

Building Engagement, Building Futures:

Our Strategy to Maximise the
Participation of 16-24 Year Olds in
Education, Training and Work

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Ministerial Foreword

Increasing the participation of 16-24 year olds in education, training and work not only makes a lasting difference to their individual lives, but is central to our ambitions to improve social mobility and stimulate economic growth.

The radical programmes of reform that the Government has put in place for schools, vocational education, skills and welfare will all make a significant difference to young people's opportunities and support. We know that our young people are dynamic, focused and keen to take up these opportunities – we will shortly set out in *Positive for Youth* our overall vision for young people aged 13-19 and for a society that helps and supports them.

We must not underestimate the scale of the challenge – 1.16 million 16-24 year olds are not in education, employment or training and some young people remain out of learning or work for long periods. We know that stretches of unemployment whilst young can have a negative impact on an individual's long term prosperity, health and well-being. We also know that disadvantaged and vulnerable young people are at greater risk of long term disengagement. We need a new approach to encourage this group to realise their potential and to break the inter-generational cycle of disengagement.

But in order to meet this challenge we first need to understand the nature of the issue. In fact, more 16-18 year olds are participating in education or training than ever before and gaining the qualifications and skills they need to get good jobs. Unemployment rates for young people have risen, but remain lower than during previous recessions and a high proportion of those who are not in education, employment or training will quickly find work or start courses without additional intervention.

In *The Plan for Growth*¹, we set out how we will create the conditions for economic growth and recovery, helping to reduce cyclical youth unemployment. This strategy is all about ensuring that young people are in the best possible place to realise those opportunities as the economy picks up.

That is why we are committed to raising the participation age so that all 16 and 17 year olds are in education or training by 2015, transforming vocational education following the Wolf Review, increasing the number of Apprenticeships for young people, taking forward the reforms in the Special Educational Needs Green Paper², providing skills training for young adults who have not yet achieved Level 3 and putting in place personalised support through the Work Programme for those who are unemployed.

¹ HM Treasury, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *The Plan for Growth* (March 2011)

² Department for Education. *Support and Aspiration: A new approach to special education needs and disability* (March 2011)

But we want to go further still. We have announced a new package of reforms to Apprenticeships that includes at least 40,000 incentives for small businesses to take on a young apprentice and action to address the bureaucracy that can discourage employers from offering these vital opportunities. On 25 November, the Deputy Prime Minister announced the Government's new Youth Contract, worth almost £1 billion, which will support some of our most vulnerable 16-17 year olds to re-engage in education, Apprenticeships or jobs with training and provide wage incentives and Work Experience places for up to 410,000 18-24 year olds over the next three years.

We are publishing this document jointly because the Government recognises the need for coherent policy approaches across education, training, skills and employment. The shared aim of all these elements of the system must be to help every young person make progress towards adult life and successful careers. We want to ensure that all services align in the best possible way to serve that shared purpose.

We owe our young people the very best support on their journey from school or college into the world of work. This strategy sets out how we will support *all* young people to develop the skills, qualifications and experience they need – to succeed in their careers and make a positive contribution to our society and economy.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Hayes" with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

John Hayes MP
Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Loughton" with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Tim Loughton MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Grayling" with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP
Minister of State for Employment

Executive Summary

(i) The majority of young people succeed in education and make a positive transition to adult life and the world of work. But we face a very real challenge in terms of opportunities for young people, with 1.16 million young people in England aged 16-24 not in education, employment or training (NEET):

- 150,000 are 16-17 year olds who may need additional opportunities or support to re-engage in education or training;
- 523,000 are 18-24 year olds who are unemployed, not in education, and looking for work. 249,000 have been unemployed for over six months and may need significant help to find work; and
- 490,000 are 18-24 year olds who are economically inactive. Of these, 371,000 are looking after family or home, or are sick or disabled. The remaining 119,000 are inactive for a wide range of other reasons.

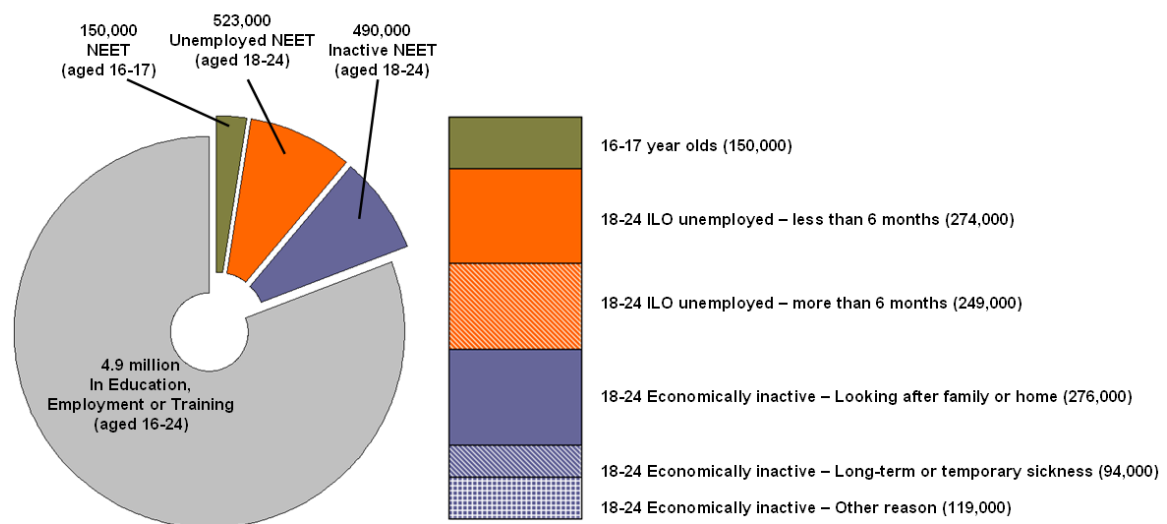


Figure 1 – Breakdown of 16-24 year olds NEET (Labour Force Survey, Quarter 3 2011)

(ii) There are many reasons why people spend time not in education, employment or training. Most young people only spend a short time NEET before starting a course or taking up work or training. But others need more help if they are to avoid an extended and potentially damaging period outside learning or work.

- (iii) Increases in unemployment have been driven by long-term factors including structural changes to the economy and more recent economic challenges brought about by the recession. The impact of these has been greater on young people.
- (iv) Addressing this issue is of paramount importance to young people, to society and to our economy. Young people who are currently not participating are more likely than their peers to have low skills, to go on to be unemployed in the future, to earn less and to suffer from poor health or depression, which can have an impact well into adult life. This can fuel an inter-generational effect that acts as a block to social mobility. We want to minimise both the long and short-term impact of young people being NEET and ensure that all 16-24 year olds, including the most disadvantaged, get the opportunities and support they need to have the best possible start to adult life. This is also in the interests of our economy as we know that a fifth of the gap in productivity between our country and some of our key competitors is directly due to a lack of skills.
- (v) This strategy sets out how our existing strong reforms to schools, vocational education, skills and welfare provision will all help to increase the number of young people who are engaged in education, training and work. But the scale of the challenge means that in some areas we need to go further, in particular to help the most vulnerable, who are at risk of long-term disengagement. An overview of our strategic priorities is set out below:

Our Strategic Priorities

Alongside creating the conditions for balanced and sustainable growth in the wider economy, we have five priorities for action to maximise the proportion of 16-24 year olds who are participating in education, training and work:

Priority 1: Raising educational attainment in school and beyond to ensure that young people have the skills they need to compete in a global economy;

Priority 2: Helping local partners to provide effective and coordinated services that support all young people, including the most vulnerable, putting us on track to achieve full participation for 16-17 year olds by 2015;

Priority 3: Encouraging and incentivising employers to inspire and recruit young people by offering more high quality Apprenticeships and work experience places;

Priority 4: Ensuring that work pays and giving young people the personalised support they need to find it, through Universal Credit, the Work Programme and our Get Britain Working measures; and

Priority 5: Putting in place a new Youth Contract worth almost £1 billion over the next three years to help get young people learning or earning before long term damage is done.

- (vi) **Chapter 1** explores the characteristics of young people who are not participating and our understanding of the issue.
- (vii) **Chapter 2** sets out our plans for early intervention and radical reform of the education system. Attainment at 16 is the single most important factor in securing young people's participation and future achievement. We will raise the attainment of all pupils and prepare them for post-16 participation by:
- Giving parents and families the support they need to encourage and help their children to develop, learn and participate at all ages;
 - Ensuring that all front line services working with young people and their families understand the benefits of participation and are provided with the information and tools they need to support young people to participate;
 - Giving schools greater freedom, improving the curriculum and addressing poor behaviour, as well as helping young people to make the right choices by giving schools responsibility for securing access to independent and impartial careers guidance for pupils in Years 9-11, and consulting on the extension of this age range;
 - Supporting the development of "I Am...", an innovative website where young people can shape their futures and improve the likelihood of finding fulfilling employment;
 - Providing additional support for the most disadvantaged young people, who are at greatest risk of disengaging; and
 - Improving accountability to incentivise schools to focus on young people's destinations.
- (viii) **Chapter 3** sets out our plans for achieving full participation of 16-17 year olds in education and training, so that all young people have the opportunity to build the experience and qualifications they need for successful employment and adult life. We will do this by:
- Raising the participation age to 17 in 2013 and 18 in 2015;
 - Targeting greater investment on Apprenticeships for young people so that they can gain skills and qualifications through a real paid job, while making it quicker and easier to take on an apprentice, and ensuring every Apprenticeship consistently delivers high quality training;
 - Reforming vocational education through new coherent 16-19 programmes of study, including work experience;
 - Enabling local authorities to fulfil their statutory duties to support young people to participate, including disadvantaged young people, by implementing the proposals in the Special Educational Needs Green Paper;
 - Addressing financial barriers to participation through better targeted support, including the new £180 million 16-19 Bursaries Fund; and

- Introducing a new programme, as part of the Youth Contract, to support disengaged 16-17 year olds to participate in education, an Apprenticeship or a job with training.
- (ix) **Chapter 4** outlines how we will help 18-24 year olds to engage in education and training, by:
- Launching the National Careers Service, which will provide information, advice and guidance about careers and learning, covering further education, Apprenticeships, other forms of training and higher education;
 - Introducing a new approach to public information so that from September 2012, each university will publish a Key Information Set on its website, providing easily comparable information on a course by course basis;
 - Reforming the Apprenticeship programme, maximising the number of Apprenticeships for 18-24 year olds as well as 16-17 year olds and promoting the uptake of Advanced Level and Higher Apprenticeships;
 - Providing further education and training opportunities focused on the needs of young people, and those seeking work;
 - Fully funding 18-24 year olds to gain their first Level 2 or 3 qualification;
 - Supporting the development of progressive routeways to jobs and Apprenticeships, looking particularly to promote the effective use of flexibilities in the skills system and the Work Programme to best meet the needs of young people;
 - Ensuring that qualifications meet the needs of both employers and young people;
 - Continuing to widen participation in higher education.
- (x) **Chapter 5** sets out our plans for supporting 18-24 year olds into employment, by:
- Creating the conditions for growth within the economy and the labour market, including through getting remuneration levels right for young people;
 - Working with employers to make a clear case for the benefits of recruiting young people, and jointly investing in projects to create opportunities;
 - Strengthening partnership between Jobcentre Plus, colleges, training organisations and employers to offer young people coordinated support;
 - Helping those who are ready to work through Universal Credit and our Get Britain Working measures, including Work Experience;
 - Supporting those who are at risk of long term unemployment through the Work Programme; and
 - Helping young disabled people, including those with the most complex needs, back to work through the Work Choice Programme and Access to Work.

- (xi) A key element of our approach is the offer of additional support to unemployed 18-24 year olds as part of our new Youth Contract. This aims to help get young people working or learning quickly before their long term prospects are damaged. As we are providing more support and more opportunities for young people, we also expect more in return. Those failing to engage positively with the Youth Contract will be considered for Mandatory Work Activity. Those who drop out of a Work Experience place or a subsidised (or other) job without good reason will lose their benefits.
- (xii) The Youth Contract will include an offer of a Work Experience or sector-based work academy place for every unemployed 18-24 year old who wants one (after they have been on Jobseeker's Allowance for three months). In total, we will provide an additional 250,000 places over the next three years. Young people aged 18-24 will receive extra support from Jobcentre Plus, including weekly, rather than fortnightly signing from month five of a Jobseekers' Allowance claim and extra Personal Adviser time from month three. They will also be able to access a careers interview from the National Careers Service in the first three months of their claim. To give them a step up into employment, we will also provide 160,000 wage incentives of £2,275 to make it easier for employers to take on young people. Alongside our existing programmes of reform and our plans to support the growth of 16-24 Apprenticeships, in total the Youth Contract will provide additional support for up to 410,000 18-24 year olds over the next three years.
- (xiii) **Chapter 6** sets out our plans to support 18-24 year olds on inactive benefits and those in disadvantaged groups. These plans include:
- Where appropriate, supporting young people on inactive benefits towards education, training and employment;
 - Working with the voluntary and community sector to provide additional support to young people to move into productive activity through the Innovation Fund, giving providers a real chance to develop innovative solutions through social investment models;
 - Empowering the staff who run services to set up public service mutuals to take over the services they deliver by exercising new Rights to Provide across the public sector;
 - Improving data sharing between agencies, particularly at transition points, to ensure individuals' needs are best met; and
 - Providing targeted support for specific groups of young people such as lone parents, those with health problems, disabled people including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, young carers, offenders, substance misusers and care leavers.
- (xiv) This strong combination of current action and new reforms will help to ensure that more of our young people make a successful transition from education into work, bringing benefits to themselves, the economy and wider society. Whilst this strategy applies to England only, a number of the

policies covered apply across the United Kingdom, such as those of the Department for Work and Pensions, and the Government will work with the devolved administrations on areas of shared interest.

