

Unleashing Aspiration:

The Final Report
of the Panel on
Fair Access to
the Professions

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Foreword from the Chair



The UK's professions are world leaders. Abroad they enjoy an unrivalled reputation for excellence and integrity. At home they command high levels of public support and make an enormous contribution both to our economy and society. And our country's professions provide opportunities for millions of people to pursue careers that are rewarding and fulfilling.

It is their role as a creator of opportunities that has made the professions so important to the UK's past and that makes them so central to our country's future. The huge growth in professional employment that took place after the Second World War was the engine that made Britain such a mobile society. By opening their doors to people from a rich variety of backgrounds, the professions created unheard of opportunities for millions of men and women. In the decades since then, of course, social mobility has slowed down in our country. Birth, not worth, has become more and more a determinant of people's life chances. But that may be changing. There is now evidence that the long-running decline in social mobility has bottomed out. And a big growth in professional jobs is creating the conditions for a second great wave of social mobility in the near future.

The Panel on Fair Access to the Professions was established by the Prime Minister to advise on how we can make a professional career genuinely open to as wide a pool of talent as possible. I would like to record my thanks to the Prime Minister for asking me to chair the Panel. It comprises leaders in the professions and experts in social mobility. It is independent of government and cross-party in its make-up. I owe each of its members an enormous debt of gratitude for their insight and energy. They have been a pleasure to work alongside, as has the Panel's excellent secretariat drawn from the Cabinet Office and the Strategy Unit.

In our Report we look beyond the confines of the current economic recession. Our horizon is deliberately long term. We make detailed recommendations on how we can realise the social and economic benefits of the forthcoming expansion in professional employment in our country. In large part this Report is based on evidence from employers, trade unions, universities, schools, voluntary and professional bodies and, most importantly of all, young people themselves. Since our establishment in January 2009 we have received 13,000 pages of evidence from a broad range of people and organisations. The issue seems to have touched a nerve. I think it has done so because people have come to recognise a number of things.

First, the growing importance of the professions – one in three jobs today is professional and millions more professionals may be needed by 2020 as our economy becomes ever more service-orientated and professionalised. Of course there will be growth in other parts of the economy. The UK will continue to need a strong manufacturing sector for example but we have been told that up to nine in ten new jobs in future will be professional jobs. Some experts believe that once retirements are taken into account we will need up to seven million new professionals in employment by 2020. At a time when the country is suffering from a deep and painful global recession it is easy to forget that Britain's professions are well placed to take advantage of a huge global growth in middle class employment over the next few decades.

Second, as demand for unskilled labour falls still more dramatically in the years to come, those without skills will be left stranded economically and divorced from the mainstream socially – unless we can get mobility to take hold. Already today in London over half the workforce are in professional or managerial jobs. In the North East it is only one third. The risk is that without appropriate action employment segregation will widen rather than narrow in the years to come.

Third, there is a great opportunity here as well as a great challenge. The generation of the late 1950s of which I am part were the beneficiaries of a mobility in society that came about because of a change in the economy – the advent of a service economy and the professionalisation of jobs – so creating more room at the top. I grew up on a council estate and I was lucky enough to end up in the Cabinet. But a more fluid society did not just emerge by chance. It also came about because of a big policy choice. Government action after the Second World War was crucial to help people realise the new opportunities that economic and social change were producing. Together, full employment, universal education and a new welfare state brought new opportunities to millions of people, me included. Likewise, provided we make the right policy choices today the UK can look forward to a second great wave of social mobility from which the present and future generations will benefit.

But fourth, for all the progress that has taken place in recent years by government tackling poverty and disadvantage and all the efforts that have been made by the professions to expand the pool of talent from which they recruit, Britain remains too much a closed shop society. The glass ceiling has been raised but not yet broken. Despite the narrowing of the gender pay gap, the top professional jobs still tend to go to men not women. Despite increasing numbers of people from black and ethnic minority backgrounds in professional jobs, many professions are still unrepresentative of the modern society they serve. And most alarmingly of all there is strong evidence, given to the Panel, that the UK's professions have become more, not less, socially exclusive over time.

This weight of evidence suggests there is a chasm between where we are and where we need to be if Britain is to realise the social benefits of a huge potential growth in professional employment in future decades. This is more than an issue for those at the very bottom of society. It is an issue for the majority not the minority in our country. It matters to what President Clinton famously called the 'forgotten middle class'.

The data we have seen suggests that tomorrow's professional is today growing up in a family richer than seven in ten of all families in the UK. If the growth in social exclusivity, that our report details, is not checked it will be more and more middle class children, not just working class ones, who will miss out. Take internships: they tend to go to the few who have the right connections not the many who have talent. Or careers advice in schools: the Connexions service seems to have focussed on the disadvantaged minority to the detriment of the aspirational majority. Across the board too many able children from average income and middle class families are losing out in the race for professional jobs. If the aspirations that most hard-working families have for themselves, their children and their communities are thwarted, then social responsibility and individual endeavour are both undermined.

Ultimately, it is the aspirations people have to better themselves that drives social progress. It has long been recognised that the UK is a highly unequal society in which class background still too often determines life chances. Hence the welcome focus in recent years on tackling poverty and disadvantage. But we need to recognise too that a closed shop mentality in our country

means too many people, from middle income as well as low income families, encounter doors that are shut to their talents. It is time for a new focus – to end the closed shop society and create in its place an aspirational society. Doing so means unleashing aspiration, not just beating poverty.

This Report is about unleashing aspiration. The stories I have heard during the Panel's work have made me realise just how far we as a country have to go. The young woman from inner-city London, now training to be a doctor, who told me she almost missed out on a career in medicine because no-one at her school had told her she needed an A-Level in chemistry. The young hairdresser who had not realised she would be working for the minimum wage, when what she really wanted to do was go to university. Teaching assistants who aspired to become teachers being faced with giving up their jobs in order to undertake further training. It is barriers such as these that must be dismantled if we are to unleash aspirations in our society. Otherwise social resentment will fester and grow.

What has struck me so forcibly during the course of our work particularly when meeting young people from a whole variety of backgrounds is the emergence of a “not for the likes of me” syndrome. One in two children with parents who are professionals want to pursue a professional career. Only one in six children from average family income backgrounds want to do the same. Of course not everyone can be a doctor or a lawyer – and not everyone will want to be – but those with ability and aptitude need a fair crack of the whip to realise their aspirations. And in some of the most disadvantaged communities in the country we need to go further still. We have to enter what is new territory for public policy and find new ways of systematically raising the aspirations of those youngsters and families who simply do not believe that they will ever progress.

It is not that many young people do not have aspirations. It is that they are blocked. It is not that they do not have talent. To coin a phrase, Britain's got talent – lots of it. It is not ability that is unevenly distributed in our society. It is opportunity. Of course there is no single lever that on its own can prise open the professions. No single organisation can make it happen either. It is far too complex an issue for that. It is as much about family networks as it is careers advice, individual aspiration as school standards, university admission procedures as well as career development opportunities.

The Panel has examined all these areas and more during its work. In recognition of the fiscal position that future governments will face, our recommendations are cost neutral overall as far as government is concerned. Many of our recommendations will be for the professions to act on and we have seen a lot of willingness on their part to do so. We have been deeply impressed by the myriad of initiatives and schemes to mentor children and reach out to schools. The most progressive parts of the professions are already throwing open their doors to a wider cohort of talent. I hope our Report goes with the grain of their efforts.

Equally, initiatives to broaden access seem more marginal than mainstream. The default setting in too many professions, particularly at the top, is still to recruit from too narrow a part of the social spectrum. In this sense the professions simply reflect a wider problem in British society: a governing assumption that is still present in too many of our institutions that progress can be achieved on the basis of a limited pool of talent having access to a limited set of opportunities. All too often the professions have exemplified this out dated notion. With some honourable exceptions, over time they have narrowed entry routes – not widened them. They have become more socially exclusive, not less. It is not just that such elitism is unjust socially. It can no longer work economically.

The UK's future success in a globally competitive economy will rely on using all of our country's talent, not just some of it. In a fast moving world the old notion of a single track, single chance in life has to give way to a new notion where opportunities are more widely available throughout life to people regardless of their backgrounds. Any vestiges of a closed shop mentality – either in the professions or in our society – need to be banished once and for all. It is not just in the country's interest for all the professions to fish in a wider pool of talent. It is in the professions' own interest too. If they are to properly serve a Britain that is characterised by its rich diversity, they need themselves to embrace the notion of becoming more diverse.

This Report makes recommendations on how the professions, the Government and others can unleash the pent-up aspiration that exists in the young people of our country. Social mobility is not something that can be given to people. It has to be won through their effort and endeavour. Governments can equalise opportunities throughout life but in the end social mobility relies on individual drive and ambition. Put another way, if the job of the Government is to create more chances for people to get on, it is the job of the citizen to grab those chances.

Of course, the professions can and should do more to put their house in order and our Report suggests many ways in which they can do so. But they cannot instil in children an aspiration to pursue a professional career. That has got to come from individuals themselves and from their families and communities. Nor can the professions create the framework within which there are many more opportunities for individuals to realise their aspirations to progress. That is properly a job for government and the institutions of civil society. So while this Report examines some issues in detail it has also attempted to paint a broader picture of what is required to make Britain once again a mobile society.

Our approach seeks to open up new opportunities for everyone in society, while recognising that without more targeted action some will never have the chance to seize such opportunities.

Many of our recommendations are universal: aimed at expanding opportunities and widening the winners circle so that more people can fulfil their aspirations. We reject the notion that there is a fixed pool of talent or a limited set of opportunities in our society. Professional employment will grow rapidly in the decades to come so many more people will have the chance of a good career. So we propose how the silos between further and higher education can be broken down and how the professions can be opened to those without a university degree. We recommend ways in which internships, good careers services, schools' extra-curricular programmes and university degrees can all be made more widely available.

Other of our recommendations are more targeted, being aimed at giving the most disadvantaged the opportunity of an equal chance in life. We recognise that while prosperity has grown for most in our country, poverty remains an entrenched way of life for too many. Poor people are unfairly handicapped in the race for success. We reject the notion of positive discrimination which we believe will create new injustices. But we do advocate targeted help so that the most disadvantaged – children especially – get a fair chance to compete to succeed. We will not create a mobile society unless we can create a level playing field of opportunities. So we look at how new schools could be opened in poorer areas, how apprentices could get more help to progress and how mentoring programmes can be extended to raise the aspirations of disadvantaged children.

And because we believe that social mobility will not advance if we think it is only wealth that is unevenly distributed in our society we make proposals that are about redistributing power. If Britain is to get moving again socially, people need to be able not just to get a job or training or childcare but also to enjoy greater control and to have a bigger say in how they lead their lives. Unlocking our country so that it is open to aspiration and effort requires a new drive to fundamentally change how power is distributed in our society. So in our Report we make proposals to empower people to determine how their training needs can best be met through a state-funded budget they control. And we examine how parents, especially in the poorest areas, could be empowered with a new right to choose a better school for their children. It is this notion of a State that empowers citizens to realise their own aspirations to progress that underpins much of the thinking in this Report.

