



Education Politics

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Now: a Labour leader who supports a school system accountable to local communities

INSIDE:

Labour policy in a new world

Where next for TVET?

Editorial

The SEA nominated Jeremy Corbyn for the leadership at its AGM in June, long before Corbymania. Why? Because its members want a different Labour politics, one that breaks from the slick professionalism of focus groups and triangulation and reflects the more positive aspects of British character: tolerance, support for the underdog, commitment to community, and most of all a strong sense of fairness. SEA members are part of what turned out to be the silent majority who had been pining for a Labour Party more true to its roots, more wary of the rich and powerful, not just talking about social justice but producing it.

This is not to deny the achievements of Labour in power from 1997. Corbyn supporters simply say, but we could have done so much more. The statutory minimum wage, a great step forward, but the loopholes could have been closed, enforcement made more rigorous, and most of all the rate raised until it became a living wage. Labour has never claimed sufficient credit for saving the world economy from chaos in 2008, but then it failed to deal with the cause, the out-of-control global financial sector. And what of education? Yes, huge investment and SureStart, and yes, let us be clear, huge improvements in the performance of schools and colleges – but so many blind alleys, now developed by the Tories, due to the blind belief in markets and privatisation.

When allowed one member one vote, Labour has installed a leader who wants to turn a page. But we must not spend too much time cheering, because the Party now enters a difficult and dangerous time. Let us be frank: the main danger lies within the Parliamentary Labour Party, whose composition does not reflect the balance of the various traditional strands of thought within the party but is over-represented by the there-is-no-alternative neo-liberal wing. Too many of these MPs have been behaving as if unaware of the breadth of views within the Party's natural supporters and the need to look for common ground between social democrats and democratic socialists. The whole PLP needs to reflect on what the members have told them in this election, and to forgo the arrogance of assuming that the supremacy of neo-liberalism was permanent rather than a phase.

Austerity has failed. The economy has remained relatively flat for the longest period in history. Labour MPs need to oppose Tory austerity and support a change in the balance between markets

and the state, with the state investing where short-termist capitalists will not. Some Labour MPs need to develop a better understanding of the relative roles of the market and the state in modern society; there could be no capitalism without the state, which sets its rules (and needs to tweak them, as Andy Haldane at the Bank of England suggested recently) and provides the infrastructure without which capitalism would not work. This is not anti-business; it only clarifies the boundaries of business.

Thus Labour should clearly oppose the marketisation of public services, including education. In early years and schools, it must work with the grain of current thinking. It must move on from the over-emphasis on the 'great school', or even worse, 'great headteachers', towards re-establishment of a system in which schools can turn to external support to help them improve. Jeremy Corbyn simply responded 'support all' when asked about the seven principles espoused by Reclaiming Education, the umbrella organisation supported by SEA. (These are: a National Curriculum for all; schools should not choose their pupils; inclusion and equal opportunities; equal treatment for schools; schools within an area to work together; a new inspection system; all staff should be qualified.)

Labour must also lead a debate on the need for radical change in post-compulsory education and training. This edition of *Education Politics* takes a long look at vocational education. The weight of academic evidence is that it is in a sorry state. The under-reported savagery of cuts in FE, the limited Tory perspective on training, the persistence of damaging elitism in policy on FHE, must all be exposed by Labour. New Labour was characterised by timidity, but a number of candidates in the leadership elections showed an encouraging interest in new thinking in this area.

The whole Party must come to terms with the reality that the election of Jeremy Corbyn means that new thinking is needed in many policy areas. This moment must be the start of policy debates, which hardly featured in the election, simultaneously coupled with an all-out assault on Tory policies. Humility is not the characteristic most associated with politicians, but without it the Party is in great danger. The only way to avoid a destructive battle is to play the ball (a set of policies which the country needs and will support) and not the man. The man, like it or not, is Jeremy Corbyn.

The 2015 Caroline Benn Memorial Lecture

10th November 6.00 pm, House of Commons

Susan Robertson, Professor of Sociology of Education, University of Bristol

“In this lecture I argue that not only is the project of making more equal societies through democratising education not even ‘half-way there’, but that new widening and lengthening divisions are being created, exploited and exported. I consider three ways in which I see this occurring in education: the deepening involvement of profit-making firms in education provision; the promotion of private interests in national and global education policy-making spaces; and the enclosure of political space that limits public scrutiny and accountability. Taken together, these developments suggest a new level of urgency around what must be our common cause: the capacity to do the sums that add up in making a very different society.”

See more at <http://susanleerobertson.com/>

Where next for TVET?

This edition is devoted mainly to perspectives on the condition of TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) in England. This was the only area of education policy which received much attention during the leadership campaign, as was evident in the candidates’ positions as set out in Education Politics 124.

There are undoubtedly policy issues in pre-16 education, and it must be admitted that they are uppermost in the minds of many SEA members. But they are less significant than the challenges in post-16. The cuts to funding and provision in the FE sector will damage the lives and employment prospects of millions of people - and not just the young. More, there is no apparent vision within BIS of the learning and training needs of adults and young people, and with BIS now led by Sajid Javid, who strongly believes in small government, short term prospects are dire.

As in other policy areas, political debate has been highly restricted in recent years, with an apparent consensus that post-compulsory education is all about providing the skills to support economic growth and employability. It is obvious that this is one purpose; but life-long education should be for the emancipation, development, and achievement of individuals, to the huge benefit of both them and society. There is a thirst for learning out there.

As Professor Linda Clarke points out, vocational policy suffers from historical weakness in comparison with much practice across Europe. The tendency within the UK to describe any narrow based training in specific skills as ‘apprenticeship’ is in contrast to the combination of continuing general education and a wider introduction to the relevant

industry found abroad. This may have reached its nadir with the government’s commitment to create three million ‘apprenticeships’, with commentators already predicting substantial massaging of statistics to meet the target.

Anne Hodgson and Ken Spours open the debate. They make a series of proposals which require a rethink across the education system, including a new 14-19 curriculum leading to a National Baccalaureate. They also seek local initiatives for co-operation between providers in the likely absence of national change.

The experienced and leading practitioner Eddie Playfair makes passionate claims for a new curriculum with equal opportunities for all. The call for a new national education service could well be the basis for a new debate within the Labour Party.

John Woodcock presents the position of the Labour Party as Shadow Minister for Young People. As MP for one of the many economically precarious northern constituencies, John should have a useful perspective.

