



POLICY BRIEFING NOTE: 2

This is the second of a series of short Policy Briefing Notes prepared by Patrick Watson, MONTROSE PUBLIC AFFAIRS CONSULTANTS LTD, and published by Careers England.

“TOMORROW’S GROWTH: NEW ROUTES TO HIGHER SKILLS”: CBI, July 2013

Read the full report here

http://www.cbi.org.uk/media/2178879/tomorrow_s_growth.pdf

Policy Briefing Note: Comments

- **Long-term growth demands more ‘learn as you earn’ schemes alongside traditional degrees**
- **Needs to be better co-operation between business and Universities**
- **Better support for careers information and advice in schools needed**

Comments

1. The UK will fail to close its chronic skills gaps without urgent action to boost advanced ‘learn as you earn’ training and more business-designed degrees, the CBI report *Tomorrow’s Growth* published on 31 July argues.
2. Relying alone on traditional university courses will not meet the growing demand for degree-level, technical skills in key sectors like manufacturing, construction, IT and engineering.
3. It says that government needs to remove a series of barriers to better co-operation between higher education and industry.
4. And it urges Ministers to address the 40% drop in part-time undergraduate applicants since 2010-11.
5. The CBI warns businesses need to tackle the perception that A-levels followed by a three-year residential course is the only route to a good career, with higher tuition fees meaning young people are getting more astute in deciding what to study from 18.
6. The UK’s biggest business group says there are not enough courses with business links; patchy understanding of student finance; and poor careers advice on options



open to young people – arguing a new vocational UCAS-style system could bridge the gap.

7. **Tomorrow's Growth** identifies that key changes need to be made in our education system to ensure universities and businesses can step up to this challenge.
8. The CBI argues the challenge for the Government is removing the barriers that currently exist to co-operation, around finance, information, relationships and the lack of incentives in the system to focus on employment outcomes.
9. Its recommendations include:

- Build a vocational UCAS-style system – a single portal with information on the full range of business-backed university courses and industry-run training programmes alongside each other. This should also include publishing clearer information on employment outcomes from courses through the Key Information Set data. It is a big step toward parity of esteem with traditional routes.

- **Create more inspiring careers information and guidance by putting in place more support for schools to meet their statutory duties.** Careers advisers need to help students navigate information **about different vocational options open to them**; costs; career prospects; and returns. *see page 22 extract below*

- Universities and colleges to get more commercial nous in their business-outreach teams to identify gaps in skills needs and design tailored curriculum and courses with employers.

- Businesses must strengthen their skills-procurement teams to better articulate their needs and give universities and colleges greater insight into the workplace so they can build better provision.

- Reform student finance arrangements to allow universities greater freedom to design short-courses and tailored programmes for business – including one or two-year compressed degrees.

- Remove Higher Education places that are fully funded by employers from the student numbers quota as they are no burden on the taxpayer. This will help stimulate more business-engagement in universities.

- Route apprenticeship funding directly through employers and consider an apprenticeships tax credit run through the PAYE tax system – with only one in 50 apprenticeship starts at the higher-level, this will increase the demand for more advanced training.



- Exempt strategically important subjects from rules, which bar public funding for part-time degrees for those with equivalent or lower qualifications, holding back older workers needing to reskill. There was a 40% drop in undergraduate part-time applicants to study higher education part-time since 2010-11, following legislation to introduce higher tuition loans.

Page 22 extract

“Learners need access to the right information and at the right intervals to be able to make informed decisions. But there are questions about whether our careers advice system is up to the task. And we need to tackle the perception that A-levels followed by the traditional residential university degree is the only route to a good career.

Careers advice in England has never been as good as it needs to be, with vocational options long undersold as an option for young people. There is thus far little evidence that this is changing on the back of the new statutory duty on schools to provide careers guidance.

We need a comprehensive new approach to advice and guidance, reaching young people as early as possible and based on an inspirational strategy that engages businesses with young people. Rather than handing out information, careers guidance has to be about helping young people navigate all the information they already have at their fingertips more effectively.”

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