

RESEARCH PAPER

Lessons from history:

Increasing the number of 16 and 17 year olds in education
and training

James Kewin, Mark Tucker, Sarah Neat and Mark Corney

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In the area of adult skills, higher education and welfare to work policies, Mark authored *Still waiting for 'big ideas' on adult skills (2007)* published by CfBT, and co-authored with Mick Fletcher the CfBT pamphlet *Adult skills and higher education: separation or union? (2007)*. Mark, along with Mick Fletcher and Nigel Brown, has more recently co-authored *Higher Education and the Cuckoo in the Nest – Getting beyond the fixation with full-time study by young people (2008)* published by the Campaign for Learning.

Mark writes regularly for *Education Guardian*, and chairs conferences and policy seminars.

Foreword



John Harwood
Chairman CfBT Education Trust

CfBT Education Trust has always taken a keen interest in the needs of disadvantaged young people. As well as actively working as a provider of information, advice and guidance (IAG) for young people and providing educational services to help vulnerable young people through our subsidiary include, we have commissioned and published a series of highly influential research reports. These include a series of reports on the future of IAG for young people (A.G Watts 2007, McGowan *et al.* 2009); work on the provider infrastructure in post 16 education and training (Perry and Fletcher 2008) as well as the curriculum for 14–19 (Stanton 2008). More generally we have published reports on the policy and implementation issues affecting the raising of the age of compulsory participation in education (Fletcher *et al* 2007, Corney 2009).

During the course of commissioning and publishing these reports, there has been a very serious economic downturn. The Trustees of CfBT are acutely aware of the historical links between economic recession and high levels of unemployment among young people, especially 16–17 year olds. We felt it would be opportune to examine youth labour market interventions of the past, particularly between 1972 and 1997, to inform the policy for this group today. We are delighted with the outcome of this research and both our Trustees and myself hope this will help to shape the policy debate.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Harwood'.

John Harwood
Chairman CfBT Education Trust

Executive Summary

“...there is a strong case for reviewing historic youth unemployment and training programmes to identify lessons for policy makers today. This report is the result of a review of 18 programmes implemented between 1972 and 1997.”

Background

At the end of 2008, 14% of 16 and 17 year olds in England were not participating in recognised education or training. Of these, 4% were in jobs without training (JWT), 3% in employer funded training (EFT) – which is not recognised as high quality training – and 7% were not in education, employment or training (NEET). Around 95,000 16 and 17 year olds fall within the NEET category, about 59,000 are unemployed and 36,000 are economically inactive.

This report focuses on 16 and 17 year olds for three key reasons. Firstly, each of the main political parties are committed to increasing participation in recognised education and training in England by 16 and 17 year olds. Secondly, the Labour Government is committed to Raising the Participation Age (RPA) to 17 in 2013 and to 18 in 2015 (although the Conservatives are lukewarm to the proposal and the Liberal Democrats oppose the measure). And thirdly, the onset of the worst recession since the Second World War has meant this age group has the highest unemployment rate on the ILO (International Labour Organisation) measure than any other.

As the recession has deepened, the spectre of mass youth unemployment has returned. During the build-up to Budget 2009, a great deal of attention was paid to preventing unemployment amongst 18 to 24 year olds, but much less attention was paid to 16 and 17 year olds. There was a growing fear that 16 and 17 year olds could become the forgotten group of this recession. In response, the Labour Government announced an extra 72,000 school, college and apprenticeship places from September 2009. If all the places are taken up, non-participation might reduce from the current level of 14% to around 10%. And yet, as many as 100,000 16 and 17 year olds currently in employment (with or without training) could still be at risk from the recession.

Currently, participation in full-time education falls by around 11 percentage points between

the ages of 16 and 17. Faced with limited job opportunities, the choice for many 17 year olds is between remaining in education or unemployment. Many will, hopefully, stay on in full-time or part-time education. But some might reject education or employment unless additional labour market interventions can increase the number of jobs with training and especially jobs with Apprenticeships.

Programmes from history

In this context, there is a strong case for reviewing historical youth unemployment and training programmes to identify lessons for policy makers today. This report is the result of a review of 18 programmes implemented between 1972 and 1997. A full list is provided in Table I.

The year 1972 was chosen as this is when active labour market policies were deployed to manage rising unemployment; the review concludes in 1997 when the Labour Government first took office. The focus of the review was on employment and skills measures rather than interventions directly targeted at increasing participation in full-time education. Curriculum reform and financial support for full-time students were outside the scope of the review.

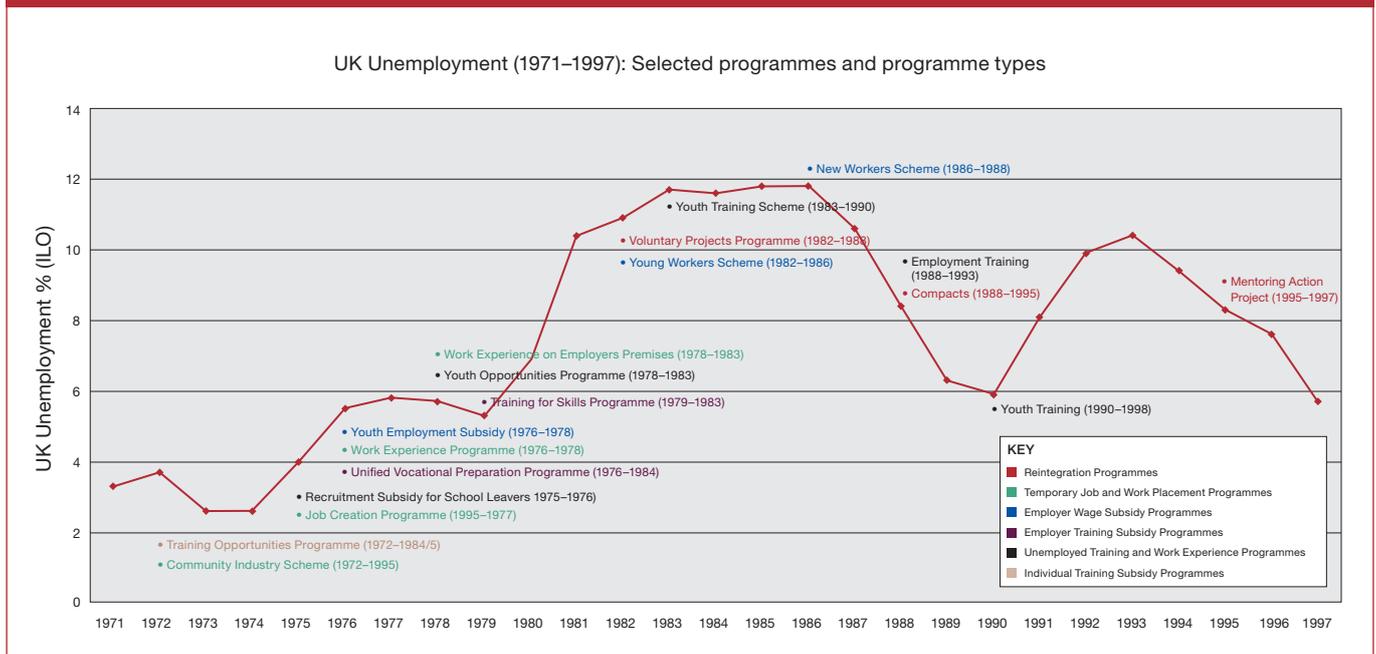
To learn from history, we must accept that the education and labour market for young people has changed significantly over the past 40 years. For example, during the 1980s the labour market was still a source of jobs (with or without training) for a significant proportion of 16 and 17 year olds with a much smaller proportion participating in full-time education. Today, the reverse is true. At the same time, the UK has moved from an employer-funded system of 16–18 apprenticeships to a publicly-funded system.

Unemployment rates are also an important contextual factor. Figure I plots the start date of each of our 18 programmes against the unemployment rates (using the ILO measure)

TABLE I: Historical programmes selected

Programme name	Programme duration
Training Opportunities Programme	1972–1984/5
Community Industry Scheme	1972–1995
Recruitment Subsidy for School Leavers	1975–1976
Job Creation Programme	1975–1977
Youth Employment Subsidy	1976–1978
Work Experience Programme	1976–1978
Unified Vocational Preparation Scheme	1976–1984
Youth Opportunities Programme	1978–1983
Work Experience on Employer's Premises ¹⁰	1978–1983
Training for Skills Programme	1979–1983
Young Workers Scheme	1982–1986
Voluntary Projects Programme	1982–1988
Youth Training Scheme	1983–1990
New Workers Scheme	1986–1988
Employment Training	1988–1993
Compacts	1988–1996
Youth Training	1990–1998
Mentoring Action Project	1995–1997

FIGURE I: Historical programmes by UK unemployment and programme type



between 1972 and 1997. The programmes have been categorised as:

- Reintegration Programmes;
- Temporary Job and Work Placement Programmes;
- Employer Wage Subsidy Programmes;
- Employer Training Subsidy Programmes;
- Unemployed Training and Work Experience Programmes, and
- Individual Training Subsidy Programmes.

Lessons from history

From our review of historic youth unemployment and training programmes, we have identified a number of key lessons for policy makers aiming to *maximise* participation in education and training and *minimise* unemployment amongst 16 and 17 year olds.

(1) *Lessons for strategy*

In the past, large scale programmes coincided with high unemployment rates. Large scale programmes were also *supplemented* by smaller scale programmes. For example the Youth Opportunities Programme (1978–83) was successfully supplemented by the Training for Skills Programme (1979–83). Unemployed training and work experience programmes were also deployed alongside employer wage subsidy programmes, for example the Youth Training Scheme (1983–90) and the Young Workers Scheme (1982–86). The lesson for today is that policy makers should be prepared to combine different types of programmes and specifically focus them on 17 year olds that may not wish to stay on in full-time education.