This is not a job for any one department of government. It is a job for the whole of government. And a modern form of government. One that empowers not controls. And one that puts at the top of its agenda a national drive to make Britain a fair, open and mobile society.

One thing is certain – modern Britain will not work if it harbours a closed shop mentality. Our economy will not prosper unless we harness the talent of all those who are able and aspire to make a contribution. And our society will not flourish unless people feel that effort and endeavour are rewarded. How we make a professional career genuinely open to as wide a pool of talent as possible goes to the heart of what a modern Britain should look like. I hope the work of the Panel helps create a shared determination in our country to systematically unblock every obstacle that stands in the way of individuals being able to realise their own aspirations to progress. And I hope that is something this and future governments will lead.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Milburn', written in a cursive style.

Rt Hon Alan Milburn MP

The Panel and our Report



The creation of the Panel

The Government published its *New Opportunities* White Paper in January 2009. It set out proposals aimed at ensuring that the UK captures the new opportunities upon which the economic upturn will be built, and ensuring that every part of society has a fair chance to benefit.

The White Paper also announced the establishment of the Panel on Fair Access to the Professions. It said:

'As well as general barriers to opportunity – such as low skills levels – there can be other obstacles to careers in certain high-status professions. To help ensure that everyone, including those on moderate and middle incomes as well as the wealthiest, has a fair chance to access careers in high-status professions, we will establish a panel to work with the professions themselves to identify obstacles including cultural barriers to access and how they can be removed.'

The Prime Minister asked the Rt Hon Alan Milburn MP to chair the Panel on Fair Access to the Professions. As an independent cross-party panel, it was invited to make recommendations to the Government and the professions. A small secretariat, drawn from the Cabinet Office, was set up to support the Panel's work.

Membership of the Panel

The Panel comprises 18 representatives from a range of professions. They are all influential and high-profile members of their professions. They provide expertise from the perspective of their particular profession, but additionally they look at issues of fair access to professions as a whole. The Panel also has two independent experts on social mobility issues. The full list of Panel members is attached at **Annex A**.

The Panel's work programme

Analysis and evidence gathering

The Panel took evidence from a wide range of sources:

Desk work

The Secretariat to the Panel conducted a thorough and comprehensive desk-based review of available data on fair access to the professions and of the latest thinking on social mobility. The Secretariat reviewed government research and statistics, think tank publications and academic journals in order to construct an informed picture of the current situation, both in this country and overseas.

National Call for Evidence

The Panel issued a National Call for Evidence in February 2009. Professional bodies, employers, third sector bodies, trade unions, Members of Parliament and the public were invited to send submissions to the Panel. The Panel received over 140 submissions in response to the Call for Evidence, amounting to over 13,000 pages of evidence.

National Youth Fora

The Panel held three National Youth Fora in order to hear the views of young people themselves. Working with the Social Mobility Foundation, the Citizenship Foundation, the Prince's Trust and the Brightside Trust, the Panel took evidence from over 70 young people aged 10–19 from a range of backgrounds and schools. Panel members heard at first hand about the difficulties and frustrations, as well as some of the successes, of young people trying to enter the professions.

icould survey of young people

icould, the online resource featuring careers advice and inspirational role models, conducted a survey of 1,525 young people on behalf of the Panel. Views were sought on career aspirations, the barriers young people thought they faced in accessing the professions, opportunities for entry and progression and suggestions for what government could do to help.

Think tank roundtable

The Panel held a session with leading think tanks from across the political spectrum to consider fair access. Evidence was heard on the latest policy thinking, and some recommendations for the Panel's Final Report were put forward by attendees.

Evidence Hearings

The Panel held five Evidence Hearings, in which key organisations were invited to present evidence to the Panel. The Evidence Hearings heard from leading third sector organisations, major employers, professional bodies, trade unions, universities and schools.

Ministerial Champions and Senior Officials Group

The Chair of the Panel held meetings with the Ministerial Champions for Fair Access – a group comprising the junior minister in each Government department responsible for fair access issues. At each meeting, the Chair updated ministers on the Panel's progress and then took ministers' views on the published analysis and current work plans, and accepted further points of evidence and views from them. The Secretariat held parallel meetings with senior departmental officials.

Consultation Events with the professions

Six consultation events were held, covering a wide range of professional groups. Professionals attended to provide views on the Panel's recently published analysis and to discuss ways in which fair access might be improved. There was representation from the following professions:

- creative industries;
- life sciences;
- legal professions;
- architecture and surveying;
- engineering and science; and
- accountancy and business finance.

Debate in the House of Commons

A debate on social mobility and fair access to the professions was held in the House of Commons on Thursday 11 June 2009. There was broad cross-party support for the work of the Panel. The report of the debate can be found at: http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm090611/debtext/90611-0010.htm#column_977

Bilateral evidence

The Panel Chair and the Secretariat both held a series of bilateral meetings with important organisations and actors in the field of social mobility and access to the professions.

Gathering of International Best Practice

The Panel commissioned British Embassies in leading OECD countries to report back with examples of fair access best practice in these countries.

Formulation of recommendations and report writing

Upon completion of the evidence gathering and analysis, the Panel formed sub-groups. Each sub-group took the lead in developing recommendations on each of the barriers identified during the analysis and evidence-gathering stage. The Secretariat worked with each of the Panel sub-groups to ensure consistency of approach and to bring together the different packages of work into the final report.

Products of the Panel's work

The Panel published five documents, all of which can be found at: <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/accessprofessions>

Trends and analysis in fair access to the professions

The Phase 1 analysis paper highlighted key trends and issues in access to the professions.

The research report found that many of the UK's professions have become more socially exclusive and that, as a consequence, bright children from average-income families, not just those from more disadvantaged backgrounds, are missing out on a professional career.

Good practice review

The Phase 2 best practice paper highlighted best practice initiatives aimed at encouraging more young people to pursue a professional career. The report summarised the views and suggestions of over 140 organisations and professional bodies from more than 40 sectors on how government and the professions could provide opportunities to help people to get better jobs and improve their prospects.

Summary of responses to the National Call for Evidence

The Call for Evidence sought views on the processes and structures that govern recruitment and progression into the professions. Respondents included academics and research groups, employers, higher education institutions, think tanks and campaign groups, public sector organisations, third sector organisations, trades unions and professional bodies.

Survey of young people

A national survey of young people was conducted on behalf of the Panel by the organisation icould.

The Final Report: Unleashing Aspiration

This Final Report was published on 21 July 2009 alongside a summary report. It contains recommendations for action by the professions, government and others, attached as Annex B. Primarily, the recommendations are about forming new partnerships for action. A minority would involve some cost to government for implementation. For these we identify appropriate programmes for reprioritisation in Annex C of our Report. However, given the fiscal context we have sought to ensure that, overall, our recommendations involve no additional government spending. A table setting out the costs and savings associated with each of the Panel's recommendations is attached at **Annex C**.

Our hopes for after the Report is published

Publishing this Report will not in itself make access to the professions fairer. Mechanisms must be put in place to deliver the recommendations post-publication and to review their implementation over time. We suggest in Chapter 10 how this might be done.

We recognise that some of the recommendations relate to reserved matters, and some to devolved. However, we do not believe this should be a barrier to implementation. Where our recommendations relate to devolved matters we expect the Government and relevant Devolved Administrations to implement the recommendations in order to make access fairer across the whole UK.

More fundamentally, it requires a shared determination on the part of the professions, government and others to remove any vestige of a closed-shop mentality. We hope that our Report will contribute to that. We hope it will make the professions more representative of the modern UK. Above all else, we hope that more young people get the opportunity to fulfil their aspirations.

Acknowledgements

A list of the organisations consulted in the course of the Panel's work and who submitted to the National Call for Evidence is attached as Annex D.

Chapter 1

The professions: the key to new opportunities



This chapter sets out:

- Who the professions are and the key role they play in our society and economy
- How new professional opportunities were at the heart of the UK's first great wave of social mobility in the post-war decades
- Why the professions are key to opening new opportunities for a second great wave of social mobility in the years ahead
- How social mobility into professional careers has slowed. It points out that, if action is not taken to reverse historical trends, tomorrow's generation of professionals will today grow up in families that are better off than seven in ten of all families in the UK
- Where good progress has been made by the professions and where more needs to be done.

Who are 'the professions'?

There is no single definition of 'the professions' but typically they have:

- Recognisable entry points – for example, with standard qualification requirements
- Codes of ethics – for example, that set out aspects of professional responsibility
- Systems for self-regulation – for example, setting and regulating standards for professional development
- A strong sense of vocation and professional development.

There are over 130 different professional sectors in the UK, with around 11 million people in the labour force working in professional and managerial occupations. These include:

- 'Life science' professionals, such as doctors, dentists, nurses and vets;
- Legal professionals, such as judges, barristers, solicitors, paralegals and court officials;
- Management and business service professionals, such as accountants, bankers, management consultants and business and finance advisers;
- 'Creative industry' professionals, such as journalists, publishers, designers, writers and artists;

- Public service professionals, such as senior civil servants, managers in local government, armed forces officers and senior police officers;
- Scientists, such as archaeologists, chemists, mathematicians and physicists;
- Education professionals, such as professors, lecturers, teachers and early-years specialists; and
- Built environment professionals, such as architects, engineers, surveyors, town planners, urban designers and construction specialists.

Among the largest professions are:

- local government (2.25 million);
- NHS (around 1.4 million);
- teaching (around 700,000);
- engineering (around 500,000);
- IT professionals (around 450,000);
- the law (around 250,000); and
- construction specialists (250,000).

New professions are also emerging. For instance, analysis by the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts suggests that between 2009 and 2013 the UK creative industries, which are responsible for films, music, fashion, TV and video games production, will outstrip the rest of the economy in terms of growth by 4% on average. By 2013, the sector is expected to employ 1.3 million people.¹

The UK's professions are among the world leaders in their fields:

- The UK is a global leader in academia and science: it has more Nobel laureates per capita than any other G20 economy. There are 114 Nobel Prize winners from the UK, second in total only to the United States.²
- The UK's finance, management, consultancy and professional service sectors are among the largest in the world and the City of London is ranked as the most competitive financial centre in the world.³
- The UK is a global leader in healthcare. For example, the pharmaceutical industry is the biggest investor in research and development (R&D) in the UK, valued at £3.3 billion in 2005.⁴
- The UK's Armed Forces are among the best and most respected in the world.