Chapter 1: Understanding the Issue

1.1 The majority of young people succeed in education and make a positive transition to adult life and the world of work. More than 96% of 16 year olds and 87% of 17 year olds were participating in education or work-based learning at the end of 2010 – more than ever before³. But latest figures show that we face a very real challenge, with 1.16 million young people in England aged 16-24 not in education, employment or training (NEET):

- 150,000 are 16-17 year olds who may need additional opportunities or support to re-engage in education or training;
- 523,000 are 18-24 year olds who are unemployed, not in education, and looking for work. 249,000 have been unemployed for over 6 months and may need significant help to find work; and
- 490,000 are 18-24 year olds who are economically inactive. Of these, 371,000 are looking after family or home, or are sick or disabled. The remaining 119,000 are inactive for a wide range of other reasons.

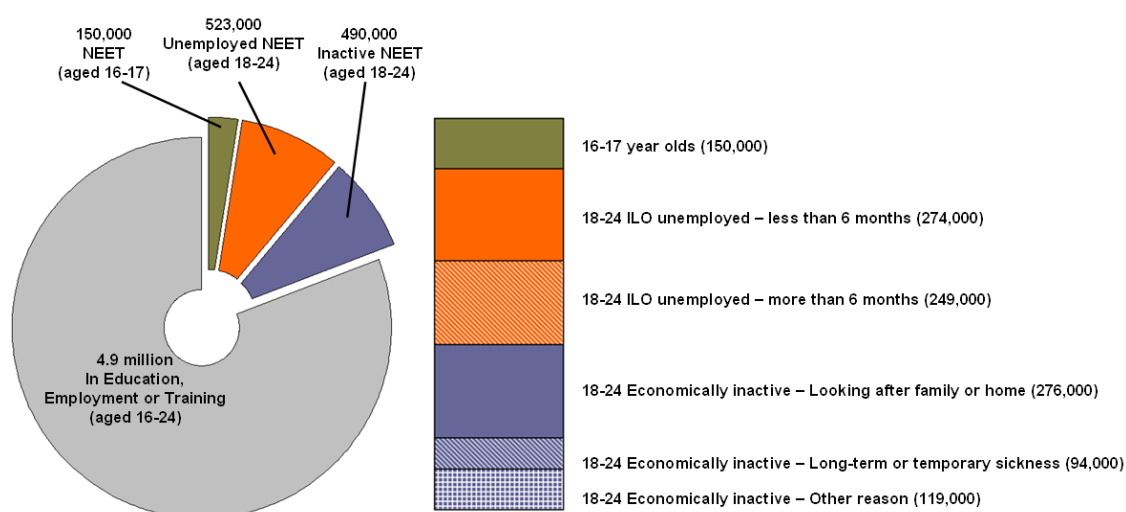


Figure 1 – Breakdown of 16-24 year olds NEET (Labour Force Survey, Quarter 3 2011)

³ Department for Education. *Participation in Education, Training and Employment by 16-18 year olds in England* (June 2011). The official data on 16-18 year olds is published annually in June. End 2010 figures are the latest available. Figures used in this document are for England unless otherwise stated.

Causes of young people's non-participation

1.2 Beneath these headline statistics, the characteristics of young people who are not participating vary significantly. We therefore need to start with a clear understanding of the problems we are trying to address. There are many reasons why people spend time not in work or study: some are on a gap year or waiting to start a job or a course they have already found, others are looking after young children or have an illness or disability. Most young people only spend a short time NEET before starting a course or taking up work or training. But others need more help if they are to avoid an extended and potentially damaging period outside learning or work.

1.3 There is no doubt that the recession has had a major impact on the participation and unemployment rates of young people. Figure 2 shows the proportion of 18-24 year olds NEET since 2001 and it is clear that from 2008 the recession saw this rise quickly. However, it is also evident that the proportion of 18-24 year olds NEET was rising before the recession took hold. Having been broadly stable since 1998, the proportion of young people NEET rose steadily from 2004, despite economic growth. This shows the impact of longer-term structural and demographic changes to our economy and society, as well as failures in our education system to ensure successful transitions for all young people.

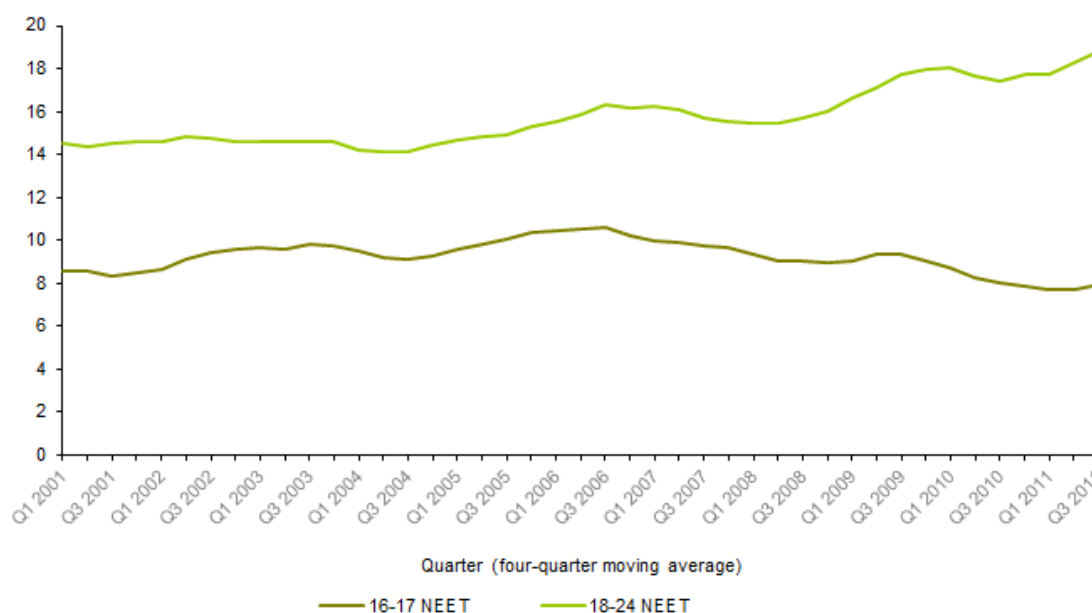


Figure 2 – Proportion of 16-17 and 18-24 year olds NEET (Labour Force Survey⁴)

1.4 Youth unemployment in the UK now stands at over 1 million. Some 297,000 of these young people are in full-time education and looking for predominantly part-time work. Rises in unemployment have been driven by longer-term factors including structural changes in the economy. This has altered the nature of the youth labour market, reducing the number of entry level jobs and increasing employers' demand for higher skills.

⁴ Department for Education. *NEET Quarterly Brief* (England figures. November 2011)

- 1.5 There have also been significant demographic changes, with the cohort of people entering the labour market now significantly larger than ten years ago. The ratio of the youth to adult population in England is very high and since 2000, the 16-24 age group in the population has grown from 5.1 to 6.1 million. This has increased pressure on the available employment opportunities, at the very time when the recession hit.
- 1.6 Although the recession was wide ranging and its impact has been felt by all demographic groups, it is young people who have experienced the greatest challenges (Figure 3). The number of long-term unemployed young people doubled between 2008 and 2010 and currently stands at 225,000. Although youth unemployment levels today are lower than in previous recessions, there is a clear case for action to address this issue.

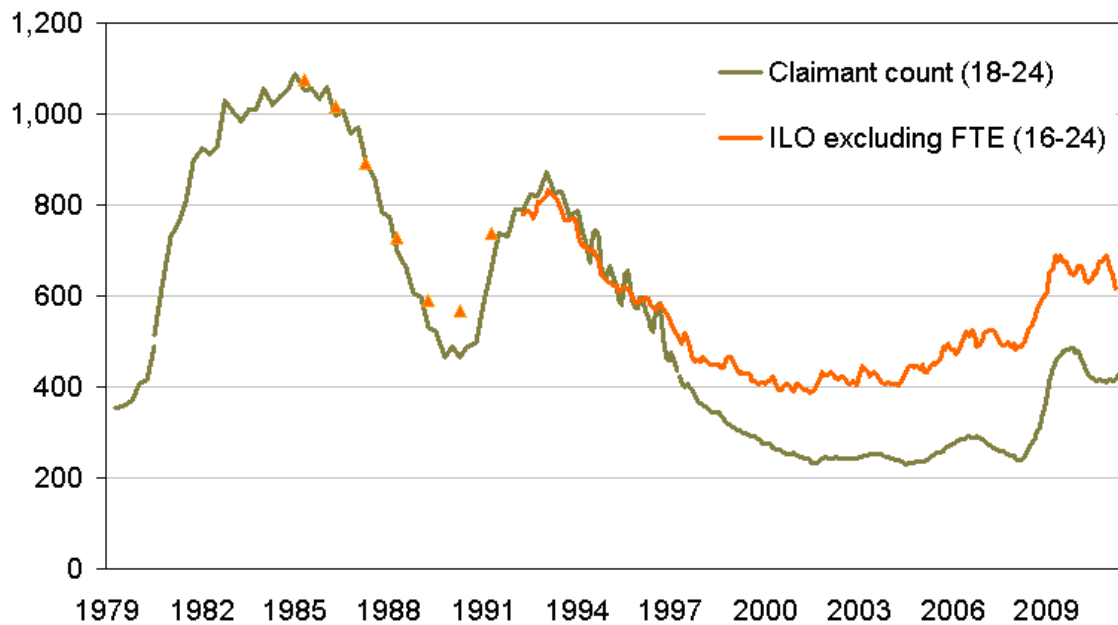


Figure 3 – Youth unemployment, claimant count and International Labour Organisation definitions (UK figures, excluding full-time education)

Understanding young people’s non-participation

- 1.7 We know that many young people will spend a short period not in education, employment or training, but relatively few spend a long period disengaged. In the three years following compulsory education, nearly a third of young people experience at least one period NEET, such as over the summer or between courses, but only 1% are NEET at ages 16, 17 and 18. Similarly, for those who experience a period of unemployment, it is usually short. Even in the recession, 60% of 18-24 year old claimants have moved off Jobseeker’s Allowance within the first three months, 80% in six months and 90% in nine months. So it is important to distinguish in our strategy between the positive opportunities needed for the vast majority of young people who are NEET to re-engage and the more intensive support required for the

small group who may be NEET for long periods.

- 1.8 Attainment at 16 and the qualifications achieved by an individual are the most important factors in determining later participation and attainment. By the age of 18, 45% of those with no reported qualifications had spent more than a year NEET, compared to 4% of those with 5-7 GCSEs at A*-C⁵. Approximately 75% of young people unemployed for more than six months have qualifications below Level 2. Employers also tell us that English and maths are particularly important core criteria when they recruit. Increasing the attainment of young people, particularly in English and maths, is therefore an integral part of our strategy, both in schools (Chapter 2), for 16-17 year olds through our new programmes of study (Chapter 3) and for 18-24 year olds who have not had the opportunity to get these key qualifications (Chapter 4).
- 1.9 The relationship between disadvantage and performance in school leads to a long lasting link between disadvantage and young people's likelihood of participating. It is striking that 16 year olds who receive free school meals are more than twice as likely to be NEET than those who do not, and they are nearly four times more likely to "drop out" of education, employment or training by the age of 19. Tackling this link between disadvantage, attainment and participation is central to addressing wider issues of social mobility. This underpins our strategy at all stages, from the Pupil Premium in schools (Chapter 2) to additional support for disadvantaged young adults through the skills (Chapter 4) and benefits systems (Chapter 5). It is also at the heart of Positive for Youth, which will shortly set out the value of youth work and other out-of-school services in helping young people to overcome disadvantage.
- 1.10 Partly as a result of lower levels of attainment, disadvantaged groups of young people are at significantly greater risk of becoming NEET. Evidence shows, for example, that despite increasing rates of participation at 16-17, 30% of young people who had statements of special educational needs at 16 were NEET at 18, compared to 13% of their peers⁶. Nearly 40% of teenage mothers leave school with no qualifications⁷ and only 29% are in education, employment or training. Young people who are in care or leaving care are also at particular risk of becoming NEET.
- 1.11 Of those who are NEET for longer than a few months, many are either looking after young children and receiving lone parent benefits or are inactive because they are ill or disabled. These groups need particular support to understand the options available, and to begin to move towards training or employment. Throughout our strategy, we are

⁵ Department for Education. *Youth Cohort Study and Longitudinal Study of Young People in England: The Activities and Experiences of 18 year olds: England 2009* (July 2010)

⁶ National Audit Office. *Oversight of special education for young people aged 16-25* (November 2011)

⁷ Office for National Statistics. *2001 Census (April 2001)*. Data from LSYPE, which is more recent, but based on a relatively small sample size, showed that 28% of teenage mothers left school without any GCSEs at A*-C.

focusing more support on vulnerable young people and those who are at greater risk of disengagement. Our support for vulnerable 16-17 year olds forms part of Chapter 3, whilst the additional help available to vulnerable 18-24 year olds is set out in Chapter 6.

- 1.12 As outlined above, there are a number of structural, demographic and economic factors that are affecting the youth labour market. We must ensure that young people are able to make a successful transition into work, That is why we are focused on ensuring that all young people reach the age of 18 with the skills they need (Chapter 3), giving those who did not achieve at Level 2 or Level 3 a second chance to do so by the age of 24 (Chapter 4) and supporting unemployed young people back into work and providing additional support through the Youth Contract (Chapter 5).

Consequences of young people's non-participation

- 1.13 Participating in education, employment or training can have positive effects long into adulthood. Participating and achieving qualifications dramatically increases young people's lifetime earnings – for example, people with an Advanced Level Apprenticeship earn between £77,000 and £117,000 more over their lifetimes than those without, whilst the employment rate of adults with a Level 2 qualification is twice that of those without qualifications. By contrast, where they are not participating, young people are at greater risk of protracted unemployment, poor health, depression and a criminal record⁸, all of which have significant social and economic costs.
- 1.14 As we have seen, young people from families that are workless or have lower incomes are twice as likely not to be participating than their peers. This can result in an inter-generational cycle of disadvantage, low skills and unemployment. As was recognised in the Social Mobility Strategy⁹, young people not participating in education, employment or training is therefore a significant impediment to real social mobility.
- 1.15 The UK continues to perform poorly compared to other OECD countries – as shown in Figure 4, we had the eighth highest rate of 15-19 year olds NEET at the beginning of 2009. This has a knock on effect on our economy. We have lower productivity than other nations and almost a fifth of that gap with our key competitors is explained by lack of skills in the working age population. Increasing participation and attainment will therefore make a significant contribution to economic growth. Recent OECD research estimates that raising the attainment of UK pupils in cognitive skills tests to the level achieved by Finland would increase the UK's growth rate by 0.5%, once the whole labour force had reached the higher level of educational performance.