(2) *Lessons for policy*

Under the Training for Skills Programme (1979–83), employers were incentivised to increase the supply of youth apprentices through grants towards off-the-job training and a recruitment subsidy. Only around 5% of 16 and 17 year olds are currently undertaking an employer-based Apprenticeship, and while employers

receive free off-the-job training they must meet the wage costs of apprentices. While the Labour Government is seeking to expand employer-based Apprenticeships for 16 and 17 year olds, it is increasingly clear that in the current recession, some employers are struggling to meet all of the associated costs. Policy makers should therefore consider offering wage subsidies to employers taking on 16 and 17 year old apprentices, but target these subsidies at small firms to minimise deadweight.

Historically, there was a very definite split between the level of allowances paid at 16 and at 17. For example, the Youth Training Scheme paid a training allowance of £27.50 at 16 and £35.00 at 17. This principle has been forgotten in current 16–18 financial support policy. Policy makers should consider whether a higher rate of financial support – such as Education Maintenance Allowances – should be paid at 17 compared to 16 to encourage 17 year olds either to stay on in full-time education or enter unwaged training such as programme-led apprenticeships. This is an important issue which should be considered by the Treasury-led review of 16–18 financial support.

(3) *Lessons for programmes*

- It is essential that all education and training programmes provide participants with high quality information, covering a broad range of subjects, in order to sustain their interest and engagement.
- Successful programmes generally include among their outcomes an element of progression for successful participants, such as a job interview or a place on a training course or work-based scheme.
- One-to-one support from individual mentors is a key feature of successful programmes, helping significantly to sustain the engagement of participants.
- Individual plans, with incremental targets, promote confidence amongst participants and allow their progress to be monitored.
- Financial support is effective in engaging young people in education and training. Wages are preferable to allowances

because they give the feeling of a real job and encourage employers to provide trainees with genuinely productive tasks. Wages should not be set too low relative to the market rate.

- Programmes should be developed with enough flexibility to meet the needs of groups in different localities and different circumstances. Grant expenditure, start dates, programme activities and locations should not be prescribed too strictly.
- It is essential to effectively manage participants' expectations of programme content and the potential outcomes for them as individuals. Inaccurate information, giving rise to unrealistic expectations, leads to disillusionment and drop out.
- Past experience highlights the importance of engaging the support of employers, although most programmes enlisted them as providers of jobs rather than of education and training.
- Paying financial incentives to employers to encourage them to recruit additional young staff was relatively unsuccessful.
- Employers were engaged in the design of some of the most successful programmes helping to make the content of the training component relevant to the requirements of the industries concerned.
- The quality of the training provided by employers needs to be carefully monitored. When employers provided training as part of past programmes, it was frequently criticised as inconsistent or generally unsuitable, or that its various components lacked co-ordination.

(4) *Lessons for Raising the Participation Age*

Participation under the RPA has been defined in terms of engagement in accredited activity which includes recognised education and training but also other activities still to be determined. All 16 and 17 year olds will be expected to participate unless they have been awarded a Level 3 qualification or have a reasonable excuse. This would theoretically classify any 16 and 17 year olds in England not

participating in recognised education or training as truants. In practice, however, the move from voluntarism to compulsion represents a systems change; 16 and 17 year olds would no longer be able to participate in jobs without training (JWT) or employer funded training (EFT). Participation in employment would be restricted to jobs of 20 hours or more with statutory release, jobs of 20 hours or more with accredited employer funded training and jobs linked to Apprenticeships.

Some 16 and 17 year olds might need to participate in accredited activity other than recognised education and training. The category closest to this sort of activity in our review is Reintegration Programmes. The review of this category of programme suggests that the key lessons for the RPA are to design programmes that are built around (i) one-to-one support; (ii) short courses as a first step towards engagement and (iii) agreements between each 16 and 17 year old entering accredited activity programmes.

Policy makers might also wish to consider Employer Wage Subsidy Programmes and Employer Training Subsidy Programmes to support the employment and skills prospects of some 16 and 17 year olds. Under the RPA, employers will be obliged to offer time off for training of 280 guided learning hours per year, the equivalent of 7 hours per week for 40 weeks. The lessons from history are that employer engagement is most effective where (i) employers receive a payment for releasing young people to undertake training; (ii) training is linked to industry requirements, and (iii) training is delivered flexibly to avoid disruption.

1 Introduction

“At the end of 2008... 14% of 16 and 17 year olds in England were not participating in recognised education or training.”

Background

16–17 participation in education and training

1.1 At the end of 2008, **86%** of 16 and 17 year olds in England were participating in recognised education or training, categorised as:

- Full-time education (FTE) 74%.
- Work-based learning (WBL) 7%.
- Other education and training (OET) 5%.

1.2 The remaining **14%** of 16 and 17 year olds in England were not participating in recognised education or training. This group were categorised as:

- In jobs without training (JWT) 4%.
- In employer funded training (EFT) 3%.¹
- Not in education, employment or training (NEET) 7%.²

1.3 It is this group (collectively termed NET – not in recognised education or training) that are the focus of this report. It should be noted that there is a considerable degree of churn between the JWT, EFT and NEET categories.

16–17 unemployment

1.4 Labour market economists measure unemployment using two measures. The first is the claimant count. Since 16 and 17 year olds are not normally eligible for Jobseekers Allowance, this measure is not used when discussing this age group. The second is the ILO (International Labour Organisation) measure. Here, an individual is defined as unemployed if they have looked for work in the last four weeks and are ready to work in the next two weeks. This is the preferred measure for 16 and 17 unemployment.

1.5 The ILO unemployment rate is defined as the number of unemployed people as a

proportion of the economically active age group. The latest headline rate for April to June 2009 for unemployed 16 and 17 year olds in the UK is 32% – some 206,000 individuals – the highest amongst any age group.³

16–17 unemployment and the NEET category are not the same

1.6 The above analysis shows that the headline rate of 16-17 ILO unemployment (32%) and the headline NEET rate (7%) are not one and the same. The former is UK-wide and refers to economically active 16 and 17 year olds whereas the latter is England-wide and refers to the whole cohort of 16 and 17 year olds.

1.7 While policy in England focuses almost exclusively on tackling the NEET category, policy makers rarely point out that this group is composed of both those who are ILO unemployed (4%) and the economically inactive (3%).

The NET category

1.8 Bearing in mind the above, the focus of this research was slightly different from both youth unemployment according to the ILO definition and NEET according to the participation in recognised education and training definition. Our focus is on those 16 and 17 year olds not in recognised education and training – the NET group.

Policy Developments

Increasing participation on a voluntary basis

1.9 Participation in recognised education and training amongst 16 and 17 year olds in England is currently voluntary and the present Government has introduced a range of policies to increase participation on this basis. In terms of qualifications and curriculum, these include

¹EFT is not included in the participation statistics as the quality of training is thought to be extremely variable

²16 and 17 year olds who are economically inactive (3%) and those who are unemployed and have looked for work in the past 4 weeks (4%).

³ONS, Labour Market Statistics, August 2009

“...the Labour Government announced an extra 72,000 school, college and apprenticeship places... and yet as many as 100,000 16 and 17 year olds in employment (with or without training) could still be at risk from the recession.”

the development of four pathways: general qualifications (GCSEs and A levels); Diplomas; Apprenticeships and the Foundation Tier.

1.10 The Government has also piloted a range of education and training options to increase participation for young people in ‘employment but not in education or training’ (i.e. the JWT and EFT categories), and those not in employment, education or training (i.e. the NEET category). The former include Activity Agreements and the Accrediting Employer Training pilots, the latter include Learning Agreements.

The NEET strategy

1.11 Reducing the 16–18 NEET category is a key aim of the Labour Government. Ed Balls, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families stated in November 2007 that:

‘Too many young people choose not to continue on learning beyond the age of 16, or drop out between ages of and 18, and so do not get the skills they need for successful employment...We need to take action now to cut the numbers who are NEET (not in education, employment or training). Being NEET is an enormous waste of a young person’s potential, their contribution to their community, and to the economy. And, evidence shows that spending time NEET is a major predictor of late unemployment, low income, depression and poor mental health.’⁴

1.12 The present 16–18 NEET strategy is structured around four key themes:

- careful tracking to identify early those young people who are NEET, or who are at risk of becoming NEET;
- personalised guidance and support to enable young people to access suitable provision, and to tackle barriers to learning;
- a flexible mix of learning provision, both pre- and post-16, designed to meet the needs of every young person in every area, and
- an emphasis on rights and responsibilities so that there are clear incentives on young people to re-engage quickly if they drop out.

Expanding provision from October 2009

1.13 Between October 2008 and March 2009 pressure mounted on the Government to consider the impact of the worsening recession on participation in education and training by 16 and 17 year olds and a potential rise in youth unemployment. There was a fear that the recession could lead to a fall in the number of jobs with or without training, and with limited employment opportunities, demand for full-time education would rise. For those unwilling to stay-on in full-time education but unable to get an employer-based apprenticeship, programme-led apprenticeships or other provision might be needed. Demand for education and training places could reach a peak as school and college leavers entered to labour market from the summer until September 2009.

1.14 In response, the Labour Government announced an extra 72,000 school, college and apprenticeship places from September 2009. If all the places are taken up, participation might increase to around 90%. And yet, as many as 100,000 16 and 17 year olds currently in employment (with or without training) could still be at risk from the recession.

Raising the participation age

1.15 The Labour Government is committed to making participation in education and training by 16 and 17 year olds in England compulsory. The centre piece of the 2008 Education and Skills Act is the raising of the participation age (RPA) to 17 in 2013 and 18 in 2015. The Conservatives appear lukewarm towards the RPA and the Liberal Democrats are opposed to the measure.

1.16 When the RPA was originally announced in March 2007, the Government estimated that participation by 16 and 17 year olds would rise to around 94% by 2013 and reach close to 100% by 2015. Voluntary interventions could increase participation to 94% but a compulsory framework would be required to move from 94% to close to 100%. Compulsion would take the form of civil sanctions on

⁴DCSF, Reducing the Number of Young People in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) – The Strategy, November 2007, p i

“The aim of this report is to review historical programmes aimed at young people – particularly 16 and 17 year olds – who today would not be in recognised education and training (NET).”

young people to participate and a statutory entitlement to release for training. Importantly, the 2008 Education and Skills Act refers to 16 and 17 year olds participating in ‘accredited activity’ which might not necessarily be recognised education and training.

