

T levels

The case for change - the Sainsbury Panel Report and Post-16 Skills Plan

T level Awareness Raising Event

November 2017



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for Education

The current system isn't meeting our country's skills needs...

The UK faces a long-standing productivity challenge

- The UK's **productivity performance is poor** compared to international competitors, and our relative position has worsened since 2007.



Part of this is directly attributable to weaknesses in our skills base

- The UK is in the **bottom four OECD countries for literacy and numeracy skills** among 16–24 year olds.¹
- The UK also performs poorly on **intermediate professional and technical skills**, and is forecast to fall to 28th out of 33 OECD countries for intermediate skills by 2020.²

Addressing this is a matter of economic and social imperative

- We live in **an age of increasing global competition** and ever-faster technological change.
- **Skilled employment leads to prosperity and security** for individuals while unskilled employment often means the opposite.



....it isn't meeting learner needs...

Post-16 academic education follows a clear, well-established and respected path

- A levels enable access to undergraduate degree courses. In contrast.....

The post-16 skills system is complex and of variable quality

- There is a **lack of clear progression routes** to employment.
- Students face a **bewildering choice** of qualifications:
 - Nearly 13,000 qualifications are currently available for 16–18 year-olds, including 28 in plumbing alone.³
 - Many of the existing qualifications are **low-quality**:
 - Only 173 meet the DfE tech level requirements.⁴
 - Competition between awarding organisations can lead to a 'race to the bottom' on standards.
 - They do not prepare students for work
- Careers education and guidance provides **insufficient information and support** for those wishing to access technical training for skilled employment.



...or the needs of employers

Employer engagement in the current system is limited

- The current system has **limited employer engagement** in defining qualifications and curricula. Intermediary bodies have not provided an effective voice for business and many employers have disengaged from the skills system.



Many employers do not understand the system

- Many employers do not know what to expect from a person with a particular qualification – what do they know and what level of skills do they have? Current qualifications therefore have **limited labour market currency**.

Provision is not aligned with local and national economic needs

- There are **not enough apprenticeship opportunities to meet potential demand** in the economy and the wider availability of training opportunities frequently doesn't reflect employment market demand.



The Government sought advice from an Independent Panel

The Sainsbury Panel

Chair:

Lord Sainsbury of Turville, former Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State For Science and Innovation (1998-2005)



Panel members:

- **Simon Blagden**, Non-Executive Chairman, Fujitsu UK
- **Bev Robinson**, Principal & Chief Executive, Blackpool and The Fylde College
- **Steven West**, Vice-Chancellor & President, University of the West of England
- **Professor Alison Wolf**, Sir Roy Griffiths Professor of Public Sector Management, King's College London



... and considered international evidence

- They considered a number of international exemplars of routes-based technical education systems, including **Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and Singapore**.
- In the best international technical education systems, **routes begin with a broad curriculum, then increasingly specialise** as an individual progresses to higher levels of knowledge and skills.
- While **jurisdictions vary in their economic and social contexts**, and thus comparisons must be made with care, this should not be viewed as a barrier to **learning from principles that underpin strong technical education elsewhere**.



Danish system...students start on one of 12 broad, basic foundation programmes:

1. Motor vehicle, aircraft and other means of transportation
2. Building and construction
3. Construction and user service
4. Animals, plants and nature
5. Body and style
6. Human food
7. Media production
8. Business
9. Production and development
10. Electricity, management and IT
11. Health, care and pedagogy
12. Transport and logistics



... including those of the OECD



“The current system of awarding bodies which operate in many parts of the UK (but works differently in Scotland) has very serious drawbacks. The proliferation of competing qualifications in England and Northern Ireland undermines the labour market value of vocational qualifications, and prevents employers from engaging effectively in the construction of qualifications.”

Source: <https://www.oecd.org/unitedkingdom/skills-beyond-school-United-Kingdom.pdf>



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The Government accepted all of the Sainsbury Panel's recommendations

The Sainsbury Panel started work in November 2015 and submitted their **final report** in April 2016.

The Government response, set out in the **Post-16 Skills Plan** in July 2016, accepts all 34 of the Panel's recommendations, and was widely welcomed by stakeholders including the CBI and AoC.