⁸ British Birth Cohort Study in Social Exclusion Unit. *Bridging the Gap* (1999)

⁹ Cabinet Office. *Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers: A Strategy for Social Mobility* (April 2011)

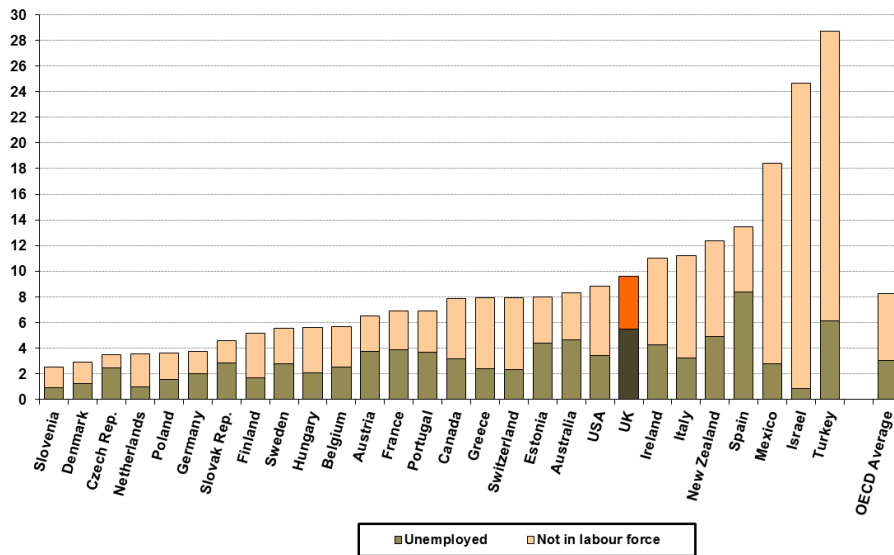


Figure 4 – Proportion of 15-19 year olds NEET in OECD countries at the end of 2008 (OECD, 2011: *Education at a Glance 2011: OECD Indicators*)

1.16 By understanding and addressing the underlying causes of disengagement, our strategy can therefore have a positive impact on young people, our society and the economy. The next chapter looks at this from the very start of a young person’s life, ensuring that their early support and education prepares them for post-16 participation.

Chapter 2:

Early Intervention and Attainment at 16

- 2.1 As Chapter 1 made clear, attainment at the age of 16 is the single most important factor in determining young people's participation and achievement post-16. The most effective thing that we can do to increase participation in future is to drive up attainment for all young people, including disadvantaged young people, and intervene early to prevent issues that can become barriers to participation. For some young people who face the most complex barriers, such as those with severe learning difficulties and/or disabilities, we need to ensure that they have access to the opportunities and support they need to achieve their aspirations and fulfil their potential.

Intervening early at every stage

- 2.2 Evidence shows that some of the factors that get in the way of young people's participation can become apparent early in life or emerge during school years. That is why we are investing from the earliest years and throughout children's schooling to set them on the right track towards post-16 education and training and prevent those young people who are at greatest risk of becoming NEET from disengaging.

Early Years

- 2.3 Evidence shows that gaps in the attainment of richer and poorer children can open as early as 22 months and have implications for achievement right through to adulthood. Within the foundation years we are committed to retaining a network of high-quality Sure Start Children's Centres, accessible to all families, but focused on those in greatest need. To further address disadvantage from the outset, we are extending the free 15 hours of early education from all three and four year olds to the 40% most disadvantaged two year olds, giving these children a firm base to achieve higher levels of attainment when they start school.
- 2.4 We have reviewed the Early Years Foundation Stage so it is focused much more clearly on getting children ready for education and learning, and we are providing additional funding and support for the teaching of phonics in primary schools. From June 2012, a new phonics reading check will be introduced for all Year One pupils to help identify early those children who need additional support with reading. This

intervention in the early years will ensure that children build a strong base of learning and development that sets them on the right track for achievement and participation post-16.

Supporting parents and families

- 2.5 Clearly, parents and families have a key influence on the lives of young people and play a crucial role in helping them to form realistic and ambitious aspirations for their future. It is essential that we give parents and families the support they need to encourage and help their children to develop, learn and participate at all ages. As well as the targeted support provided by Parent Support Advisers, we are funding eleven voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations to deliver specialist online and telephone support services over the next two years.
- 2.6 Young people from families with multiple problems are often at the greatest risk of not participating. We are committed to turning around the lives of around 120,000 of the most troubled families by the end of this Parliament. The Department for Communities and Local Government has established a new Troubled Families Team, whose first priority will be to put in place an action plan that incentivises services to work together around families. Approaches such as intensive Family Intervention or Multi-Systemic Therapy, which works with young people with severe conduct disorder, can make a real difference to the lives of young people, their families and communities. We will also invest £200 million of funding to help the most troubled families to overcome barriers to employment.
- 2.7 Teenage parents and their children are also benefiting from the Family Nurse Partnership, an evidence-based, preventative, intensive home visiting programme for vulnerable first time teenage mothers and their babies. We are committed to doubling the number of places on the programme by 2015.

Risk of NEET Indicators

- 2.8 Some problems can emerge in the teenage years and so the early intervention approach is just as important for those young people who are nearing the age of 16. Schools have the key role in identifying and supporting pupils who are at greatest risk of disengagement and ensuring that they receive the support and advice they need to move on into a successful post-16 destination. A number of local authorities and schools, including in Medway and Worcestershire, are building on the knowledge and expertise of teachers to develop Risk of NEET Indicators. These analyse detailed local data to establish the factors associated with those young people who disengage post-16. This enables schools and other local services to target their support much more effectively on those pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11, who are most likely to disengage and to prepare them for a successful transition to

education and training, reducing the flow of young people becoming NEET¹⁰.

Wider services for young people

- 2.9 Young people who are not participating and their families often face a range of complex problems and may be in touch with a number of local services. For young people who are at risk of disengaging, relationships with other trusted adults in the community, including youth workers, can be crucial to maintaining their participation. We will ensure that all the front line services working with young people and their families understand the benefits of young people's participation and will provide them with the information and tools they need to support these young people into education and training.
- 2.10 We will shortly set out in *Positive for Youth* the ways in which wider services for all young people can help them to develop the aspirations and skills they need to participate and succeed in learning, and overcome any specific barriers they may face. Youth workers and other professionals and volunteers have a key role in supporting young people's personal and social development and helping them avoid negative outcomes such as teenage pregnancy, substance misuse or crime, thereby supporting their educational attainment and readiness for work.

Raising educational attainment at 16

- 2.11 Attainment at school is the most influential factor in securing young people's participation and future success and the best protection against becoming NEET. We have set out in *The Importance of Teaching*¹¹ a clear programme of fundamental reform that will help to raise standards for all young people so that by the age of 16 they are well-equipped to go on to positive participation in education or training and on into work by:
- Giving schools more freedom and flexibility to meet young people's needs;
 - Ensuring the curriculum encourages and prepares children and young people for future success;
 - Improving behaviour and attendance, which can be a very significant factor in future participation;
 - Providing targeted support to the most disadvantaged, who are at greatest risk of disengaging; and
 - Improving accountability to incentivise schools to focus on young people's destinations.

¹⁰ More information on Risk of NEET indicators and examples of how areas have developed them, are available on the DfE website: <http://www.education.gov.uk/16to19/participation/rpa/a0075564/raising-the-participation-age-rpa-locally-led-delivery-projectstrials>.

¹¹ Department for Education. *The Importance of Teaching: The Schools White Paper 2010* (November 2010)

Increasing freedoms and flexibilities

- 2.12 The most important priority for helping schools to improve participation and attainment is giving them the freedom and flexibility to meet the needs of their individual pupils. Building on international evidence, we are devolving power to head teachers by greatly increasing the number of Academies and introducing new Free Schools. The latest GCSE results¹² show that attainment in Academies has improved twice as fast as in maintained schools.
- 2.13 These increased freedoms are also enabling the development of new kinds of institutions that will meet the needs of groups of young people who might otherwise not have been engaged. There are already two University Technical Colleges, which offer high quality technical education, with sponsorship from a university and local employers. We will establish at least 24 University Technical Colleges by 2014. Six Studio Schools are now open, providing their students with experience of practical project-based learning and coaching. These institutions will recruit from a wide ability range, helping to raise the attainment of pupils who might otherwise have disengaged from traditional schooling.

The right academic and vocational qualifications

- 2.14 Over recent years too many schools, particularly in disadvantaged areas, have stopped giving their pupils the chance to take a range of academic subjects at GCSE, restricting their future options. We have already turned this around by introducing the new English Baccalaureate – good GCSEs in English, maths, two science subjects, history or geography and a language. Recent independent research showed that nearly half of pupils in the surveyed schools were taking up study of these subjects, compared to one in five in 2010¹³. We are also reviewing the National Curriculum to ensure that it focuses on essential knowledge, giving teachers more flexibility to develop learning approaches that inspire all pupils.
- 2.15 We want to ensure that vocational qualifications offer young people opportunities at the same standard as academic ones. The Government has accepted all the recommendations in the independent Wolf Review¹⁴ on vocational education and we are in the process of reforming performance tables and funding rules to ensure that these incentivise only the best vocational qualifications. We have set out a clear plan for judging which qualifications will appear in the performance tables based on their content, assessment and, importantly, progression into further learning and work. We will also make it easier for colleges to recruit directly at age 14, giving access to specialist teaching and facilities for vocational education alongside a broad curriculum, as well as making it easier for vocational specialists to teach in schools. Reforming the curriculum and ensuring that the best qualifications are incentivised will ensure that more young people

¹² Department for Education. *GCSE and Equivalent Results in England - 2010/11* (October 2011)

¹³ Clemens, S. *The English Baccalaureate and GCSE Choices* (August 2011)

¹⁴ Department for Education. *Wolf Review of Vocational Education: Government Response* (May 2011)

reach 16 ready to progress on into further education and skilled work with training.

Improving behaviour and attendance

- 2.16 Poor behaviour, poor attendance and exclusion can get in the way of success for both the children taking part and those around them. The evidence clearly shows that young people who have been affected by these factors are at much greater risk of not participating post-16. That is why we are taking firm and immediate action to address this key area, giving teachers more power to deal with poor behaviour and prevent it from impacting on young people's education. We have legislated to abolish the rule of giving 24 hours' written notice of detention and to give teachers a more general power to search for and confiscate items which may cause harm. We have clarified guidance on the use of force and strengthened head teachers' authority to discipline pupils for misbehaviour outside school. Schools will continue to carefully monitor pupils' attendance and address absence at an early stage and we have introduced a revised 15% threshold for persistent absence so that schools will focus on addressing poor attendance patterns before they become an entrenched problem.
- 2.17 We are helping teachers to get to the root causes of challenging behaviour using multi-agency assessments to identify and address any underlying issues and prevent exclusion where possible. We are also trialling a new approach to permanent exclusions where schools have the power, money and responsibility to secure suitable alternative provision for excluded pupils and retain accountability for those pupils' outcomes. We are establishing alternative provision Academies and Free Schools, giving pupil referral units more autonomy to manage their budgets and staffing, and seeking to introduce a greater diversity of high-quality provision. The Secretary of State for Education has asked Charlie Taylor, his expert adviser on behaviour, to conduct a review of the alternative provision sector and to look at ways to strengthen schools' powers to deal with poor attendance. Tackling poor behaviour and attendance at an early stage will help to keep these young people engaged, improve their attainment and set an important pattern of successful engagement that can continue in their post-16 learning.
- 2.18 The Government is committed to expanding children's and young people's access to psychological therapies, providing £8 million to support this over the next four years. Exclusion is also a key risk factor for young people getting involved in crime and we are exploring ways to improve education provision for young people in custody, including once they are released.

Targeted support for disadvantaged pupils

- 2.19 The evidence also makes clear that disadvantaged pupils are more likely to struggle at school and disengage at a later stage. Tackling the link between disadvantage, attainment and participation is central to addressing wider issues of social mobility. So we are providing schools

with extra funding to help this group to attain at 16 and move on into further learning. In 2012-13, the Pupil Premium will provide schools with an additional £600 for each pupil known to be currently eligible for free school meals, or who have been registered for free school meals at any time in the past six years, to spend on raising their achievement. This figure will increase each year until 2014-15 when the Premium will be worth £2.5 billion.

- 2.20 Looked after children have significantly worse outcomes than their peers. Only 12% gained five good GCSEs including English and maths in 2010. We are determined to narrow the gap between the attainment of looked after children and others. That is why, alongside those eligible for free school meals, we decided that looked after children should receive the Pupil Premium. Schools will be able to use their Pupil Premium funding for additional support such as one-to-one tuition to help raise their attainment and make maximum progress.
- 2.21 For children who are disabled or have special educational needs, the reforms set out in the Special Educational Needs Green Paper are designed to improve their life outcomes and support them to succeed. The Green Paper has a clear focus on raising achievement and sets out a range of measures to improve teaching and school leadership. For example, we are building the capacity of schools to improve outcomes for pupils with special educational needs by making the “Achievement for All” programme available to any school that wants it. The pilot of this programme showed that with the right support and engagement, it is possible for pupils with special education needs to achieve good outcomes. In the pilot areas, these pupils made significantly greater progress in English and maths than children with special education needs, and in some cases those without, nationally.

