

Technical Education and Skills in the UK

Supporting employability by enhancing
quality in technical education and skills



UK Skills Seminar Series 2014 –15

British Council UK Skills Seminar Series

At a time when the demand for skills is ever growing, both in the UK and abroad, we are working to foster innovation, build new partnerships and identify and develop new opportunities. The UK has much expertise to share with countries that have also made a commitment to ensuring they offer training for young people that allows them to develop the skills they need to positively contribute to their economies and communities.

The UK is one of the world's leaders in developing systems, strategies, tools and initiatives necessary for the successful delivery of employer-led technical education. It's technical and vocational education system is designed to deliver quality focussed training and qualifications that employers need, in areas where employment is available – therefore creating the environment for economic growth and personal fulfilment.



The British Council UK Skills Seminar Series 2014 – 15

Bringing together expert speakers from some of the UK's leading educational institutions, these Seminars combine lectures, workshops, discussions and visits to educational organisations and employers to provide an invaluable insight into the UK skills system.

Who would benefit from attending?

The Seminars will benefit senior government officials, policy and decision makers, employers and employer organisations, donor agency representatives and senior education staff.

The British Council

Established in 1934, the British Council is UK's cultural relations organisation. We create international opportunities for the people of the UK and other countries to exchange knowledge and ideas, and we build trust between them worldwide by sharing our cultural assets of English language, arts, education and our way of life.

Each year, our work directly engages more than 30 million people worldwide, and reaches nearly 600 million people through digital media, radio and television. In the UK, we provide opportunities for more than three million people to improve their skills and gain international experience.

From developing occupational standards to qualifications and national qualification frameworks

23 – 27 June 2014
Scotland

Developing National Occupational Standards

28 – 29 January 2015
London

TECHNICAL WORKSHOP

Quality assurance in technical education and skills

22 – 26 September 2014
London

Employer Engagement and Apprenticeships

23 – 27 February 2015
London

A guide to UK Sector Skills Councils and Organisations

3 – 4 December 2014
London

TECHNICAL WORKSHOP

Careers education and guidance for a global economy

20 – 24 October 2014
Belfast

The UK's National Skills Strategy: the policy, tools and mechanisms the UK has used to transform its TVET system

10 – 14 November 2014
London

From developing occupational standards to qualifications and national qualification frameworks



23 –27th June 2014, Scotland

Developing and delivering high quality skills education that meets the needs of employers and prepares learners for meaningful employment has become a priority for governments worldwide. In the UK, employers work closely with education providers to develop national occupational standards that reflect the range and level of skills needed in the modern workplace. These form the core of the qualifications on national qualifications frameworks, which prepare learners for the world of work and support career progression and mobility.

This Seminar is delivered in partnership with the Scottish Qualifications Authority - Scotland's national awarding and accreditation organisation with over 100 years' experience. The Seminar has been designed to develop delegates' understanding of the processes and tools involved in developing employer-led occupational standards, qualifications based on these standards and the mechanisms for validating qualifications to qualification frameworks. It will also explore how training providers develop programmes that lead to accredited qualifications.

The objectives:

- To review the role of UK Sector Skills organisations in developing occupational standards that reflect employers' needs and government strategies.
- To understand the main process involved in developing occupational standards.
- To review the process of developing qualifications and certification from occupational standards.
- To understand the value of national qualification frameworks as policy instruments that support mobility, progression and international collaboration.
- To understand the process of validating qualifications on to the Scottish Credit Qualifications Framework.
- To understand how training providers develop training programmes leading to accredited qualifications.
- To provide participants with opportunities to network with leading UK and international experts in the field of employer ownership of skills.

Partner



Quality assurance in technical education and skills

22 – 26 September 2014, London



The success and growth of UK businesses is dependent on the development of skills that meet the needs of the modern workplace and the changing economy. Employers need to be confident that technical education and skills training programmes are of high quality and are relevant to their businesses, and learners need to know that their qualifications are widely recognised and valued. Central to this are robust quality assurance mechanisms and systems.