Professionals such as doctors, teachers, nurses and police officers are at the heart of UK society. The public hold such professionals in very high esteem. Professionals also contribute to wider civic life. Skills gained through professional activity are invaluable to charitable and third sector organisations, and twice as many professionals volunteer their time and expertise as other groups.⁵

The professions are central to the UK's future

Over recent decades the UK's economy has come to rely increasingly on service-based and professional employment. In future, the UK's economic advantage will lie increasingly in knowledge-based services, the very sectors where professionals are most concentrated. Indeed the UK is a world leader when it comes to knowledge-based services (see figure 1a). The country's future prosperity and growth – its business and exports – will be underpinned by the professions. In turn, as they expand, they will need to recruit the most talented people, whatever their background.

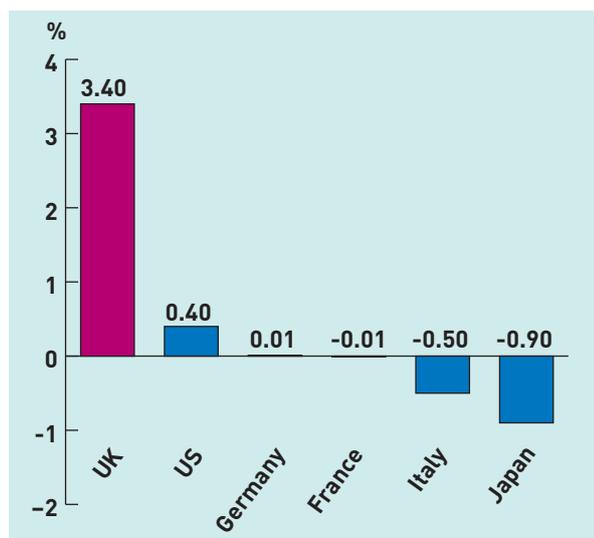


Figure 1a: Net trade in knowledge-based services as a share of GDP⁶

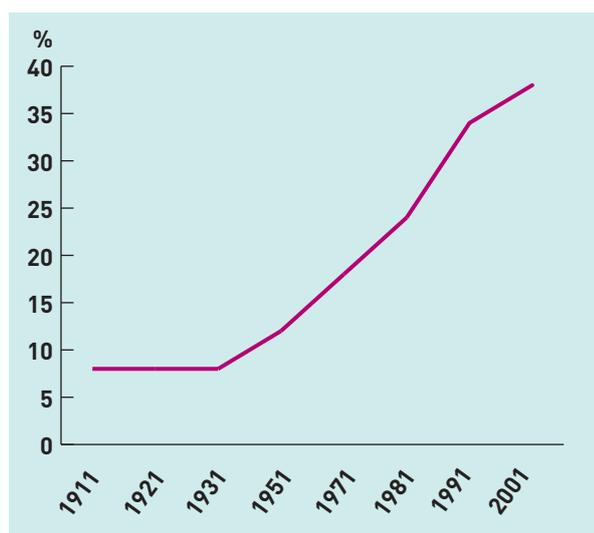


Figure 1b: Percentage of labour force in professional and managerial occupations⁷

In addition to the important role the professions play in the economic and civic life of our nation, they have also been the key that has unlocked social mobility in the UK.

A huge post-war growth in new professional opportunities brought about the first great wave of social mobility

At the start of the twentieth century, there were few professional or managerial jobs. In 1911, only one in every fourteen jobs was professional. By 1951, this had risen to one in every eight jobs, and by 2001 to over one in every three (see figures 1b and 1c).

It was at the start of the second half of the last century that manual work increasingly gave way to more professional and managerial occupations. Those born in the 1950s and early 1960s were **three times** more likely to be a professional at age 35 than those born during or before the Second World War.⁸

This huge growth in professional employment coincided with British society becoming more socially fluid. Of course, there were several factors that lay behind this opening up of British society:

- The post-war years were characterised by a desire for a fairer society, encapsulated in the creation of a new welfare state.

- The vital jobs so many women undertook in the war effort laid the ground for a more fundamental change in the role of women in society.
- The advent of new technology created new types of jobs open to more diverse groups in society.

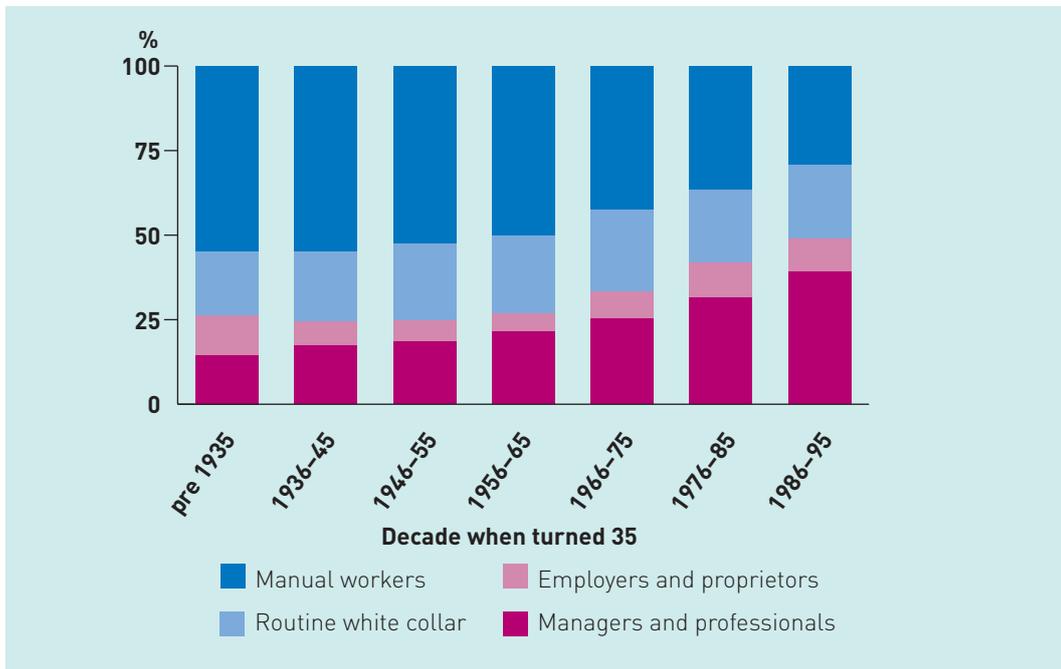


Figure 1c: Occupational classes⁹

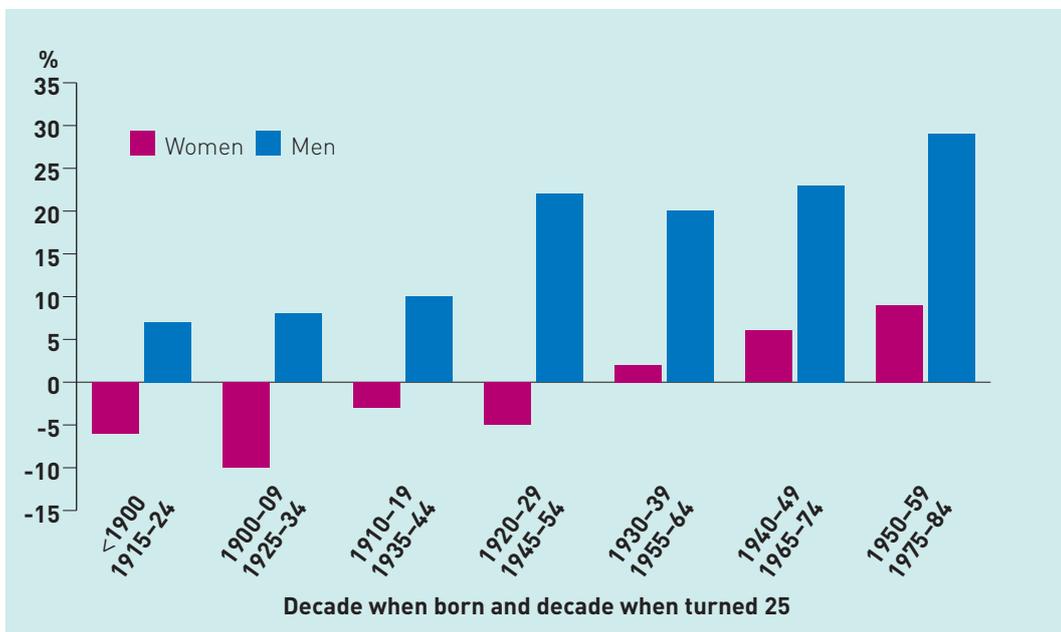
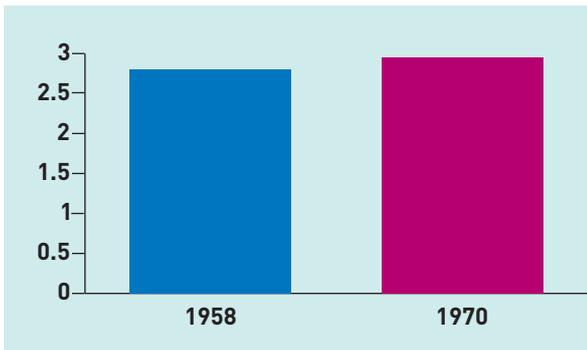


Figure 1d: Net percentage of men and women in higher occupations than their fathers¹⁰

The end result was an unprecedented period of social mobility, in which many more people from less well-off backgrounds were able to progress up the social ladder. For men, there was positive social mobility for every generation born after 1900, but this was highest for those born in the decades after the Second World War. For women, social mobility accelerated with the generations born in the 1940s and 1950s and later.



This first great wave of social mobility, built on the solid foundation of a widening in professional employment opportunities, made the prospect of a genuinely meritocratic society seem within reach.

Figure 1e: Immobility index (a higher score means less social mobility)

But this first wave of social mobility has since slowed, with professions becoming more – not less – socially exclusive

The first wave of social mobility experienced by the post-war generation has since flattened out. For the most recent cohort surveyed (born in 1970) the rates of social mobility are very similar to those of the previous cohort (born in 1958). A comparison of sons born in 1958 with those born in 1970 shows that there has been a small reduction in the proportion obtaining better jobs than their fathers (see figure 1e). Although there is some recent evidence that the UK may have reached the bottom of a long-running decline in social mobility, access to society's top jobs and professions has become less, not more, socially representative over time.

We used two measures to explore this. First we looked at the school background of professionals at the most senior levels. This shows that, although only 7% of the population attend independent schools, well over half the members of many professions have done so (see figure 1f). For example, 75% of judges, 70% of finance directors, 45% of top civil servants, and 32% of MPs were independently schooled.