Guidance and Inspiration

- 2.22 All children need clear guidance to begin to plan their further learning and career routes. Alongside the key role of parents and families in helping to shape young people’s ambitions, schools are best placed to know what kinds of careers guidance their pupils need. We have legislated to make schools responsible for securing access to independent and impartial careers guidance for their pupils in Years 9-11. The new duty will come into force from September 2012. We will consult shortly on extending the duty down to Year 8 and up to young people aged 16-18 in schools and further education institutions. The content and style of the careers guidance offer to young people will depend on local needs and circumstances, and will be determined by schools and colleges, either individually or working in partnership.
- 2.23 While young people receive advice from many different sources, some will benefit from a face-to-face exploration of their skills, abilities and interests that can help them think through the learning and career options available to them. To support schools in fulfilling their new duty, we will publish statutory guidance setting a clear expectation that they should secure face-to-face careers guidance where it is the most

suitable support, in particular for disadvantaged children and those who have special educational needs. The guidance will also contain a clear description of the quality standard for careers guidance so schools can have confidence in the quality of external support they commission.

- 2.24 We recognise the contribution that strong links between schools, colleges and business can make to outcomes for young people and Ofsted will take account of the extent to which schools work in partnership with business. Recent evidence suggests that young people who went on to participate tended to have much greater employer contact whilst at school¹⁵. This contact can take many forms, including: business leaders spending time in schools talking to young people about their role, business leaders serving as governors, placements for teachers to spend time in an industry environment, workplace visits or mentoring. The best partnerships are based on an understanding of the needs of the school and of what the business can offer, and are sustained over a period of time. We are supporting “Inspiring the Future” - a new Education and Employers Task Force programme to encourage up to 100,000 people from all sectors and professions into schools and colleges to talk about their jobs and career routes. The entire Cabinet has signed up to the ‘Speakers for Schools’ initiative, giving schools access to a network of high profile inspirational speakers. As part of its consideration of a school’s leadership and management. We expect these measures to have a significant impact, but will consider further action if necessary.
- 2.25 Supported by the Government and brought together by a passion to inspire the next generation, industry partners Serco, Engine, Eversheds, the Institute of Education Business Excellence and the Ideas Foundation have created “I Am...” a social enterprise that aims to inspire young people about their futures. The enterprise is collaborating with young people, as well as a growing number of employers, brand and digital experts, including Centrica, Dairycrest and Microsoft. “I Am...” is an inspirational campaign and website that brings all careers information and opportunities for young people into one place. It will draw on specialist resources from a wide range of organisations and services, including the National Careers Service.

Increasing accountability

- 2.26 Increasing the freedom and flexibility of schools, improving the curriculum, addressing poor behaviour and targeting support on disadvantaged pupils will all help to raise participation and reduce the proportion of young people becoming NEET both in the immediate future and for years to come. But we need to ensure that schools are held clearly to account for this key role and that is why we are developing a new Key Stage 4 Destination Measure to show what each school’s former pupils go on to do. It will set out what proportion went on to school sixth forms, to colleges, to Apprenticeships and, eventually, to other forms of work. This will provide parents, pupils and

¹⁵ Education and Employers Task Force. YouGov Survey (February 2011)

schools themselves with information about how well they are preparing their pupils for successful progression at 16 and encourage them to improve the support available. We will publish the first set of Key Stage 4 Destination Measure data, focusing initially on education and training destinations, in Spring 2012.

- 2.27 By reforming the school system to improve attainment and intervening early to prevent disengagement, we will ensure that more young people reach the age of 16 well equipped for positive participation in education, training and employment, reducing the flow of young people becoming NEET.

Chapter 3:

Full Participation of 16-17 Year Olds

- 3.1 As we saw in Chapter 1, the vast majority of young people are already participating in education or work-based learning – over 96% at 16 and 87% at 17. But these figures are still not high enough and we have made a clear commitment to reach full participation for this age group by 2015, so that all young people have the opportunity to build the experience and qualifications they need for successful employment and adult life.
- 3.2 This means that we must take immediate action to increase participation and to support those young people who are NEET to re-engage. We will do this by:
- Raising the participation age to 17 in 2013 and 18 in 2015;
 - Providing more Apprenticeships for young people so that they can gain skills and qualifications through a real paid job;
 - Reforming vocational education through new coherent 16-19 programmes of study, including work experience;
 - Enabling local authorities to fulfil their clear statutory duties to support young people to participate, including disadvantaged young people, such as by implementing the proposals in the Special Educational Needs Green Paper;
 - Addressing financial barriers to participation through better targeted support, including the new £180 million 16-19 Bursaries Fund; and
 - Introducing a new programme, as part of the Youth Contract, to support disengaged 16-17 year olds to participate in education, an Apprenticeship or a job with training.

Raising the Participation Age

- 3.3 We are raising the participation age (RPA) so that all young people will be required to participate in education or training to the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 from 2013 and to at least their 18th birthday from 2015. Young people will have a number of participation options, including full-time education in a school or

college, an Apprenticeship, or other full-time work alongside part-time education or training. We will shortly consult on the regulations that underpin the RPA primary legislation to seek views on how best to put those into practice.¹⁶

- 3.4 We want young people to participate actively and voluntarily and so we will ensure that the education system has in place attractive options and the necessary support to make young people enthusiastic about learning. That is why, through the Education Act, we have legislated to give ourselves the ability to delay the introduction of the enforcement process against young people and their parents – we will only introduce this if and when necessary. This means that young people will be under a duty to participate, but it puts the onus on the system to offer young people the tailored education and training programmes and targeted support they need to engage.
- 3.5 There are currently still too many young people who are not in education, employment or training at 16-18 – 58,000 at the end of 2010. Information collected by local authorities shows that around 70% of the 16-17 year olds who are not currently engaged are actively seeking work or learning. As Figure 5 shows, the relatively small number who seek to enter employment directly at 16 do not always have the skills and experience they need to be attractive to employers. This makes it all the more important that we ensure that there are high quality options to engage all 16-17 year olds in education and training, helping them to gain the skills and qualifications they need to succeed in the workplace. We know that many of them are motivated by work and so our first priority must be to increase the availability of high quality work-based training.

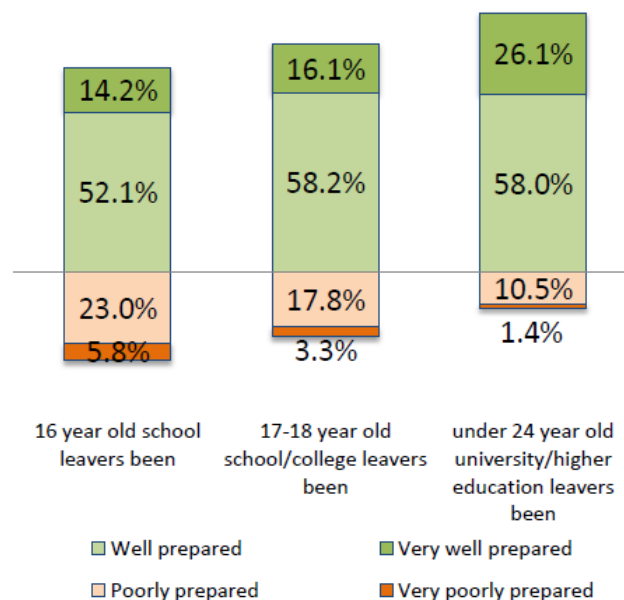


Figure 5 – Employers views on how well prepared young people are for work (UKCES, 2011)

¹⁶ The consultation will include consideration of whether self-employment or volunteering alongside part time education or training should count as a valid participation option under RPA.

Providing more Apprenticeships for young people

- 3.6 Apprenticeships are highly regarded by employers and young people and offer the opportunity to gain accredited qualifications as part of a real paid job. We are already increasing the number and quality of Apprenticeships: in 2009/10, 116,800 16-18 year olds started an Apprenticeship, a 17.5% increase on 2008/09, and 113,800 19-24 year-olds joined the programme, a 34.3% increase on 2008/09. In the 2012-13 financial year, we are making £833 million available to fund 140,200 16-18 year old Apprenticeship starts. This will mean that there will be around 240,000 apprentices aged 16-18 in learning.
- 3.7 The Access to Apprenticeships pathway allows young people with the potential to succeed as apprentices a probationary period to polish up skills and establish a track record in the workplace, so that they can secure a paid place with an employer quickly and complete their Apprenticeship training in the usual way.
- 3.8 Building on the impressive growth that we have seen at all ages and all levels of the Apprenticeship programme, we will further target our efforts and investment where returns and impact are greatest, including focusing more on young people aged 16-24. To achieve this, we need to put employers in the lead, make it as easy as possible to take on an apprentice, and drive up standards still further so that we can be sure that every Apprenticeship delivers the high quality, professionally-recognised qualifications and skills that employers value. Investing in young people's vocational education will yield considerable returns for them and for our economy – the returns in terms of increased earnings are +9% for 17-18 and +11% for 19-24 year olds compared to +6% for 26-30 year olds¹⁷. Those 16-24 year olds who undertake an Intermediate Level Apprenticeship are also much more likely to move straight on to an Apprenticeship at Advanced Level, further increasing their skills and productivity.
- 3.9 As part of our new Youth Contract, we want to go further in opening up Apprenticeship opportunities for young people, so we will offer at least 40,000 incentive payments of £1,500 for small businesses to take on their first apprentices. Payments will be made in two stages, the first payment shortly after recruitment and the second timed to incentivise progression into ongoing employment. We will also ask the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) to target more actively, through marketing and other operational levers, those sectors and groups where Apprenticeships deliver the greatest benefits, including for young people.
- 3.10 We know that too many employers still find the Apprenticeships programme bureaucratic and complex, so we are simplifying processes to make it quicker and easier to take on an apprentice. We will reduce

¹⁷ Figures relate to Level 3 NVQs compared to Level 2. London Economics. *Returns to Intermediate and Low Level Vocational Qualifications* (September 2011)

to one month the time it takes for an employer to advertise an Apprenticeship vacancy, including identifying a provider and agreeing a suitable training package. As a first step in tackling the unnecessary regulation that can deter employers from recruiting young people, we will streamline health and safety requirements so that there are no additional demands on employers who already meet legal standards. We will go further in simplifying the processes for employers, including working with training providers to develop new service standards for supporting small and medium-sized businesses, to be included in their contracts.

- 3.11 We also need to go further to ensure that every Apprenticeship consistently delivers the high quality training that helps learners acquire professionally recognised qualifications and progress in their career. So we will launch a rapid employer-led review into the standards and quality of Apprenticeships, reporting in Spring 2012, to ensure that they continue to meet the evolving needs of employers and learners, and that Government is getting the maximum return from investment in the programme. This review will consider the content of an Apprenticeship framework and the quality of the vocational qualifications involved.

Case Study 1: Apprenticeships at Rolls Royce

Rolls Royce recruits 200 apprentices a year. Of the annual cohort, approximately a third are aged 16-17, a third join after post-16 education and the remaining third are 18+ with wider experience, including ex-service personnel. Recruitment is for jobs on the shop floor, technicians and more recently, professional roles mainly in engineering and manufacturing. The Apprenticeship programme brings many advantages and the mixed age range of apprentices brings benefits both to the individuals as they share experience and perspectives, and to the company.

Rolls Royce are overwhelmed with applications every year - approximately 3,500. They advertise vacancies via their website with applications taking place on line. They run an outreach programme with schools near their premises through which they build up a long-term relationship and staff go to talk to students and teachers about Rolls Royce and the sector in which it operates.

Rolls Royce want to play their part in ensuring that enough young people are studying science, technology, English and maths subjects to provide a good supply of recruits for their own company and to support the sector and supply chain as a whole, to ensure it remains vibrant and that work can be kept in this country.

- 3.12 Building on the recommendations of Professor Wolf, we are strengthening the requirement on English and maths for apprentices who have not yet achieved a Level 2 qualification in these areas. We will make it a condition of funding that training providers should seek to support all learners who have not achieved A*-C in English and maths to reach that standard, with performance data on results being published.

Transforming vocational education through new 16-19 programmes of study

- 3.13 Apprenticeships are not an option for everyone. Some young people do not have the required qualifications or experience that would make them attractive to employers or that enable them to compete with older workers for places. That is why we need urgently to increase opportunities for other forms of work-based learning – programmes of study offered by colleges or other high-quality providers, including those from the private or voluntary and community sectors, built around work experience and tailored to the particular needs of the individual.
- 3.14 One of the main barriers to offering high-quality programmes of study, particularly in vocational areas, has been a funding system that has incentivised the accumulation of qualifications rather than coherent programmes that offer good progression. Many young people are offered a mix of small qualifications, many of which have little or no value in the labour market. For the first time, we are proposing radical reforms to the funding system to fund students, not qualifications, allowing schools, colleges and other providers to develop programmes that make sense rather than maximise income. This will benefit all learners, but particularly those who might otherwise not have participated and were put off by the absence of work experience, or who were participating but accumulated a clutch of qualifications that did not subsequently help them secure a job or further training. As with schools, we will also hold providers to account for young people's progression to positive destinations, through the new Key Stage 5 Destination Measure.
- 3.15 The new 16-19 programmes of study will offer real breadth and depth and will not limit young people's options for future study and work. Our new approach to funding will give providers greater freedom to design exactly the kinds of courses that will appeal to young people who might otherwise have disengaged. We will also expect colleges and providers to identify an individual with overall responsibility for putting together and overseeing each student's individual programme. This will ensure young people receive the tailored support they need to stay engaged and help to reduce the numbers who drop out of learning at this crucial stage.

- 3.16 Employers consistently tell us, and international evidence confirms, that English and maths skills are among the most important that businesses look for when they recruit. So we will ensure that study programmes, as well as Apprenticeships, include English and maths for all those young people who have not achieved at GCSE by the age of 16. But many employers report that even those young people with good GCSE grades do not always have the levels of literacy and numeracy that they would expect. We have already taken action to reform the GCSE in the short term to provide greater focus on the key skills of spelling, punctuation and grammar. In the longer term, as part of our review of the National Curriculum, we will go further to reform the GCSE in order to ensure that employers can be more strongly assured that the holder of a pass in English and maths GCSE will have the skills and knowledge they require.

