through-going overhaul of the careers guidance function in educational establishments, which is currently not fit for purpose, with more active involvement from employers.

Chapter four Cont...

Business and recruiters have an important role to play too, by:

8. Creating more internship programmes to increase opportunities for young people to gain practical experience, and develop frameworks and standards for the running of employer internship schemes;
9. Offering value-added expertise to job centres and careers services such as CV writing and interview skills based on real-life experience;
10. Investing time and resources in partnering with education providers to create a world-class career guidance function in schools, further and higher education establishments. This must be made easier to participate in and schools/education establishments should be given specific targets and incentives to develop employer-led careers guidance.

Schools, further and higher education bodies also need to re-examine the role they play in preparing young people for the workplace:

11. Adapting the content and structure of their courses to help young people develop work-place skills, Vocational experience and skills development should be included in all qualifications – GCSEs, A levels and degrees. This will address the ‘expectations gap’ that we have at present.
12. Making young people aware of different employment and self-employment options and routes into work via a modern careers guidance service.
13. Building closer relationships with the local business community to increase the opportunities for young people to gain experience of work and learn from those in employment.

Careers advisers and JobCentres have a primary role in helping the young into employment, but can enhance this by:

14. Harnessing the skills of employers and recruiters to help young people experience the workplace and develop specific job-seeking abilities.
15. Ensuring they are supplied with the latest data about employment trends and employers’ real expectations, both locally and nationally.
16. Promoting alternative routes into employment, such as temporary work, internships, apprenticeships and self-employment
17. Increasing their knowledge and professionalism by joining professional bodies such as the IRP which will ensure that their employment knowledge is up to date and relevant.

Schools, further and higher education bodies also need to re-examine the role they play in preparing young people for the workplace.



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The Student Journey Select Committee

14-18 Unemployment Data, Kent, South East and Great Britain (from January 2006 to January 2011)

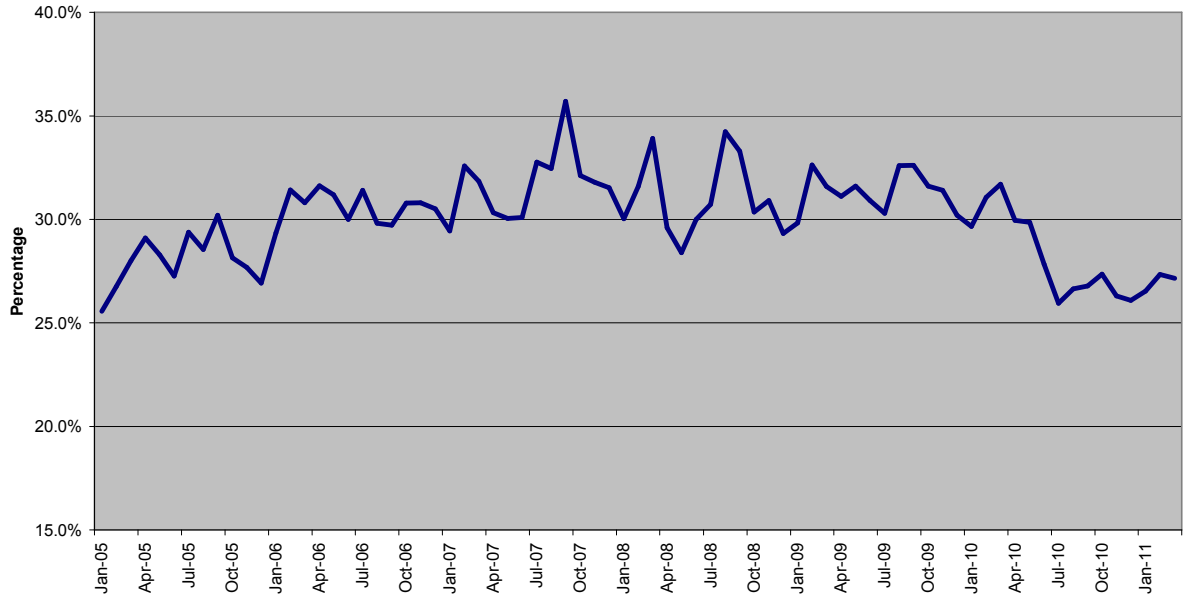
Date	Kent	Kent	South East	Great Britain
		(%)	(%)	(%)
Jan-06	4,975	28.5	26.2	29.3
Feb-06	5,345	29.1	26.9	29.9
Mar-06	5,430	29.4	27.4	30.2
Apr-06	5,165	28.9	27.1	29.9
May-06	5,240	28.8	26.7	29.5
Jun-06	4,955	28.2	26.5	29.3
Jul-06	5,175	29.2	27.5	30.3
Aug-06	5,060	29.4	28.3	30.7
Sep-06	4,925	29.5	28.5	30.8
Oct-06	4,760	29.1	28.1	30.2
Nov-06	4,670	29	27.5	29.7
Dec-06	4,585	28.6	27	29.4
Jan-07	4,900	29.3	27.2	29.5
Feb-07	5,135	30.1	28.1	30.3
Mar-07	5,055	30.4	28.2	30.3
Apr-07	4,905	30.3	27.6	29.8
May-07	4,590	29.7	27.3	29.6
Jun-07	4,265	29.2	27	29.4
Jul-07	4,405	30.6	28.2	30.3
Aug-07	4,400	30.9	28.9	30.9
Sep-07	4,195	30.7	28.8	31.1
Oct-07	3,960	30	28.2	30.4
Nov-07	3,855	30.2	27.8	29.8
Dec-07	3,815	29.8	27.6	29.8
Jan-08	3,950	29.6	27.5	29.7
Feb-08	4,180	31.1	28.6	30.7
Mar-08	4,300	31.9	28.7	30.9
Apr-08	4,125	31	28.2	30.3
May-08	4,160	30.7	27.8	30
Jun-08	3,980	30	27.6	29.9
Jul-08	4,185	30.6	28.8	30.9
Aug-08	4,750	32.2	30.1	31.6
Sep-08	4,850	32	30.1	31.8