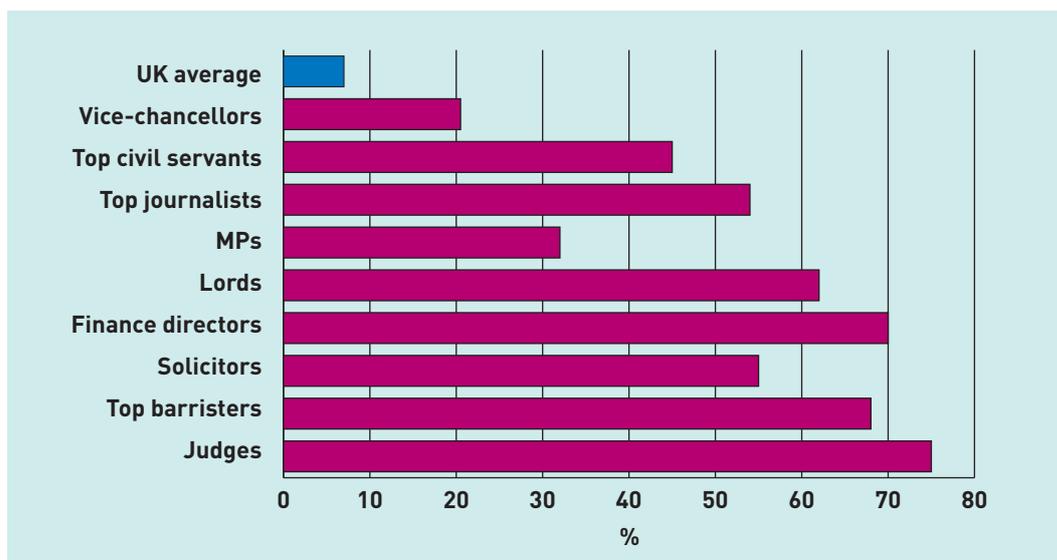


Figure 1f: Proportion of professionals independently schooled by profession¹¹

It is important to note that at the very top levels this data reflects trends in access to the professions dating back to the 1960s and 1970s. Some evidence suggests that this situation is improving slightly: figure 1g compares the educational background of professionals in the late 1980s with the educational background of similar groups of professionals in the mid-2000s. Some professions are becoming less dominated by people from independent schools, but others – such as medicine – remain largely unchanged.

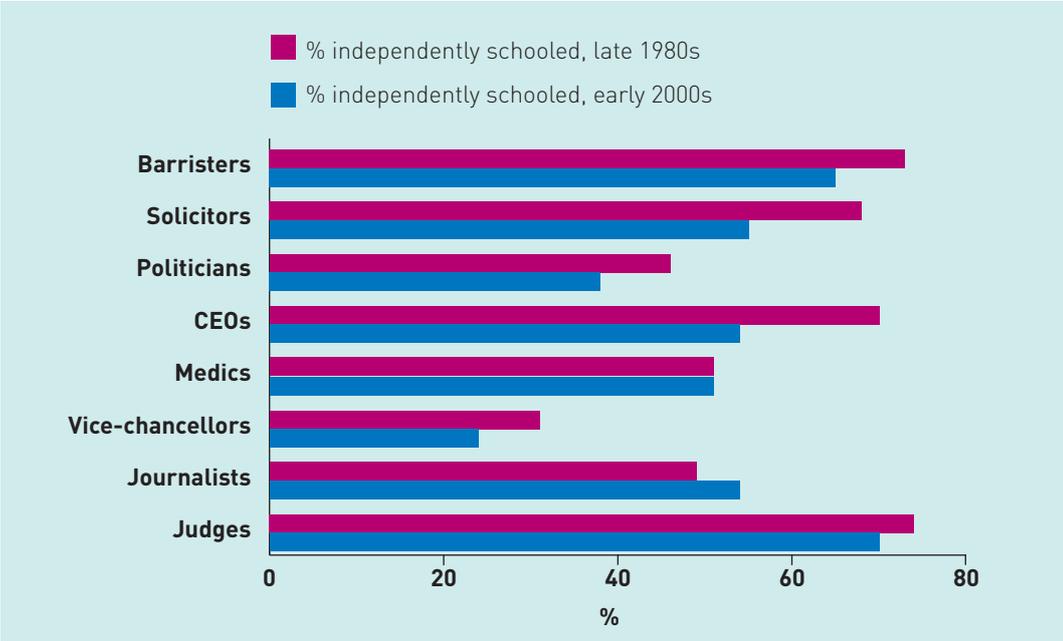


Figure 1g: Percentage of professionals independently schooled, 1980s v 2000s

Second, we reviewed the evidence on the family background of professionals (measured by their family’s income). We examined two birth cohorts: one from 1958 and another from 1970.

Our data (shown in figure 1h) confirms that senior professionals have increasingly come from wealthier-than-average backgrounds:

- Across the professions as a whole, the typical professional grew up in a family with an income well above the average family’s: today’s younger professionals (born in 1970) typically grew up in a family with an income 27% above that of the average family, compared with 17% for today’s older professionals (born in 1958)
- In nine of the twelve professions recorded, the data shows an increase in people coming from better-off families between the 1958 and 1970 birth cohorts
- Of all professions, doctors and lawyers are the occupations whose members typically grew up in the best-off families: doctors born in 1970 typically grew up in families with income 63% higher than the average family’s income, and lawyers in families with income 64% above the average family’s income
- Between the 1958 and the 1970 birth cohorts, the biggest decline in social mobility occurred in the professions of journalism and accountancy. For example, journalists and broadcasters born in 1958 typically grew up in families with an income of around 5.5% above that of the average family; but this rose to 42.4% for the generation of journalists and broadcasters born in 1970.

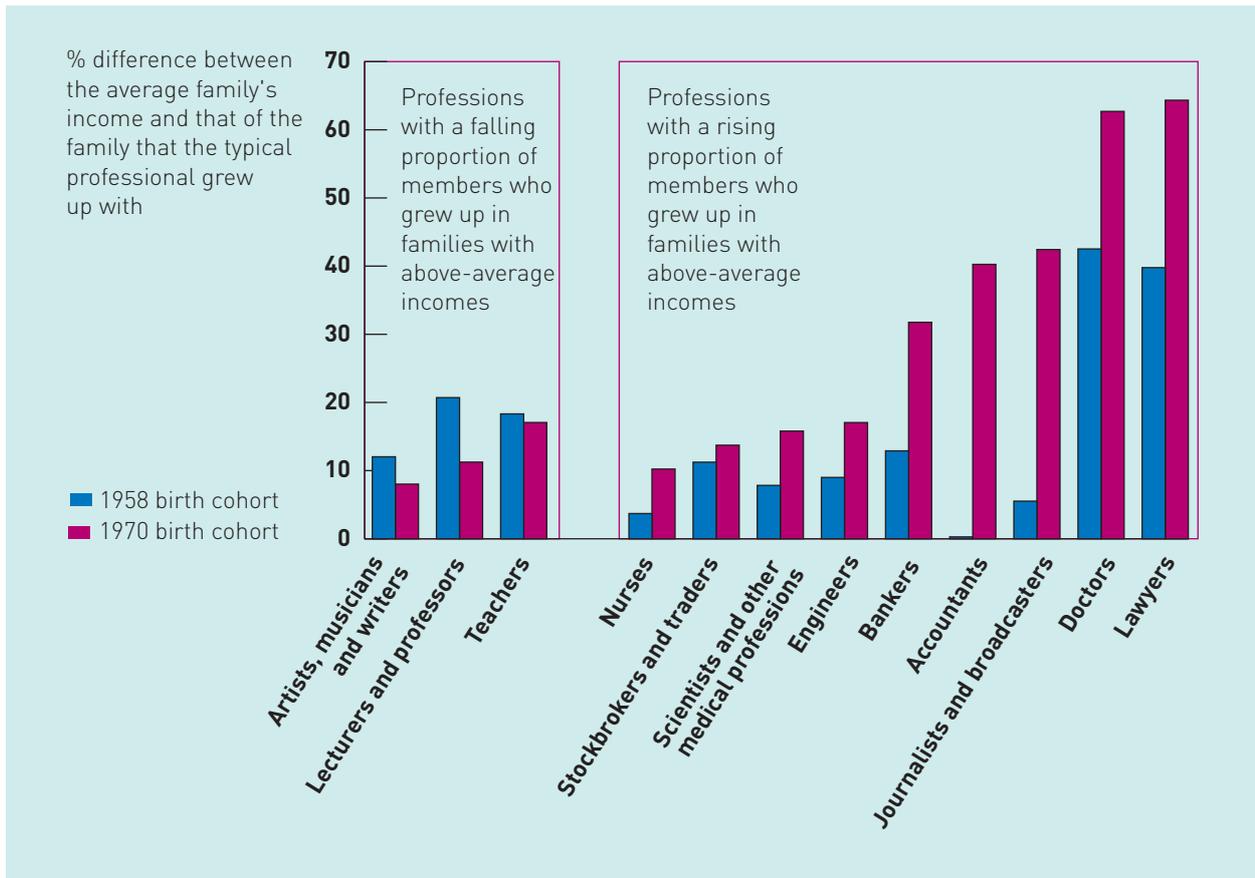


Figure 1h: Comparison of the family income background of typical professionals¹²

Of course, there will be many individual exceptions to this overall pattern. However, the general trend is clear: the professions have become more, not less, socially exclusive over time. Despite a sharp growth in professional employment opportunities over recent decades, the professions are becoming the preserve of people from an increasingly small part of the social spectrum.

This exclusivity has come at the expense of those from average family backgrounds

It is particularly important to stress that not only has the greater social exclusivity now exhibited by the professions closed doors to people from disadvantaged backgrounds: it has done the same to people from average family or middle-class backgrounds, too. This is an issue for the majority, not the minority.

The latest data we have on social mobility and access to professional careers is for the generation born in 1970. Those people are now in their late 30s. We cannot predict which of today's generation of young people will go on to pursue a professional career. But, if action is not taken to reverse the historical trend, it would mean that the typical professional of the future will now be growing up in a family that is better off than **seven in ten** of all families in the UK. This growing social exclusivity is not only a matter of serious concern for the professions; it has profound implications for our society too.

Unless the trends of recent decades are reversed:

- The typical doctor or lawyer of the future will today be growing up in a family that is better off than **five in six** of all families in the UK
- The typical journalist or accountant of the future will today be growing up in a family that is better off than **three in four** of all families in the UK
- The typical engineer or teacher of the future will today be growing up in a family that is better off than **two in three** of all families in the UK

Professions will lose from this growing social exclusivity

We believe it is in the direct business interest of every profession to tackle this increase in social exclusivity. There is likely to be a need for many more professionals in future. Some studies suggest that up to nine new jobs in ten created over the next decade will be in professional and managerial sectors. Once retirements are taken into account, around seven million new professionals may be needed.¹³ Filling these future professional roles with suitably high-potential employees will mean recruiting far more widely than from the narrower pool of talent on which the professions currently focus. The wider the base of recruitment, the better able the professions will be to serve a more diverse society.

What is behind these trends in access to professional career opportunities?

There is no single explanation for why social mobility into professional careers appears to have slowed, while social mobility in society more generally has remained constant. Several factors seem to have coalesced.

The **first** explanation offered by some researchers¹⁴ is that 'opportunity-hoarding' has risen as the professional and managerial class has expanded and become more entrenched. This can take the form of barriers being constructed that restrict entry to some jobs, such as an increased emphasis on credentials and a focus on professional qualifications. There is also evidence that selection and entry procedures – underpinned by cultural and attitudinal barriers – reinforce the existing social make-up of the professions.