This report

Aims

1.17 The aim of this report is to review historical programmes aimed at young people – particularly 16 and 17 year olds – who today would not be in recognised education and training (NET). More specifically, the report aims to capture lessons to inform programme delivery for the NET category:

- to prevent youth unemployment in the context of the present recession, and
- to avoid sanctions and increase voluntary participation if the RPA is increased to 17 in 2013 and to 18 in 2015.

1.18 The focus of this report is on the needs of the NET category. The report is concerned with identifying historical areas of good and bad practice to identify the fundamental factors that influenced the success of historical programmes in engaging with this group. The report embraces the notion of learning from the past to develop policy for the future.

1.19 It is important to stress that this report represents a short and initial investigation into historic employment and skills programmes for young people. It is not a comprehensive and detailed assessment of every programme. In a number of cases, only a limited level of programme data was available. This has impacted on the material from which lessons can be drawn. As such, it has been difficult to access the overall impact of all programmes.

Report structure

1.20 After this Introduction, **Chapter 2** provides a summary of our research method. In particular, we outline the rationale for focusing on 18 specific youth unemployment and training programmes.

1.21 Chapter 3 briefly summarises the main details of the 18 programmes according to the following six programme types:

- Reintegration Programmes
- Temporary Jobs and Work Placement Programmes
- Employer Wage Subsidy Programmes
- Employer Training Subsidy Programmes
- Unemployed Training and Work Experience Programmes
- Individual Training Subsidy Programmes.

1.22 Chapter 4 discusses the historical trends that coincided with the historical programmes selected:

- unemployment rates
- the contraction of labour market participation and expansion of full-time education, and
- the shift to publicly funded Apprenticeships from employer funded Apprenticeships.

1.23 As well as considering two contemporary developments:

- the higher rates of 17 year olds in the labour market compared with 16 year olds and that any rise in youth unemployment caused by the recession will proportionately affect more 17 year olds than 16 year olds, and
- the fall in participation in full-time education at 17 compared to 16, meaning that employment-based education and training options may be more important at 17 than 16.

1.24 Chapter 5 summarises the key lessons from history under three distinct headings:

- Lessons for strategy
- Lessons for policy
- Lessons for programmes.

1.25 Chapter 6 considers the implications of raising the participation age (RPA) on programmes designed to reduce the number of 16–17 year olds who are NET. The chapter draws on lessons from history and considers:

- changes to participation under the RPA
- changes needed to programmes under the RPA.

1.26 The chapter also discusses the lessons from history in terms of future policy for:

- 16–18 Apprenticeship entitlement
- Employer day/block release
- Accredited Activity.

2 Research Method

“*The historical programme research was undertaken in three main stages:*

- *Stage One – Identification of relevant historical programmes.*
- *Stage Two – Selection of relevant programmes.*
- *Stage Three – Review of selected programmes.*”

Scope

2.1 The focus of this report is on 16 and 17 year olds. It was agreed at the outset of the project that the following programmes would be considered within the scope of the research:

- Government-funded programmes initiated from the early 1970s and before 1997 (when the Labour Government was first returned to office)
- England-wide programmes rather than regional, sub-regional or local programmes
- Programmes aimed primarily at the target groups of 16–17 year olds who were (i) unemployed, or (ii) in employment but not receiving accredited training.

2.2 There is a clear rationale for focusing on historical programmes from the early 1970s until 1997. The early 1970s saw the introduction of an array of unemployment and skills programmes for young people. The year 1997 was chosen as a cut-off date because the aim of the project was to identify lessons for increasing participation from history rather than documenting contemporary examples of best practice.

2.3 The report focuses on England-wide programmes that were national rather than regional, sub-regional or local. The key reason for this decision was to keep the fieldwork manageable.

2.4 In addition, the report focuses on programmes with employment and training outcomes (i.e. jobs with or without training) rather than education outcomes (namely participation in full-time or part-time education). This was primarily because the majority of historical programmes were designed to achieve employment outcomes rather than education outcomes.

2.5 The report does cover the financial support arrangements for 16–18 year olds on employment or training programmes, as the 1988 Social Security Act removed access to income support for most 16–17 year olds.

In contrast, the report does not focus on the expansion of full-time education between the 1970s and 1997. As such, it does not discuss qualification and curriculum reform. The report does not explore financial support arrangements for 16–18 year olds in full-time education.

2.6 At the outset of the research, there was an understanding that the programme parameters were, to some extent, arbitrary. As the fieldwork progressed, they were relaxed in order to add to the potential outcomes of the project. Most importantly, the fieldwork relaxed the constraint on the age of participants on programmes from 16 and 17 to 16–19 and some adults.

Approach

2.7 The historical programme research was undertaken in three main stages:

- Stage One – Identification of relevant historical programmes
- Stage Two – Selection of relevant programmes
- Stage Three – Review of selected programmes.

Stage One: Identification of relevant historical programmes

2.8 The first stage of the research was to identify all relevant programmes within the scope of the project. Potential programmes were identified via desk-based research. This stage of the research identified 133 potential programmes for inclusion.

2.9 99 programmes were discounted from the list because:

- the project was a piece of research rather than a programme
- the programme focused on curriculum change
- the programme took place outside of England, or
- the programme was regional or local rather than England.

2.10 As a result, 34 programmes were designated as being within the scope of the project.

Stage Two: Selection of relevant programmes

2.11 Stage two of the research was to select a number of projects from the 34 for further study. The type of programmes chosen for consideration reflected the focus of the project which was 16 and 17 year olds not in education and training (NETs). The programmes selected cover a range of mechanisms used to increase take-up of employment and training opportunities.

2.12 The report also contains a small number of programmes that were aimed at different age groups (e.g. 16–24 year olds or adults) where it was felt that lessons could be learned for tackling 16–17 year old NETs.

2.13 In total, 18 historical programmes were selected for review as part of this project. The number of programmes chosen reflects the fact that the project was an initial investigation to identify lessons learned rather than a comprehensive review and comparison of all historical programmes assessment.

Stage Three: Review of selected programmes

2.14 Stage three of the research was to review the historical programmes. The programmes selected are set out in Table 1 below.

2.15 Further information, including evaluation and case study data, was sought regarding the selected 18 historical programmes. The focus of this stage of the research was to obtain evaluation data for each programme.

TABLE 1: Historical programmes selected	
Programme name	Programme duration
Training Opportunities Programme	1972–1984/5
Community Industry Scheme	1972–1995
Recruitment Subsidy for School Leavers	1975–1976
Job Creation Programme	1975–1977
Youth Employment Subsidy	1976–1978
Work Experience Programme	1976 –1978
Unified Vocational Preparation Scheme	1976–1984
Youth Opportunities Programme	1978–1983
Work Experience on Employer’s Premises ⁵	1978–1983
Training for Skills Programme	1979–1983
Young Workers Scheme	1982–1986
Voluntary Projects Programme	1982 –1988
Youth Training Scheme	1983–1990
New Workers Scheme	1986–1988
Employment Training	1988–1993
Compacts	1988–1996
Youth Training	1990–1998
Mentoring Action Project	1995–1997

⁵Work Experience on Employer’s Premises was the largest component of the Youth Opportunities Programme. Although not a programme in its own right, it was included because it contained a number of important lessons.

2.16 Further information, including evaluation and case study data, was sought regarding the selected 18 historical programmes. The focus of this stage of the research was to obtain evaluation data for each programme.

2.17 The initial criterion for evaluation data was that 'official' studies by government departments, Parliamentary committees or the organisation funding the programme should be used for each programme to ensure consistency of data.

2.18 In this context, however, it is important to bear in mind two points raised by the Advisory Group. On the one hand, official evaluations are more robust today than in the 1970s, 1980s and indeed the early 1990s. However, on the other, evaluations from official sources might be biased in their evaluation of the programme or might not ask some of the key questions relating to performance.

2.19 Given these caveats, 'official' evaluations of programmes have been used in this report wherever possible. In a number of cases, however, official evaluations have proved very difficult to source. As a consequence, the most suitable evaluation data was chosen and in the majority of cases these were independent and academic studies.

2.20 Both the description of the identified programmes – including conclusions from official and other evaluations – and the assessment made by the project team – in terms of the performance of the identified programmes – take into account the economic context in which the programmes operated and the subsequent effects on programme design.

2.21 Case studies were created for the 18 programmes. Each case study was placed in a template containing the following headings:

- Dates
- Target audience
- Budget
- Aim
- Employment/economic context
- How the programme worked
- 16–17 year old financial support
- Scale
- Official evaluations of progression
- Official evaluations of areas of good/bad practice

2.22 The case study document is available to download from the CfBT website www.cfbt.com.

3 Programmes from History

“Some of the 18 programmes contained similarities in the way they operated. As such, these programmes were grouped together because the historical learning was broadly similar across all programmes of that type.”

3.1 This chapter provides a brief overview of the 18 programmes that were selected for this report.

Programme scale

3.2 A critical issue in reviewing programmes is their scale. There is a need to distinguish between, for instance, small-scale programmes which were successful and large-scale programmes which were unsuccessful.

The two indicators of scale used are:

- the number of participants each year or over the life of a programme; and
- the budget of a programme either per annum or over its lifetime.

3.3 Generally speaking, budget figures were more easily acquired than participation figures. However, for some this has not been possible. Consequently, the summaries state that the budget is unknown but the programme was likely to have been small, medium or large. For this report: small is defined as planned or actual expenditure in any single year of less than £25m per annum; medium as £25m–£100m; and large as £100m+.

16–17 financial support

3.4 Another critical issue featuring in the programme summaries is 16–17 financial support. The report focuses on the financial support received whilst on-programme including allowances or wages. When the Social Security Act was passed in 1988, 16 and 17 year olds were no longer eligible for means-tested benefits.