A doyen of academic experts on VET, Lorna Unwin rounds up with an overview of the sorry state we are in. She makes clear the deep cultural and political barriers to implementing the kind of education needed by every young person. The SEA must take a lead in persuading the Labour Party that VET should not be an *alternative* kind of provision, but *one component of a national curriculum for all*. And as Professor Unwin explains, this is not about trying to meet the short-term needs of employers, but another route to creating the educated person.

Building a strong TVET system requires new economic and educational models

Ann Hodgson and Ken Spours

Why the Anglo Saxon model struggles to develop TVET

It is generally accepted that technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in the UK, and particularly in England, is weak. The symptoms are there for all to see. Our work-based route is very small (only 6% of 16-18 year olds are involved in apprenticeships); vocational education has second class status, broadly seen as being for other people's children; employer engagement is inadequate because of a voluntarist approach to the labour market; and further education colleges that should be the central driver for TVET have been deflected from this mission because of the social and educational compensatory role they are often forced to play.

The reasons for this state of affairs are to be found not only in education policy, but in the nature of the economy and the state. The UK (and particularly England) has developed, over the last 30 years or so, what has been referred to as an 'Anglo Saxon economic model'¹. Propelled by a liberal free market philosophy, the economy has become financialised and service sector oriented with a shrinking industrial base (although it has a number of world-leading companies) and a preponderance of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which often find it harder to train.

Overlaying this is what we have termed an 'extreme Anglo Saxon model of education'², defined by the twin themes of academic traditionalism and an education market, which was begun under the Conservative/Liberal Democrat Coalition Government and is now being taken forward by the new Conservative administration.

Within these parameters the Government is, nevertheless, trying to develop a stronger TVET system by deploying a typical mixture of top-down politics and markets. Preferring to use the term Technical and Professional Education (TPE) and having apparently given up on using the word 'vocational', it has a target of producing three million

apprenticeships. It is also preparing to push through a series of FE college mergers, via BIS-inspired area reviews, primarily to save money. At the same time vocational qualifications have been reformed, with a greater emphasis on clarity of purpose and 'rigorous' external assessment aimed at gaining stronger public and employer support for TVET. The Conservative Government has also felt compelled to move beyond its traditional political territory. In order to stimulate productivity whilst shrinking public expenditure, there is talk of an 'apprenticeship levy' and a 'New Living Wage'.

Despite these measures, the underlying economic logic, employer behaviour and the policy of austerity will restrict the development of TVET. City companies, for example, prefer to recruit graduates from Russell Group universities, while sectors such as construction, hospitality and food processing are content to employ migrant labour. This is the economic and political logic that underpins a small apprenticeship system; has seen the historical decline of 'youth jobs'³; produces poor employer demand for skill (mainly Level 2) and appears unable to use properly graduates in the workforce⁴. In addition, the government policy of austerity will undercut the capacity of TVET providers to supply skills, although ministers hope that a rationalized FE sector and a range of private independent learning providers can rise to the task. Finally, and at a much broader level, TVET has been and remains a poor relation in the education policy firmament with BIS being an unprotected area of public expenditure.

An expansive TVET has to be rooted in new visions of the economy and democracy

Not all countries adopt the Anglo Saxon economic or educational models. Historically and globally speaking, it is those countries with stronger social-partnership arrangements and state-sponsored economies and education systems (e.g. Germanic nations and parts of the Pacific Rim) that have developed thriving mass TVET systems. England's



Ann Hodgson and Ken Spours (cont)

job, however, is not simply to embark on a process of 'policy borrowing', but instead to benefit from policy learning⁵ by using international and historical knowledge to think about approaches to change rooted in our own conditions. If we are prepared to learn from a wider economic and system analysis and from our own history, the alternative becomes clear. Building an effective TVET system will have to be based on a different national economic vision allied to greater democratic devolution. Here we outline a number of ideas that could usefully figure in future TVET debates and policy-making.



- *A new national economic vision based on investment, technology and sustainability*

The central feature has to be a different national economic model capable of producing a new wave of sustainable technological development. Underpinned by what has been termed 'A Green New Deal'⁶ and the development of a low carbon economy, government should be developing regional investment banks that directly support new UK companies and entrepreneurialism, including co-operatives and collaborative start-ups. TVET would then become integral to a more balanced and stable economic recovery in which there could be a marked increase in the demand for high skill. But demand for skill will not automatically emerge; it will also have to be incentivised. This will mean, for example, reintroducing widespread 'licence to practise' requirements so that becoming qualified is the route

to success; thus at a stroke improving the status of TVET.

- *A more devolved and democratic TVET system*

A new economic model cannot be run effectively from the centre. Within a national framework of investment and support, real power has to be devolved to strengthened and democratically accountable regional and local levels. Here we see a leading role for regional co-ordination and the networked integration of social partners – further education and work-based training providers, vocational higher education, employer networks, regeneration agencies – working hand-in-hand to develop regional economies that focus not only on skills supply but also, crucially on skills utilization.

- *A leading role for further education colleges*

Long regarded as the 'Cinderella Sector', FE colleges will have a leading role in the new TVET formation. At a time of limited resources, however, it will be important to concentrate specialist facilities and staff expertise in a smaller number of institutions that then act as hubs in their locality/region and actively involve employers in all aspects of TVET. We are not, therefore, automatically opposed to college mergers providing they make sense to local communities and local economies. But in this context colleges will have to be clearer about their vocational specialisation(s) and be prepared to collaborate with other providers locally and beyond. Moreover, they will have to think not only about the supply of skills, but also how to promote business health and engage in joint business ventures that could be particularly helpful for SMEs. However, if FE colleges are going to take a decisive step in the direction of TVET and vocational specialization, then the other education providers in the locality (schools, sixth form colleges, independent learning providers, UTCs, Studio Schools) will have to step up to the plate. This means playing a reciprocal role in creating the progression routes and skills escalators in a range of sectors and at a variety of levels. It should not be the prime role of colleges to pick up the human debris from school selection practices.

Ann Hodgson and Ken Spours (cont)

- *A unified curriculum and qualifications system to serve all learners*

If there is one place that policy memory would serve us well, it is in the area of upper secondary curriculum and qualifications reform. History suggests that nationally designed vocational qualifications conceived separately from general qualifications are doomed to failure (e.g. GNVQs, 14-19 Diplomas). As part of a new TVET system we would advocate a unified rather than a divided qualifications system. More precisely, we see an argument for a National Baccalaureate System for England that includes all types of learning for 14-19 year olds, but has strong regionally/locally determined technical elements capable of creating a new synthesis between TVET specialist knowledge and skills and the fundamental competences, such as maths, English, research and entrepreneurship, that are required for both work and life in the 21st Century.