The **second** explanation relates to the employment structure of professions. Over time, more and more professions have become graduate only, leaving many of those without a university degree unable to pursue a professional career. Nursing and social care are the most recent instances of professions that have been subject to what some have called 'qualification inflation'.

This has not always been the case. During the UK's first great wave of social mobility, for example, journalists might have worked their way up through the local newspaper, lawyers through the article route, or accountants by starting out as a bookkeeper. Such opportunities have diminished in recent decades:

- Only one in four of *The Times* Top 100 Employers accepts non-graduate entry routes.¹⁵
- Many more professional careers now require at least an undergraduate degree – and often further qualifications (see figure 1i).

This change in the qualification requirement for professional employment has profound implications for social mobility – not least because young people from less well-off backgrounds tend to opt for vocational qualifications. More than twice as many young people from lower socio-economic groups undertake vocational qualifications as young people with parents already in professional occupations.

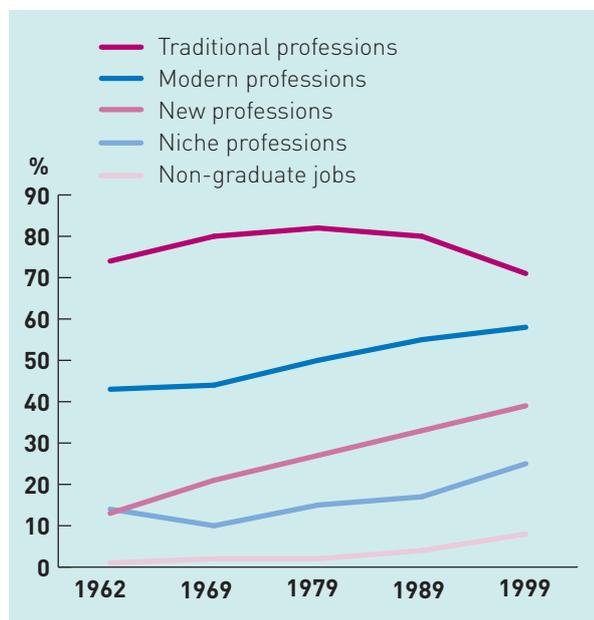


Figure 1i: Percentage of jobs requiring a degree, by type of profession¹⁶

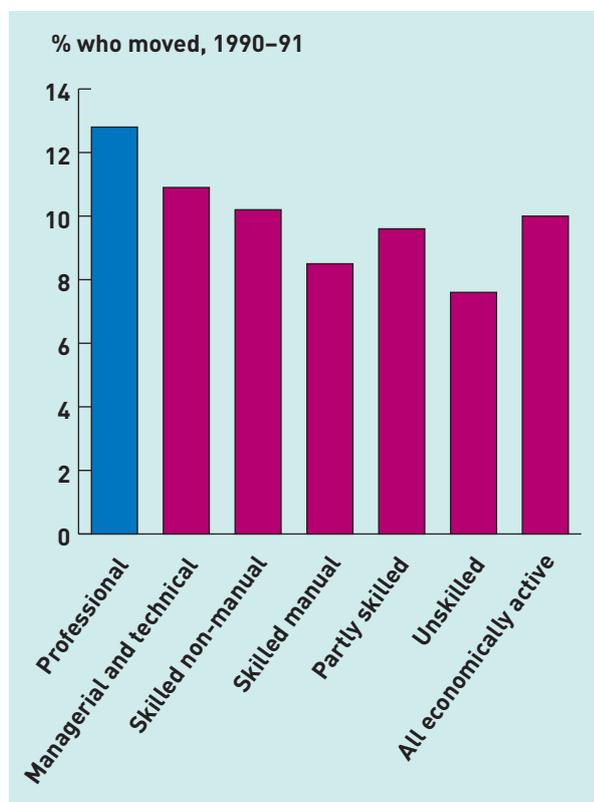


Figure 1j: Mobility (house moves) by social class¹⁹

The **third**, related, explanation is that, although vocational training routes have been expanded over recent years, progression rates into the professions are still low. Only 0.2% of apprenticeship learners progressed to further or higher education in 2007/08, and few moved directly into the professions, suggesting that there is a major silo problem in our education and training system.¹⁷

A **fourth** explanation may be found in patterns of structural change that have affected the UK economy, as more professional and managerial jobs have become concentrated in London and the South East. This has reduced the opportunities for young people from outside these regions to get a first foot on the professional career ladder.

For instance, half of all jobs in the Greater London region are professional or managerial (rising to over three in four in some parts of London) compared with less than one in three jobs in the North East (and fewer than one in five in some local areas).¹⁸

With so many professional jobs concentrated in London and the South East, people in other parts of the country often have to move in order to access a professional career. But the ability to move is unequally spread in society. Those from professional backgrounds are far more likely to move than those in unskilled jobs (see figure 1j).

Many professions have taken steps to tackle these issues, but many have not gone far enough and need to do more

Many professions have submitted evidence to us about their efforts to broaden the social mix from which they recruit. This has meant that good progress has been made on the diversity agenda.

For instance:

- The gender pay gap has fallen by over 16% in the last 10 years, as measured by median hourly pay (excluding overtime of full-time employees) across all sectors²⁰
- The proportion of black and minority ethnic (BME) professionals has grown faster than that of white professionals over the last decade (see figure 1k)²¹
- Over the last eight years, the number of disabled employees in the public sector has risen from 11.5% to 14.2%, somewhat ahead of the private sector²²

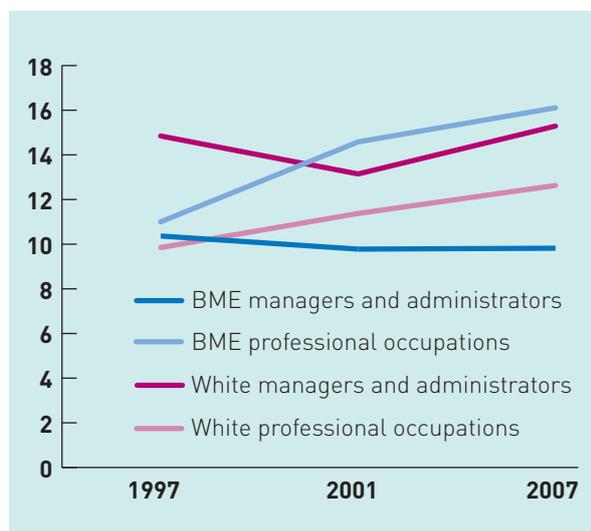


Figure 1k: Percentage of black and minority ethnic and white employees in managerial and professional sectors

The sheer scale of the future recruitment challenge faced by the professions as they expand has prompted a number of professions to develop innovative and exciting initiatives to improve access to career opportunities. Many excellent programmes were highlighted in the submissions provided by the professions as part of our Call for Evidence. The Panel warmly welcomes this commitment on the part of the professions, but we believe there is a very long way to go before fair access becomes universal.

In the legal profession:

- The Citizenship Foundation coordinates several initiatives aimed at giving young people from all backgrounds an insight into a variety of professions. National Mock Trial competitions with young people aged 8–13 from over 200 state schools are judged by circuit judges and senior barristers
- The Bar Council commissioned a working party on entry to the Bar, chaired by Lord Neuberger. It made recommendations on changes to selection and recruitment procedures

But the evidence also suggests that the law remains one of the most socially exclusive professions:

- Top solicitors and barristers are typically drawn from middle-income families that are significantly better off than average (up to £800 per week more family income than the average)²³
- Typically, over 50% of solicitors and barristers attended independent schools, compared to just 7% of the population as a whole²⁴

In the engineering profession:

- A variety of entry routes into the profession are available. It is possible to enter engineering through vocational routes such as BTECs and Apprenticeships, but a degree is usually a requirement for progression to the top levels of the profession and for professional chartership
- The Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Ambassadors programme involves people from working backgrounds, who volunteer their time to act as inspiring role models for young people. The STEM Ambassadors programme aspires to make every school in the country aware of the programme, and to provide over 27,000 STEM Ambassadors nationwide by 2011

But in engineering only 14% of undergraduates are women.²⁵

In medicine:

- Outreach programmes such as MED-VIEW, at King's College London, are aimed at Year 12 students from underprivileged families who aspire to be doctors. MED-VIEW offers the opportunity to find out what life is like as a doctor by providing work shadowing with both a GP and a hospital consultant to learn more about medicine. MED-VIEW targets AS-Level students who have no family history of higher education or the medical profession
- More than one in four of all medical school applicants and acceptances in 2007 were from minority ethnic backgrounds
- Women make up 57% of both applicants to and acceptances by medical schools.

But while this progress is to be welcomed, medicine ranks alongside law as one of the most socially exclusive professions:

- A typical doctor born in 1970 grew up in a family with an income 62% above that of the average family: in today's terms, this equates to growing up in a family that is richer than five in six of all families in the UK²⁶
- According to a recent report by the Royal College of Physicians, women remain under-represented at consultant levels, making up 40% of all doctors, 42% of GPs but only 28% of consultants in the NHS in England²⁷

In the Civil Service and politics:

- The Civil Service Fast Stream is now promoted at over 50 graduate on-campus career fairs and is focusing efforts on widening the talent pool to the best graduates from 'post-92' universities, as well as Russell Group institutions
- The House of Lords has an active and innovative outreach programme into schools and other institutions

But there is a long way to go:

- Some 50% of top civil servants attended independent schools, and 35% of MPs attended independent schools – both far above the average

In journalism and the media:

- The BBC Vision Intake Pool is an entry-level programme designed to develop a more diverse pool of talent within the organisation, to better reflect the diversity of its audiences. The focus is on selecting people with a passion and interest in the media

But the challenges for this profession are very real:

- Some 98% of entrants to journalism already have a degree or postgraduate qualification. Less than 10% of those entering the journalism profession have worked their way up through non-graduate, vocational, working-class backgrounds²⁸

Conclusion

We value the professions and believe they are key to the UK's economic future. We welcome the fact that they are growing in size and importance. And we believe they are a great source of pride for our country.

We value them particularly because the professions helped give birth to the post-war first great wave of social mobility and we believe they hold the key to the UK again becoming a more socially mobile country.

We are concerned that social mobility is not what it could be in the UK and that the professions have become more socially exclusive over time. We believe this to be an issue for the majority, not the minority, in our society.

We welcome the progress many professions have made to widen access, and we believe they deserve praise for their efforts. But we believe that a step-change has not been achieved. Initiatives and programmes to widen access remain on the margins not in the mainstream. They are piecemeal not universal. The default setting in the professions is still to recruit from too narrow a part of the social spectrum. That all has to change.

We believe that if the professions are to keep pace with change in society and successfully to expand, they need to do much more to recruit from a wider pool of talent and to banish any vestiges of a closed-shop mentality.