Programme types

3.5 Some of the 18 programmes contained similarities in the way they operated. As such, these programmes were grouped together because the historical learning was broadly similar across all programmes of that type. The six types are:

- Reintegration Programmes
- Temporary Job and Work Placement Programmes
- Employer Wage Subsidy Programmes
- Employer Training Subsidy Programmes
- Unemployed Training and Work Experience Programmes, and
- Individual Training Subsidy Programmes.

Table 2 opposite shows the 18 historical programmes by type and description.

1 of 2

TABLE 2: Historical programmes by type and description						
Programme type description	Name of programme	Dates	Target Group (Age)	Scale by budget size Small = >£25m Medium = £25m-100m Large = £100m+	16-17 year old financial support	Scale (no/s helped)
Reintegration Programmes These were programmes designed to provide participation activities for unemployed young people. The nature of the activity was typically linked to individualised support and soft, basic and employability skills. The stated outcome was progression into full-time education, employment or training.	Voluntary Projects Programme	1982-1988	Unemployed 16-18	Small: unknown but likely to be less than an average of £25m per annum. Large = £100m+	Individuals were paid a training allowance in place of unemployment/supplementary benefit.	Unknown – but by 1984, the MSC had granted approval to 280 individual sponsored projects compared with its initial target of 300.
	Compacts	1988-1996	14-18	Small: £25 million over lifetime of programme.	There was no financial incentive offered to young people to partake in the programme.	Unknown
	Mentoring Action Project	1995-1997	Young people mostly 16-24	Small: unknown but likely to be less than an average of £25m per annum.	Young people did not receive a wage or allowance but were eligible for financial support to overcome barriers preventing progression such as travel, clothing or childcare.	In 1997, MAP helped 55% of its mentees to enter education training or work (691 out of 1266).
Temporary Job and Work Placement Programmes These were programmes designed to provide periods of employment to young unemployed people who had no work experience and needed a temporary job or work placement to gain experience. The nature of the activity was usually community-based improvement activity such as painting or gardening. The stated outcome was progression into full-time permanent employment.	Community Industry Scheme	1972-1995	17-19	Medium: £25 million per year across 1986-89.	Unknown but likely to have been a wage.	Unknown.
	Job Creation Programme	1975-1977	16+	Medium: £130 million over the lifetime of the programme.	Participants received a normal local wage rate (maximum of £56 per week). The average wage of JCP was £24 per week.	The Job Creation Programme cumulatively provided 63,471 individual jobs at a cost of £86.5 million.
	Work Experience Programme	1976-1978	Unemployed 16-17 year olds	Small: unknown but likely to be less than an average of £25m per annum.	Trainees were paid a training allowance – £16 per week in 1976.	Jackson & Hanby suggest that the Work Experience Programme provided employment for c.40,000 young people by the beginning of 1978. The Hansard Commons Debates suggest that, by the end of the programme, the figure was 60,519.
Employer Wage Subsidy Programmes There were programmes designed to pay a subsidy to employers who recruited a young person. The nature of the activity was full-time employment. The stated outcome was retention in full-time employment.	Work Experience on Employer's Premises	1978-1983	16-17 year olds	Large: unknown but was probably large since WEEP was around 70% of the Youth Opportunities Programme which had an average annual budget of £168m across the lifetime of the programme.	Trainees were paid a weekly training allowance; typically £19.50.	The programme was particularly large, attracting 240,000 trainees between 1978-1981/2.
	Recruitment Subsidy for School Leavers	1975-1976	16 year olds	Small: unknown but likely to be less than an average of £25m per annum.	Individuals were employed, therefore paid a wage.	29,000 youths were employed on the scheme during its one-year duration. It became the Young Employment Subsidy in 1976.
	Youth Employment Subsidy	1976-1978	16-20	Small: £8.7m over lifetime of the programme.	Individuals were employed, therefore paid a wage.	38,497 had been supported by the programme by February 1978.
Young Workers Scheme Unknown.	Young Workers Scheme	1982-1986	16-21	Medium: varied year on year from a high of £58m in 1983/4 to £0.5m in 1986.	Unknown but it was the pre-cursor to the New Workers Scheme (below) so a wage.	Unknown.
	New Workers Scheme	1986-1988	16-21	Small: £9m in 1986-87 and estimated at £18.5m for 1987-88.	Individuals on the programme had a capped salary of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> no more than £55 p/w if they were aged 18-19 no more than £65 p/w if they were aged 20. 	The programme attracted 289,000 young people during its two-year duration.

TABLE 2: Historical programmes by type and description								2 of 2
Programme type description	Name of programme	Dates	Target Group (Age)	Scale by budget size Small = >£25m Medium = £25m-100m Large = £100m+	16-17 year old financial support	Scale (no/s helped)		
Employer Training Subsidy Programmes These were programmes designed to pay a subsidy to employers to train their existing staff or take on new staff with a training element attached. The nature of the activity was training. The stated outcome was the successful completion of training.	Unified Vocational Preparation Scheme	1976-1984	16-18	Small: unknown but likely to be less than an average of £25m per annum. Medium: £155m over three years between 1981 and 83.	Unknown but as individuals were employees it is likely they continued to receive their salary whilst training.	Only 3,000 of the target of 18,000 young people took part in the programme.		
Unemployed Training and Work Experience Programmes These were programmes designed to provide periods of employment with training for young unemployed people who had no work experience. The nature of the activity was full-time employment linked to training. The stated outcome was retention in full-time employment.	Training for Skills Programme	1979-1983	16-18	Large: average of £168m per annum across the lifetime of the programme but including WEEP.	Trainees were paid a weekly grant of £19.50.	The Training for Skills Programme affected 57,200 young people between 1980 and 1984 when the scheme finished.		
	Youth Opportunities Programme	1978-1983	16-18	Large: annual budget of £875m in 1984/85.	Youth Training Scheme participants were either: <i>Trainees</i> • First year trainees received an allowance of £27.50 per week. • Second year trainees received an allowance of £35.00 per week. <i>Employees</i> • Employees were paid a wage, but this could not be lower than the allowance.	234,000 places were offered to 16-18 year olds in 1977-78 alone. The collapse of the youth labour market in the early 1980s led to the growth of the scheme to include an intake of 368,900 participants by 1981.		
	Youth Training Scheme	1983-1990	16-17 (disabled up to 21)		The programme had two categories: • 'Employed status' - A trainee who was employed and received a wage at a level agreed with the employer. • 'Trainee status' - A non-employed trainee received: - a minimum of £29.50 per week if under 17 years old, and - a minimum of £35 per week if 17 or over.	Unknown.		
	Youth Training	1990-1998	16-18	Large: unknown but likely to be large as the programme succeeded the Youth Training Scheme.	A training allowance was allocated to trainees that equalled their benefit entitlement, plus £10 and travel expenses. Childcare expenses were also paid.	Over 500,000 people had been involved in ET in its first year of operation (Dec 1989).		
Individual Training Subsidy Programmes These programmes were designed to provide training courses to individuals who were in low-skilled jobs or unemployed. The nature of the activity was full-time education and training. The stated outcome was the completion of that education or training.	Employment Training	1988-1993	Adults (18+)	Large: planned expenditure £1.5bn in 1987 and £1.2bn in 1989.	Unknown.	99,000 people, including 20,000 young people, completed the programme in 1977-78.		
	Training Opportunities Programme	1972-1984/5	Adults	Large: £194m in 1977/78 with a reimbursement from the European Social Fund of £29 million.				

4 Historical Trends in Participation

“Rising unemployment was a critical backdrop to the introduction of many youth employment and skills programmes between 1972 and 1997...”

Programmes in context

4.1 Before we set out the historical lessons, we will consider three historical trends between 1972 and 1997 in order to understand the context in which the programmes operated:

- unemployment rates
- the contraction of labour market participation and expansion of full-time education, and
- the shift to publicly-funded Apprenticeships from employer-funded Apprenticeships.

4.2 As well as these historic trends, however, it is also important to consider participation today so that appropriate lessons can be drawn from history. Two factors need to be taken into account, namely:

- the higher rates of 17 year olds in the labour market compared with 16 year olds, and that any rise in youth unemployment caused by the recession will proportionately affect more 17 year olds than 16 year olds; and

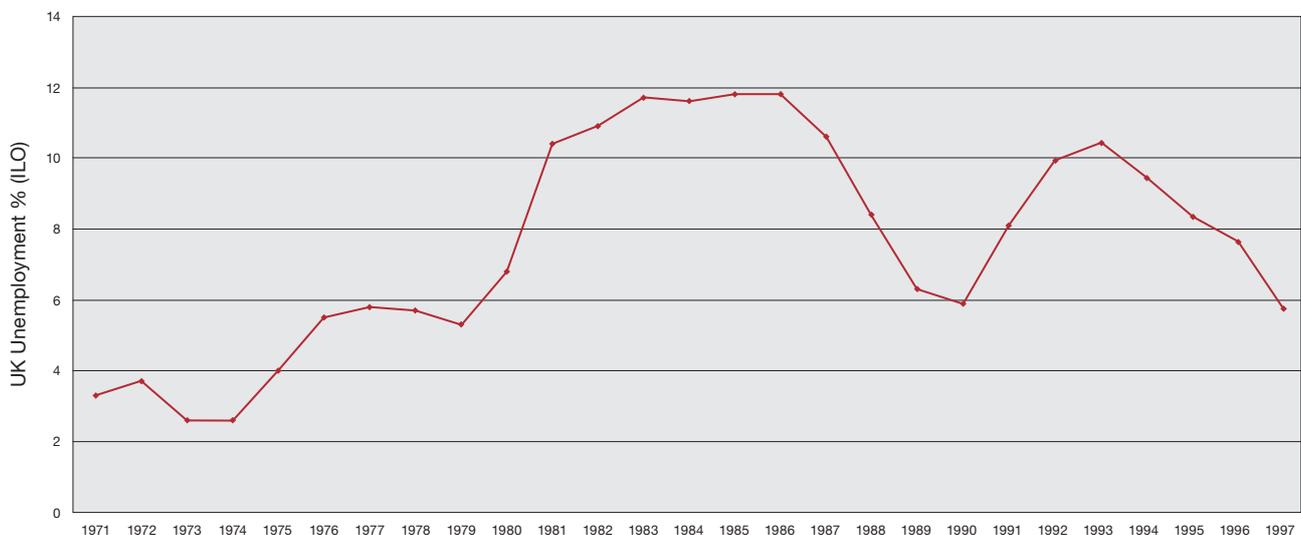
- the fall in participation in full-time education at 17 compared to 16.

