



# Improving Competencies of VET Teachers and Trainers

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The NASUWT is the largest teachers' union in the UK representing:

- nearly 300,000 teachers and school leaders;
- in all sectors of education;
- in all four jurisdictions that make up the UK.

# European Alliance for Apprenticeships Pledge

## The NASUWT will

- raise awareness about the European Alliance for Apprenticeships and
- campaign to work towards more quality, accessible and fair apprenticeships in the UK.

The NASUWT has participated in the EI campaign “Unite for Quality Education”. Through this campaign the NASUWT will:

- raise awareness about the initiative and
- disseminate the Joint declaration of the European Alliance for Apprenticeship among its members through its briefings and consultation conferences.

The Union has:

- made the EU Joint Declaration available to members including publishing it on the NASUWT website;
- contributed to consultations and meetings with various organisations and stakeholders for improved apprenticeship systems (especially in England as it often sets the trend for other UK jurisdictions);
- held consultation conferences for each of the equality groups in the Union (young teachers; BME teachers; LGBT teachers; women teachers; and disabled teachers);
- held briefings for :
  - School and college leaders; and
  - Post-16 members; and
- Held a conference on girls’ participation in education and training.

# European Alliance for Apprenticeships Pledge contd

In line with ETUCE Policy paper on maintaining and improving quality education in VET, the NASUWT, will continue to promote:

- quality apprenticeship places;
- the provision of apprenticeship places to VET students, to improve their technical knowledge, and to ensure continuing broader based learning; and
- the improvement of quality teaching in VET.

## **Added value**

The NASUWT will raise awareness and campaign for the provision of well-funded, well-resourced quality apprenticeships.

The Union has

- responded to consultations on the reform of the UK's education and qualification systems emphasising the need for appropriate, high quality provision for all students that:
  - offers a broad relevant curriculum;
  - equally respects the academic and vocational pathways;
  - values skills as well as knowledge; and
  - uses appropriate methods of assessment;
- made clear the need for high quality placements and training and that this is dependant on employers being prepared to play a full part in the system;
- campaigned for teacher professionalism, high quality teacher training and CPD; &
- held a fringe meeting on VET at its annual conference this year.

# The Political Context

The current Coalition Government has made wide-sweeping change in the English education system including:

- a new National Curriculum –
  - knowledge-based, academic, that has downgraded skills;
  - narrower subject range; and
  - narrower subject content;
- changed accountability measures to drive school behaviour especially in the types of qualification they offer; moving away from vocational qualifications and encouraging a limited number of academic GCSEs;
- far fewer qualifications , especially vocational, will be on offer by the awarding bodies;
- work experience is no longer expected to be delivered under the age of 16
- careers service has been cut and schools are only expected to deliver what guidance they each deem appropriate, without the funding to provide it;
- post-16 funding has been cut year on year and will continue to be cut for at least the next two years; and
- schools and colleges can employ unqualified teachers.

# Political Context contd

The Coalition Government turned its attention to apprenticeships in England. (However, it is not a signatory to the European Alliance for Apprenticeships unlike the Welsh Government.)

The Coalition Government's claim that it met its target of 2 million apprentices is deceptive. The figure included a high number of employees that were called apprentices by the employers in order to accredit work-based learning and to allow the companies to access apprenticeship funding.

Although it promises more apprenticeship places, it is not in the gift of government but employers who are, on the whole, unwilling.

There are some good points in the reforms of apprenticeships but there are concerns including the use of traineeships and the removal of level 2 apprenticeships.

# The Future?

- In the run-up to May's General Election, the NASUWT has been advising the main political parties on Education policy.
- It has been running a pro-education campaign (within the restrictions of the new Lobbying Act) asking people to make education a priority in their voting decisions.
- Without a change in government there is little hope for social dialogue, let alone social partnership.
- The Union will continue to work with other like-minded groups in the UK and wider afield to implement the points of the EU Declaration. If there is a change of Government we hope to persuade it to become a signatory as a step toward social dialogue.



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