Chapter 2

New opportunities: what drives social mobility?



This chapter sets out:

- What social mobility is and why it is important
- What drives social mobility
- The trends in social mobility in the UK compared to other countries
- The opportunities in the years ahead for a second wave of social mobility.

New opportunities and social mobility

Social mobility is about each new generation benefiting from more and better opportunities to get on in life. At its simplest, social mobility means:

- **better jobs** for each generation, so that our children can do better than us
- **fair chances**, so that everyone has an opportunity to access those jobs and so realise their potential.

In a modern economy, the professions are at the heart of this new opportunity story: social mobility will rise if there are more professional opportunities, or if the chances to get into a professional career become more fairly spread.

Experts typically investigate social mobility by comparing the employment outcomes of one generation with those of their parents. This is called 'inter-generational social mobility'. Another measure looks at what is happening during people's own lives: this is called 'intra-generational social mobility'. These two measures are used to compare trends in social mobility between generations and between countries – and to examine what caused these trends by looking at underlying policy drivers.

The Panel believes social mobility matters for two fundamental reasons. First, if social mobility is stalled, disadvantage is entrenched – with all the consequences that has for social cohesion. It is no coincidence that countries like Australia, Japan, Sweden and the Netherlands are the most socially fluid in the world – and are also among the most equal. The fact that the UK remains such a persistently unequal society is, in large part, the reason why social mobility is lower than in other less equal nations. Greater equality and more mobility are two sides of the same coin.

Second, if the aspirations that most hard-working families have for themselves, their children and their communities are thwarted, then social responsibility and individual endeavour are both undermined. A good society rests not just on shared values but on shared rules, where, if people put something in, they get something back. This fairness code is especially strong in British society. When social mobility is present, it provides a fair set of easily understood rules – social incentives – that earn rights through responsibilities, and earn advancement through effort. When it is absent, incentives for individual progression are weakened, rules are transgressed and fairness is undermined. Poverty of aspiration then kicks in and, worse, social resentment festers and grows.

Some argue that social mobility has downsides as well as upsides. It was Michael Young who first coined the term ‘meritocracy’ in his 1958 book *Rise of the Meritocracy*, which warned of the consequences for a society in which the able progressed but the less able languished. Others point out that social mobility cuts both ways – the more there is, the greater the likelihood is that, as some people climb up the social ladder, others fall down it.

The Panel takes a different view. We believe that a socially mobile society is not just a laudable objective. It is a necessity if the UK is to flourish – economically as well as socially. We believe that all children should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential. Individual success should reflect innate talent and ability, not background or birth. We also believe that what is right on ethical grounds in the 21st century is also right on economic grounds. In a globally competitive economy, the key to success depends on unlocking the talents of all our people. The most important resource of a company or a country is no longer its raw materials, or its geographical location, but the skills of the whole workforce. A knowledge economy needs a mobile society.

During the course of its work, the Panel has heard directly from leading experts about what drives social mobility. The evidence we have been given has helped us develop our specific policy recommendations. We have heard that a combination of factors, which interact at different stages throughout an individual’s life, have a crucial bearing on people’s life chances:

- Maternal health and child poverty
- Early-years care
- Family, parenting and community
- Education and school attainment
- Post-school qualifications, higher education and transitions into work
- Opportunities to progress in work.

We have also seen evidence that points to a number of cross-cutting influences on social mobility – such as financial capital and asset-holding, and wider economic and other barriers such as anti-competitive practices, ‘opportunity-hoarding’ and physical geography.

Maternal health and child poverty

It is an unfortunate fact that the life chances of a child born in 2009 are still determined by the circumstances of their birth. Indeed differences in life chances start well before birth.

For example:

- There is a clear correlation between poverty and low birth weight
- Children born with low birth weight are more likely to have slower early development and poorer health throughout life¹
- Poor maternal health has been shown to be associated with poorer child outcomes later on, including cognitive development and behavioural problems²

Childhood poverty may affect outcomes in later life in a number of ways. Researchers such as Abigail McKnight³ have found that:

- Young people in low-income households are more likely to be unemployed in their early 20s than young people from higher-income households
- Young people from poor backgrounds are disproportionately observed at the lower end of the earnings distribution if they are in work
- The labour market penalty associated with growing up in poverty has increased over time. Young adults from low-income backgrounds born in 1970 face greater disadvantages in terms of the probability of being in work and the size of the earnings penalty, than do those born in 1958.

Even after controlling for differences in educational attainment, there remains a negative influence associated with growing up in poverty. At age 26, young adults experience an earnings penalty of 9% if they were brought up in a household with an income below half the average, and 6% if they were brought up in a household with an income below average (all after controlling for educational attainment).

Those children who grow up in disadvantaged families and poor communities, who suffer bad housing and high levels of crime, and who have low levels of school performance face an uphill struggle to get on in life. To succeed, they have to climb not just one hill, but many. As Amartya Sen, the Nobel Prize winner for economics has noted, families and communities can suffer not only economic disadvantage, but also social, educational and cultural disadvantage.⁴ Getting social mobility moving relies on action being taken on many fronts. Housing policy is as important as financial policy. Regenerating communities and improving schools are two sides of the same coin – and should be seen as such. Too often this has not been the case.

We believe that, unless child poverty is tackled, social mobility will be thwarted. Eradicating child poverty should be a policy priority and requires a new, more holistic approach to tackle the many forms that this disadvantage can take.

Early years

There is strong – and growing – evidence about the importance of high-quality early years care in giving every child a good start in life. For instance:

- Studies have shown that children from low socio-economic backgrounds but with high cognitive ability at 22 months are overtaken by less able children from more affluent families between the ages of 5 and 10⁵
- Once children fall behind in cognitive development, they are likely to fall further behind at subsequent educational stages.⁶ Poor cognitive development also increases the risk of future offending⁷
- In Scandinavia a decline in the impact of parental factors on children’s educational attainment coincided with the introduction of universal, high-quality childcare⁸
- Access to universal, high-quality childcare gives disadvantaged children a better start in life and higher educational attainment⁹

Provision of high-quality early years care is good for all children, but seems to have a disproportionate impact on children from poorer backgrounds:

- Evidence from around the world finds that formal care has an above average beneficial impact on disadvantaged children’s development¹⁰
- In the UK, the benefits of higher-quality pre-school care are greater for boys, children with special educational needs and disadvantaged children. The difference between attending a high-quality pre-school and attending a low-quality pre-school is wider for children who come from more disadvantaged backgrounds.¹¹

We believe that early years care is beneficial for all children, the most disadvantaged especially. Continued investment here is important for social mobility.

Family, parenting and community

What parents and families do, and the social circumstances in which they do it, have perhaps the greatest influence on a child’s fortunes in life. Family and parenting impact on a child’s outcomes in a number of ways. Parenting is strongly correlated with a child’s psychology and behaviour, which in turn impacts on their later educational and employment outcomes. For example, work by Leon Feinstein¹² finds:

- Psychological characteristics (such as feelings of self-esteem and the sense of control over one’s destiny) and behavioural qualities (such as anti-social behaviour, peer relations, attentiveness and extroversion) at age 10 are strongly associated with social class background. Feinstein attributes this to the impact of different material circumstances and differences in child-rearing abilities and psychological support.
- These psychological characteristics and behavioural qualities at age 10 affect labour market outcomes in later life. Children with higher scores for self-esteem, for example, experience shorter spells of unemployment and enjoy higher wages in adulthood. Feinstein notes that candidates with greater self-esteem are likely to be more confident and better able to sell themselves at job interviews; candidates able to get on well with their peers are likely to work better in teams and so on.

Parenting and family life are influential through the impact they have on children's acquisition of cultural, social and financial capital.

Cultural capital, in the form of attitudes, values and aspirations:

- Parents' expectations and aspirations for their children are important predictors of educational attainment. Parental interest in a child's education has four times more influence on attainment by age 16 than does socio-economic background.¹³
- Parental involvement in education and aspirations for their children's future increase children's attainment.¹⁴
- Studies have shown that a lack of familiarity with particular forms of culture and a lack of sophisticated cultural vocabulary can limit people's confidence in certain social settings and deny them access to opportunities that might contribute to upward social mobility.¹⁵

Social capital consists of the values and networks that can be passed down from parents. Such social capital has an uneven social distribution:

- Young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds are less likely to establish social networks beyond their immediate circle, thus restricting the wider support and opportunities available to them.¹⁶
- The social networks of better-off families tend to be more diverse than the social networks of poorer families.¹⁷

'My parents don't know anything about the application process and it is difficult to understand alone.' (Participant in a Youth Forum about the university admission process)

This social capital gap has an important impact on outcomes. Those with less-developed social networks are much less likely to stay in school after the age of 16 than are those with more-developed social networks (see figure 2a).

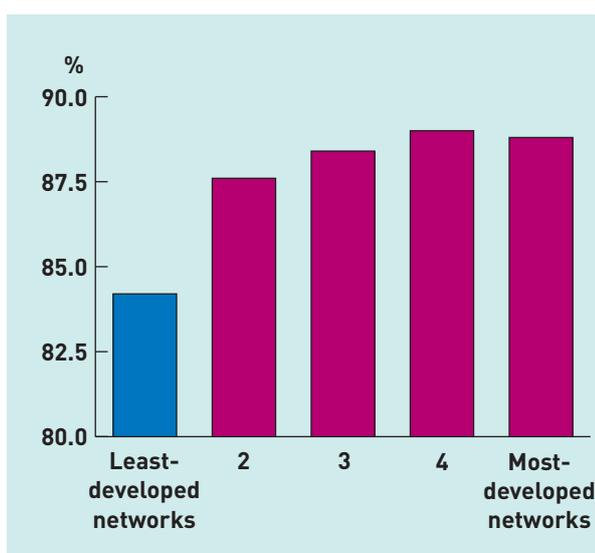


Figure 2a: Percentage of children expecting to stay in education after the age of 16, by scale of parental networks¹⁸

Financial capital is also a determinant of success in later life. There is good evidence, for example, that access to moderate amounts of financial capital at an early age can have major impacts on later life outcomes:

- A small amount of capital (between £300 and £600) at age 23 is associated with better outcomes later in life.¹⁹
- One study finds that someone who was 23 in 1981 and who received a £5,000 inheritance was approximately twice as likely to be self-employed as someone who received no inheritance.²⁰
- Evidence from the National Child Development Survey of a cohort of children born in 1958²¹ demonstrates a positive link between asset-holding at age 23 and welfare outcomes later in life. Those with assets tend to spend less time unemployed and enjoy better health. Research from the US shows that homeowners are more active in local politics and neighbourhood organisations.²²

The most substantial inequalities in modern society are not simply between income groups, but between those who own shares, pensions and housing and those who rely solely on wages and benefits. Spreading asset ownership – for example by encouraging more home or employee share ownership – has an important role to play in tackling inequality and speeding up mobility.