Providing workplace experience

- 3.17 We know that many young people who are not currently participating are highly motivated by work, but do not yet have the skills or practical experience to move into employment. That is why we are making substantive experience of the workplace a key element of 16-19 study programmes. By providing young people with meaningful work experience closer to the point at which they will enter the labour market, we will not only better prepare young people for employment, but also make continuing in learning more attractive to those young people who might otherwise not have participated. Supported internships can be particularly effective for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and could make up the majority of their programmes of study, helping them to move on into supported employment or towards independent living.
- 3.18 We know that bureaucracy can get in the way of businesses offering high quality work experience opportunities. So we will take action to cut back needless bureaucracy in relation to work experience, including consulting on the removal of requirements around CRB checks for those supervising 16-17 year old work experience. We will work with employers to consider changes to health and safety and employment legislation that would remove barriers to work experience and will cut back the 120 pages of guidance on work experience into a single simple myth-busting guide.
- 3.19 Work experience will be funded as part of 16-19 study programmes from 2013-14 when we expect the new funding formula to be introduced. However, we need to take action now to incentivise providers to offer genuine experience of the workplace for the current generation of 16 and 17 year olds, ahead of the new funding formula. So we will provide an additional £4.5 million between now and September 2013 to allow colleges to develop high quality work experience opportunities, including for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities where appropriate. To ensure that this has maximum effect, we will target the funding towards areas with the

highest proportions of young people aged 16-17 outside education and training, but will give providers the freedom to use the money in the best way to support their young people and the local labour market. We know that many providers are already using this kind of work experience as a tool to engage and support young people to progress:

Case Study 2: Work Pairings

A number of post-16 training providers are offering Work Pairings, which give young people the chance to undertake an intensive period of work experience and mentoring with a local business.

In Staffordshire, PM Training is a social enterprise that is a sister company to the local housing association, Aspire Housing. Young people taking part in the programme work in teams consisting of a supervisor, an apprentice and two Work Pairing students, undertaking real work to maintain the association's housing stock.

In East Sussex, the County Council and two local colleges have established a programme to match young people with a wide range of local small businesses from hairdressers, construction companies, manufacturing, to local historical sites.

Work Pairings are funded through providers making innovative use of existing Foundation Learning funding and shows the kind of innovative work-focused provision that can be offered where providers have the freedom to meet young people's needs. Young people are supported to move from the programme into further education and Apprenticeships, often with the business where they were placed.

“Work pairing is really good for business: Having another set of hands like Robin's means I can get on making sure we have the best possible service. [Work Pairing] allows you to dip your toe in the water when considering taking on an apprentice” – Employer, East Sussex

Supporting local authorities to deliver their responsibilities

- 3.20 The evidence clearly shows that the proportion of young people who are not participating, and their characteristics, vary widely between local areas. No “one size fits all” solution will work and instead we must focus on enabling local areas to deliver for their young people, and on targeting support at those who need it most.
- 3.21 Local authorities have clear statutory duties in relation to 16-19 year old participation – to secure suitable education and training provision and to support young people to participate, including providing targeted support to help those who are NEET at this age. They also have a duty to undertake learning difficulty assessments setting out the education and training provision required for those young people who had

statements at school. To underpin their duties, local authorities should have in place robust and timely arrangements with partners for tracking young people's participation, using their Client Caseload Information System to record this information and to identify those at risk of disengaging. This database also provides authorities with valuable information to plan and commission services to effectively target support for young people.

- 3.22 Local authorities are also expected to provide the bespoke support that disadvantaged young people, such as those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and teenage parents, need to re-engage. We know that locally tailored support will be the most effective for vulnerable young people. That is why we have brought together a range of disparate funding streams into a single Early Intervention Grant for local authorities worth £2.3 billion in 2012-13, removing ring-fences and giving local authorities the flexibility to spend this on the most effective services and approaches for young people in their area.
- 3.23 Through the Health and Social Care Bill, we are proposing to transfer responsibility for health improvement to local authorities, who will jointly lead health and wellbeing boards. Funding provided through a new public health grant would be available to address lifestyle choices such as risky sexual behaviours and drug and alcohol misuse, which can get in the way of effective participation. Vulnerable young people can often require more intensive support at age 18-24 as well, and our plans for delivering this are set out in Chapter 6.
- 3.24 Many local authorities are already carrying out their responsibilities well by:
- Working closely with schools, colleges and other youth services to track young people's participation, recording and analysing this data to target support;
 - Making sure that all 16 and 17 year olds have been offered a suitable place to continue in education or training through the September Guarantee;
 - Picking up and addressing any gaps in provision by working with local providers and flagging these to the Young People's Learning Agency;
 - Acting as a strategic lead, bringing together all of the agencies and organisations working with disengaged or vulnerable young people in the area; and
 - Offering targeted and personalised support to young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming so.
- 3.25 However, there are still too many local authorities who do not yet achieve this well enough. This does not mean that we need to revert to a top-down strategy that does not meet local needs, but rather that we

should continue to empower local people to monitor and challenge performance, help areas to support each other and ensure that statutory responsibilities are fulfilled.

- 3.26 We already publish data on participation at a local authority level, but we will go further by publishing more of this data more often so that local people can hold services to account for their performance. This will include data on vulnerable groups, such as young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and teenage parents, who we know are at greater risk of disengagement, progress towards raising the participation age, and how effective local authorities have been in keeping in touch with young people in their area. This is in line with the new Public Sector Equality Duty, which requires public bodies to publish relevant information about demonstrating work on equality in order to improve transparency and accountability.
- 3.27 Local authorities will be at the heart of delivering RPA and we are working directly with 35 areas as they develop innovative solutions to the specific issues they face, sharing these with other areas and providing peer-to-peer support. We will expand this programme of locally-led delivery projects in 2012-13 so that we can support more areas to help each other and benefit from this approach. We will support the existing projects to run a series of learning visits to share the lessons and tools developed with other areas. We will also continue the “September Guarantee” process through which local authorities ensure that all 16-17 year olds have been offered a suitable place in education or training, helping to target their resources on those without a settled route.
- 3.28 Supporting young people’s participation is underpinned by clear statutory responsibilities. Most local areas are fulfilling these well and the expansion of data publication and the RPA local projects will support more to do so. However, these are statutory duties to support some of the most vulnerable groups in society and so where we have clear evidence that a local authority is not fulfilling them, we will take action. We will contact these local authority areas to understand any underlying issues and link them to additional support where possible, such as from one of the local project areas. Where performance does not improve, we will consider a formal improvement notice where that is necessary.
- 3.29 Ensuring that there is a suitable education or training place available for all young people is essential to securing their engagement and attainment. We are increasing the amount of funding available for education and training places so that there are sufficient opportunities for all young people and clear routes into employment. In total, we will be providing £7.5 billion of funding in 2012-13, including £833 million for Apprenticeships and £314 million for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities aged 16-24. Whilst the cohort of young people is reducing by over 20,000, efficiency savings mean that we will

be able to support 34,000 more places than the number that we expect to fill in 2011/12, helping to deliver the highest ever participation rates¹⁸. Should local authorities identify significant gaps in provision they have an opportunity to apply for an exception to the lagged funding system to address it.¹⁹

Addressing financial barriers through better targeted support

3.30 We know that some young people face financial barriers to participation and have put in place a new £180 million bursary scheme. This will provide a guaranteed bursary of £1,200 per year to the most vulnerable young people, including those in care, with the remaining funding going to schools and colleges to target the real causes of individual young people's barriers to learning. Teenage parents are at particular risk of not participating and Care to Learn provides targeted support to help these young people to meet childcare costs and associated travel to allow them to engage in education and training. In 2010/11, Care to Learn supported around 7,000 young parents between 13 and 22 to participate. As we move towards full participation, we expect that more young people will look to access this support and we have recently consulted on a range of options to ensure that it reaches those who need it most.

3.31 Those 16-17 year olds who are not living with their families and are suffering from severe hardship are able to claim Jobseeker's Allowance from Jobcentre Plus. We have increased the amount of help these young people can get, giving them access to support from a Jobcentre Plus Personal Adviser as well as programmes like Work Experience that can help them build the skills they need to move into employment. For the future, we are designing Universal Credit for 16-17 year olds to ensure that the most disadvantaged receive the additional support they need, including working with special educational needs and disability stakeholders to ensure that it is flexible enough to support young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as they find work. For some vulnerable young people, health services also play a crucial role in supporting them to engage and this is reflected in the fact that 16-18 year olds NEET is one of the key indicators that we intend to include within the Public Health Outcomes Framework, incentivising health services to help these young people overcome any barriers to participation. We are encouraging areas to develop a Community Budget approach to enable all local partners to pool budgets and redesign services to better meet the needs of people in their area.

3.32 As well as being important employers in their own right, VCS organisations have a critical role to play in helping the very hardest to reach to engage. We want to ensure that valid VCS provision can be recognised as an important route for young people as we raise the

¹⁸ Young People's Learning Agency. 16-19 Funding Statement (December 2011)

¹⁹ Details can be found at <http://www.ypla.gov.uk/aboutus/ourwork/16-19-statutory-guidance/>

participation age and will shortly consult on the best way to achieve this. We are providing additional support for the development of innovative and successful programmes through our VCS Grant. This will provide around £60 million in each of 2011-12 and 2012-13 to fund 118 organisations to support vital activities for children, young people and families, including 18 youth sector organisations helping disadvantaged young people.

Case Study 3: Tomorrow's People

Tomorrow's People is a national charity which improves the lives of unemployed young people by helping them into lasting work. Since it was founded in 1984, Tomorrow's People has helped over 440,000 people on their journey back to work.

Through the VCS grant, the Department for Education is funding Tomorrow's People to run Working It Out, a programme to support disadvantaged young people into jobs or training. Young people taking part tend to have fewer qualifications and poor life and social skills; some are offenders, some are homeless, many have been in care or come from workless families.

There are now 8 Working It Out programmes running in locations across the country. Community challenges are a key part of the programme with young people arranging activities, such as cleaning beaches and renovating local parks, which benefit the local area. Working It Out has been instrumental in helping young people to gain work experience, employment support and qualifications. 75% of those who have completed the programme have re-engaged with employment, education or training with 70% sustaining a positive outcome after six months.

- 3.33 A range of VCS organisations are involved in delivering the National Citizen Service programme, which brings together 16 year olds from all backgrounds to engage in positive activity during the summer between pre- and post-16 education and training, helping them to return to education or training inspired and engaged. They will spend a week away from home doing outward-bound activities before returning to undertake a project in their local community. Over 8,000 young people have already taken part in the programme during 2011 and up to 30,000 more will take part in 2012. The Government aims to expand the programme so 90,000 young people benefit in 2014.

Introducing support for 16-17 year olds within the Youth Contract

- 3.34 We want to go further to support some of our most vulnerable 16-17 year olds. That is why, as part of our Youth Contract, we have announced plans for £150 million of additional funding over three years (£126 million in England) to provide intensive support to this group. This will focus on disadvantaged young people, who we know are more

likely to face multiple challenges, which might include having low qualifications, a history of truancy or having been excluded from school. We will ensure that this support is aligned with and linked to existing programmes aimed at troubled families to make sure that it complements that provision.

- 3.35 Delivery of this support will be through providers in the private, voluntary and community and social enterprise sectors. They will be given the freedom to engage young people in whatever way works best. This might include intensive personal support, work experience and volunteering. They will work closely with local authorities, who have the best understanding of which young people are most likely to be at risk of long-term disengagement.
- 3.36 The programme will offer intensive support, with the majority of payment to the organisations based on their success in helping these young people to engage and sustain participation in education or training through full-time education, an Apprenticeship or a job with training. This will help to support our commitment to full participation in education and training for 16-17 year olds by 2015.
- 3.37 This additional support will build on our radical reforms of post-16 education, training and support, including the development of programmes of study, the expansion of Apprenticeships and a sharper focus on local authority support to help young people who are currently not engaged, ensuring they reach 18 with the skills, qualifications and experience they need to make a successful transition to adulthood.

Chapter 4:

Engaging 18-24 Year Olds in Education and Training

- 4.1 Having the right skills is fundamental to getting and staying in work. As we have seen in Chapter 3, by reaching full participation for 16 and 17 year olds in education and training, we will ensure that more young people are equipped to make a successful transition to work and adult life. However, we need a strong, rich offer of further learning from 18, both for those who wish to pursue higher education or higher training, and those who need to gain the skills required for employability.
- 4.2 We will put learners at the heart of the system and ensure that they can access the training they need to get into work. By providing clear and transparent information about qualifications and prospects, and professional, independent advice and guidance, we will help young people and adults make well-informed choices, driving a high quality supply of education and training. The National Careers Service, to be launched in April 2012, will provide information, advice and guidance about careers and learning, covering further education, Apprenticeships, other forms of training and higher education. Alongside this, we will introduce a new approach to public information about further education and training courses; and from September 2012, each university will publish a Key Information Set on their website, providing easily comparable information on a course by course basis.
- 4.3 We are also taking action to provide an education and training offer for 18-24 year olds which helps them progress, by:
- Reforming the Apprenticeship programme;
 - Providing further education and training opportunities focused on the needs of young people, and those seeking work;
 - Supporting the development of progressive routeways to jobs and Apprenticeships;
 - Ensuring that qualifications meet the needs of both employers and individuals; and
 - Continuing to widen participation in higher education.

Reforming Apprenticeships

- 4.4 As we have seen in Chapter 3, Apprenticeships are an excellent option for young people wanting to get into work and continue their training in a workplace setting. We have seen strong growth in Apprenticeships across all age ranges and levels, with provisional data showing over 440,000 new starts in 2010/11 and completions increasing to 181,700. The reforms to the Apprenticeship programme detailed in Chapter 3 will equally benefit 18-24 year olds as we continue to drive up the quality and quantity of opportunities for this age group. In 2012-13 there will be funding of £698 million for Apprenticeships for people aged 19 and over, enough to support 650,000 apprentices in that age group in 2012/13. We will also expand provision and seek to increase the uptake of Advanced Level and Higher Apprenticeships, with an ambition to make Advanced Level the recognised level of achievement in most sectors.
- 4.5 In the 2011 Budget we announced a £105 million boost to funding for adult Apprenticeships, which enables us to support an additional 40,000 places over the spending review period and enhance our capacity to help 19-24 year olds who are NEET. The National Apprenticeships Service (NAS) and Jobcentre Plus are developing arrangements to encourage and support progression into Apprenticeships as a next step from programmes like Work Trials and as referrals from the Work Programme.