Oct-08	4,855	31.1	29.4	31.1
Nov-08	5,350	30.4	28.7	30.5
Dec-08	5,930	30	28.1	30.1
Jan-09	6,615	29.6	27.5	29.5
Feb-09	8170	31.1	28.8	30.3
Mar-09	8,485	30.9	28.6	30.2
Apr-09	8,495	30.5	28	29.5
May-09	8,335	29.6	27.3	28.9
Jun-09	7,900	29.1	27.1	28.8
Jul-09	7,945	29.5	27.9	29.7
Aug-09	8,610	31	29.1	30.5
Sep-09	8,735	31.5	29.2	30.6
Oct-09	8,665	31.3	28.7	30.3
Nov-09	8,740	31.4	28.2	29.8
Dec-09	8,615	30.8	27.7	29.4
Jan-10	8,995	30.4	27.6	29.3
Feb-10	9400	31.3	28.1	29.7
Mar-10	8,905	30.4	27.8	29.4
Apr-10	8,265	29.1	26.9	28.4
May-10	7,540	27.9	25.8	27.7
Jun-10	6,845	26.9	25.2	27.4
Jul-10	6,770	27	25.9	28.2
Aug-10	7,050	28.1	26.9	28.9
Sep-10	7,155	29	27.3	29.3
Oct-10	7,075	29	27.1	29.1
Nov-10	7,005	28.4	26.7	28.5
Dec-10	6,900	27.7	26.2	27.9
Jan-11	7,405	28	26.2	27.9

Source: NOMIS

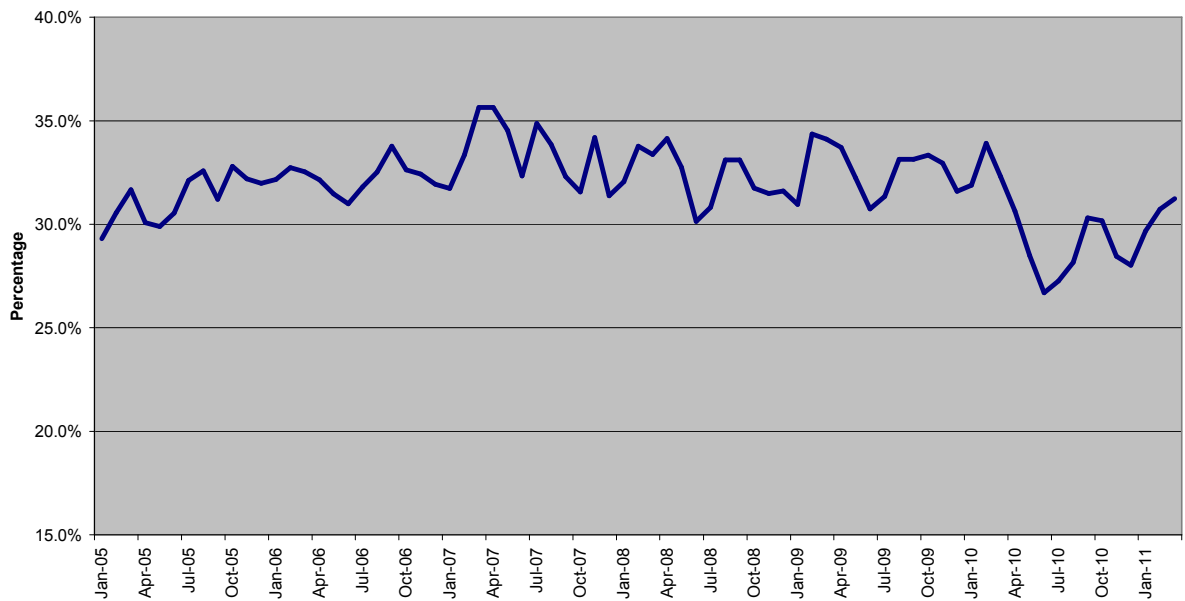
Youth Unemployment in Kent by District, 2005-2011