We believe that good parenting is the foundation for a mobile society and that parents and families should be better valued and supported. We also believe that asset-holding should be more widely encouraged.

Education and schooling

Education and schooling is becoming an increasingly significant driver of social mobility. Success in school up to the age of 16 has long been regarded as a key factor in explaining rates of social mobility. Studies²³ show that around 38% of inter-generational mobility can be explained by observable educational factors, comprising:

- 11% from cognitive skill development
- 7% from non-cognitive skill development
- 20% by school qualifications at age 16.

Research also shows that:

- Time spent in education is by far the most important determinant of future social status.²⁴
- Poor behaviour and low self-esteem at school age are good predictors of male unemployment and low wages, and can increase the risk of long-term unemployment for some groups by almost 10%.²⁵

Goldthorpe and Mills, however, find that, even when level of educational attainment is controlled for, there remains a significant association between an individual's class origins and class destinations. And research by Saunders argues that education is a classic 'positional good' – the more people who have it, the less valuable it becomes as a means of entering top positions, but the greater is the penalty for those who fail to get access to it at all.²⁶

This prompts Goldthorpe²⁷ to suggest that, as any particular level of educational qualification becomes more widely held across the workforce, the less information it offers employers about the potential of those who possess it. Employers may then give increased attention to other indicators in making employment decisions. As a result, social and people skills, personal style, adaptability, team working and other softer skills have become more important to employers, driven in part by the growth in service sector employment. Many of the softer skills required by employers may be correlated with social class background rather than formal educational attainment, which may help to explain the increase in the variance of earnings at any particular level of educational attainment.

We believe that the balance of evidence points to the quality of education and schooling is vital for a mobile society, and that this is becoming ever more important as the economy becomes more knowledge-based. We believe that every child deserves a good, well-rounded education to improve their employability prospects, and that continuing investment and reform are key to that happening.

Post-school qualifications and transitions into work

Gaining post-school qualifications is crucial in providing people with the skills and capabilities to progress. Indeed, some estimates suggest that around a fifth of all inter-generational social mobility can be explained by post-16 qualifications.²⁸ Higher education is particularly important, as figure 2b shows.

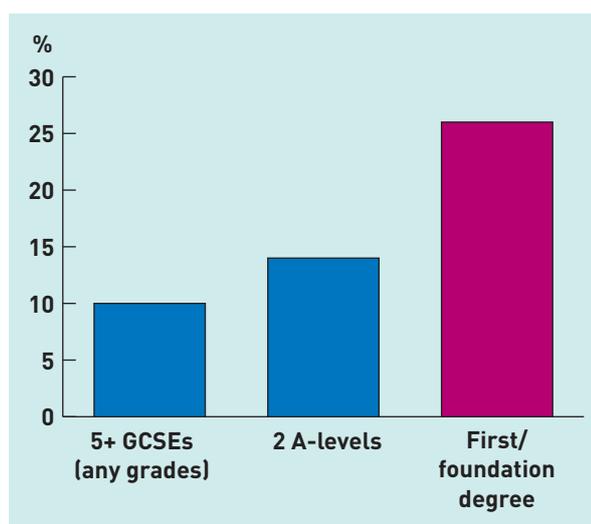


Figure 2b: Average percentage wage return versus no qualifications, 1997–2006²⁹

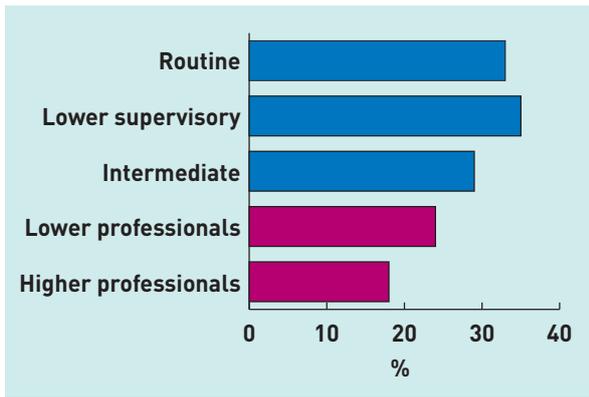


Figure 2c: Percentage with main study aim a vocational route, by parental occupation³⁰

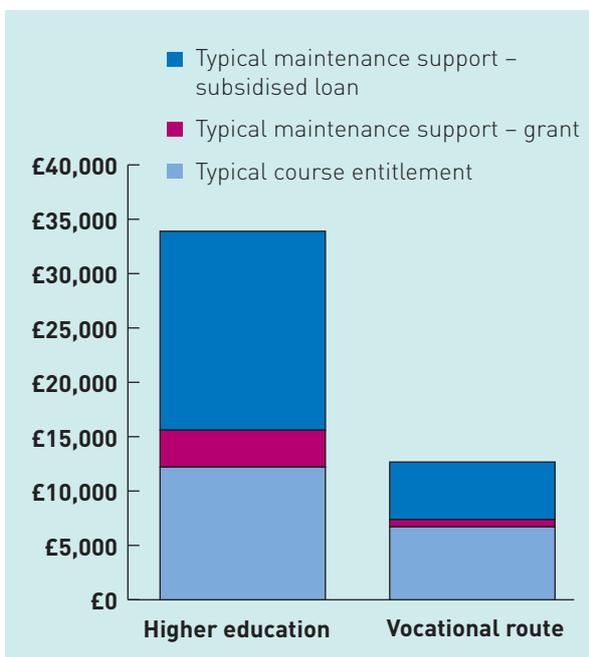


Figure 2d: Financial support that typical students doing vocational and academic training might expect to get³¹

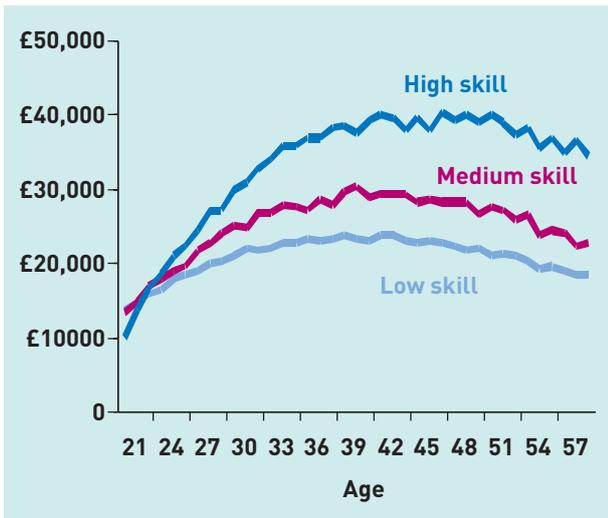
Participation rates in further and higher education remain strongly correlated with parental income. The evidence also shows that those who choose vocational routes into work tend to be from disadvantaged social backgrounds (figure 2c). Such vocational routes have lower rates of return than higher education, and also receive less support from the Government (figure 2d).

Despite improvements in the last decade, nearly five million people of working age still have no qualifications. Unsurprisingly, their employment rate is below 50%, compared with the average of 75%, and the premium on skills and qualifications is growing, not falling.

We believe that post-16 education and training, including the important work of further education colleges, is becoming more important for people's employability and needs greater recognition as a driver of social mobility.

Opportunities to work and progress

Social mobility can often stall when unemployment rises and opportunities decline. Certainly the most disadvantaged in society are those without work. The UK has the eighth-highest rate of employment in the OECD out of 30 nations, but one child in six today grows up in a workless household – rising to one in four in London – and too many people remain trapped in an endless cycle of low-waged work and spells of unemployment.³² Improving people's employability prospects is, of course, vital, but equal attention needs to be paid to their opportunities to progress once in work and to develop further skills. As the evidence in figure 2e shows, the difference in returns to skills widens by age. This places increased importance on the second and third chances that adults have to increase their skill levels and to progress in work.



In the modern economy, skills become redundant increasingly quickly:

- Evidence shows that our most productive skills are acquired on the job, which means that an integrated view of skills policy must be taken across the life cycle³³
- The pace of technological change means that employees need to continually develop and update their skills
- Length of job tenure has been decreasing in recent decades: now only 8% of women and 14% of men hold jobs for longer than 20 years.³⁴

Figure 2e: Gross median annual earnings (£) by age for men, disaggregated by skill level, 1994–2006³²

We believe that the notion of a one-off chance in education and training can no longer deliver a mobile society. More focus needs to be placed on learning throughout life, with a flexible training system that empowers individuals and that is personalised to their needs.

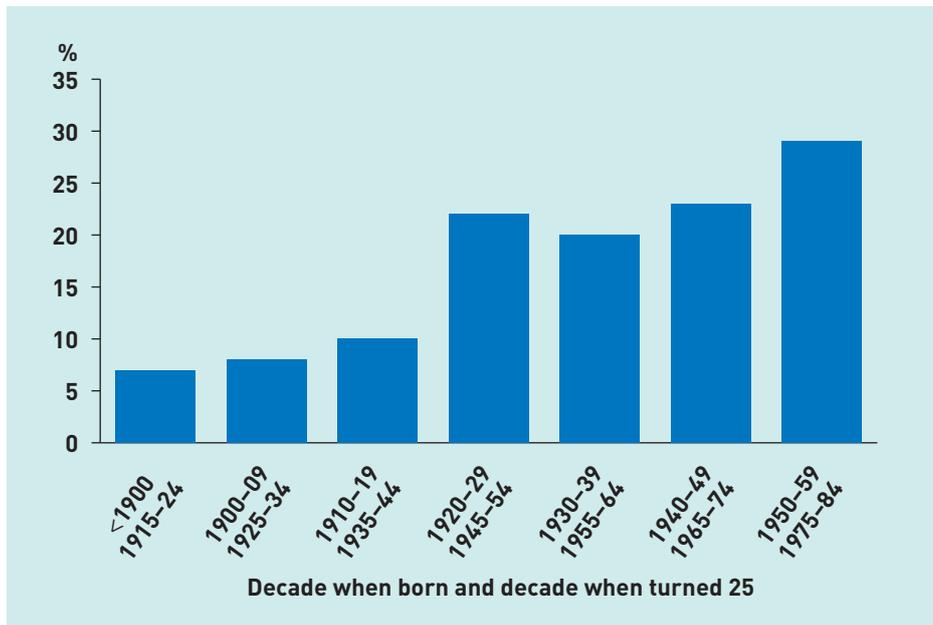


Figure 2f: Net percentage of men in higher occupational class than father, surveys of birth cohorts³⁵

How is the UK performing on social mobility and how do we compare with other countries?

Following the rise in professional and managerial opportunities in the decades after the Second World War, social mobility took off in the UK. As figure 2f shows, for the generation of men starting work during this period, there was a step-change in the proportion of those who got better jobs than their fathers.