We need to develop new practices and models in difficult circumstances

We are now faced with a strategic choice. Either we continue to follow the Anglo-Saxon economic and educational models towards what threatens to be an age of 'stagnation' or we try to break free of this logic. But we do not enjoy the immediate national conditions to replace these models. It is, therefore, important to think long-term nationally and more immediately locally. It is for this reason that we support the development of partnerships between colleges, other providers and employers at the local and regional levels to help develop patterns of institutional and curriculum innovation that have at their nucleus a vision of a new type of economy and education system. Examples of these kinds of 'prefigurative practice' are the creation of what we have termed local and regional 'high opportunity and progression ecosystems'⁷ and the emergent 'National Baccalaureate Trust' that seeks to develop a grassroots movement prepared to implement a Tomlinson-type baccalaureate framework on the ground.⁸

Footnotes

- 1 For a sustained analysis and critique of this model see Hutton, W. (2015) *How good we can be* London: Little, Brown Book Group
- 2 See Hodgson, A. and Spours, K. (2014) *Heavy fog in the Channel: Continent cut off* - reform of upper secondary education from the perspective of English exceptionalism *European Educational Research Journal*, 13 (6) 683-698.
- 3 Allen, M. and Ainley, P. (2013) *The great reversal: young people, education and employment in a declining economy* London: Radicaled.
- 4 Keep, E. (2012) *Education and industry: taking two steps back and reflecting*. *Journal of Education and Work*, 25 (4) 357-379.
- 5 Raffe, D. (2011) *Policy borrowing or policy learning? How (not) to improve education systems*. CES Briefing, No. 57. Centre for Educational Sociology, University of Edinburgh.
- 6 See for example National Economic Forum (NEF) (2008) *A Green New Deal* <http://www.neweconomics.org/publications/entry/a-green-new-deal> Accessed 26 August 2015.
- 7 Hodgson, A. and Spours, K. (2013) *Tackling the crisis facing young people: building 'high opportunity progression eco-systems'*, *Oxford Review of Education* <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2013.787923>.
- 8 Sherrington, T. (2015) *A National Baccalaureate for England* <http://www.aqa.org.uk/supporting-education/policy/the-future-of-assessment-2025-and-beyond/a-national-baccalaureate-for-england> Accessed 25 August 2015.

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Developing a vocational education and training (VET) system or just training for the skills of yesterday?

Linda Clarke

There seem to me to be remarkable misconceptions – even a conceptual vacuum! - concerning the role, nature and importance of vocational education and training (VET) in Britain, apparent in differing ways and to a different degree in all the addresses on education put forward by the Labour leadership candidates (EP June 2015, No 124), but going back a very long way. Given the critical and precarious situation for VET today, its importance as an area for long-term economic investment, and a hopefully changing and more open political debate, I will attempt here to indicate what these misconceptions are, why they arise and how we might overcome them.

One misconception is that VET, at least as concerns apprenticeship, is just about learning by doing, and not about learning to learn and to manage projects. This was wonderfully summed up by an OECD delegation to Britain fifty years ago in 1964, consisting of a joint team of employers and trade unions from the Federal Republic of Germany:



Both sides of industry are frequently unable to free themselves of the traditional notion that special skills can only be gained through experience. It is often hard to convince them that systematic teaching and learning methods can considerably shorten the time required to instil certain forms of knowledge.¹

Ironically this statement was made in exactly the same year as the Industrial Training Act was passed in Britain, establishing tripartite Industrial Training Boards (ITBs) to give trade unions a fuller role in training policy, creating an obligation to train on the part of the employers through the institution of a levy-grant system and representing 'the first attempt to formulate a modern industrial manpower policy'² across all sectors.

These ITBs have only survived today in the construction and engineering construction industries in the form of the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) and the Engineering Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB), having become

voluntary bodies in all other industries in the 1970s, though in the scourge of the Thatcher regime to reduce the role of trade unions even they became what is officially called 'employer-led'. Nevertheless, the CITB still offers important lessons for today about the structure of VET, in particular through its short-lived training plan of 1969, which sought to develop schemes of training for all the activities in the industry rather than only for traditional trades. The failure to develop a comprehensive VET system encompassing broadly defined occupations, including, for instance, groundworks, concreting, drylining and machine operation, continues today to be a major weakness and means that the vast majority of construction trainees are still to be found in the traditional trades of carpentry and joinery, bricklaying, painting and decorating, plastering, heating and ventilating, plumbing and electrical work, though these employ less than half the construction workforce, the remaining areas being relatively 'no-go' areas for the purpose of training. This then represents another misconception: that VET is about 'training' for 'skills' in traditional and relatively unchanging 'trades', as opposed to occupations.

As we have found in our comparative studies, such as on bricklaying,³ the qualifications for these traditional 'trades' in Britain have also become narrower and narrower, as VET has become increasingly so-called 'employer-led' and the trade unions have ceased to play an active, responsible role in negotiating and defining the scope of different occupational profiles. As a result the scope of activities covered by bricklaying trainees today, largely confined to the 'skills' of laying bricks and blocks, is extremely restricted compared to their counterparts in most European countries, whose VET systems encompass far more competence and knowledge elements and who invariably (with the exception of the Netherlands) reach a higher qualification level, the equivalent of NVQ3 or above, rather than NVQ Level 2 common in Britain. A bricklayer in Denmark, for instance, has gone

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through a VET programme of over three years, much of the time in the college and in training workshops, and covering many aspects not in the core curriculum in Britain, including: in terms of know-how or practical skills, concreting, plastering, cladding, flooring and insulation; in terms of non-manual competences, communicating, dealing with waste, quality control, ordering and assessing materials; and, in terms of knowledge, a foreign language, sciences, technical drawing, citizenship, labour law, materials and environmental protection. The misconception in Britain is that VET is regarded not as education but just as 'training' to meet immediate 'skill' needs, reflecting also the obsession with 'skill' at the expense of knowledge and competence.