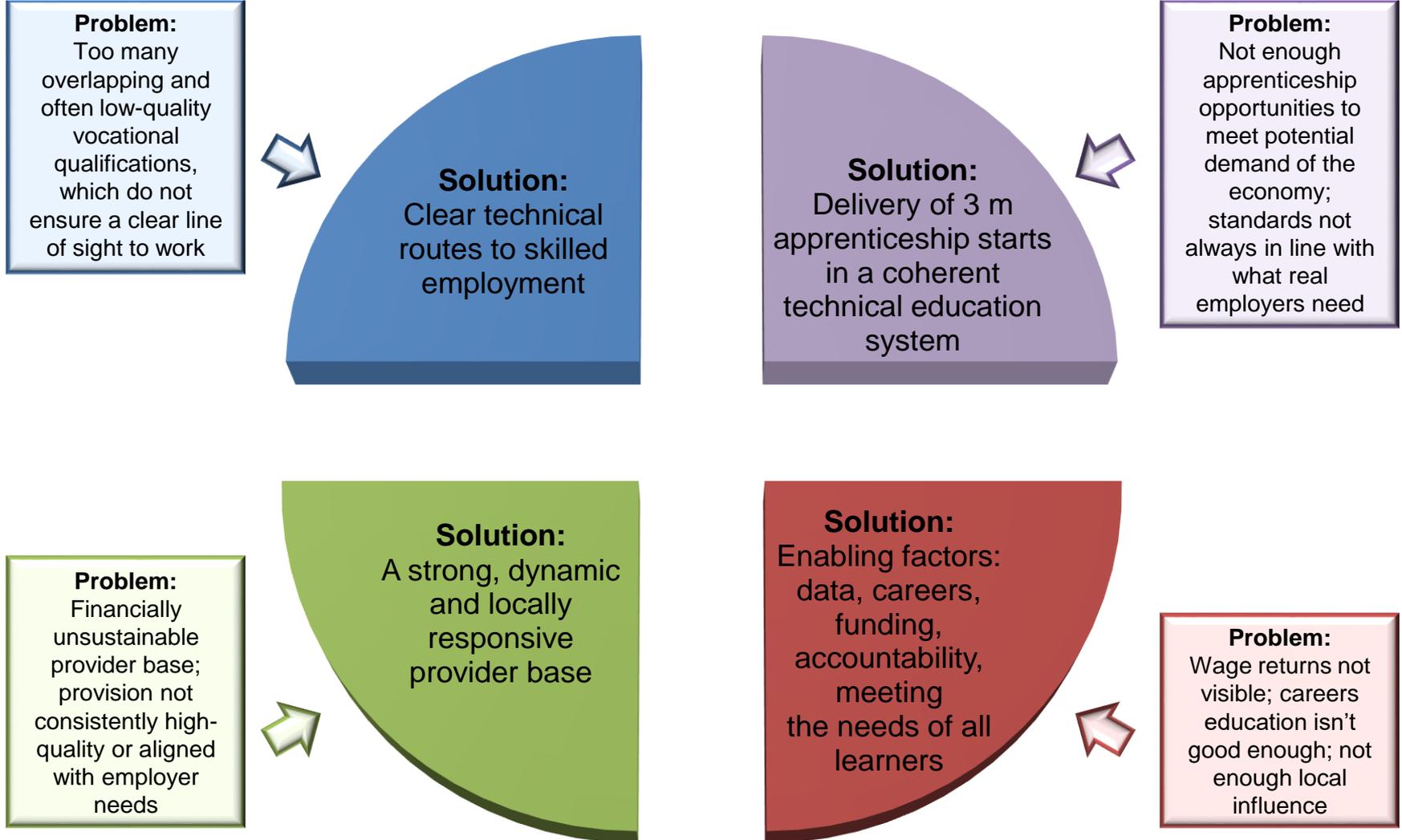
In the **Spring Budget 2017**, the Chancellor announced additional funding to deliver the Sainsbury Panel's recommendations – over £500m a year to increase training hours from the current 600 to 900 per year, including a substantial work placement for each student.

The **Technical and Further Education Act 2017** provides the legislative basis for delivering the reforms, extending the remit of the Institute for Apprenticeships to cover technical education.