Percentage youth unemployment in Ashford



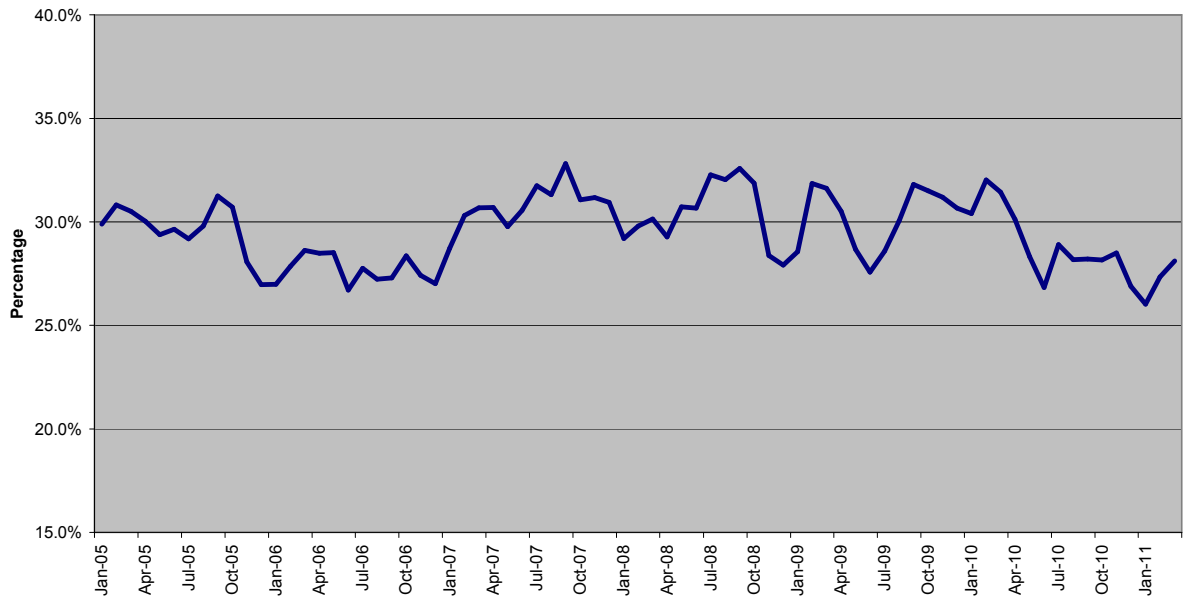
Source: NOMIS
Prepared by: Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

Percentage youth unemployment in Canterbury



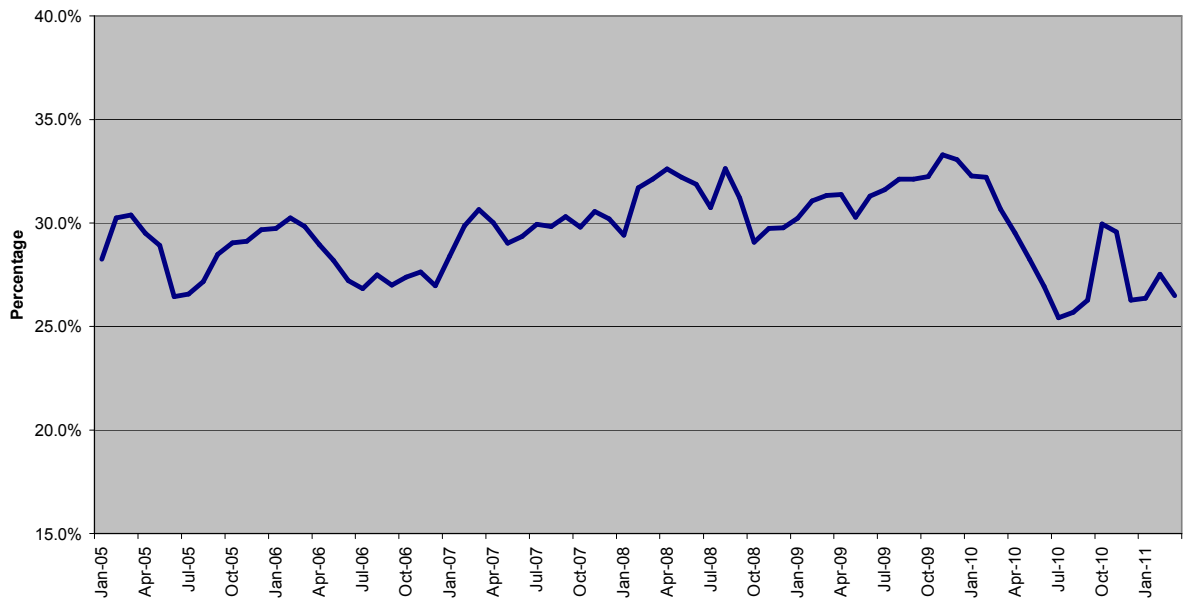
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Prepared by: Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