It is hardly surprising that construction VET has become so narrow, given the reversion to the day release system of the 1950s, as laid down in the 1944 Education Act. In contrast, the well-regarded Standard Scheme of Training in construction of the 1970s was for a minimum of three years and based on block release, 13 weeks in college and off-site workshops, and then 13 weeks on site, in rotation. This still represents a far cry from many continental systems today, including the Danish, where the first year is almost entirely spent in the college, and the German Stufenausbildung, usually in 26 week blocks, whereby the 12 occupations into which the construction industry is divided are covered by all trainees in a common first year, followed by gradual specialisation in the second year into either 'Building', 'Finishing' or 'Civil Engineering' and only specialising into a specific occupation such as bricklaying or dry assembly in the third year. The German VET system that developed in the 1970s and is still in place today explicitly distanced itself from 'apprenticeship' (Lehre), with the 'apprentice' (Lehrling) becoming instead a 'trainee' (Auszubildendender). The curriculum is also divided into three locations - school, training centre, and workplace - with the school concentrated on classroom education, the training centre concerned



with innovation and simulation in workshops, and the workplace of the company concerned with learning under productive and market conditions. The misconception in Britain is in seriously underestimating the role of the Further Education (FE) Colleges and of state regulation, investment and institutions, which is reinforced by being wed to a traditional notion of 'apprenticeship'.

These examples illustrate some of the differences between VET in Britain and other developed continental countries. In the latter, VET comes under the education system rather than as in Britain under a Ministry concerned with the labour market, currently Business, Innovation and Skills. The concern in these countries is to develop the knowledge, know-how ('skills') and competences of individuals through a mandatory curriculum in a particular occupation so as to equip them for a long-term future working life, not just to impart 'skills' to meet the short-term demands of employers. The underlying pedagogical principle is that trainees learn how to apply theoretical

knowledge, not 'learning by doing' based on the generalisation of different experiences. The systems - whether in Scandinavia, France, Germany, or the Netherlands - are social-partner (trade unions and employers) based, with the trade unions participating in decision-making, including in negotiations concerning the development of occupational qualification and changes to them, in the workplace through the works councils, and even in Germany in the examination boards of the Chambers. There are clear institutional links between the education systems and industry, between the vocational colleges and the labour market. Qualification levels are reflected in collectively agreed wage rates, so that workers have a defined and recognised status in society. And, in turn, the currency of occupational qualifications in the labour market is high; many employers recruit directly from the colleges and it is increasingly difficult to work on a construction site without a recognised qualification.

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This is not to say that, in the construction industry at least, work-related VET all over Europe is not confronted by some of the same labour market challenges that beset it in Britain, including extensive subcontracting, agency labour, 'self-employment', casual and short-term employment, a wage system geared to output, and health and safety risks. Such a labour market does not anywhere provide a training infrastructure in which to insert young people. Large employers do not employ, and the smaller firms and subcontractors do not have the means, the finance, the incentive, the personnel or the time to train. Long gone are the days when training was something that a benevolent employer provided through apprenticeships, apart from some exemplary schemes in the public sector and on large sites. A highly qualified workforce is required in practically every area of activity, even more so now with the abstract competences and knowledge demands of low energy construction which require each and every construction worker to be thermally literate. In this situation, and given the marginalisation of trade unions, the privatisation of Sector Skills Councils, and the terrific pressures on FE colleges, it is hardly surprising that the British VET system is in crisis. In the construction sector, the majority of training (over 80%) is focussed at Level 2 so that it has become almost impossible to progress and develop a career, and trainee numbers have plummeted, standing at just 19,000 by 2014, the lowest ever recorded!⁴ To compensate for this, employers in Britain have increasingly come to rely on recruiting workers trained in other countries, so 'poaching' from VET systems elsewhere.

Where do we go from here? If we compare VET provision in Britain with that in other countries, one particular aspect seems crucial for the development of a qualified workforce. VET as the link between general education and employment has shifted away from employment, and 'learning by doing' - largely characteristic of apprenticeship - is no longer an option. As a result, the workplace is more and more peripheral as a place for VET and the college classroom and simulation in workshops - or, in the case of construction, special trainee sites - are indispensable given the increasing demand for higher level qualifications. We are also witnessing a stage of globalisation of the labour market and in

VET systems, particularly with the gradual implementation of the European Qualifications Framework and other tools, which any VET system needs to be in tune with and thus transnationally valid. In broad terms, however, what is needed in Britain is:

A new comprehensive, regulated, inclusive and statutory VET system, with institutional support for research and the development and control of occupational qualifications, and far higher investment in FE Colleges;

A VET structure based on social partnership and geared to: developing an individual's occupational capacity over working life; adapting to change and innovation; and integrated teamworking;

Work-based learning with an appropriate infrastructure, including direct employment, careful guidance and monitoring, and a wage system not just rewarding output but geared to building potential and aligned with qualifications;

A new approach to construction VET in particular to achieve "near zero emissions" buildings;

Mutual recognition, trust and transparency for interchangeability of qualifications across Europe.

Footnotes

1 OECD (1964) Vocational Training in the Enterprise in the Context of Industrial Change, report of visit by German joint team, 2-7 November, page 15

2 Perry, P. J. C. (1976) The Evolution of British Manpower Policy: From the Statute of Artificers to the Industrial Training Act 1964, Portsmouth: Grosvenor Press, page xix

3 Brockmann, M., Clarke, L., Christopher Winch (editors) (2010) Bricklaying is more than Flemish bond: bricklaying qualifications in Europe, Brussels/London

4 CITB (2015) Training and the Built Environment, Construction Industry Training Board, p. 5

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The challenge of creating a system

Eddie Playfair

The next government will inherit a chaotic market with a vacuum where a coherent national strategy or needs-driven planning should be. Selection, both covert and overt will be increasingly prevalent and distinct segregated pathways from age 14 seen as the norm. Students labelled as 'less academic' or 'vocational' will be steered towards non-educational 'training' routes with reduced opportunities for breadth and depth of learning.

In the face of such a mess, will it be possible to turn things around and set a course in a more egalitarian and democratic direction? It will, but this will require nothing less than the creation of a new system which can offer sensible answers to the key questions: what is education for? What kind of education do we want? Education needs to have its 'NHS moment' where a commitment to doing things differently is forged. Such a commitment needs to be based on the wider public interest while also responding to the aspirations and ambitions of individuals. We've lost much of the 'hard wiring' which a good system needs and it will be necessary to build on the commitment of parents, teachers and other education staff to start to 're-wire' our system based on different values.

