



## Employability – Thinking About the Way Ahead

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## Key Questions

- Aren't we addressing and/or planning to address this already?
- What is the UK employer perspective?
- What about the global challenge?
- What are the challenges and/or issues that we should consider?
- What might good practice look like?



## Aren't we addressing and/or planning to address this already?

### Adults

- Skills for Life Strategy
- Train to Gain
- Leitch Report and World Class Skills

### 14-19

- Diplomas
- Key Skills / Wider Key Skills
- Functional Skills
- 5 A\* - C GCSE measure includes English and mathematics
- 18 proposed minimum age to leave education/training



## What is the UK employer perspective?

- Employers are **not** saying - **the only thing that matters** is literacy and numeracy but **are** saying if you can't give us anything else then '**at least**' give us that
- Employers say - if you (the education system) can't give us the **deal breakers** then we **can't employ** these individuals
- Employers **don't want** the education system to **just develop literacy/numeracy plus 'generic' employability skills** but many can do the vocational/business training if necessary
- Employers are getting **more worried** rather than less across the last ten years
- Employers **do not have uniform capacity to support skill development** - particular challenges felt by smaller employers

## What about the global challenge?



### Leitch Report

- Emerging economies, such as India and China, are growing dramatically
- 1/5 or more of the UK's productivity gap with countries such as France and Germany results from the UK's relatively poor skills
- Proportion of people with low or no qualifications in the UK is more than double that in Sweden, Japan and Canada
- Educators in competitor countries are developing academic/vocational/skills plus employability skills to develop/maintain competitiveness – to be economically valuable
- OECD relevant measures – UK in the bottom quartile with an aspiration to change!

## What are the challenges and/or issues that we should consider?



- **Definition** - What do we actually mean when we say employability skills?
- **Opportunity** - How can employability skills be developed, when and where this can happen?
- **Measurement** - How do you recognise if someone has employability skills and to what extent?
- **Responsibility** - Who, among government, employers, education providers and individuals has responsibility for the development of employability skills?
- **Experience** - What is your experience like of working with others to develop employability skills?

## What are the challenges and/or issues that we should consider?




- **Definition** – We have lots, how much additional refinement/development is needed here?
- **Opportunity**
  - Teaching and Learning v work experience
  - Applied/purposeful learning v content knowledge
  - In education how do we value knowing compared with doing?  
hard compared with soft skills?
  - Impact of character of skills of workforce in education

## What are the challenges and/or issues that we should consider?



- **Measurement** – Do constraints of assessment design, for example reliability, adversely impact on teaching and learning?
- **Responsibility**
  - What are the implications across the age ranges?
  - If success is not being achieved then what should be the counter measures and who should be responsible?



## What might good practice look like?



Learning and Skills Network (LSN) currently working with UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) to identify and collect examples of good practice

- focus on **development** of employability skills
- economically valuable skills
- Afternoon workshop 'Promoting Employability Skills'