Percentage youth unemployment in Dartford



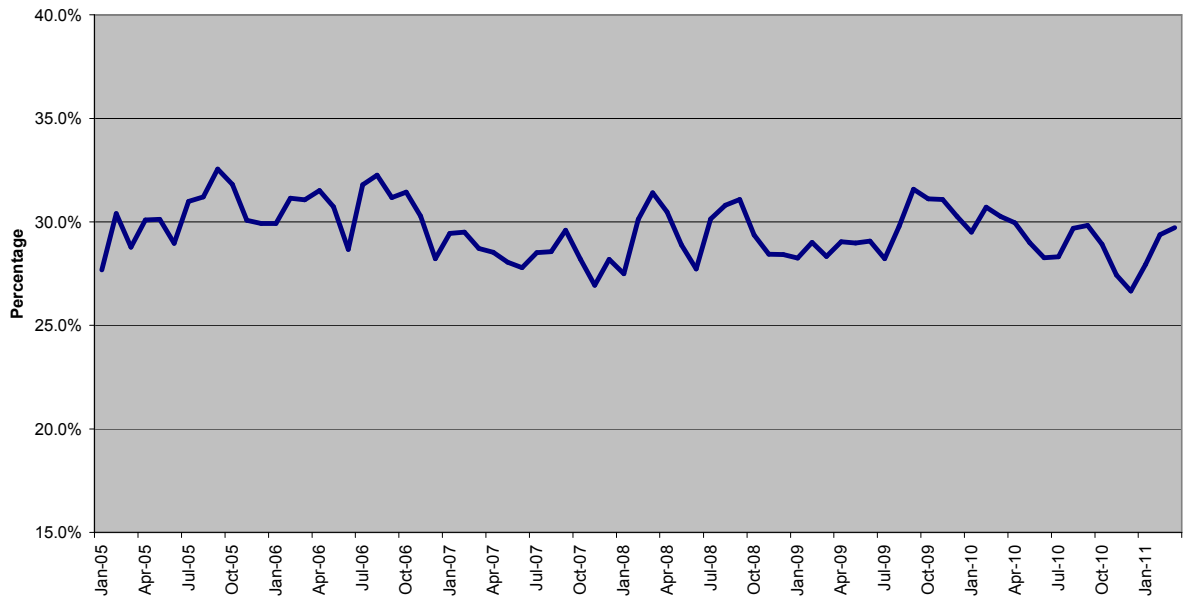
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 Prepared by: Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

Percentage youth unemployment in Dover



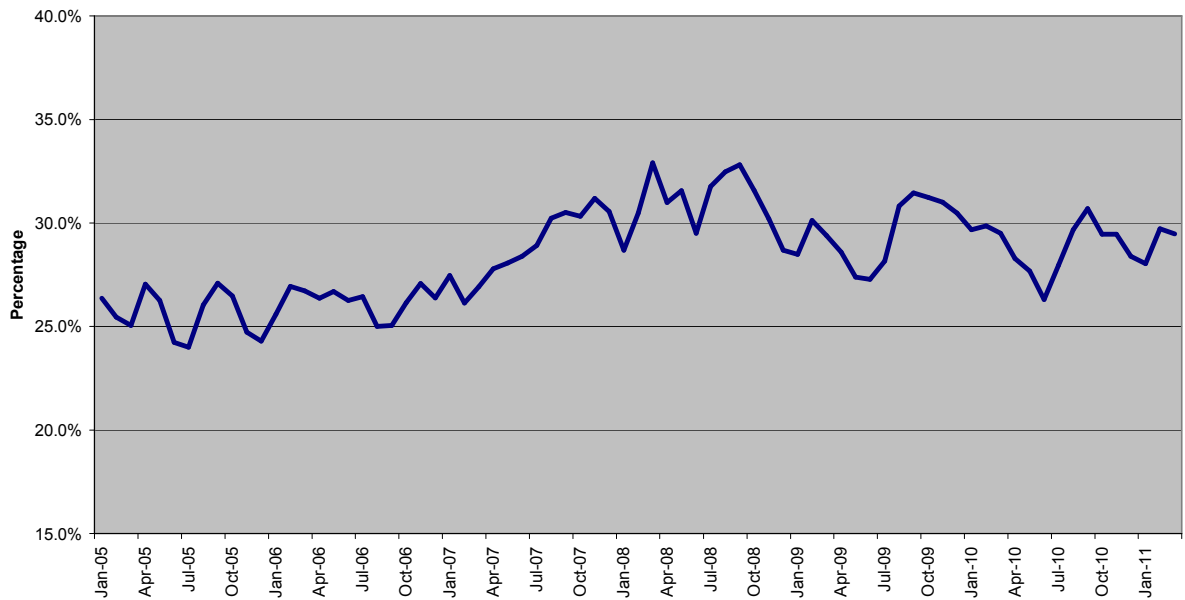
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 Prepared by: Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