So how do we begin? We need to work out what values we want to base education on. For Labour, there should be no question that these must be grounded in equality and opportunity for all. Our vision must be generous and inclusive; based on the belief that everyone can benefit from a full, broad education and everyone is entitled to access the best that our system can offer.

16-19 education is characterised by the transition to adulthood. It is a time when young people raise their sights above their immediate concerns and relationships and start to think about how they can make a difference in the world, as workers, citizens and agents of change. It is a time of developing intellectual, social and emotional awareness.

Clearly it is a crucial phase and as a society we need to agree what our aims are for young people at this stage. To put the question as Richard Pring did in the Nuffield 14-19 review: 'what do we mean by an educated 19 year old?' What combinations of breadth and specialisation, knowledge, experiences and skills development will achieve this? But instead

of trying to answer these crucial questions, we have a system based on testing, labelling, sorting and segregating.

Some of the challenges we face at the moment:

Funding: education for 16-19 year olds is the lowest funded of all sectors of education with roughly £4,000 of public funding annually per full time student compared to roughly £5,000 in schools and £9,000 in universities. Despite the raising of the participation age to 18, funding for this age group is in the unprotected part of the Department for Education's budget and is therefore the most vulnerable to further cuts. Our best guess is that these cuts could amount to a further 20% in cash terms over the next 3 years. This inevitably means that an increasing number of school sixth forms and colleges will become fragile and vulnerable.



Further marketisation which leads to intense competition, selection and segregation – this works against the development of a fair and equitable system by pitting provider against provider, narrowing options and reducing efficiency. Our phase is a hyper-competitive 'wild west' – an object lesson for anyone who wants to see where further marketisation leads.

Continuing tension between the educational and the economic with a likely shift from investment in education towards investment in training and apprenticeships.

A general lack of national purpose or confidence in the system and those of us who work in it as demonstrated by reduced funding and our

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inspection and audit regimes. Our high levels of autonomy don't seem to translate into high levels of trust.

So what political strategy is appropriate? In my view we need to:

1. take every opportunity to show our commitment to students and to high standards and expectations;
2. defend education to 18 against narrow job training while also developing an economic policy which can deliver work and high quality training for more young people;
3. support the development of the National Baccalaureate which is being built from the bottom by practitioners. This should include all students and offer the broadest possible combination of general and practical learning for 14-19 year olds;
4. demonstrate how we could reinvent a system. Work with what we have and find new, even unlikely, partners, build new coalitions and create new structures. Roberto Unger talks in terms of democratic experimentalism. We need to question many of our assumptions and ask a lot more 'what if...?' questions about the way we do things and be prepared to do them differently. We need to encourage the creation of comprehensive local systems involving all providers working in new kinds of partnership; national, regional and local.

In addition,

5. All the resources of publicly funded education provision should be mobilised as part of a national education system. Requiring education providers to work together in the interests of their communities should release the co-operative dividend by squeezing out much of the waste and inefficiency of market competition. The new system might not be based on markets but it can still offer diversity and allow for choice in a way which need not disadvantage anyone. The planning and regulation to ensure quality and equality will need to be light-touch, with a minimum of bureaucracy.

6. Strategic planning and decision-making should be transparent and subject to democratic scrutiny. Encourage the creation of new democratic structures such as education forums at both local and regional levels, involving all our stakeholders. A regional level will be needed for post-16 and higher education where catchments are wider and specialisation greater.

These demands for educational content, for a genuinely comprehensive post-16 curriculum as well as for training opportunities, and demands for a living wage for apprenticeships, for partnership between our institutions, for a democratic voice in education decision-making could also become the ingredients of collective bargaining by post-16 education workers.

Beyond that, what kind of wider organisation do we need? Is it time for the various groups with similar agendas to federate? To build a single network for public education; an alliance built around shared values with different parts playing different roles: *Reclaiming Education* has made a start in bringing different campaigns together. Perhaps it needs to become something like the Network for Public Education in the US; a loose federation of organisations which have different priorities and knowledge but share some key basic principles and aims. Each brings something different; research, advocacy, campaigning, representation, political links and the network itself is able to achieve more than the sum of its parts.

We need to create the conditions and the opportunities to start building a new common sense; a national education system which can actually meet our needs as individuals and as a society. We need to identify the building blocks of that project even if our margin of action is somewhat limited at the moment. This is both a practical and a visionary approach – something we might call pragmatic idealism. If we do this work, it can only be a positive contribution to building the new progressive majority this country needs.

Eddie Playfair is Principal, Newham Sixth Form College (NewVIc) and Chair of the Sixth Form Colleges Association

All our young people deserve the chance to succeed

John Woodcock

ALL our young people deserve to be given the chance to succeed – and the future economic success of the UK will at least in part depend on the supply and utilisation of well-trained employees. Apprenticeships will be key to that future success.

Under the Conservatives the 50 per cent of young people who did not go to university were largely forgotten. Far too many young people are unemployed, yet there is still a lack of high quality vocational education that can lead to jobs or training.

Across England there are some apprenticeship schemes which benefit both young people and the employers, but the quality of these courses is variable and the proportion of courses of questionable value – mainly in low-skill, low-wage sectors – has increased.

Figures show fewer than one in 10 employers offer apprenticeships while at the same time the skills gap keeps on growing with the UK falling behind other countries when it comes to acquiring technical skills. Rather than making sure we can compete with our main European competitors and deliver opportunities for all our young people, it is on the Tories' watch that apprenticeships have been downgraded.

Labour needs to show it would pave the way for the forgotten 50 per cent with rigorous vocational qualifications that are fully accredited by employers and a high-quality work placement in English and maths to the age of 18. We need to firm up plans to introduce new technical degrees as the summit of a new vocational route – making sure that young people who excel in vocational skills have the chance to take up high-level training that launches them on a career path.

Labour should also increase the number of apprenticeships and ask all companies that bid for major government procurement contracts to provide new apprenticeships for the emerging generation. One way of addressing the problem of low quality

apprenticeships would be to motivate employers to create more gold-standard qualifications that are trusted by everyone involved.

Modern apprenticeships should have education at their core with mandatory off-site learning provision. We should examine abolishing the gap between national minimum wage and apprenticeship minimum wage and a certificate – with a professional title – should be available to the young person once the course is completed.

But changes need to be made in our education system, too. Our young people need academic and



vocational qualifications and teachers need to find any way they can to get children involved in learning. To meet the demands of the emerging digital economy we should move away from the limited “exam factory” approach. We need to devolve power, broaden the curriculum, respect technical and creative education and invest heavily in teacher quality. The burden of standardised testing needs to be reduced and there is a case for reforming the inspection process.