Unemployment rates

4.3 Rising unemployment was a critical backdrop to the introduction of many youth employment and skills programmes between 1972 and 1997 (see Figure 1 below).

4.4 Figure 1 refers to International Labour Organisation (ILO) unemployment, that is ‘People claiming benefits (that is unemployment benefit, supplementary benefits or national insurance credits) at unemployment benefit offices on the day of the monthly count, who on that day were unemployed and able and willing to do any suitable work’. It also refers to all unemployed people rather than 16–17 year olds because it was difficult to find a consistent youth unemployment data source for the period 1972–1997, especially prior to 1985.

FIGURE 1: UK Unemployment 1971–1997 – Source LABORSTA International Labour Office – ‘Year Book of Labour Statistics’



4.5 Many historical programmes were introduced in response to, or in anticipation of, high youth unemployment. Historically, programmes focused on employment (with or without training) because that was the main activity of over a third of young people. **In short, full-time education was not the initial response to preventing high youth unemployment.**

4.6 In the current recession, youth unemployment is increasing. Some commentators believe that 16–17 year olds will be most affected by the economic downturn.⁶

The contraction of labour market participation and expansion of full-time education

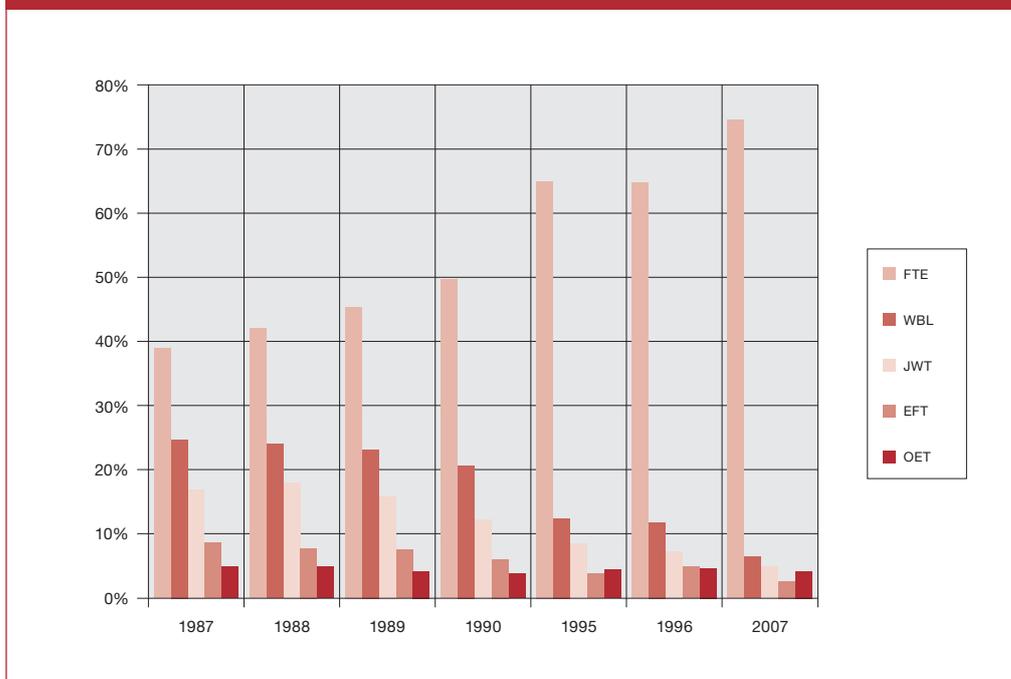
4.7 Most recently, the Government has responded to the recession with an extra 54,500 places for 16 and 17 year olds in

school and colleges in addition to 17,500 places to expand 16–17 Apprenticeships.⁷ Since the mid-1980s, there has been a marked shift from employment opportunities (with or without training) towards participation in full-time education, as Figure 2 below shows.

4.8 As a result, over time, historical programmes increasingly moved away from simply employment to include education and training outcomes.

4.9 As participation in full-time education has increased over the period 1987–2007, it is not surprising that the current policy response is to increase education and training rather than employment opportunities. Participation in full-time education is much higher now than in the 1970s and 1980s.

FIGURE 2: Participation by 16 and 17 year olds by Labour Market Status 1987–1996 and 2007 – Table D7, Statistical First Release 13/2008, DCSF, 19 June 2008



⁶Corney, M. 'Why teenagers will be casualties of the recession', *Times Educational Supplement*, 13 March 2009.
⁷Budget 2009.

“Between the early 1980s and the mid-1990s, employer training of Apprenticeships declined as statutory levy arrangements no longer existed in most sectors of the economy...”

The shift to publicly funded Apprenticeships from employer funded Apprenticeships

4.10 Between 1964 and 1981, employers funded the cost of Apprenticeships and apprentice wages through the operation of the statutory levy-grant (1964–1972) and statutory levy-exemption (1972–1981). These arrangements were managed by statutory Industrial Training Boards (ITBs). The abolition of statutory ITBs in all but two sectors resulted in the ending of the statutory levy arrangements which (in the main, but not exclusively) funded Apprenticeship costs, including wages as well as training.

4.11 Between the early 1980s and the mid-1990s, employer training of Apprenticeships declined as statutory levy arrangements no longer existed in most sectors of the economy, and public funding was allocated to meet the skills training needs of *unemployed* 16–17 year olds rather than *employed* 16–17 year olds. Not until the mid-1990s did the Government specifically decide to create a publicly funded system of Apprenticeships – where the state paid for the cost of on-the-job training and employers paid the wage costs – including Apprenticeships for 19–24 year olds as well as 16–18 year olds.

4.12 This is important to understand when drawing out lessons for 16–17 Apprenticeship policy today from Apprenticeship policy in the past. Public spending not employer spending is the source of funding in scope.

Potential youth unemployment at 17 compared to 16

4.13 The recession today is likely to have a significant impact on youth unemployment in the future. However, it is likely to affect 17 year olds to a greater extent than 16 year olds.

4.14 Figure 3 (below) shows the participation by 16 year olds in 2006 and the provisional participation of the *same cohort* in 2007.

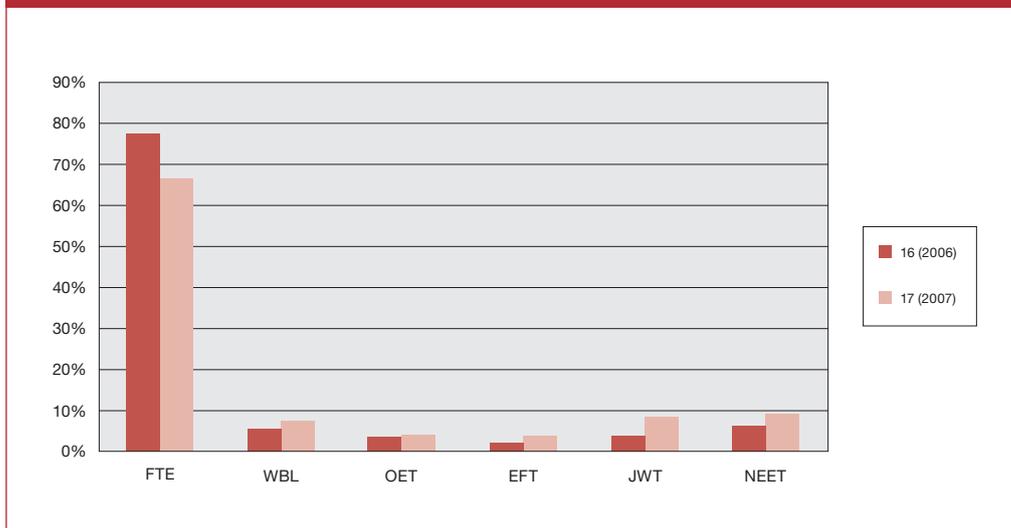
4.15 The data shows that there are marked differences in participation rates between 16 and 17. There is an increase across the board for all employment-related activities at 17 compared to 16. For example, twice as many 17 year olds are in Jobs without Training (JWT) than 16 year olds (9% and 4% respectively). Youth unemployment is also higher at 17 than 16 (5% and 3% respectively).

4.16 In the current recession, unemployment at 17 is likely to be relatively higher than at 16.

The fall in full-time education at 17 compared to 16

4.17 Figure 3 also shows that participation in education and training *between* the ages of 16 and 17 *declined* by 11 percentage points between 2006 and 2007 (78% and 67% respectively).

FIGURE 3: Participation by 16 year olds in 2006 and 17 year olds in 2007 – source: Tables 1, 2 and 3 – Statistical First Release 13/2008, DCSF, 19 June 2008



5 Lessons from history: Increasing participation before the raising of the participation age

“ This chapter identifies the lessons learned from history in terms of reducing youth unemployment in the context of recession...”

5.1 Chapter 4 placed the programmes in their historical context. This chapter identifies the lessons from history in terms of (i) reducing 16–17 youth unemployment and (ii) engaging 16–17 year old NETs into education and training including through employment. The lessons are not linked to the debate on raising the participation age (RPA) as these are addressed in the next chapter.