Percentage youth unemployment in Gravesham



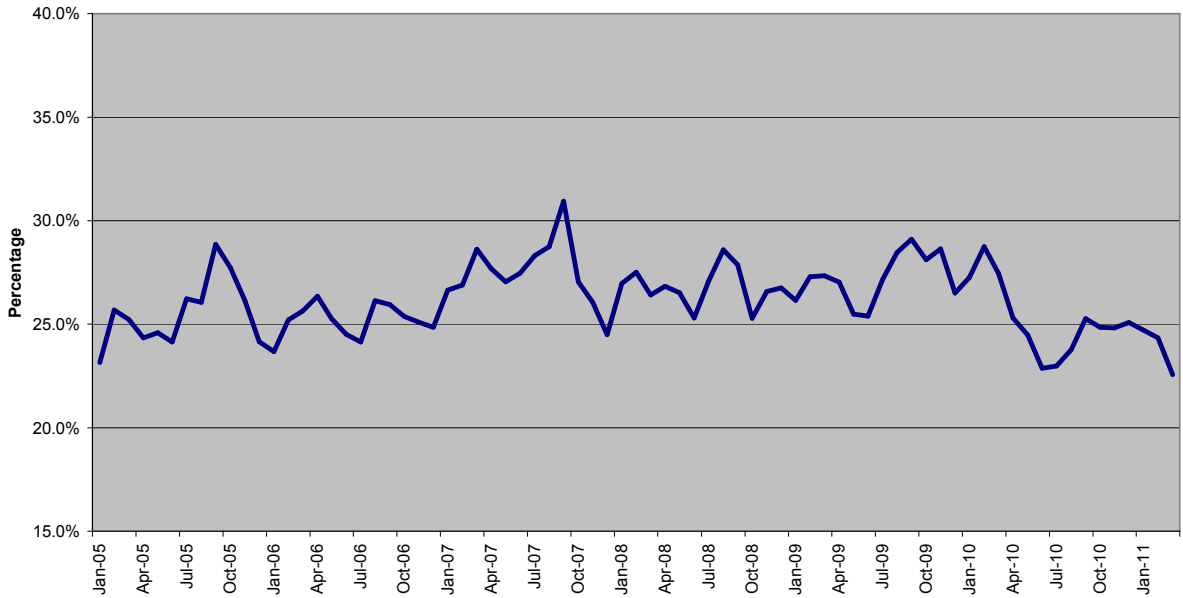
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 Prepared by: Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

Percentage youth unemployment in Maidstone



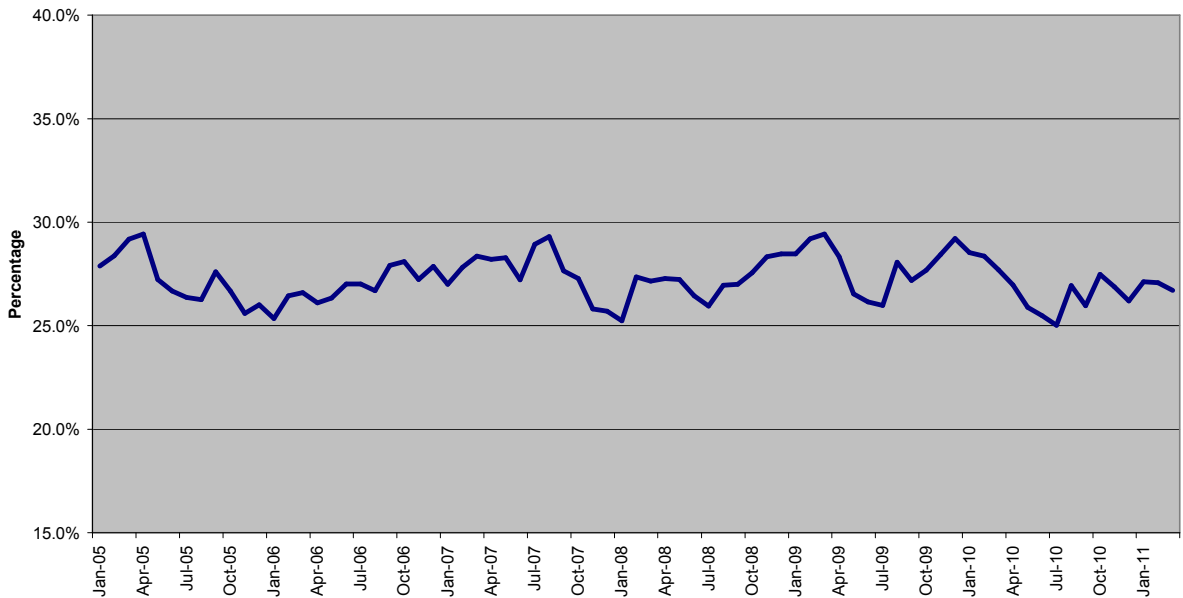
Source: NOMIS
 Prepared by: Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