But when it seems clear that these steps need to be taken to improve things, we see a government intent on moving in the opposite direction. The Tories continue to press ahead with a target-driven, structural approach.

John Woodcock

We need to unleash the latent excellence that is in our young people, and that is something I have been involved with in my constituency of Barrow and Furness. In the summer I launched a Future Leaders' Academy that is designed to help prepare our 10-year-olds for future key roles in business and industry that will come on stream as investment at the shipyard and elsewhere gathers pace. There is evidence that some parents are thinking that good employment prospects await their children who are embarking on apprenticeships rather than taking a university course. Parents often know what is best,

particularly small and medium-sized businesses with the apprenticeship programme. Group training sessions are an under-used resource for SMEs and more efforts should be made to resource these and improve access to apprenticeships for SMES.

Regarding vocational education and training, if we are to strive for the highest standards we must keep the teachers and lecturers working in vocational training at the heart of any reforms. VET teachers are both professional teachers and professionals with a specific subject or skill. At Furness College in Barrow there are people teaching skilled trades who learned



Future Engineers Day at BAE Systems Maritime, Barrow

and this is another indication of a prevailing wind. I remain concerned about the gendered nature of apprenticeships and we need to break down the traditional occupational barriers. Nationally the number of women taking apprenticeships has more than doubled over the past decade. However, women are still pursuing careers in sectors that offer lower wages and diminished career opportunities than in sectors where men tend to do apprenticeships.

What is perhaps missing from the apprenticeship landscape is how to engage enough employers,

their craft with nearby businesses and who are imparting that knowledge to apprentices and learners. There is a need to make sure they have enough opportunity to bring their own knowledge and skills up to date with subject-specific continuing development, especially given the rapid process of change that is geared to digital innovations in technology.

John Woodcock is MP for Barrow and Furness and Shadow Minister for Young People and Skills

Will we ever take vocational education and apprenticeship seriously?

Lorna Unwin

Why do we return again and again to the ‘problem’ of vocational education and training (VET) in the UK? Why does it puzzle us so much? I’d like to suggest a number of reasons why VET remains both a conundrum, yet provides such fertile ground for policymakers (of all political persuasions) to dream up endless initiatives and to make fatuous speeches about the ‘forgotten’ and, even worse, ‘bottom 50%’, or the need to resurrect the trappings of the medieval guilds.

My starting point is that in national policy terms, we have never taken VET seriously because we have never sufficiently valued ‘ordinary’ jobs. This is deeply rooted, partly in age-old class prejudice, but also in the continued fallacy that only certain jobs involve cerebral skills and knowledge; hence, some on the Left regard VET as problematic because they fear it might trap young people in what they see as low-end jobs and limit their ‘horizons for action’.

The use of the term ‘job’ is significant as it denotes a much more diluted concept than that of an ‘occupation’ and certainly than that of a ‘profession’. In *Culture and Society*, Raymond Williams reminded us how, up to the 18th century, the word ‘art’ meant ‘skill’, but then began to be associated much more with the ‘arts’ as in painting and sculpture so that the term ‘artist’ became distinguished from the term ‘artisan’ with the emphasis on skill being replaced by an emphasis on ‘sensitivity’. As a consequence, art and design usually sits in a separate and more gilded educational box to other types of VET.

From the time of the industrial revolution, which cemented the belief that most jobs required little beyond rudimentary on-the-job training, to the more recent pronouncements that the country is now a

‘knowledge economy’, we are still struggling to create a stable, well-functioning and properly resourced VET infrastructure underpinned by a shared sense of purpose. Moreover, apart from some notable exceptions, the broader educative potential of VET to unlock the joy and relevance of studying such subjects as aesthetics, history, literature, geography, politics and science has been largely ignored. As the campaigners for adult education continue to stress, there is a huge, unquenched thirst for learning in the population. And many individuals seek their own ways to craft their jobs into something meaningful in order to utilize their knowledge and skills.



We can do VET as well as any other country and some of our VET programmes and apprenticeships are stunning in terms of the way they expose apprentices to cutting-edge workplace practice and integrate that with the necessary theoretical knowledge to provide a platform for further learning. This provision (from Level 2 through to degree level) works because it is acknowledged as being vital to the formation and continuing development of the expertise required in a range of occupations.

Lorna Unwin

Anyone participating in this provision knows they are climbing a ladder of progression gaining qualifications that have both educational and labour market currency. Yet this provision exists in a parallel world to the cash-strapped, inconsistent and unambitious place where many young people and adults encounter VET. In this world, policymakers seek continuous 'reform' and expect VET to solve educational, social and economic problems; they parrot the mantra that everything would be well if only VET was employer-led. Individuals entering this jungle find programmes, including apprenticeships, of different lengths and levels, some with a work-based element and some not, leading to a bewildering array of qualifications whose exchange value varies even at the same level.

This is a problem for adults who want to acquire new skills or upgrade their skills, but we should be particularly concerned about young people. In those European countries with strong VET systems, young people embark on nationally consistent VET programmes and apprenticeships all lasting at least three years and involving both general education and vocational training. We know that inequalities in adult skills in England are high in comparison to other OECD countries. Research by my colleagues Andy Green and Nicola Pensiero shows that skill gaps found at age 15 close more substantially over the life course in countries with strong VET and apprenticeship systems.

In England, due to the policies of the previous Labour government and continued by both the Coalition and the Conservatives, apprenticeship has become a 'brand', a government-designed product to be piled high and sold cheap. For several years, with my research colleague, Alison Fuller, I have been trying to draw people's attention to the importance of apprenticeship as a litmus test for the state of VET

and the economy more generally. As our research has shown, including a recent study for the Nuffield Foundation, apprenticeship has been distorted to the extent that it now includes subsidising employers (in both the public and private sector) to convert existing employees into 'apprentices' and accrediting them for skills they have already acquired. This helps to explain why over 40% of all apprentices are aged 25 and over (with 6% aged 50 plus) and why most apprentices are found in sectors such as health and social care and hospitality.

We are not arguing that apprenticeship isn't appropriate for adult employees – our Nuffield study shows it can work well and that some adults particularly welcome the requirement to study maths and English. Neither are we arguing that provision shouldn't be made for adults to acquire qualifications. Given the extended nature of working life due to the removal of mandatory retirement, people's need to continue earning money and, in some cases, the desire to carry on working, provision for good quality accredited adult training is very important. Rather, we are concerned to highlight the crucial difference between the accreditation of existing skills and the concept of apprenticeship as a model of learning designed to develop occupational knowledge and expertise over time.