5.2 The lessons are split into three distinct categories:

- Lessons for overall strategy
- Lessons for the mechanisms through which programmes work
- Lessons for the features of individual programmes

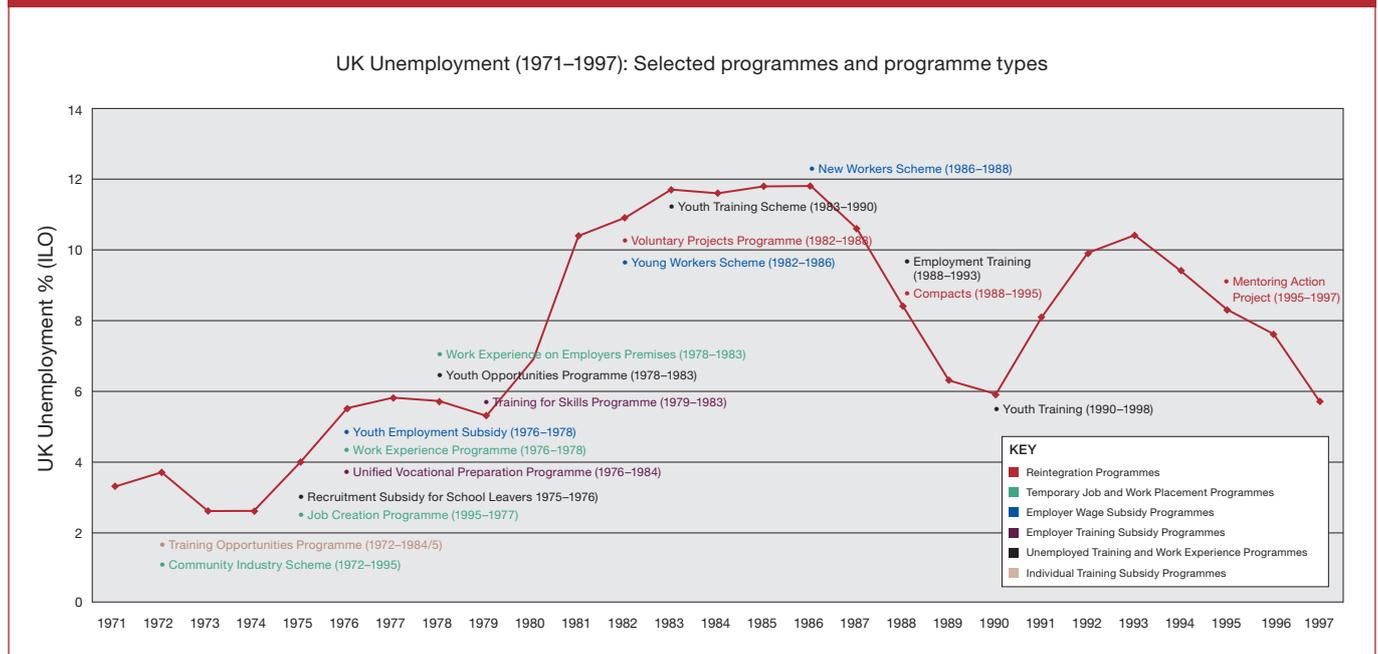
Lessons for strategy

5.3 In this section, we consider the key strategic lessons that can inform the design of current and future programmes for 16 and 17 year olds ‘not in education and training’ to enter education and training in the context of the present recession.

5.4 Figure 4 plots the 18 programmes against the unemployment rates between 1972 and 1997. Four points stand out.

5.5 Firstly, **large-scale programmes coincided with high unemployment rates in general.** For instance, the period between 1979 and 1986 witnessed general UK unemployment above 10% and coincided with the implementation of large-scale programmes including the Youth Opportunities Programme (1978–83) with average expenditure of £168m and the Youth Training Scheme (1983–1990) with expenditure of £875m in 1984/85.

FIGURE 4: Historical programmes by UK unemployment and programme type



“Policy makers might wish to consider whether a higher rate of financial support at 17 would reduce the fall in participation in full-time education...”

5.6 Secondly, **large-scale programmes were supplemented by small-scale programmes.** The operation of the Youth Opportunities Programme (1978–83) was supplemented by the Training for Skills programme (1979–83). The Youth Training Scheme (1983–1990) was supplemented by Young Workers Scheme (1982–86) and the New Workers Scheme (1986–88).

5.7 Thirdly, **policy makers operated large-scale unemployed work experience and training programmes at the same time as employer wage subsidy programmes.** For instance, policy makers combined the Youth Opportunities Programme (1978–1983) – a work experience and training programme – with an employer training subsidy programme – namely the Training for Skills Programme (1979–1983). The Youth Training Scheme (1983–1990) was combined with employer wage subsidy programmes – such as the Young Workers Scheme (1982–1986) and the New Workers Scheme (1986–1988).

5.8 Fourthly, **large-scale work experience and unemployed training schemes evolved from work experience to training programmes.** The shift from employment and skills programmes such as the Youth Opportunities Programme (1978–83) to skills programmes such as Youth Training (1990–98) coincided with lower rates of unemployment – 11% in 1979 compared to 5% in 1990. However, it was also a conscious policy consideration that enabling young people to achieve skills and qualifications was more important than enabling them to gain work experience to get a job with or without training.

5.9 Going forward, policy makers might still consider labour market employment and skills programmes because participation in full-time education may not be attractive to 16 and 17 year olds at risk of becoming unemployed. Nonetheless, the scale of these programmes may not need to be as large because many more young people are expected to participate in full-time education today compared with the past.

Lessons for policy

5.10 In this section, we consider the key historical programme mechanisms from the 18 programmes. This report identifies two specific programme mechanisms which policy makers should examine in light of participation in education and training today.

Higher allowances at 17 rather than 16

5.11 Historically, there was a very definite split between the level of payment made at 16 and at 17. For example, Youth Training (1990–1998) paid a training allowance of £27.50 per week to 16 year olds but this increased to £35 per week for 17 year olds. This principle has been forgotten in current 16–18 financial support policy.

5.12 Policy makers might wish to consider whether a higher rate of financial support at 17 would reduce the fall in participation in full-time education between 16 and 17 (as outlined in Chapter 4) as well as encourage greater participation in unwaged training. This is an important issue which the 16–18 Financial Review led by the Treasury might wish to consider, especially in terms of reforming means-tested Education Maintenance Allowances alongside means-tested Child Tax Credit and universal Child Benefit.

Wage subsidies for 16–17 year old Apprenticeships

5.13 Under the Training for Skills Programme (1979–83), employers were incentivised to increase the supply of youth apprentices through grants towards off-the-job training and a recruitment wage subsidy.

5.14 Today, the Government is seeking to expand employer based Apprenticeships for 16–17 year olds on the basis of free off-the-job training in return for employers paying the wage costs. In a recession, however, free off-the-job training linked to Apprenticeship standards might not be sufficient. As a consequence, policy makers might wish to consider looking at the lessons from the Training for Skills Programme (1979–83) in terms of offering wage subsidies to expand 16–17 Apprenticeships.

“Providing high quality information, advice and guidance is an important historical lesson.”

Lessons for programmes

5.15 In this section, we consider the key *programme-specific* lessons identified from the 18 programmes. It is worth noting that the majority of historical programmes, including those that we reviewed, aimed to increase 16–17 year old participation in **employment** in times of economic recession, rather than **education and training** *per se*. Despite this, many valuable lessons can be learned from these programmes, particularly those that operated in the difficult economic conditions of the 1970s and 1980s.

5.16 The lessons identified relate to areas of both good and bad practice. The lessons are based on the evaluation material identified for each of the programmes. The lessons represent the fundamental building blocks on which historical programmes succeeded or failed.

5.17 In terms of the current recession, according to evaluation data, economic decline only explicitly affected a few historical programmes. For example, the Compacts programme (1988–1996) was praised for its ability to continually motivate school pupils to study, build local partnerships, improve careers education and guidance and develop better systems for student target-setting and monitoring in spite of the economic climate in which it operated.

5.18 Perhaps not surprisingly, programmes offering employment were hardest hit by economic downturn. Both Work Experience on Employer’s Premises (1978–1983) and the Community Industry Scheme (1972–1995) were criticised because individuals on them lost their jobs, or were unable to secure full-time employment post-programme, as a result of the economic downturn.

5.19 The lessons from history can be split into five over-arching lessons:

- the importance of individual support
- the importance of 16–17 year old financial support

- the importance of programme flexibility
- the importance of transitional programme design
- the importance of engaging employers.

The importance of individual support

5.20 Individual support was a crucial factor in the success of historical programmes. The biggest criticism of programmes was the lack, or poor level, of support structures for individuals. Individual support in this context covers the following three areas:

- information, advice and guidance⁸
- one-to-one support
- individual plans.

Information, advice and guidance

5.21 Providing high-quality information, advice and guidance is an important historical lesson from history. The information provision was most successful when it covered a broad range of subjects. Historical topics typically included financial advice, housing advice and counselling information e.g. the Mentoring Action Project (1995–1997). The provision of information helped to maintain learner interest in historical programmes and ensured they continued to participate in education and training.

5.22 Access to careers information and progression routes was also a vital component of some programmes e.g. the Youth Training Scheme (1983–1990).

5.23 Not surprisingly, a lack of information, advice and guidance was a criticism of programmes. For example, the Community Industry Scheme (1972–1995) was criticised because it did not help trainees on the programme to find employment once the programme ended.

One-to-one support

5.24 The use of one-to-one support was a success mechanism for engaging young

⁸ This report acknowledges that the information, advice and guidance category in this report is broader than the current IAG policy definition.

“Individuals preferred wages over training allowances because they felt that earning money and paying taxes on income meant they were undertaking realistic jobs...”

people. In these cases, individuals were assigned mentors for the programme's duration, who supported individuals in a number of ways. They provided the information, advice and guidance outlined above. However, in addition, they offered support on post-programme progression including arranging interviews with employers and training providers.

5.25 Mentoring was used to engage a number of distinct client groups including the homeless, ex-offenders, individuals leaving care, lone parents or individuals living in unstable homes e.g. the Mentoring Action Project (1995–1997).

5.26 Evaluations found that the relationship between project workers and individuals played a pivotal role in the success of programmes. For example, the Mentoring Action Project (1995–1997) was praised for being non-judgmental and tailored to individual needs. The programme also supported individuals by adopting a 'good parent' role, arranging interviews or supporting them in court cases.