Percentage youth unemployment in Sevenoaks



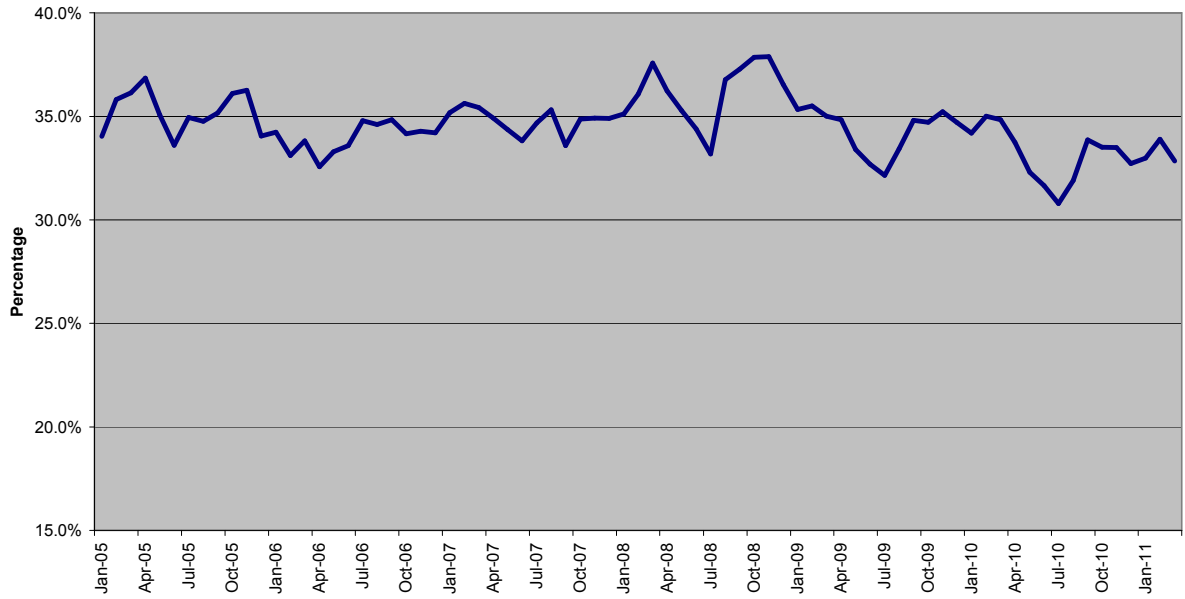
Source: NOMIS
 Prepared by: Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

Percentage youth unemployment in Shepway



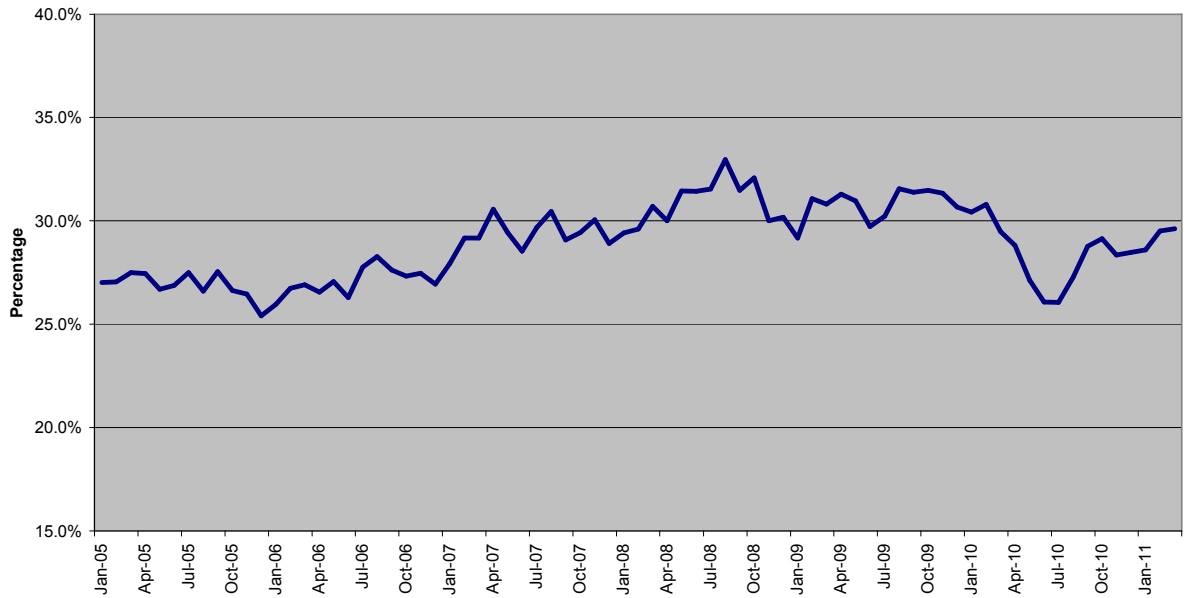
Source: NOMIS
 Prepared by: Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