It has been possible to reduce apprenticeship to a 'brand' that includes the accreditation of existing skills because, in the late 1980s, we introduced a form of competence-based vocational qualification that can be largely assessed on-the-job. Our lack of ambition for VET as a whole is matched by our naïve assumption that employers can be treated as an homogenous constituency who all know what they want from education and provide the kind of

Lorna Unwin

skilled jobs policymakers dream about. We have some wonderful employers and we have some pretty awful employers, but too many have themselves never been through a good training programme and some have the same low levels of basic skills of some of their employees. It is not surprising, therefore, that they struggle to create the conditions for what Alison Fuller and I have called 'expansive' workplace learning environments and

conceptualise the relationship between education and work so it is less oppositional and more relational. Many employers will need support to play their part. Vocational teachers and trainers will themselves need access to high quality professional development. But the driver for vocational education shouldn't just be the economy. Developing a sense of the dynamism of the modern workplace as well as a respect for and interest in the different types of



instead perpetuate the restrictive work and business practices they encountered as employees. As a consequence, not enough employers are providing apprenticeships or investing more generally in training.

We have to join up the dots. This country has serious skill shortages, gaps and mismatches. In order to start to take VET and apprenticeship seriously, we need to refashion the way we

skill and knowledge involved in all forms of work should be part of every child's education. A vocationally rich society would be a fairer society, one in which everyone's capabilities were valued and celebrated.

Lorna Unwin is Professor Emerita in the Department of Lifelong and Comparative Education at UCL Institute of Education

No crammers, no grammars—the road to the new Curriculum for Wales

Huw Lewis

In June I announced the Welsh Government's support for the development of a new Curriculum for Wales by accepting, in full, the recommendations of the Successful Futures report recently published by Professor Graham Donaldson. Though it has served us well up until now, we can no longer address the weaknesses of the current, pre-internet 1988 National Curriculum, through a traditional 'patch and mend' approach. Professor Donaldson's report [see EP 123] has challenged us all to re-think the sort of curriculum we need for the 21st century and in doing so re-focus on the important purposes of education. We will now begin working towards the new Curriculum for Wales in a mature partnership with our schools, colleges, professionals, young people and parents.

It is clear there is an enormous appetite for change in Welsh education. The Great Debate on education has shown this clearly in the supportive responses to the Successful Futures review. The next step will be to invite, through the consortia, leading schools across Wales – primary, secondary and special schools – to apply to be Pioneer Schools to lead and shape the detailed design and the development of the new, inclusive Curriculum for Wales. We will not rush to set out a timetable for implementation and will publish more details in the autumn. I see this new curriculum as very much building on two important developments in Welsh education. First, the important steps we have taken as a Welsh Government to raise standards in our schools, through programmes like Schools Challenge Cymru; the introduction of the Masters in Educational Practice and the strengthening of literacy and numeracy at all levels. Secondly, it builds on the important improvement in results that we are now beginning to see from Foundation Phase through to CCSE and A level. As the recently retired Chief Inspector of Estyn Anne Keane said, there is a 'new momentum' building in Welsh education and I want to use that energy to help us take the next logical step to develop and deliver a world class curriculum for our schools.

The new curriculum will have rigour and excellence running through its heart. Our approach to its design also sets out in a very clear way the respect we have for the profession. One of the problems that Professor Donaldson outlined in his review is that the current curriculum has become overly prescriptive with government dictating too many of the things that should be taught in the classroom. I

want our schools system to maintain the benefits of a national curriculum framework and for us to take advantage of the smarter accountability system that Graham Donaldson has pointed us towards. However, within this framework, I also want us to help re-build some of the professionalism and autonomy that has been lost from teaching through the years. I believe that this marks us out in Wales very clearly, as moving towards a system that drives higher standards through the quality of its professionals.

I think there are essentially three sorts of education systems in the world – the first we see in South East Asia that puts a very heavy emphasis on rote learning and deep prescription. The other is the free market Anglo-American model we see developing through Free Schools and Charter Schools in England and the US. Then there is the third model, operating in parts of Scandinavia and Northern Europe, which empowers its professionals to drive results within a self-improving system. I'm very clear about where I want Welsh education to be. We don't want crammers and we don't want grammars; we want higher standards, driven by professionals at the vanguard of our system.

That is the message coming out of Professor Donaldson's report and it is very much the advice of the OECD who undertook their report on Welsh education last year. A system cannot outrun the quality of the professionals at its frontline.

That is why alongside this new curriculum we have launched the 'New Deal' to help support and develop the existing workforce to deliver this new curriculum. It is also why we are taking forward the recommendations of the Furlong Review to transform our system of teacher training so new professionals are ready to deliver this curriculum when they qualify.

My job as Minister is to set the framework; ensure there is accountability for parents and professionals; ensure rigour and quality runs through everything we do and that we are uncompromising about world class standards. The job of professionals in our system will be to take decisions about world class teaching and learning in the classroom.

That work begins now.

**Huw Lewis is the Welsh Government
Minister for Education and Skills**

The glass floor—it's real

A review of the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission report 'Downward mobility, opportunity hoarding and the glass floor'

The research paper published by the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission in July was an analysis of the employment and income data of a sample of people aged 42 compared with their performance in five tests administered when they were aged five. Just think about that for a moment. Researchers have been funded to follow everyone born in Britain during one week in 1970 and periodically (eight times so far) to gather data about their lives. This 1970 British Birth Cohort Study is just one of a number of similar projects with different start dates. Social researchers can address a myriad of issues by interrogating their data. Only a state prepared to fund such an enterprise could enable the acquisition of such powerful and fascinating truths about people's lives in modern Britain, a tool of benefit to all.

The study of social mobility particularly benefits from such longitudinal data. The LSE researcher Abigail McKnight has worked in this territory for some time and crunched the numbers – and they turn out to be very revealing. The research questions were, taking the 20% lowest performers and 20% highest performers in five cognitive tests at age five, how did they fare in terms of job status and earnings 37 years later, at a time in their lives when they are likely to have settled down in terms of their work? And what impact did their family background, measured by both social class and income, their later cognitive development, their social and emotional skills, and their educational experience, have on their trajectory during those years?