Further education and training opportunities

- 4.6 *New Challenges, New Chances*²⁰ sets out the Government's plans for further education. There needs to be a strong offer in further education for young people, so that they can access a skills ladder of opportunities at whatever point they are at. This will particularly include opportunities for those who want to develop their vocational skills, or who have completed their formal education without acquiring 5 good GCSEs including the level of English and maths expected within the workplace.
- 4.7 It is essential that we give young people who have not achieved these qualifications before the age of 18 an opportunity to do so and so we will prioritise funding for further education and training on young people aged 19-24 without basic literacy and numeracy skills, intermediate or advanced skills and those seeking work. Fully-funded training will be available for young people studying for their:
- first full Level 2 qualification, as well as foundation learning aims for those who need it to make the step up to Level 2;

²⁰ Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. *New Challenges, New Chances: next steps in implementing the further education reform programme* (December 2011)

- first full Level 3 qualification; and
 - English and maths basic skills qualifications (including GCSE qualifications and forthcoming standalone units).
- 4.8 More broadly, the Government is freeing colleges and training organisations from red tape and central controls, allowing them to respond to local needs. We have already removed central targets and simplified funding systems we are now in the process of reducing a wide range of bureaucracy and regulation that have acted as a barrier to flexible and responsive delivery in the past.
- 4.9 We expect colleges and providers to work closely with local partners including Local Enterprise Partnerships, local authorities and Jobcentre Plus to ensure they are making a strong contribution to meeting the social and economic needs of communities. The Commission on Colleges in their Communities has been clear about the increasing importance of accountability of colleges to their communities.

Routeways to jobs and Apprenticeships

- 4.10 One area where those flexibilities can have an immediate impact to improve the offer for young people is in joining up the welfare and skills systems. Skills providers have been freed to respond to local communities while Work Programme providers have significant freedom to meet the needs of individuals. We are clear that the needs of young people are particularly important and want providers to work together to develop a progressive routeway to jobs and Apprenticeships which reflects the needs of each local community and economy.
- 4.11 So we will look to Work Programme and skills providers to work together to meet the needs of young people who are least likely to find work because they don't have the skills and experience employers are looking for. The routeway can bring together basic skills training (including English and maths) to the level employers expect, training in sectoral/vocational areas needed locally, combined with tasters and visits as well as work experience. This will make use of the flexibilities in both systems, bringing the welfare and skills reforms together to support young people to progress through learning into jobs and Apprenticeships. We will explore what more we can do to best meet the needs of young people with low skills levels.

Ensuring qualifications meet employer and individual needs

- 4.12 As we have seen in Chapter 2, it is vital that the courses or qualifications young people choose enable them to progress, either into work or into further learning.

- 4.13 We want to ensure that employers can signal which courses or qualifications they value so young people can be confident in their choices. The Government will consult in early 2012 on the fitness for purpose of National Occupational Standards and on employers' involvement in developing, specifying and awarding qualifications.
- 4.14 As we set out in Chapter 3, we are simplifying Apprenticeship processes and reducing bureaucracy so that employers can engage much more easily with the programme. Our forthcoming review of Apprenticeship standards and quality will ensure that frameworks continue to meet employers' needs.

Widening access to higher education

- 4.15 The Government's reforms of higher education are designed to put the student at the heart of the system. There will be wider choice of high quality courses and institutions and we will ensure that higher education is a realistic and inspiring option for all young people who have the aptitude and could benefit, but would otherwise not have considered it.
- 4.16 For many young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, going to university is a gateway to social mobility. To help more disadvantaged young people enter higher education and secure places in the most selective universities, the Government is increasing the responsibility placed on universities to widen participation. We are putting in place new access agreements and a National Scholarship Programme, so that all universities wanting to charge more than the £6,000 annual graduate contribution to tuition fees for entry in 2012 will have to set out what more they will do to attract more students from disadvantaged backgrounds, including the funding they will focus on this.
- 4.17 Increasingly, people are looking to progress into higher learning from work-based learning or vocational pathways. We will therefore encourage greater progression from Advanced Level and Higher Apprenticeships to higher learning. New evidence from research published by the University of Greenwich shows that around 13% of apprentices move into higher education within four years of completing their Apprenticeship²¹.
- 4.18 We want students in higher education to think particularly about how their university course will prepare them for a future career. The Key Information Set will show whether a course is recognised by a professional body or employer organisation. The Government is encouraging universities to work with employers to co-design, accredit or "kitemark" courses so employers can clearly signal which courses or

²¹ University of Greenwich. *Apprenticeship progression tracking research project report: Longitudinal tracking of advanced level apprentice cohorts progressing into Higher Education 2005-2006 to 2009-2010* (July 2011)

qualifications they value and young people can be confident in their choices. A group of science, technology, engineering and maths-focused sector skills councils²², with support from the Confederation of British Industry and Skillset, will lead an industry group to kitemark courses. The Government will encourage other sector skills councils to do the same. Students will be able to access initial information on employer endorsement as part of the 2012 Key Information Sets.

- 4.19 This chapter has set out how our reforms of the skills system will help to ensure that all young people, including those who missed out on the opportunity at an earlier stage, will be able to achieve the skills and qualifications that employers need, putting them in a much better position to find work. The next chapter takes this one stage further, looking at how our employment and welfare reforms will provide the direct targeted support these young people need to find employment.

²² SEMTA, COGENT and e-skills

Chapter 5:

Moving on into Employment

5.1 As we saw in Chapter 1, 523,000 18-24 year olds who are NEET are unemployed and looking for work, so in addition to education and skills reform we must ensure that people who are ready to work find jobs quickly. We will provide support by:

- Creating the conditions for growth within the economy and the labour market;
- Working with employers to make a clear case for the benefits of recruiting young people, and jointly investing in projects to create opportunities;
- Strengthening partnership between Jobcentre Plus, colleges, training organisations and employers to offer young people coordinated support;
- Helping those who are ready to work through our Get Britain Working measures, including Work Experience;
- Supporting those who are at risk of long-term unemployment through the Work Programme;
- Helping young disabled people, including those with the most complex needs, back to work through the Work Choice programme and Access to Work; and
- Implementing the Youth Contract to offer more support from Jobcentre Plus, Work Experience and subsidised jobs to unemployed young people.

Building a strong economy and flexible labour market

5.2 Creating an environment in which employers feel confident to create job opportunities is clearly fundamental to tackling the root causes of youth unemployment. As set out in the Autumn Statement²³, the Government is doing everything it can to protect and build a stronger

²³ HM Treasury, *Autumn Statement 2011* (November 2011)

economy for the future and promote fairness, helping to create the right conditions for business to start up, invest, grow and create jobs.

- 5.3 In the Statement we also announced plans to secure opportunities for growth through the education and skills system. The Government has worked with employers to understand what more it can do to make the skills system more responsive to employer needs in a number of areas. We are focusing on the skills that employers say they need from entrants to the labour market; increasing the skills of the existing workforce by unlocking investment from employers through greater ownership of the skills system; facilitating informed choices and maximising the potential of the UK's education export market.
- 5.4 The UK is considered a "successful employment performer" because of our light touch system of employment regulation which gives us a strong competitive advantage. Although the UK labour market performs well, there is more we can do to encourage firms to take on staff. We have set out an ambitious programme of reforms as part of the Employment Law Review and are offering an opportunity to employers and employees to feed in views on new priorities for reform as part of the Red Tape Challenge.
- 5.5 Getting levels of remuneration right for young people entering employment is a vital ingredient for stimulating growth in the economy. That is why we have commissioned the independent Low Pay Commission (LPC) to consider the National Minimum Wage for young people, including those on internships and Apprenticeships, and make recommendations in its next report to Government. The Apprenticeship rate of the National Minimum Wage is already set according to LPC recommendation.
- 5.6 The Government is ensuring that people will always be better off in work than on benefits. The introduction of Universal Credit will make the benefit system simpler and more efficient. People will keep a higher proportion of their earnings and the distinction between in-work and out-of-work support will be removed. We expect Universal Credit to have a positive impact on young people through stronger work incentives and smoother transition into jobs.
- 5.7 Universal Credit will significantly reduce the financial, and some of the non-financial barriers, to work faced by disabled people. The largest allowances for disregarded income under Universal Credit go to disabled people - £7000 per annum or £134 per week. In addition, there will be a work-related activity component and a support component to reflect the extra costs of longer durations on benefit. Qualification will be based only on the Work Capability Assessment rather than the complex current system of eligibility. The Universal Credit taper will remove barriers in the current welfare system that disabled people face if they can only do small or fluctuating amounts of work.

	2014–15 excluding Universal Credit		2014–15 including Universal Credit	
	At 10 hours	At 35 hours	At 10 hours	At 35 hours
Lone parent with one child	£20	£105	£53	£102
First earner in couple, no children	£10	£67	£30	£79
First earner in couple, two children	£10	£89	£41	£90
Second earner in couple, no children				
First earner working 10 hours	£1	£95	£23	£72
Second earner in couple, two children				
First earner working 10 hours	£4	£93	£23	£72
Single, under 25, no children	£6	£72	£23	£72

Figure 6 – Illustrative weekly increase in income with and without Universal Credit (HM Treasury)

5.8 The Work Programme will provide personalised support to an expected 2.4 million claimants who need the most help to find employment over the next seven years. It is the biggest single payment by results employment programme to date and shows the Government’s commitment to tackling long term unemployment. It has replaced much of the complex and overly prescriptive employment support previously on offer and for the first time providers are paid partly out of the benefit savings that they help to achieve by supporting claimants into sustained employment. There is further information about this key element of our package of support below.

Working with employers

5.9 Employers should play a driving role in creating opportunities. They need to recognise the benefits of employing young people who bring new ideas, creativity and energy, and be prepared to step up and provide young people with worthwhile work experience and jobs. Employers who do recruit young people are clear and often passionate about the benefits they bring in both skill and attitude.

5.10 The UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES), a social partnership comprising large and small employers across a range of sectors, has set out the business case for recruiting young people, offering work experience and other opportunities. The key benefits are:

- Employers who recruit younger people often do so because they are very willing to learn new skills, work differently and bring fresh perspectives and ideas to the workplace;
- Psychologically, young people have an inbuilt optimism and ability to anticipate and adapt to change allowing them to be positive and resilient, helping businesses grow and change;

- Young people bring insight into new and emerging customer groups and markets. These perspectives are valuable where markets are rapidly changing or rely on a younger customer base;
 - Less experienced staff can be recruited at lower cost and risk to the organisation as well as being efficient in the longer term; and
 - Bringing new talent into organisations improves succession planning, increases loyalty, reduces turnover and therefore increases profitability in the medium to long term. Investing in young people in the workforce is about building businesses to survive in uncertain futures, whilst meeting immediate labour needs at low cost and low risk to the organisation.
- 5.11 Through a series of networking and speaking opportunities, UKCES Commissioners and other influential employers are inspiring fellow business people about the benefits of recruiting young people and engaging with schools and colleges. But this work will require wider support from partners and employer networks.
- 5.12 The Business Compact, announced in the Social Mobility Strategy, asks businesses to do their bit to remove barriers to success and includes a commitment to improve skills and create jobs by providing opportunities for all young people to get a foot on the ladder.

Case Study 4: Lakeland Plastics

Lakeland Plastics is a medium sized employer which engages with students at local schools through a school prize system and maintains this link through project work, work experience and, ultimately, employment of the young person. This arrangement builds in local and community involvement.

They work with local schools to offer a prize for the best student in particular subjects. Part of the prize is to work with the company on a problem that they cannot solve. Employees help the students develop solutions for the problem and the solutions are implemented. This provides interaction with the existing workforce and changes are made, for instance to factory layout.

If both parties are interested, the students continue to have links with the company and work for them over the summer when at college or university, and some ultimately end up working for them. Lakeland Plastics covers the cost of the prizes and the wages of the students when on work experience.

The company see this as fulfilling a clear business interest, giving them a head start in recruitment and providing the students with opportunities to experience working for the company prior to full employment.

- 5.13 The Government will also invest jointly with business where this can help to create new opportunities for young people. Through the Growth and Innovation Fund (GIF), government and businesses are jointly investing in employer-led solutions to skills problems. The GIF has recently announced it is open to bids all year round to enable employers to pace the development of bids to suit their needs rather than be subject to centrally controlled, arbitrarily-imposed deadlines.
- 5.14 We are also committed to testing new and different ways of giving employers greater ownership of the skills agenda, for example through a new pilot that will route public investment in skills directly to employers and allow them to purchase the vocational training they need. This will be backed by up to £250 million over the next two years subject to high-quality employers' bids and ongoing evaluation.

Jobcentre Plus working in partnership

- 5.15 We are piloting new models which embed careers guidance professionals from the National Careers Service within jobcentres. Claimants receive advice and support that helps them consider their career and learning options, informed by data about the labour market.
- 5.16 Jobcentre Plus, in partnership with colleges, training providers and employers, has a key role to play in influencing the provision offered locally to ensure it best meet the needs of employers and people on benefits. In parallel, Jobcentre Plus has developed the "Framework for Joining-Up Support" for businesses enabling employers to easily access a combination of recruitment, training and business support.
- 5.17 In addition, new legislation to establish integrated employment and skills arrangements gives Jobcentre Plus a legal gateway to share personal information on 18-19 year old benefit claimants with local authority staff. This will allow a much more joined up service for young people and much closer working with local authority services in order to offer tailored support to young people. Some areas have already developed this level of joint working, for example by ensuring regular contact between advisers; encouraging young people to take a copy of their activity record with them when they first go to Jobcentre Plus; or using a case conference approach for young people who need the most intensive support. Jobcentre Plus advisers also now have access to a single "Knowledge Hub" which gives all local teams the information they need on key areas. As a result Jobcentre Plus advisers are able to offer claimants an extensive menu of help.
- 5.18 We are developing arrangements for how this data sharing will take place in practice, including developing guidance for Jobcentre Plus and drawing up a Memorandum of Understanding with local authorities. Over the longer term we will explore the possibility of sharing

information with other organisations who support people to access employment and skills services.