Individual plans

5.27 The use of individual plans is an important lesson from history. Historically, step-by-step plans were drawn up containing tangible, realistic targets for young people to achieve. Individual step-by-step plans were successful in giving individuals incremental achievable targets which would contribute to them gaining confidence. This also ensured that individual progress was monitored throughout the programme e.g. Youth Training Scheme (1983–1990) or Mentoring Action Project (1995–1997).

The importance of 16–17 year old financial support

5.28 Financial support was an important mechanism for engaging young people in education and training. Individuals on the majority of historical programmes received a weekly financial payment. If the programme was training-specific e.g. Employment Training (1988–1993), they received a training allowance. If the programme was employment-specific e.g. the Work Experience Programme

(1976–1978) they received a wage. Wages were typically higher than training allowances but both payments were usually set lower than the market wage rate for 16–17 year olds (see Table 2 in for a breakdown of payments by programme).

5.29 Individuals preferred wages over training allowances because they felt that earning money and paying taxes on income meant they were undertaking realistic jobs e.g. the Job Creation Programme (1975–1977). In addition, employers paying a wage rather than a training allowance felt obliged to give 16–17 year old employees genuine, productive tasks rather than ad hoc work-related activities to do e.g. Employment Training (1988–1993).

5.30 However, the main lesson from history is that wage payments to 16–17 year olds on programmes were too low relative to the market wage rate. This had a number of repercussions:

5.31 Firstly, employers who were able to recruit at reduced wage rates (a) were often criticised for exploiting young, cheap labour, or (b) were concerned themselves that they were paying young people less to carry out the same job as other members of staff e.g. the Work Experience Programme (1976–1978). Indeed, low wages was one of the main reasons that young people left programmes early e.g. the Youth Training Scheme (1983–1990).

5.32 Secondly, as a result of low wages, many employers were unable to recruit young people to programmes at all; as they already paid more in the open market for similar candidates e.g. 81% of New Workers Scheme (1986–1988) employers could not attract young workers at reduced rates.

5.33 It should be noted that the Mentoring Action Project (1995–1997) offered additional payments (e.g. childcare costs or transport support) to 16–17 year olds. However, additional payments were more common for adults e.g. Employment Training (1988–1993) and the Training Opportunities Programme (1972–1984/5).

The importance of programme flexibility

5.34 Historical programmes highlight the importance of programme flexibility to engage 16–17 year olds in education and training. This flexibility manifested itself in a number of ways:

5.35 Firstly, programmes allowed for localised, specific solutions to be developed from national blueprints. This ensured that individual projects could be developed to deal with the specific needs/issues of groups of individuals in localities. For example, government guidelines on the Unified Vocational Preparation Scheme (1976–1984) were not prescriptive and the Training for Skills Programme offered grants to employers but they were then free to spend the grant on whatever training they deemed fit for their employees (1979–1983).

5.36 Secondly, start dates were flexible. Individuals were able to start programmes when they required a place, rather than when the previous cohort had completed the course. This meant that there was no chance of willing individuals having to wait for places or falling out of the system e.g. Youth Training Scheme (1983–1990).

5.37 Thirdly, programme activities were flexible. Individuals could participate in a range of activities and choose those parts that most interested them (for example, the Community Industry Scheme, which allowed participants to take part in a number of different activities including painting and decorating, construction, landscape gardening and workshops). This variety ensured that their interest was maintained and they were less likely to leave the programme. Similarly, the Unified Vocational Preparation Scheme (1976–1984) included physical activities, problem-solving and/or initiative exercises, group projects and leadership training.

5.38 Fourthly, learning environments were flexible. A range of providers were present in historical programmes which allowed for flexibility of learning environment. This allowed individuals to overcome geographical barriers as well as learning in non-traditional learning locations. For example, the Voluntary Projects Programme (1982–1988) was sponsored by private sector employers, local authorities,

charities and community groups: each offered their respective premises for learning.

The importance of transitional programme design

5.39 Historical programmes highlight the importance of individual transition in programme design. Programmes that were not able to provide post-programme progression or manage the expectations of individuals on those programmes found that they were unable to maintain individual interest.

Progression

5.40 Ensuring progression from programmes into education and training is an important historical lesson. To some extent, the information, advice and guidance outlined above was able to identify progression routes for 16–17 year olds.

5.41 A minority of historical programmes were designed with progression as a stated outcome. For example, Compacts (1988–1996) guaranteed progression-related outcomes such as an interview with an employer, places on training courses or work-based learning schemes for individuals who met the requirements of their agreement.

5.42 In most cases, progression was rarely part of the programme itself. Some programmes such as the Work Experience Programme (1976–1978) were criticised for not supporting individuals with job-search. However, evidence suggests that, in spite of this, individuals on historical programmes did progress into a range of activities post-programme including full-time employment, full/part-time learning or volunteering.

5.43 In the majority of programmes, individuals were free to leave programmes if they found a place in education, employment or training. This ensured that any opportunities for individuals to progress were explored.

5.44 Those programmes that were not concerned with progression as an outcome typically found that individuals leaving the programme found themselves back in unemployment.

“ Historical programmes typically engaged employers as providers of employment rather than as providers of education and training. ”

Managing individual expectations

5.45 Managing individual expectations is an important lesson from history. Those programmes that were unable to do so found that individuals became disillusioned and often left programmes frustrated. By managing expectations and being realistic about what the programme (a) entailed and (b) could deliver as outcomes, programmes were successful.

5.46 By their very nature, programmes contained certain elements, lasted a finite amount of time and were unable to guarantee outcomes for individuals. For example, the Job Creation Programme (1975–1977) offered periods of work experience to young unemployed people. The programme was criticised – and individuals left the programme – because, although the programme did not contain training, individuals expected it.

5.47 The impact of not managing expectations was felt in a number of programmes. For example, many Employment Training (1988–1993) trainees did not feel they had received the training they were promised and, as a result, became disillusioned and left the programme.

The importance of engaging employers

5.48 Historical programmes highlight the importance of engaging employers. Historical programmes typically engaged employers as providers of employment rather than as providers of education and training.

5.49 Broadly speaking, historical programmes started on the basic premise that employers did not want to employ or train young people because they were too young and/or too inexperienced. Therefore the solution was to offer employers financial incentives to recruit young people.

5.50 However, although the majority of employers did have a general preference for ‘more experienced’ or ‘more mature staff’⁹, they

would only recruit new staff (young or otherwise) if there was a genuine business need e.g. 65% in the case of the New Workers Scheme (1986–1988). This need was not overtly dictated by the level of experience or maturity of staff.

5.51 Historical programmes used a number of mechanisms to engage employers. These were:

- offering financial incentives to employers
- engaging employers in programme design
- engaging employers as programme leads
- engaging employers in training provision.

Offering employers financial incentives

5.52 Historically, financial incentives paid to employers to recruit additional staff were relatively unsuccessful because the majority of employers would only recruit new staff if there was a genuine business need (i.e. demand for their goods and services). The level of deadweight was significant. This finding was particularly prominent in relation to the evaluation of the Recruitment Subsidy for School Leavers (1975–1976).

5.53 Both the presence and level of financial incentives was an ineffective mechanism for increasing employer demand for young staff. For example, 75% of Youth Employment Subsidy (1976–1978) employers would have employed the 16–17 year olds irrespective of the subsidy and 78% of them would have employed the same number of young people if the £10 per week incentive had been reduced to £5 or increased to £15.

5.54 In a minority of cases, incentives meant that employers simply replaced existing full-time staff with younger, cheaper alternatives between 20% and 30% in the case of Work Experience on Employer’s Premises (1978–1983). However, the Youth Employment Subsidy (1976–1978) contained a clause that all individuals on the programme had to be in ‘... normal, full-time employment and the vacancy must not have been created by discharging another worker’.¹⁰

⁹This was the case in both the YES and NWS.

¹⁰Deakin, B. M. (1996). ‘The Youth Labour Market in Britain: The Role of Intervention Department of Applied Economics’ Occasional Papers (No. 62) p.74.

Engaging employers in programme design

5.55 A small number of historical programmes engaged employers in programme design and therefore were able to stimulate employer demand for employment and skills. For example, the Training for Skills Programme (1979–1893) was praised for linking training content to industry-wide training plans across a wide range of industries.

5.56 In contrast, a small number of programmes were explicitly criticised for the disconnect between the content of programmes and the needs of employers/ sectors e.g. the Unified Vocational Preparation Scheme (1976–1984).

Engaging employers as programme leads

5.57 A number of programmes invited employers to develop and deliver individual projects themselves. For example, the Work Experience Programme (1976–1978) was led by employers, who identified recruitment gaps and were able to choose 16–17 year olds to fill those positions. The programme was popular with employers and won the support of Trade Unions.

5.58 However, one historical lesson is that employers tended to choose their better qualified members of staff to attend programmes designed to secure training for 16–17 year olds in JWT rather than developing entry-level staff e.g. the Unified Vocational Preparation Scheme (1976–1984).

Engaging employers to provide training

5.59 Historical programmes engaged employers as training providers. However, there are historical lessons in terms of this engagement.

5.60 Poor/inconsistent quality training was the main criticism of training provided by employers. For example, in spite of setting minimum standards for training and learner outcomes, the Youth Training Scheme (1983–1990) was criticised for unsuitable training and poor coordination of core skills, vocational studies or work experience. Some individuals left the programme because they did not feel they had received any training at all.

5.61 The lack of monitoring of training was also a concern. Youth Training Scheme evaluations suggest that ‘on the job’ training was not assessed and therefore there was no indication of its quality. Some smaller, sometimes un-unionised employers simply did not have the capacity, or the willingness, to provide training e.g. Work Experience on Employer’s Premises (1978–1983).

5.62 In contrast, the criticism was sometimes a subjective one, as it was a perception of the individuals and/or employer on the programme. For example, 70% of Job Creation Programme (1975–1977) trainees did not believe they had received training on the programme. In contrast, 90% of employers felt that they had provided training.