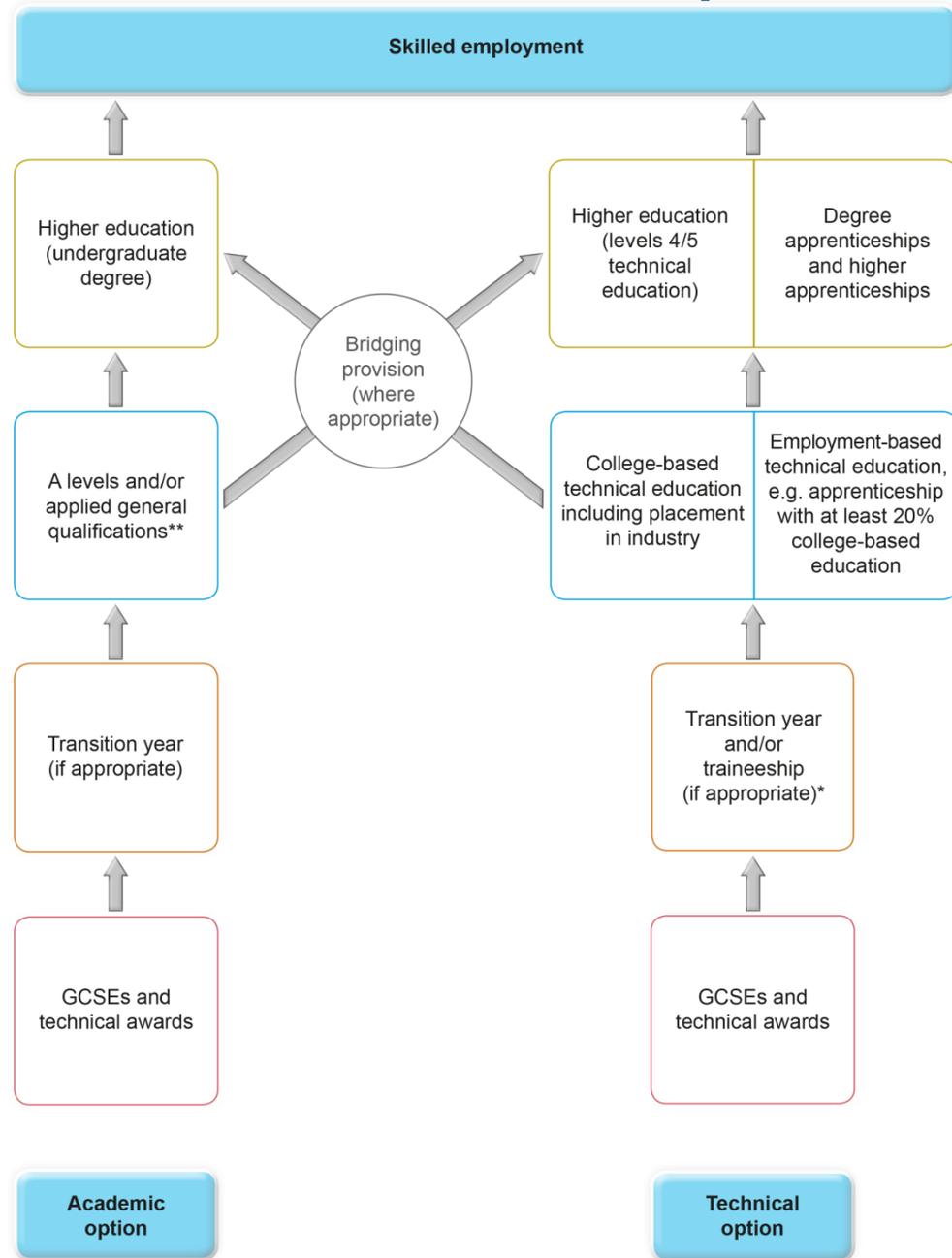
The Secretary of State spoke at **British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) Education Summit** on Thursday 6 July, setting out her ambition for the new technical routes and T levels, and focusing on the need for a genuine partnership between business and Government, to deliver these.



The Post-16 Skills Plan explains how we will create a coherent technical education system fit for the twenty-first century



How the academic and technical options would work



* Where a student does both, the traineeship will follow the transition year. Students doing both the transition year and a traineeship may progress directly to employment.

** Some students will move directly from A levels and/or applied general qualifications to degree and higher apprenticeships.



The proposed routes

1. **Agriculture, Environmental and Animal Care**
2. **Business and Administrative**
3. **Catering and Hospitality**
4. **Childcare and Education**
5. **Construction**
6. **Creative and Design**
7. **Digital**
8. **Engineering and Manufacturing**
9. **Hair and Beauty**
10. **Health and Science**
11. **Legal, Finance and Accounting**
12. **Protective Services**
13. **Sales, Marketing and Procurement**
14. **Social Care**
15. **Transport and Logistics**



To be delivered
primarily through
apprenticeships



T levels: new technical programmes are central to the reforms

“As part of these routes we will introduce a new certificate – the “T Level” – which will be a gold standard for technical and professional excellence. Offered alongside apprenticeships, they will form the basis of our new technical education system.” Secretary of State, 6 July 2017



with employers involved in shaping their design

“Delivering these reforms will be a challenge. I am clear there is only one way to get this right – through a genuine partnership between business, government and education professionals. This means we need a collective plan. One plan. One team for skills.”

Secretary of State, 6 July 2017

To ensure the skills system responds to the changing labour market, employers, providers and other partners need to be involved in both design and delivery.

Co-creation: shaping occupational standards and designing wider T level content.

Co-delivery: employers offering work placements to T level students so they can apply the knowledge and skills they have learnt in college.



“Businesses and colleges will be in the room at every single point – so we drive the skills revolution together.”

Secretary of State, 6 July 2017



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Any questions or thoughts?