Even the cautious academic is enabled to describe the findings in relatively unconditional terms. To summarise:

Children from higher family income or higher social class backgrounds are more likely to perform better in cognitive tests at age five, and these tests are related to labour market success at age 42.

Such children are more likely to be in high income groups at age 42 (40% from social class I go on to be in the top 20% of earners, compared with 7% of social class V).

The converse applies to children performing less well at age five.

McKnight goes on to compare the characteristics of the high attainers with the low attainers at age 5 when they reach age 10. Low attainers are more likely to be in a low income family, still be low attainers, have low self esteem, less sense of being in control of their future, and are much more likely to have moderate or severe behavioural problems. So far, so commonplace, but it is always good to get confirmation of known phenomena from high quality data. But then things get interesting. What happens to low and high attainers later in life?

Looking at low attainers from high income families, they are more likely than others to end up as high earners themselves, and in a high ranking occupation – they largely avoid downward mobility. They do better at maths at the age of 10, have a greater sense of control, are much more likely to go on to a grammar or private secondary school and then a degree. Over and above these there is also a social class factor.

And what about the high attainers? For them, the social class differences in likelihood of success at 42 are much larger than for the low attainers, and these differences are not entirely explained by the factors used in the analysis. Social class I has a particular advantage; they are much more likely to gain a degree.

McKnight describes four typical biographies. Charlotte, a low attainer at five from a high income graduate family, had family support to raise her attainment, went to private school and gained a degree. She has a 73% chance of being in the top earnings group at 42. Amelia, on the other hand, had a father who left school with O levels, went to a comprehensive and left with GCSEs. She has an 8% chance of being in the top earnings group, only 1% higher than someone who had no interest in school and left with nothing.

McKnight points out that that the variables analysed are broad; for example, the impact of a degree may vary according to the university attended, or the degree subject or grade. Also, unobserved characteristics like values, aspirations and cultural differences may make a difference.

‘Downward mobility, opportunity hoarding and the glass floor’

See https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/447575/Downward_mobility_opportunity_hoarding_and_the_glass_floor.pdf

Hats off to the Social Mobility Commission. This is a very rare example of the publication of an uncomfortable truth about social mobility – that in today’s labour market there is not expanding room at the top, and any upward mobility must be balanced by downward mobility. And hey, whaddya know, those at the top seem pretty adept at passing on their advantages to their offspring, regardless of early cognitive ability. McKnight’s regression analysis shows how they create the ‘glass floor’, suggesting it’s a mixture of money, know how, and know who. It’s worth studying the figures closely; for one thing, they illustrate the social science truism that we are discussing tendencies rather than iron laws – 60% of children from class I did not become top earners, whereas 20% of class III (non-manual) did.

The problem for the Commission is that the policy discussion at the end of this paper is brief, relatively superficial, and totally unconvincing. A crucial element in transmitting advantage is the use of parental connections in finding good jobs, described here as opportunity hoarding, but no remedy is suggested. Maybe this is because there is no remedy? The finding that attendance at grammar and private schools is connected to later success sparks a discussion, linked to earlier questioning about the part played by school choice, but produces only the lame suggestion of pushing for changes to the selection procedure. The SEA stands for the abolition of selection, but few would doubt that these days the advantaged would use additional private tuition to overcome such a change. The only other ideas are tired aspirations about compensatory education and a plaintive plea to redress educational opportunity among adults.

For the left, discussion of downward social mobility can only be based on theories of social class which predict that those at the top, by definition, have advantages which they can use to maintain their position. The particularities of the mechanisms they use will depend on the circumstances. The truth, which adherents of social mobility as a tool for social justice can never come to terms with, is that class is a determining category, not a subordinate one.

For the left, debates on social mobility are asking the wrong question: essentially, how to allow relatively more people to climb the ladder. Social justice is better served by policies aimed at reducing the length of the ladder, reducing the differences in advantage between classes; in short, by reducing inequality. Equality of opportunity may be a chimera, but if wealth, income, and power differences between classes could be significantly reduced, so would class cultural differences, and mobility between classes would become less important for life chances.

The Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission is the product of a centre-ground consensus which has dominated Westminster politics for twenty years and, it is now becoming clear, alienated a large proportion of the electorate. Although we should be grateful to it for funding this paper, its abolition would be one cut few would miss; or better still, rename it the Social Equality Commission.

MJ

Your SEA subscription

The SEA AGM in June agreed to increase annual subscriptions for the first time in very many years. The AGM recognised that it isn’t possible to maintain the level of activity we want to see if the association’s income is reduced by inflation every year. The new postal charges alone have proved a significant challenge.

Members paying by standing order are asked to amend their standing order as appropriate through their own bank (eg through internet banking). Alternatively complete the enclosed form and return it to the Membership Secretary, Paul Martin. Members paying by cheque will be asked for the revised amount when their subscription becomes due.

The new subscription levels are:

Individual waged £25
Individual unwaged £12
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Couple unwaged £18
Affiliate £30



Conference

Whose Education is it Anyway?

The passage of the Education and Adoptions Bill through parliament will accelerate the complete removal of the Education System from any democratic local accountability. There will not even be locally appointed school governors and the only recourse for dissatisfied parents will be to the private corporations to whom the schools are being handed over or directly to the Secretary of State. The young and the future well-being of the country will be the hapless losers of this take-over. This conference will review the current situation and propose a campaign to make state education a free and liberating experience that serves the needs of children rather than one that is designed to perpetuate and exacerbate inequalities and serve the interest of a narrow elite.

Speakers will include:

Richard Wilkinson (The Spirit Level) on equality
John Howson on teacher supply
Daniel Jeffery (Southampton City Council) on funding & impact on LAs
Alasdair MacDonald (former Headteacher - Morpeth School) on curriculum and assessment
Wendy Scott (President of TACTYC) on early years
Jonathan Simons (Policy Exchange)
and lots more

- Venue: Mander Hall, Hamilton House, London (near Euston and Kings Cross)
- Saturday 14 November 2015, 10:30—3.45
- Tickets, £27.50 from: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/date/181569>

Other forthcoming events

27th-30th September, Brighton: Labour Party Conference (SEA delegate Emma Hardy)

7th November 2pm, London: SEA members forum, all welcome

10th November 6pm, House of Commons, London: Caroline Benn Memorial Lecture

21st November 11am – 3.30pm, London: Comprehensive Future Conference 'Selection – the growing threat'

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