6 Lessons from history: Increasing participation after the raising of the participation age

“The Labour Government is committed to making participation compulsory until the age of 18 from 2015.”

6.1 Chapter 5 summarised the lessons learned from history for designing programmes to engage 16–17 year old NETs in employment and education and training today.

6.2 This chapter discusses programme design in the context of the RPA including:

- the changes to participation categories under the RPA
- the changes needed to programme types
- the historical lessons that can help policymakers: Employer Day/Block release; Accredited Activity; and 16–18 Apprenticeship entitlement.’

Changes to participation under the RPA

6.3 As outlined in the Introduction, the Labour Government is committed to making participation compulsory until the age of 18 from 2015’. By implication, 16–17 year olds who are ‘not in education and training’ (i.e. in JWT, unaccredited EFT or NEET) will become truant and may become subject to a compulsory framework (including sanctions).

6.4 There are two main changes to participation under the RPA:

- firstly, 16–17 year olds in full-time employment (i.e. JWT or EFT) must also participate in day/block accredited training, and
- secondly, a new category called ‘Accredited Activity’ might have to be created (which has yet to be fully defined).

6.5 The full list of categories that may count as participation in education and training under the RPA are currently being defined but are likely to include:

Education and training

- Full-time Education (16hrs+ p/w) studying recognised qualifications
- Employer-based Apprenticeships studying recognised qualifications
- Programme-led Work-Based Learning studying recognised qualifications
- Accredited Activity – 16 hours or more per week – including E2E, not necessarily leading to recognised qualifications.

Employment with education and training

- Full-time (20hrs p/w) Jobs with Accredited Employer Training (JAET).¹¹
- Full-time (20hrs p/w) Jobs with Statutory Release (equivalent to 7 hours per week for 40 weeks studying recognised qualifications) (JSR).¹²

6.6 The categories that are not subject to participation under the RPA are:

- 16–17 year olds with reasonable excuses
- 16–17 year olds with Level 3 qualifications.

Truants

6.7 Under the RPA, 16–17 year olds who are ‘not in education and training’ will technically be truant as the categories of NEET, JWT and EFT will not be a legal status. The Government will use compulsion (including sanctions) for eligible 16–17 year olds who do not voluntarily participate in education and training.

Participation targets

6.8 The government aim is to achieve 94% participation by 2013 and 100% participation by 2015 (see Table 3 below):

¹¹ i.e. accredited Employer-Funded Training

¹² Employers will be under a statutory duty to provide day/block release for education and training for 16–18 year olds in JWT. However, 16–18 year old NEETs will be at risk of sanctions (so-called compulsion) through their non-participation.

“Under the RPA, employers will be under a statutory duty to provide block/day release to 16–17 year olds in JWT or EFT.”

6.9 Of course, participation will never reach 100%. The gap between non-participation and 100% participation is dependent upon definitions of non-participation including ‘truancy’ and ‘reasonable excuses’. Participation is also reliant on the extent to which NETs can be made to participate without resorting to sanctions.

Changes needed to programmes under the RPA

6.10 The changes outlined in Chapter 5 can ensure that programmes designed to engage NETs in *employment* and *training* learn from the good and bad practice of the past. However, under the RPA, NETs will need to participate in *education* and *training* rather than *employment*. Therefore, programme types may need to change under the RPA.

6.11 Under the RPA, 16–17 NET programme outcomes must result in, or contribute to, participation in *education* and *training* as outlined above. Using historical programmes as a basis, Table 4 (below) shows the changes that would be needed to be made to the different programme types in order for them to count as participation under the RPA:

Historical lessons for policy design

6.12 The policy discussion around the RPA is still in its infancy. However, historical programmes do provide lessons for policy makers in terms of:

- Employer day/block release
- Accredited Activity
- 16–18 Apprenticeship entitlement.

Employer block/day release

6.13 Under the RPA, employers will be under a statutory duty to provide block/day release to 16–17 year olds in JWT or EFT. There are lessons from history in terms of how day/block release could work under the RPA.

6.14 It is worth noting that the majority of historical programmes that offered young people employment did offer training, albeit usually informally e.g. New Workers Scheme (1986–1988). If this informal training could be accredited, securing day/block release for training or accredited employer-funded training for individuals could be achieved relatively easily.

6.15 More specifically, the Unified Vocational Preparation Scheme (1976–1984) and Training for Skills Programme (1979–1983) were historical programmes designed to provide training for young people who were in employment but not receiving training.

6.16 Firstly, bespoke training programmes were created to deliver training to young people in jobs without training. For example, The Unified Vocational Preparation Scheme (1976–1984) was a bespoke government programme designed to provide a course of training to 16–17 year old employees. Individual projects took a small number of employer-nominated young employees from a sector (typically 12) who

TABLE 3: Projected 16–17 year old participation in education and training (snapshot percentages and volumes) – Source: Taken from Table 2: Raising Expectations: Staying on in education and training post-16, DfES, March 2007

Provider	2005/06		2013/14		2015/16	
	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number
Schools	32%	427,000	37%	454,000	38%	458,000
FE&HE	37%	495,000	42%	526,000	46%	543,000
Part-Time Education	5%	61,000	3%	43,000	4%	40,000
Work-Based Learning	7%	93,000	12%	145,000	12%	138,000
Total	81%	1,076,000	94%	1,168,000	100%	1,179,000

TABLE 4: Changes needed to historical programme types to count under the RPA	
Type of programme	Changes needed to count as participation in education and training under the RPA
Reintegration Programmes	Any activity would need to be accredited itself or linked to accredited activity.
Temporary Job and Work Placement Programmes	Any temporary jobs created would need to be either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • full-time (20hrs p/w), and • linked to day/block release for accredited training.
Employer Wage Subsidy Programmes	Any wage subsidies paid to employers would have to be linked to employers who were prepared to offer jobs that were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • full-time (20hrs p/w), and • linked to day/block release for accredited training.
Employer Training Subsidy Programmes	Any training subsidies would need to apply to full-time jobs (20hrs p/w) and be used to purchase training that was: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accredited, and • day/block release (7hrs p/w).
Unemployed Training with Work Experience Programmes	Any training and work experience would need to be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • full-time employment (20hrs p/w), with • accredited and day/block release (7hrs p/w).
Individual Training Subsidy Programmes	Any training subsidies would need to be linked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • full-time (16hrs p/w) accredited education, or • block/day release for accredited training if combined with full-time jobs.

undertook a one-year course designed around the needs of that particular industry. Employers were paid £4 per trainee, per day (1976–83) for releasing the trainee and promoting training.

6.17 Secondly, employers were offered financial incentives to train their staff. The Training for Skills Programme (1979–1983) offered financial incentives to employers to encourage them to train their 16–17 year old staff. Training awards were paid to employers to provide training for existing young staff. Again, training was linked very closely to industry training plans and attracted applications for a wide range of industry sectors including air transport and pharmaceuticals.

Accredited Activity

6.18 Accredited Activity is a new category under the RPA. It does not yet have a formal definition. The assumption is that any activities will be:

- accredited in their own right, or
- linked to accredited *education or training*.

6.19 As outlined in Table 4 above, any of the programme types could count as participation under the RPA if the content of those programmes was linked to one of the participation outcomes outlined in the changes to participation under the RPA above, or if it was accredited in its own right.

6.20 The policy options for these activities are two-fold:

- *Option 1:* Such activities should be expanded because they meet a specific need but on condition that the aim is to **progress** as many 16 and 17 year olds as possible into official education and training.
- *Option 2:* Participation in such activities – or a designated programme delivering those activities – is defined as **desirable in itself** and should be deemed as participation in official education and training, in the same way as, for instance, participation in E2E.

“Raising the Participation Age (RPA) to 17 in 2013 and to 18 in 2015 will coincide with a new employer-based Apprenticeship entitlement for 16–18 year olds.”

6.21 Historical programmes contained certain activities that could count as participation in Accredited Activity.

6.22 The programmes linked together under the category of Reintegration Programmes contain methods that could most easily be considered as Accredited Activity under the RPA:

- One-to-one support
- Short courses
- Learner agreements.

6.23 By accrediting these activities or combining them with education and training, 16–17 year old NETs will be able to participate under the RPA.

One-to-one support

6.24 As outlined in Chapter 5, one-to-one support was an important part of some programmes e.g. the Mentoring Action Project (1995–1997). They offered an individually tailored support structure for 16–17 year old NETs in an attempt to raise their aspirations and encourage them to participate in education, employment and training.

Short courses

6.25 Short courses were used by the Voluntary Projects Programme (1982–1988) as a first step to engaging young people in education and training. The programme offered four-week courses covering basic skills, the development of existing skills and work preparation. The programme took place on sponsors' sites, often voluntary organisations, where individuals had to attend for 21 hours a week.

Learner agreements

6.26 Agreements were used by Compacts (1988–1996) as a mechanism for retaining young people in education and training. However, the mechanism could be used for 16–17 year old NETs.

6.27 The agreement was a contract between a pupil, his/her school, college/training provider and employer. If the pupil achieved a set of objectives (such as attendance and

qualifications) outlined in the agreement, he/she would be guaranteed an interview or would receive a place in employment with training or further education.

6.28 Compacts were focused on ensuring that young people moved onto a positive outcome after their education had finished, ensuring there was progression after the programme ended.

16–18 Apprenticeship entitlement

6.29 Raising the Participation Age (RPA) to 17 in 2013 and to 18 in 2015 will coincide with a new employer-based Apprenticeship entitlement for 16–18 year olds. Currently, demand for 16–17 year old employer-based Apprenticeships is high but supply is low.

6.30 To make the entitlement effective, and to reduce reliance on programme-led Apprenticeships, financial incentives might be required to encourage employers to offer more Apprenticeships to 16 and 17 year olds under the RPA. As a consequence, policy makers might wish to consider wage subsidies as well as free off-the-job training for 16–17 Apprenticeships along the lines of the Training for Skills Programme (1979–83). To reduce deadweight, wage subsidies might need to be restricted to small firms.



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