Help for those who are ready for work

- 5.19 As a result of the current economic conditions, more young people are experiencing a spell of unemployment. This group includes some who, in other times, would have gone straight into work but who may, now, come into contact with Jobcentre Plus services for a short spell. Our aim is to keep them focused on work through regular contact with Jobcentre Plus Personal Advisers.
- 5.20 At the start of their claim there will be more time to assess the young person's needs and to set clearer and more tailored expectations of their job search, education and training. Fortnightly job search reviews remain a key feature of the support offered and will increase to weekly as part of the Youth Contract. More frequent attendance will be required of claimants where appropriate. We expect this new approach to be both more challenging and more supportive in ensuring an individual's re-engagement with education, employment or training. The Flexible Support Fund is available to District Managers and Personal Advisers in Jobcentre Plus to enhance the support that is provided. On an individual basis it can be used to help claimants with the purchase of small items that are essential to help them back to work, such as clothes for interview or to cover travel costs for interviews or training programmes. District Managers also have the discretion to use the fund to buy one-off support where it is not available from any other source or to work with local partners in joint projects.
- 5.21 Personal Advisers can call on a range of measures that are designed to help jobseekers stay connected with the labour market and to enhance their employability. These opportunities include work experience, a wide range of skills training, sector-based work academies, pre-employment training and work focused learning provision.

Work Experience

- 5.22 Lack of experience can be a deal-breaker for employers when choosing between candidates. Chapter 3 set out our plans to increase the availability of work experience as part of the 16-19 programmes of study. We have also created a Work Experience opportunity for young people on Jobseeker's Allowance which lasts long enough for a young person to really show their capability and add value to their CV. Jobcentre Plus Advisers are working on both a local and national basis with employers to match young people to experiences lasting up to eight weeks, which not only support the young person on their first steps into work but also build peer support through local communities.

- 5.23 Government departments across Whitehall are also supporting placements and have collectively pledged to facilitate over 6,000 opportunities by March 2013. For example, the Department for Transport has offered 1,000 work placements to young jobseekers. These short placements are offered in diverse roles throughout the Department and its agencies and are aimed at developing confidence and motivation in young unemployed people.
- 5.24 At the last Budget we announced help for 100,000 young people through Work Experience placements and through the Youth Contract, we are creating a further 250,000 places over the next three years. Initial predictions based on the first 1,500 starts show that young people who have participated in the Work Experience scheme are leaving Jobseeker's Allowance earlier than their peer group. Statistics show that over 16,000 young people completed Work Experience between January and August 2011 and of this cohort 55% have subsequently stopped receiving benefits.

Case Study 5: Work Experience

Lauren was diagnosed with anxiety and depression over a number of years. Undertaking Work Experience as an Administration Assistant has transformed her confidence.

A typical day involves referencing, filing, data entry, answering telephone calls, reception duties and processing staff timesheets. Since starting Work Experience, Lauren has attended three job interviews and feedback from prospective employers has been very positive.

Feeling professional, being part of a team, building confidence and gaining the skills to do a job that she really wants to do are just some of the benefits Lauren has recognised from this experience.

Work Clubs

- 5.25 Since October 2010, we have been supporting the development of Work Clubs. These build on local knowledge and resources to help unemployed people in their communities. Following announcements in May 2011 we have encouraged local communities and organisations to use their knowledge and expertise to set up Work Clubs specifically aimed at 16-24 year olds.

Case Study 6: Work Club

A Work Club for 18-24 year olds living in Callington was hosted by Ginsters and Tesco with support from the Royal Air Force (RAF). The Jobcentre promoted the event with a number of 18-24 year olds attending.

The day included motivational and team building activities run by the RAF, followed by Ginsters, Tesco and the RAF talking about what employers look for in potential candidates. Sessions during the day were run on “Personal Branding”, completing application forms, applying online, interview techniques and work experience.

Feedback from claimants was excellent, stating they had learned a lot from the day.

Sector-based work academies

- 5.26 Sector-based work academies commenced as a pilot in the North West of England during October 2011. Through sector-based work academies young people can access a combination of training and work experience with an employer. The training, which is funded by the Skills Funding Agency, is flexible, focused on employers’ needs and accredited, leading towards a unit of a qualification. Jobcentre Plus is funded to support up to 105,000 places over the next four years.

Case Study 7: Sector-based work academies

Hilton Worldwide Hotels has led on delivering a “hospitality academy” in Liverpool with two other hotels in the city centre. The vacancies are predominately in housekeeping, but as the academy progresses, other roles, such as kitchen porter and front of house management have emerged as additional opportunities. An open day was held at Hilton where Jobcentre Plus, a training provider, and three other employers selected 19 claimants to attend this academy, at the conclusion of which 18 are now currently undertaking work experience placements.

Volunteering

- 5.27 Volunteering can help young people improve their chances of securing work by building skills, motivation and fostering citizenship. It is an example of the Big Society in action.

Case Study 8: Adult Volunteering (Richard, Business Mentor)

I met Paul after he'd been accepted on to The Prince's Trust Business Programme, which supports young people in setting up their own business. I was chosen as his mentor because they thought I could offer him something...For me it's been great. Working as a mentor gives you a feeling that you're actually contributing to something and putting your experience to good use, especially with someone like Paul who's receptive and driven.

We don't share the same opinions all the time and he doesn't always agree with my ideas, but that's healthy...that's the role of the mentor; just to be available, run through ideas or help out with whatever issues may come u. Paul is passionate about the success of his enterprise...He's full of desire and that reminds me of when I first started. To relive all that and see him go through so many things I once did is amazingly stimulating. It makes you feel like you're giving something back and doing something that's really worthwhile.

Pre-Employment Training

- 5.28 Young people who are struggling to get into work need a skills system that gives access to relevant training opportunities so they can acquire the skills that employers demand. As set out in Chapter 4, skills providers have been given greater flexibility, autonomy, and freedom from bureaucracy leaving them well placed to identify the needs of young people and be innovative in how they meet them.
- 5.29 Specifically, we have introduced a new approach to pre-employment training focused on those looking for work and designed by colleges and training providers working with employers and Jobcentre Plus. This is for people on Jobseeker's Allowance or Employment Support Allowance in the Work Related Activity Group, including young people. They can access fully-funded, targeted skills training relevant to the local labour market, to help them obtain work. This can be single units (from the Qualification and Credit Framework) or full qualifications depending on what the individual needs. In addition, and at the discretion of the college or training provider, fully-funded training can be offered to people on other benefits provided that the training provider has sufficient funds to do so and that they can demonstrate that the training is being provided to help individuals enter or return to work.
- 5.30 In line with the adult skills offer, we want to ensure that 18 year olds on benefit have access to work focused pre-employment training opportunities that fit alongside benefits, with a particular focus on English and maths for those without these qualifications.

Starting a business

- 5.31 For many young people, starting a business will be the best option. Young entrepreneurs need our wholehearted encouragement, and support that helps them to take their idea to market. We are offering that support through:
- The New Enterprise Allowance which offers access to mentors for young people wishing to develop a business plan and move towards launching their own business. Once trading they can claim a weekly allowance for up to 26 weeks, and loan finance to help with start-up costs. In addition young people can access Enterprise Clubs in their local area, run by groups and organisations to promote entrepreneurship and give additional advice and guidance to attendees;
 - Helping young people find sources of funding by continuing to support Community Development Finance Institutions (CDFIs) which are independent financial institutions, who lend to those who have been turned down by banks;
 - The Regional Growth Fund, which has approved, subject to due diligence, a contribution of £30 million to a new £60 million wholesale fund for organisations that make loans to entrepreneurs, start-ups and SMEs, particularly in disadvantaged groups and communities. This is the biggest fund of its kind in the UK; and
 - Big Society Capital (formerly the Big Society Bank), which will soon begin investing in social enterprises. This could include investing in CDFIs and Enterprise Agencies that provide business advice, training, mentoring and loans to entrepreneurs, start-ups and SMEs, again focused on deprived groups and communities.

Graduates

- 5.32 We are helping to ensure that new graduates are fully equipped for employment. The Government is asking more employers to work with universities to plan courses, to sponsor students and to provide relevant work placements.
- 5.33 We are also continuing to encourage employers to invest in students and graduates by offering work experience and internships. For those graduates who are taking longer than they would expect to find work appropriate for their qualifications, the Graduate Talent Pool is a free website that brings together graduates seeking an internship and employers looking to take on interns.

Young people volunteering for the UK Reserve Forces

- 5.34 We recognise that for an unemployed young person choosing to volunteer for the military reserves, including becoming a Cadet Force Adult Volunteer, can be a source of pride, discipline and an opportunity

to develop useful skills for life and to gain relevant qualifications while contributing to society. Many of the skills and experiences a reservist gains through training can be transferred back into the workplace. But we know that for some the bureaucracy associated with volunteering for the reserve forces whilst claiming Jobseeker's Allowance can be a deterrent to this worthwhile activity. We are committed to cutting bureaucracy in order to ensure that Jobseeker's Allowance claimants who decide that they want to join a reserve force are enabled to do so, and that reservists who find themselves unemployed are provided with the support they need to maintain their commitment. In particular, we are:

- Ensuring reservist opportunities are clearly signposted, with information allowing claimants who are so minded to choose the right path for them, including by distinguishing the Cadet Forces from other reserves; and
- Simplifying the current rules to ensure reservists on Jobseeker's Allowance are not disadvantaged when attending the required period of continuous training (e.g. 15 day annual camp).

Help for those who are at risk of long term unemployment

- 5.35 As we saw in Chapter 1, significant periods of unemployment for young people can have long term negative impacts on young people's futures. So we have introduced the Work Programme to provide intensive personalised support for those people who are more at risk of long term unemployment. Work Programme providers design support based on individual and local need and are paid primarily for supporting claimants into employment and helping them stay there for longer than ever before, with higher payments for supporting the hardest to help.
- 5.36 Everyone who receives Jobseeker's Allowance or Employment Support Allowance can access the Work Programme at a time that is right for them. Young people aged 18-24 become eligible for the Work Programme after nine months unemployment; this is three months earlier than older claimants. Those facing particular difficulties can enter the programme even earlier, after three months unemployment. For example, this applies to those who have left care or who had claimed Jobseeker's Allowance when they were aged 16 or 17.
- 5.37 Work Programme providers are paid almost entirely for results, defined as sustained job outcomes for participants. There are three main types of payments that are available for each participant:
- A small attachment fee for each new participant in the early years of the contracts. This will be reduced each year and eliminated after three years;

- A job outcome payment paid after a participant has been in a job for three or six months, depending on how far they are from the labour market; and
- After receiving a job outcome, providers can claim sustainment payments every four weeks that a participant remains off benefit and in employment. These payments continue for a maximum of two years, depending on how far the participant is from the labour market.

5.38 The level of these payments, and the length of time they are paid for, is adjusted depending on how far a participant is from the labour market, but the key principle is the same for all participants: the longer they stay in work, the more providers will be paid. This means there are strong incentives for providers to continue to provide support once participants are in work.

Work Choice and Access to Work

5.39 Work Choice is designed for disabled people with more complex needs, which cannot be met through other employment support provision. It ensures that they have access to the right support to help them find work or self-employment, progress in the workplace or, where appropriate, move into unsupported employment. Work Choice participants get consistent, quality support from providers based on their individual needs. Access to Work can provide financial help towards the equipment an individual needs at work, a communicator at job interviews, adapting premises to meet an individual's needs, paying for a support worker or meeting the cost of getting to work where individuals cannot use public transport.

Youth Contract

5.40 We have a strong programme of existing reforms that support young people to gain the skills and experience they need to move into sustainable employment. However, the current economic situation means that there is also an immediate challenge and a need to do more. So, in addition to our existing reforms, we are committing to a new package of support worth nearly £1 billion over the next three years. This builds on what businesses are telling us about the practical help Government can provide to make it easier for them to take on young people, and enrich their chances of success in the world of work. It also fully complements and builds on existing welfare reforms and partnership relationships to offer an enhanced and strengthened offer.

5.41 We know that different young people need different types of support, so this package includes a range of measures to ensure that every 18-24 year old who finds themselves unemployed has the right support, at the right time, to help find a job and move into sustainable employment. It includes:

- Extra support through Jobcentre Plus offering young people more time in the form of additional adviser intervention from three months and weekly, rather than fortnightly, signing from five months;
- Access to a careers interview with the National Careers Service in the first three months of their claim;
- An offer of a work experience or sector-based work academy place for every unemployed²⁴ 18-24 year old who wants one, before they enter the Work Programme, providing up to an additional 250,000 places over the next three years. This supports employers and young people's desires to have an understanding of the world of work and the responsibilities that come with that; and
- A total of 160,000 wage incentives to make it easier for employers to take on young people aged 18-24. A wage incentive worth £2,275 will be available as part of the Work Programme. This will more than cover the cost of an employer's National Insurance contributions for employing a young person for a year and exceeds the recommendations of the CBI in their recent report on youth unemployment. It will also ensure that Work Programme providers are there to give ongoing support to the young person as they take their first steps into employment, helping them to overcome barriers to remaining in the workplace.

5.42 We are providing more support and more opportunities for young people but we also expect more in return. The signing regime will be more demanding than the current one. And those who drop out of a work experience placement or a subsidised (or other) job without good reason could be at risk of loss or reduction in their benefits.

²⁴ This applies if 18-24 year olds are on Jobseeker's Allowance for over three months.