Built on more than 150 years of experience, the UK technical and vocational education system incorporates a comprehensive set of quality assurance mechanisms that ensure skills training is relevant to the needs of UK business. These mechanisms include the development of robust employer-led qualifications accredited to a national qualifications framework, quality assurance standards for institutions delivering training and an independent, public auditing process. All of this is supported by an outcome-based funding mechanism which is designed to continuously enhance quality of provision.

This seminar focuses on quality assurance in technical education and skills and will provide delegates with useful models for the comparison and review of their own national systems. Delegates will have the opportunity to meet with leading UK experts through presentations and facilitated workshops, and visit colleges and businesses to see how quality assurance operates in different learning environments.

There will be excellent opportunities to network with decision and policy makers from around the world with an interest in quality assurance and improvement of learning provision.

The objectives:

- To share knowledge and best practice in the area of quality assurance in technical education and skills.
- To provide a detailed introduction to the approaches, tools and systems used to improve and maintain quality in technical education and skills in the UK.
- To provide opportunities to network with leading UK and international experts in the field of quality assurance.
- To explore how approaches in quality assurance and improvement, discussed during the seminar could provide useful models for delegates' national reform plans.

Partner



Careers education and guidance for a global economy

20 – 24 October 2014, Belfast



Effective careers education and guidance must reflect the changing needs of the global economy to ensure that employers have access to the skilled workers that they require, both now and for the future.

With the ever changing face of the labour market and the rapidly evolving global economy, the need for good quality careers provision is probably greater than ever. Therefore, services provided to both young people in schools and vocational colleges, in training, and to adults seeking work or to up-skill, need to reflect the needs of a modern vibrant and dynamic 21st century.

This Seminar will provide delegates with an insight into policy and practice across the UK in the field of careers education and guidance, with a particular focus on the system in Northern Ireland who will be hosting the event.

Delegates will have the opportunity to meet the senior policy makers and implementers of careers education and guidance system in Northern Ireland and the other UK countries who will share their current practice and plans for future development. Delegates will also have the opportunity to visit schools, technical colleges and careers centres to see first-hand how services are delivered.

The objectives:

- To share UK knowledge, information and best practice in the area of career education and guidance.
- To highlight the importance of effective use of labour market intelligence to inform careers guidance and curriculum development in secondary schools, vocational colleges and training providers.
- To provide delegates with the opportunity to network with leading UK and international experts in the field.
- To explore how current and future policy and practice in NI and the rest of the UK could help inform delegates' own national reform plans.

Partners



The UK's National Skills Strategy: the policy, tools and mechanisms the UK has used to transform its TVET system



10 –14 November 2014, London

The UK is continuously implementing improvements to the systems and processes that form its employer-led national skills strategy. These include increasing the age for completing compulsory education, refocusing funding, implementing new schemes that allow employers to develop new solutions to skills needs and supporting and promoting apprenticeships as a way of ensuring young people can access employment.

This Seminar will help delegates understand the political, economic and social drivers for reform of the UK's demand-led technical education and skills system, and provide an overview of the main organisations involved. It will combine workshops and briefings from key UK organisations and agencies, and visits to relevant organisations. It will also provide excellent opportunities to network with delegates from around the world who will have expertise and an interest in system reform.

The objectives:

- To identify the key principles, tools and mechanisms that the UK has used to develop a demand-led system driven by UK Government's strategy.
- To understand the key components of a demand-led competency-based education and training system, and how these could be applied more widely.
- To analyse the role of skills development in improving productivity and competitiveness, and to understand the key role employers play in the UK system.
- To understand the rationale for qualification reform in the UK and the benefits of flexible qualifications frameworks.
- To identify how funding and regulatory mechanisms can be used to continuously improve the supply and quality of provision.
- To review recent innovations in UK technical education and skills provision.
- To explore how approaches discussed during the seminar could provide useful models for delegates' national reform plans.

Partners to be confirmed

A guide to UK Sector Skills Councils and organisations

TECHNICAL WORKSHOP



3 – 4 December 2014, London

Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) are independent, employer-led, UK-wide organisations originally set up to be the authoritative voice for employers in individual industry sectors. SSCs are able to exert influence over the UK's education, skills and training systems to ensure that training and education is meeting the needs of employers now, and in the future.