Percentage youth unemployment in Swale



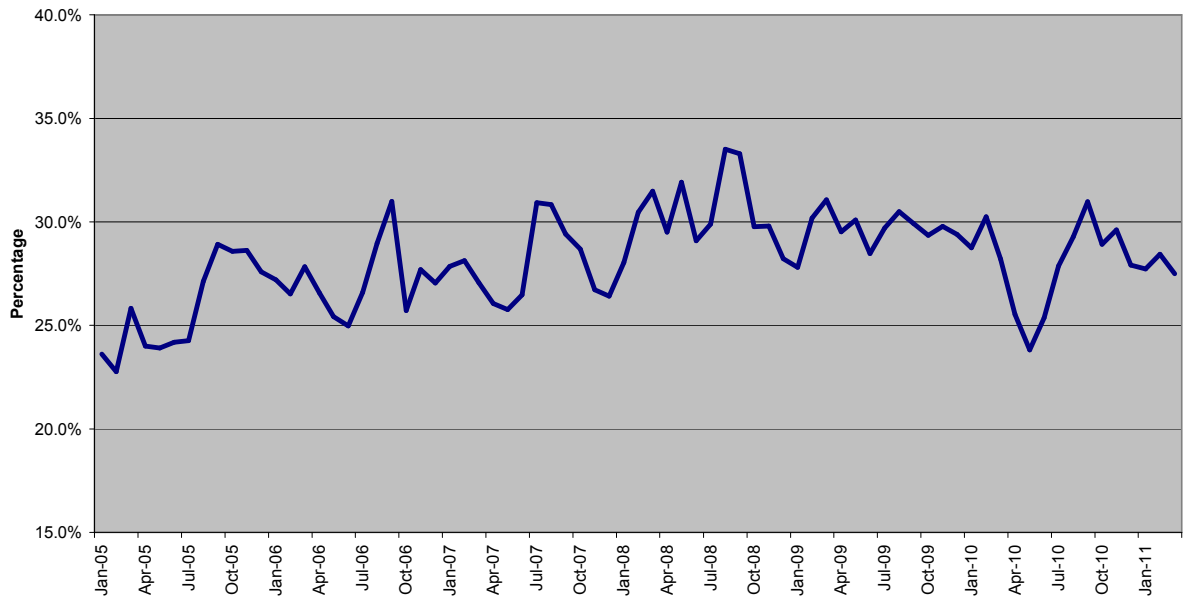
Source: NOMIS
Prepared by: Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

Percentage youth unemployment in Thanet



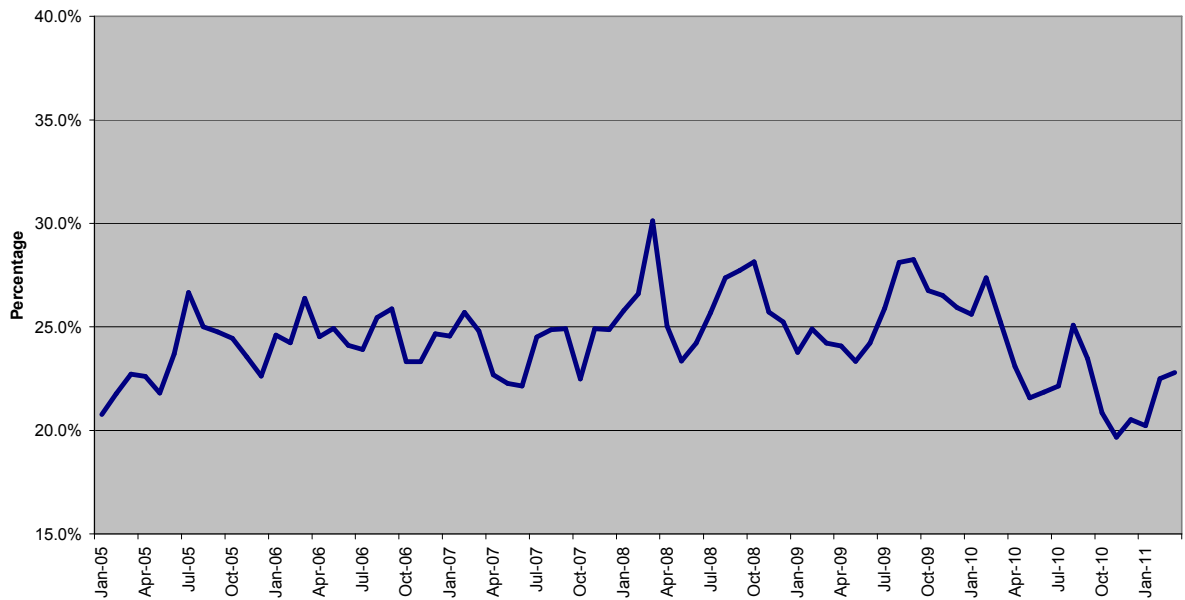
Source: NOMIS
Prepared by: Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