Chapter 6: Inactive and Vulnerable 18-24 Year Olds

- 6.1 As we saw in Chapter 1, 371,000 young people aged 18-24 are not available for work because they are caring for a family, or have a disability or illness which prevents them from working. Others are inactive for other reasons, including taking a gap year or waiting to take up a course or job they have already found.
- 6.2 Some young people struggle to engage in education, training or employment due to major, often multiple barriers. Young people from vulnerable groups are much more likely to be NEET, including teenage parents, ex-offenders and those who have been in care or have been carers themselves. Chapters 2 and 3 describe how we will intervene early to address these issues and support young people under 18 to continue in learning and overcome barriers to participation.
- 6.3 For the older age group, we want to promote independence and personal responsibility and ensure that the most vulnerable are provided with tailored support. We will do this by:
- Where appropriate, supporting young people NEET on inactive benefits towards education, training and employment;
 - Working with the voluntary and community sector to provide additional support to young people to move into productive activity; and
 - Providing targeted support for specific groups.
- 6.4 Intensive early support for the most disadvantaged young people is vital. As we saw in Chapter 5, young people can access the Work Programme earlier than other claimants (after nine as opposed to 12 months). The most disadvantaged young people, including those NEET, repeat benefit claimants, former Incapacity Benefit claimants and those who are severely disadvantaged can access support at three months and the Employment and Support Allowance Work Related Activity Group are able to access the Work Programme at any point.
- 6.5 The Youth Contract underlines the importance that the Government attaches to providing the right support for those who need it most. As we have seen in Chapters 3 and 5, the extra support for vulnerable 16-

17 year olds and through the Work Programme for 18-24 year olds to access jobs will particularly benefit those who are least able to find work.

Reducing the number of young people NEET on inactive benefits

- 6.6 The Government is taking steps to help young people NEET on inactive benefits move off these benefits and towards work. These measures include:
- Employment Support Allowance/Incapacity Benefit Reassessment so that those on sickness benefits are assessed in terms of their work capability rather than being left without support in long-term benefit dependency;
 - Increasing lone parent conditionality so that those whose youngest child is over the age of five face active job-search requirements;
 - Extending childcare support, including for those working under 16 hours in Universal Credit, to improve incentives for lone parents to work;
 - New requirements for those in the Employment Support Allowance Work Related Activity Group who are able to prepare for work to participate in work preparation activities;
 - Introducing of Universal Credit for those currently on inactive benefits; and
 - Designing Universal Credit to support vulnerable groups.

Additional support from the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)

- 6.7 As we saw in Chapter 3, VCS organisations have a key role in supporting young people who are at risk of disengaging at all ages. The voluntary and community sector are uniquely placed to reach out to these individuals and play a vital role in strengthening communities, promoting opportunity and delivering personalised and innovative public services. The sector has a central part to play in preventing disengagement and supporting vulnerable young people to find and stay engaged in learning and work.
- 6.8 The Government's commitment to work in partnership with the voluntary and community sector is reflected in the renewed compact between the government and the sector launched last year, which aims to create the right environment for partnership working in order to deliver better outcomes for people and communities. We have committed to making it easier to run a charity, social enterprise or voluntary organisation, to getting more resources into the sector,

strengthening its independence and resilience and making it easier for such institutions to work with the state. As an example of this approach, Chapter 3 described the support for vulnerable young people provided through the Voluntary and Community Sector Grant and organisations like Tomorrow's People.

- 6.9 One of the key aims of the European Social Fund is to reduce the proportion of young people NEET and we are investing this money into proven programmes and interventions, many of which are run by voluntary and community sector organisations. By the end of 2010, these projects had already helped 221,000 young people NEET into education, employment or training since 2007 and further funding will be invested through this route up to 2013. We also want to harness innovative models of social finance to fund high quality voluntary and community sector support. We have also announced a new Innovation Fund worth £10 million per annum to give delivery organisations working with 14-21 year olds a real chance to develop innovative solutions to prevent young people becoming NEET through new social investment models.
- 6.10 The Prince's Trust and other voluntary and community sector partners have co-located in 29 jobcentres to work together and raise the profile of volunteering with Jobcentre Plus staff and customers. This has resulted in closer working and enhanced relationships between Jobcentre Plus and the voluntary and community sector organisations and has enabled them to work in partnership to deliver locally tailored solutions to help claimants in their search for work.

Case Study 9: The Prince's Trust

Steven had spent time homeless and in prison before becoming involved with The Prince's Trust. He was excluded from school and never returned, leading him to become involved with older gangs, taking drugs and drinking.

After leaving prison, Steven moved in with his grandfather and began to take control of his alcohol addiction. After being unemployed for two and a half years, he managed to secure work experience as a kitchen porter and joined the Get into Cooking programme.

During the programme, Steven's talents impressed both Prestonfield Executive Head Chef John McMahon and Garreth Wood, owner of Elements. Once the course was complete, he initially worked part-time in Elements before being 'headhunted' by Prestonfield. Steven is now a full-time Commis Chef there, preparing meals for hundreds of people including royalty. He recently ran his own section of the kitchen for a high-profile event, with real skill and expertise.

- 6.11 The Government is also committed to empowering public sector employees to take over the running of the services they provide by setting up public service mutuals. There is significant potential for these new mutuals to develop innovative services, as has been demonstrated in the provision of health and social care. The Cabinet Office has launched a Mutuals Information Service as a gateway to a comprehensive package of support for fledgling mutuals.

Targeted support for specific groups

- 6.12 Vulnerable young people often receive support from a wide range of different agencies and services and it is essential that this is joined up to maximise its effectiveness. It is also not the case that young people can be easily separated out into groups – each young person is unique and some may experience a number of different barriers. However, the section below sets out some of the specific support that young people in different circumstances can receive.

Lone parents

- 6.13 Lone parents are at particular risk of not participating. Subject to the passage of provisions in the Welfare Reform Bill, lone parents will only be able to claim Income Support until their youngest child is aged five (currently aged seven), thereafter moving into employment, or to Jobseeker's Allowance - if they are capable of but unable to find work - or Employment and Support Allowance if they have limited capacity to work. Over 50% of those on inactive benefits looking after a family are qualified below Level 2. As well as support to continue their learning through the Care to Learn programme detailed in Chapter 3, young parents will be encouraged to take advantage of fully-funded training provision while still on inactive benefits, especially where this fits with Government funded childcare provision, to better prepare themselves for their return to work.

Young people with health problems or who are disabled

- 6.14 Poor physical health, mental health and disability can be significant barriers for young people to employment, education and training and undermine successful transitions between key life stages. The importance of good mental health was recognised in the Government's mental health strategy²⁵.
- 6.15 To improve the experience of young people who are moving from CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) to adult services the Department of Health ran a joint programme in partnership with the National CAMHS Support Service and the Social Care Institute for Excellence. This produced a series of practical tools and learning resources to help smooth the transition, for use by young people,

²⁵ Department of Health. *No Health Without Mental Health* (February 2011).

parents, carers, professionals and commissioners²⁶.

- 6.16 The Government has asked disabled people and their organisations throughout the UK to contribute directly to a new cross government disability strategy. The strategy will aim to give renewed impetus to the Government's commitment to disability equality. It sets out areas for discussion based on three key principles of raising aspiration, increasing individual control and changing attitudes and behaviours²⁷.

Young People with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities

- 6.17 Young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are more than twice as likely not to participate as their peers. Despite progress in the employment rate for disabled people generally it remains too low, and those with moderate to severe learning disabilities are even less likely to be employed.²⁸
- 6.18 The Special Educational Needs Green Paper sets out our vision for a radically different system to support better life outcomes for these young people. It contains a number of proposals for supporting young people to fulfil their aspirations and potential including:
- Creating a single statutory assessment process and “Education, Health and Care Plan” from birth to 25 for all those who would have had a statement of special educational needs or a statutory learning difficulty assessment. This will replace the current range of assessments at different ages and will set out a young person's learning and life outcomes across education, health, employment and an independent life;
 - Giving families an option of a personal budget to pay for the support required;
 - Ensuring an effective transition from school to further education;
 - Dedicated support to help disabled students participate and succeed in further education; and
 - Providing opportunities for workplace based learning through supported internships, work placements and the use of supported employment.

Young carers

- 6.19 Helping to care for a family member is something that many young people are happy and proud to do. It helps them develop a sense of responsibility and skills they will use later in life. Taking on a caring role

²⁶ The tools from this project are available at: www.nmhdu.org.uk/our-work/improving-mental-health-care-pathways/supporting-effective-transitions-and-development-of-services-for-young-adults/transitions-guides/

²⁷ The discussion document can be found at <http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/about-the-odi/odi-news.php#fulfilling>. Responses will feed directly into the Government's strategy which will be published in Spring 2012.

²⁸ Labour Force Survey (2010) and NHS Information Centre for Health and Social Care (2008)

can strengthen family ties and build maturity and independence²⁹. However, inappropriate or excessive levels of caring by young people can put their education, training or health at risk.

- 6.20 Supporting young carers is a priority for this Government. The Government's revised Carers Strategy³⁰ has a strong focus on supporting young carers and emphasises the importance of adult and children's services working together with the voluntary sector to identify and support young carers. It also encourages local authorities to adopt the principles in *Working Together to Support Young Carers*³¹, a model memorandum of understanding published by the Associations of Directors of Adult and Children's Services that state that no care package should rely on a young person taking on an inappropriate caring role.

Offenders

- 6.21 The prison population is significantly skewed towards young people. The Government's strategy for offender learning³², sets out a new vision for education arrangements that will secure real and relevant vocational skills for young adults as they prepare for release from prison. The strategy is built upon on powerful and effective partnership working between the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), the Skills Funding Agency and Jobcentre Plus.
- 6.22 A new emphasis on local commissioning and management of the service will see coalitions of partners, drawn together by lead governors within the clusters of prisons between which offenders move during their sentence, ensuring the learning offer delivered by the Skills Funding Agency's providers is mapped precisely onto the needs of employers in the areas to which those prisoners will be released. And where there is a need for continuing education, the prison learning providers will be responsible for joining-up arrangements so that, supported by mentors funded by NOMS through its ESF programme, released prisoners are supported and encouraged to complete the skills programmes they began in custody.

Young substance misusers

- 6.23 The national Drug Strategy³³ clearly states that young people's drug use is a distinct problem. The majority of young people do not use drugs and most of those that do are not dependent. However, drug and/or alcohol misuse can have a major impact on young people's

²⁹ Aldridge, J. & Becker, S. *Children Who Care: Inside the World of Young Carers* (1993)

³⁰ Department of Health. *Recognised, valued and supported: next steps for the Carers Strategy* (November 2010)

³¹ Directors of Adult Social Services, Association of Directors of Children's Services: *Working Together to Support Young Carers: A Model Local Memorandum of Understanding between Statutory Directors of Children's Services and Adult Social Services* (December 2009)

³² Ministry of Justice, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. *Making Prisons Work: Skills for Rehabilitation: Review of Offender Learning* (May 2011)

³³ HM Government. *Drug Strategy 2010: Reducing Demand, Restricting Supply, Building Recovery: Supporting People to Live a Drug Free Life* (December 2010)

education, their health, their families and their long-term chances in life. It is important that young people's services are configured and resourced to respond to their particular needs and to offer the right support as early as possible.

Care leavers

- 6.24 Young people leaving care need particular support to remain engaged. Revised regulations and guidance that came into force in April 2011, stress the importance of local authorities supporting care leavers to engage with employment, education, or training. Every care leaver will have a pathway plan setting out how the local authority will support their individual aspirations in these areas and will be supported by a Personal Adviser. Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide care leavers in higher education with a bursary of £2,000. The Government also funds the National Care Advisory Service, to run the From Care2Work programme, which is increasing employment opportunities - from work experience, through Apprenticeships to other full time jobs - for care leavers.

Case Study 10 – From Care2Work

The From Care2Work project is working with national and local employers, and over 100 local authorities to increase work opportunities for care leavers.

Nathan had not been participating in education, employment or training for a long time, but was keen to get into carpentry and joinery and had previously completed a joinery course at Bradford College. He was referred to From Care2Work by a local authority personal adviser.

Following an interview with Bradford Council's Building services, Nathan completed his trial period to a high standard and moved into a full time Apprenticeship. He also attended Leeds College of Building to undertake an NVQ Level 2. Nathan has recently completed his first Apprenticeship and is now moving into a further 2 year Apprenticeship to increase his skills and qualifications. There is a commitment to him being taken on as an employee when he has finished this.

"I really enjoy my Apprenticeship; I have never experienced some of the work before and could not wish for better." - Nathan

Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 This strategy has set out our ambitious plans to achieve full participation for 16-17 year olds, reverse the trend of rising youth unemployment and tackle the long-term consequences of young people being NEET.

7.2 The radical programme of reforms to schools, vocational education, skills and welfare that we have already set in train will ensure that more young people have the qualifications and experience they need to succeed in education and training and to progress into successful careers.

7.3 But we recognise the scale of the challenge and that is why we have put in place new measures to support the most vulnerable young people to overcome the barriers which prevent them from finding, or staying in, learning or work. We are:

- Raising the participation age to 17 in 2013 and 18 in 2015 so that all young people have the opportunity to engage in high quality education and training that prepares them for higher education and successful employment;
- Creating new coherent 16-19 programmes of study, offering breadth and depth, including English and maths for those who have not reached GCSE and substantive workplace experience;
- Challenging local areas to fulfil their responsibilities to support all young people to participate by continuing the September Guarantee, expanding the Raising the Participation local projects, publishing more performance data and developing a performance management process for areas that are failing to deliver;
- Further targeting Apprenticeships on younger adults, ensuring consistently high quality across all Apprenticeships, offering at least 40,000 incentives for small businesses to take on a young apprentice and cutting back on bureaucracy to encourage more employers to join the programme; and
- Establishing a new Youth Contract, worth almost £1 billion over the next three years. This will provide £150 million of new investment to support vulnerable 16-17 year olds NEET, 160,000 wage subsidies for 18-24 year olds and 250,000 new Work Experience placements for this age group.

7.4 Taken together, our existing radical reforms and these new measures mean that, despite the challenging economic climate, we have a clear strategy to maximise young people's participation education, training and work. This will provide even more young people with the support they need to make a successful transition from education into work, bringing benefit to themselves, the economy and the wider community.

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