The principles of the UK SSC model are now being applied worldwide as a successful way of engaging employers in the development of innovative technical education that encourages employers to invest in skills development and job creation.

This technical workshop will explore the model for UK SSCs and a wider range of sector skills organisations and help delegates understand the key principles of these unique employer led organisations. It will provide an overview of the formation, governance, licensing, performance and funding arrangements, and showcase the work of successful UK SSCs.

The objectives:

- To communicate the evolution and the role of UK Sector Skills Councils.
- To provide an understanding of how the UK Commission of Employment and Skills provides strategic leadership on skills and employment issues in the UK.
- To explore how different UK Sector Skills Councils close skills gaps, improve productivity, boost skills and improve learning for the industry sector they represent
- To review the role of employers in the governance and strategic direction of Sector Skills Councils and the UK Commission for Employment and Skills.
- To evaluate new initiatives, such as the Employer Ownership initiative, that aim to enable employers to take the lead in skills development.
- To provide delegates with the opportunity to network with leading UK and international experts in the field.
- To explore how current and future policy and practice in UK could help inform delegates' own national reform plans.

Please note that delegates should have the relevant professional background, or be working in or towards the development of a sector skills organisation. Places will be limited to 20 delegates.

Partners to be confirmed

Developing National Occupational Standards

TECHNICAL WORKSHOP

28 – 29 January 2015, London



National occupational standards (NOS) are statements of performance that an individual must achieve when carrying out a function in the workplace, together with the knowledge and understanding they need to meet that standard consistently. They form the basis of the UK's demand-led technical and vocational qualifications.

This technical workshop has been developed for those involved, or soon to be involved in, developing NOS. It has been designed to help delegates to understand the process of NOS development and provide some of the essential tools and skills they will need to develop their own standards. Delegates will have practical opportunities to work through the NOS development cycle.

The objectives:

- To understand how national occupational standards are developed in the UK and the roles and responsibilities of key organisations.
- To support delegates in developing their own standards.
- To provide an opportunity to network with UK Sector Skills Organisations.
- To explore how approaches discussed during the workshop could provide useful models for delegates' own development plans.

Please note that delegates should have the relevant professional background, or be working in the area of standards development. Places will be limited to 20 delegates.

Partners to be confirmed

Employer Engagement and Apprenticeships

23 – 27 February 2015, London



Employers and business have an essential role to play in setting the standards for training and education so that young people leaving education are work-ready. Many employers, however, do not consider education and training to be their responsibility and look to education institutions and government to develop the recruits they need for business growth, and where employers are involved in education, they are often influenced by government policy rather than setting the agenda themselves.

This Seminar looks at how employers, government and the education sector can work towards a successful, shared agenda, and focusses on the employer's contribution to the UK's national skills strategy through initiatives such as apprenticeships. It will explore the contribution that apprentices make to their businesses, how employers balance the need of apprentices as learners and as employees who need to contribute to the long-term success of companies, and the support needed to encourage the growth and the success of apprenticeship programmes.

Each day will focus on a different industry sector and employers will share their personal experience of working with apprentices, and of being an active partner in the UK's skills strategy. Delegates will be able take part in facilitated discussion on how UK models could be applied to their own national strategies, and network with decision and policy makers from around the world who share an interest in apprenticeships and employer engagement.

The objectives:

- To identify best practice examples of employers working in partnership to develop work-ready skills.
- To review the UK's approach to engaging employers through sector skills organisations and industry groups.
- To review the different elements of employer engagement in skills development, including creating academies and skills strategies based on demand supported by research.
- To explore how approaches to employer engagement and apprenticeships could provide useful models for delegates' national reform plans.

Partners



Booking information

To book a place, please send an e mail to

skillsforemployability@britishcouncil.org

or contact your local British Council office.

You can also find further information in our website

www.britishcouncil.org/learning-skills-for-employability-project-policy-dialogue.htm



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£700

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