Percentage youth unemployment in Tonbridge and Malling



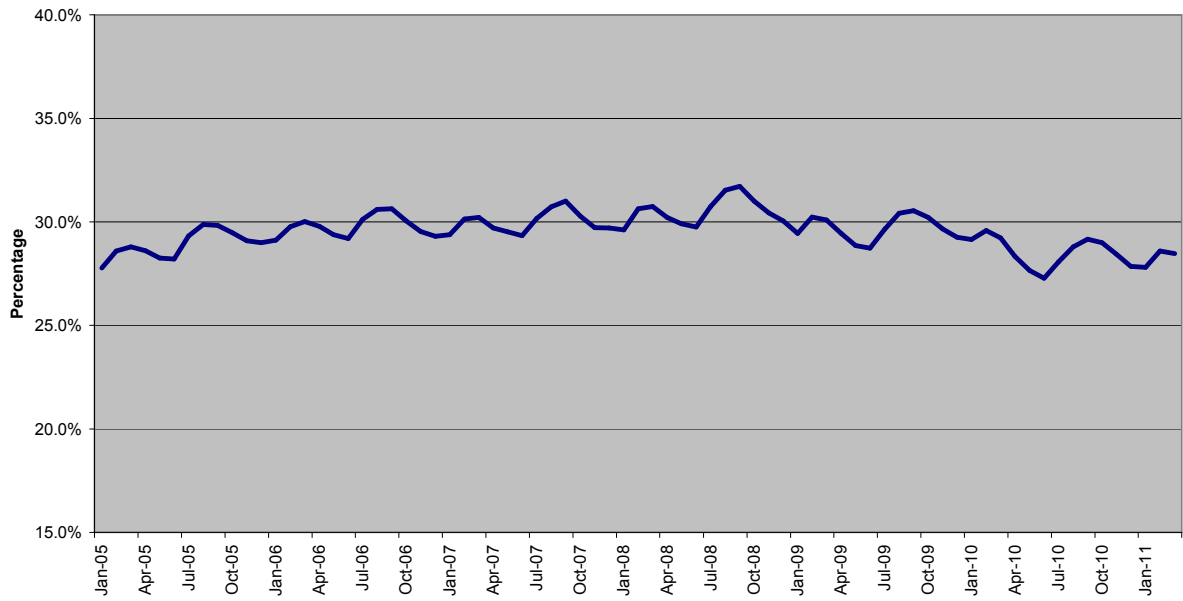
Source: NOMIS
Prepared by: Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

Percentage youth unemployment in Tunbridge Wells



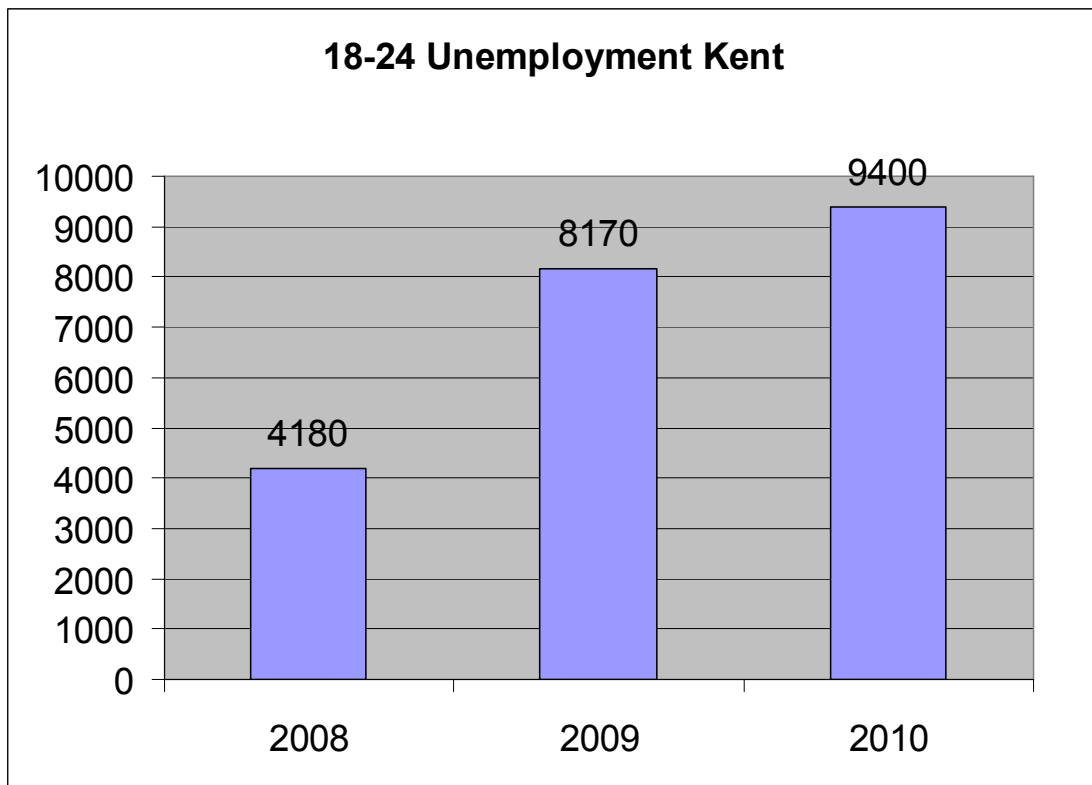
Source: NOMIS
Prepared by: Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

Percentage youth unemployment in Great Britain



Source: NOMIS
Prepared by: Research & Evaluation, Kent County Council

18-24 Unemployment Kent



Source: NOMIS

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