

**Locating Apprenticeships in the new
16-19 landscape:
The challenge of creating a high quality
mass participation route**

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Newsom Report 1963

- Identifies challenges still faced in 2013
- ‘It is possible that the potential of these children is very much greater than is generally assumed and that the standards they could achieve might surprise us all.’
- What provision could enable this potential to be realised?



Raising the school leaving age

- ‘In order that the children with whom we are concerned should have an effective secondary education, we recommend that ... the school leaving age will be raised to sixteen for all pupils entering the secondary schools from September 1965 onwards.’
(school leaving age 16 in 1973)



Apprenticeship as policy priority 2013

“Apprenticeships are at the heart of our mission to rebuild the economy, giving young people the chance to learn a trade, to build their careers, and create a truly world-class, high-skilled workforce that can compete and thrive in the fierce global race we are in.”

David Cameron, 11 March 2013

Presentation Plan

- Policy context
- 16-18 participation statistics
- Ways of thinking about the relationship between education & work, and 16-19 as a transition system
- Government supported apprenticeship – features and stats
- Summary challenges
- Expansive- restrictive continuum, apprenticeship as a model of learning
- Conclusions

Policy context

- High youth unemployment (just under 1 million 16-24s)
- Raising the participation age (2013 and 2015)
- Review of vocational education (Wolf 2011)
- Tripling of tuition fees for higher education (2012)
- Richard Review of Apprenticeship (2012)
- Funding by study programme (2013)
- Review of vocational qualifications & Traineeships (2013)

16 and 17 year old participation (2009-10)

- 33% pursuing three A levels
- 6% pursuing one or two A levels plus other qualifications
- 18% pursuing an L3 qualification (but not A level)
- 30% pursuing L2/L1 or below
- Remainder in Apprenticeships, other government support E/T, employment or unemployed

Wolf Report March 2011)

Participation rates (rounded)

- 67% of 16-18s in FT education (SFR June 2013)
- 9% of 16-18s in PT education
- 6% of 16-18s in Work-based learning
- 10% of 16-18s NEET
- Approx. 36% 18/19 year olds progress directly to HE (HEFCE 2010) i.e. over 6 out of 10 don't
- So what kind of a 'transition system' do we have?

Understanding education-work transitions

- An holistic or ‘societal approach’ (Maurice et al 1986) focuses on the relationship between education, the labour market and social and civic institutions
- “[it]... emphasizes the holistic interrelationships among different social and economic institutions, including education and training, the labour market and industrial relations systems, the production system, family structures and cultures, and so on. (Raffe 2008: 278)

Need to think about:

- How changing one aspect of the system might affect other parts, if you only change one aspect it is likely to have minimal impact on other parts
- Not only the education and training system (supply side) but also about the labour market and work. What kinds of jobs are available and for whom? How is the changing nature of work affecting employers' demand for skills?
- Implications for policy borrowing from other countries.



Characterising transition systems

- **Stratification** – what proportion of the cohort stays in education for longest and progresses to HE?
- **Segmentation**, permeability – how easy is it to transfer between pathways horizontally and vertically (availability of ladders and bridges)?
- **Standardisation** – to what extent is provision consistent or variable, implications for trust?
- **Logics** – how strong are the linkages between education and employment?
- **Diversion effects** – to what extent are social groups diverted into the vocational/apprenticeship pathway?

Government supported apprenticeship

Three programmes inc. competence-based/knowledge-based components, functional skills, ERR:-

- Intermediate Apprenticeship (leading to L2 qualifications)
- Advanced Apprenticeship (leading to L3 qualifications)
- Higher Apprenticeship (leading to L4/5/6 qualifications)
- Apprenticeship is small pathway (approx. 6% 16-18s)



Apprenticeship Statistical Picture 2011/12 (England)

- Just under 130,000 starts aged 16-18 (25% of all 520,600 starts)
- Of 16-18 starts - 95,400 (73%) Intermediate Apprenticeship; 34,100 Advanced Apprenticeship; 300 Higher Apprenticeship
- Males - 73,300 starts (71% Intermediate, 29% Advanced)
- Females – 56,500 starts (77% Intermediate, 23% Advanced)

Gender imbalance by apprenticeship sector

Percentage female start

- Children's care – 93%
- Hairdressing – 91%
- Business administration – 75%
- Engineering – 3%
- Construction – 2%
- IT and telecoms – 10%

Summary Challenges

- Quantity and quality
- Pay (apprenticeship minimum wage, some reports not paid in childcare and hairdressing, Higton et al 2012)
- Progression (L2 to L3 and to HE – often weak currency of L3, Fuller and Unwin 2012)
- Off-the-job (52% 16-18s no off-the-job Higton et al 2012 despite SASE minimum standards – 100 hours)
- Islands of excellence but variability key feature of English apprenticeship system



Research led to development of Expansive – Restrictive Continuum

- Tool for analysing why some apprenticeships offer so much more than others – key characteristics include the extent to which:
- Apprentices given access to new knowledge, skills and recognised VQs
- Structured on & off-the-job training with skilled vocational teachers/trainers
- Opportunity to learn about whole work process over time not just discrete tasks for immediate productivity
- Apprentices has dual status as learner and employee
- Apprenticeship provides a platform for higher learning and career progression

(Fuller &Unwin)



Apprenticeship as a Model of Learning

- Apprenticeship a universally understood model of learning, involving the development of occupational expertise
- Supported journey taking time to become a recognised member of an occupational community, acquire wider knowledge about concepts and theories underpinning skilled vocational practice
- Model requires a key role for teachers, trainers and employers; apprenticeships integral to workforce development not just on-the-job training
- Making the model work is challenging, employers have to plan for medium/long term – in any country the quality will vary but particular problems with variability in England



Interrelated Reasons for restrictive model

- Largely unregulated nature of occupations
- Use of competence-based qualifications as mandatory output of all government funded training programmes since 1980s
- Competence-based approach separates the process of training from the assessment of competence (exceptions)
- Obsession of successive governments with increasing the stocks of qualifications in the workforce (irrespective of whether acquisition requires new knowledge)
- Helps explain why majority of starts at L2



Conclusion

- So what are the conditions for successful transition systems?
- A healthy economy - availability of skilled jobs
- Well-organised pathways (eg apprenticeships) that connect education with work and further study
- Effective institutions, partnerships and processes (system capacity)
- Standardised programmes to help build shared understanding and trust



Cont.

- Opportunities for horizontal and vertical articulation between pathways (implies importance of breadth)
- Labour market/occupational regulation – strong LM signals
- Tightly knit safety nets for those at risk
- Good information and guidance
- Well-qualified, trained & resourced teachers/trainers (brings us full circle to the recommendations of the Newsom report 50 years ago)