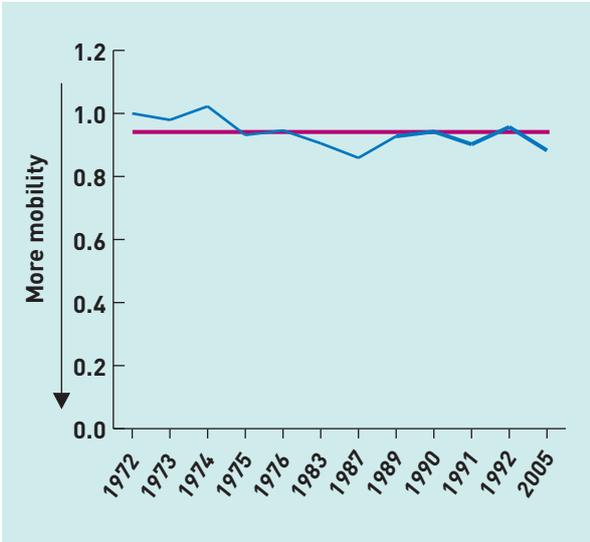


Figure 2g: Estimates of class fluidity, males aged 25-59³⁷

However, since the 1970s the evidence (see figure 2g) suggests that the likelihood of a man moving to a higher occupational class than his father has remained constant. In other words, social mobility for men has been relatively flat³⁶ since the 1970s, although, as we explain later, that may be changing.

For women, however, the proportion with a better job than their father has been rising (see figure 2h).

But for women it has not been a one-way street. Inequalities in the workplace persist, and there is strong evidence that new mothers face downward mobility once they return to the labour market.

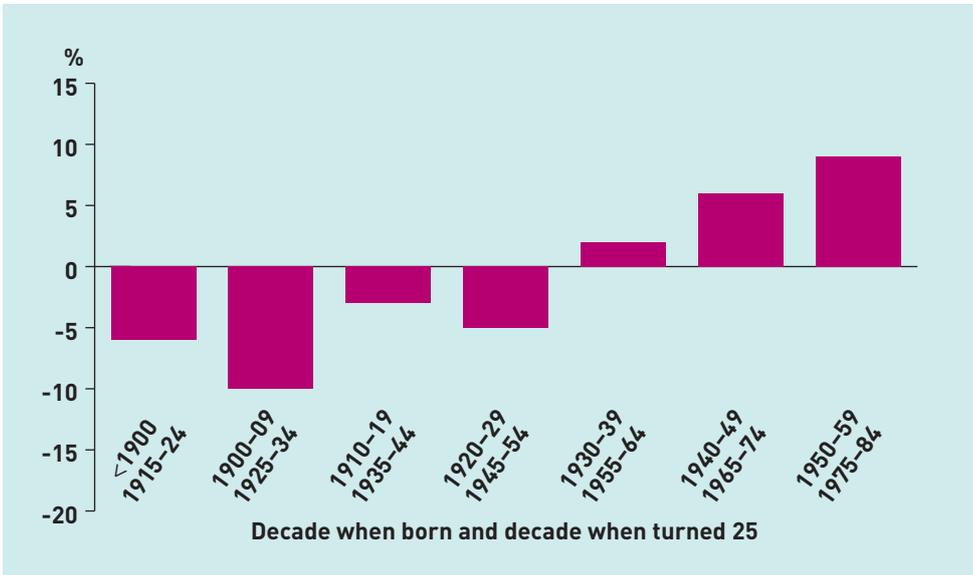


Figure 2h: Net upward mobility of birth cohorts of daughter relative to father, %³⁸

Comparing these trends internationally, social mobility has historically been lower in the UK than in many other countries. One study of six European countries finds the UK with the lowest levels of social mobility for women and the second lowest for men (see figures 2i and 2j).

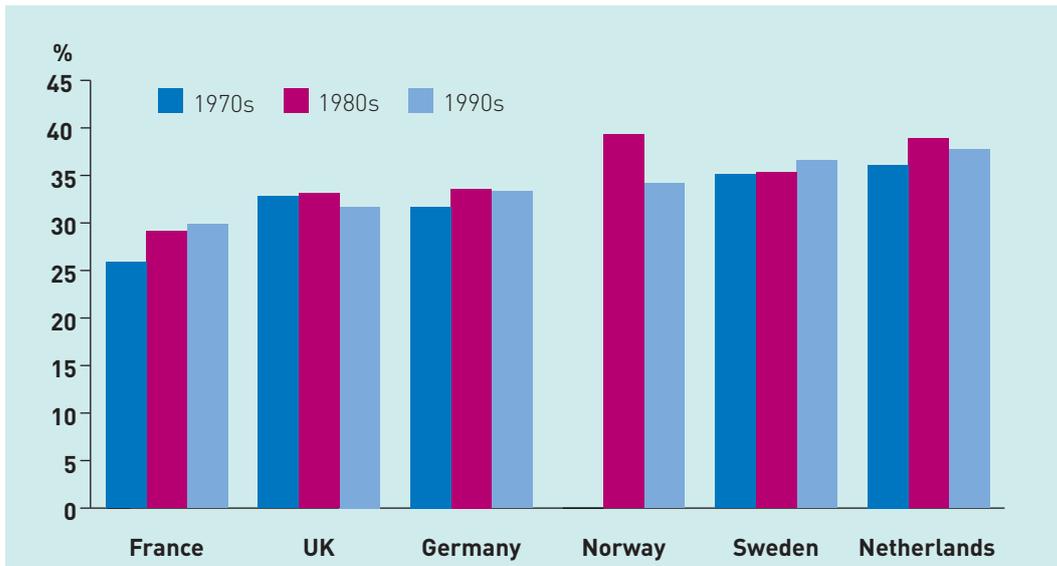


Figure 2i: Upward social mobility: the proportion of **men** getting better jobs than their parents³⁹

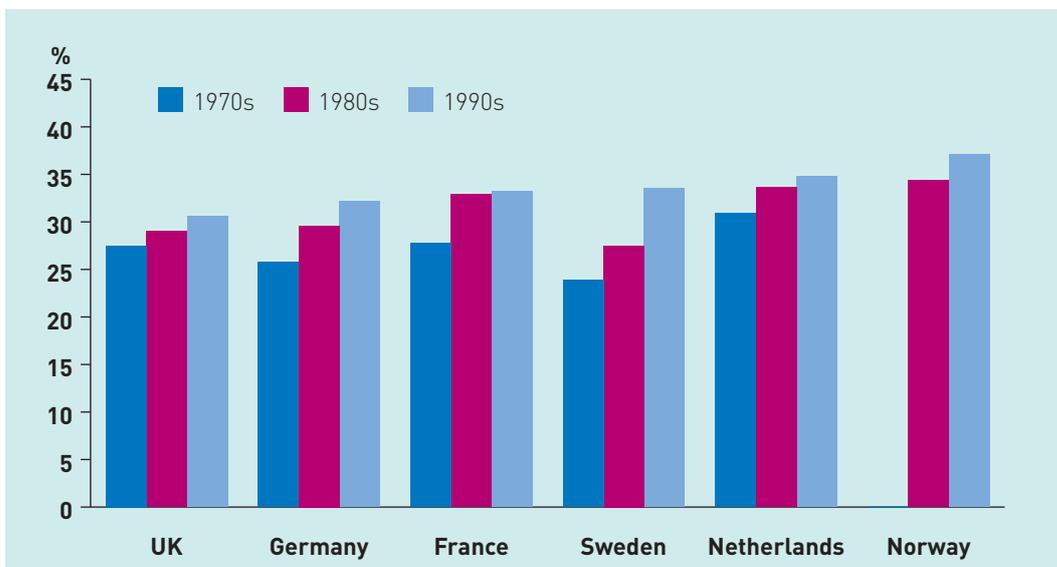


Figure 2j: Upward social mobility: the proportion of **women** getting better jobs than their parents⁴⁰

Another survey of 12 countries finds Britain just behind Brazil and the USA in terms of parental income being a more significant determinant on an individual's income (see figure 2k).

The Panel believes the balance of evidence suggests that social mobility has neither risen nor fallen in recent decades, but that social mobility in the UK is generally lower than in many other countries.

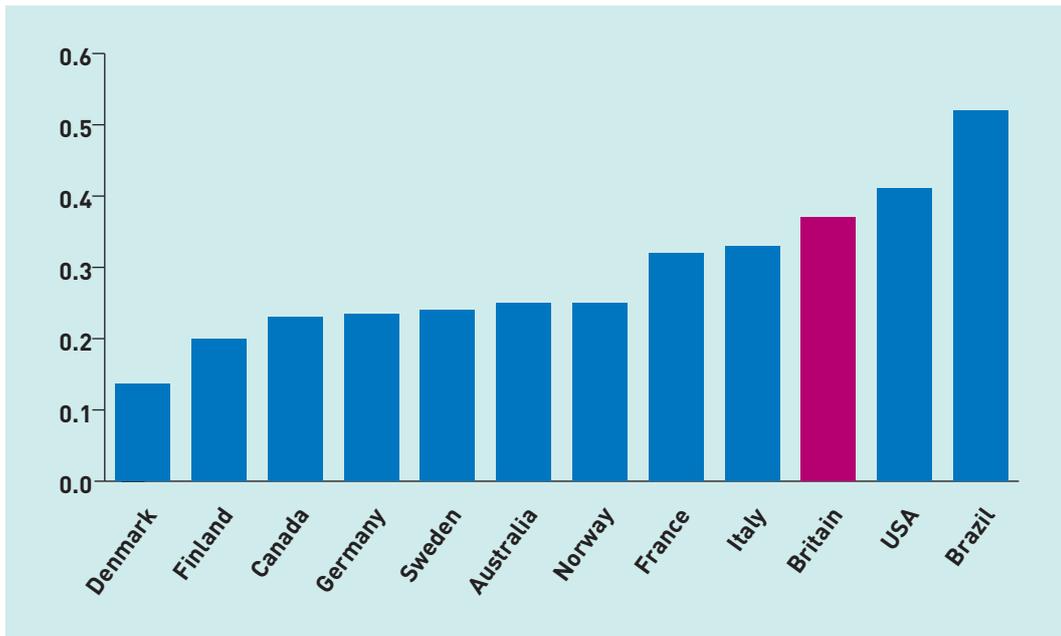


Figure 2k: Inter-generational income elasticities for those born in 1960⁴¹

There are clear opportunities in the years ahead to improve rates of social mobility into the top jobs

Although social mobility has historically been low in the UK, there is the opportunity for a second wave of social mobility – if the opportunities are grasped now. These opportunities are provided by:

- Economic change, with continued growth in professional and managerial opportunities expected in the years ahead
- Progress in schools and education, which suggests a reduction in the link between household income and pupil attainment
- Trends in poverty and inequality, with poverty rates having fallen in recent years
- A strong and growing evidence base on what makes for a socially mobile society, which is now being used by policy makers in countries across the world.

Economic change

The fundamental factor that will provide an opportunity for increased social mobility is the changing nature of the economy. Despite the current downturn, experts predict that long-term structural growth in the economy will be most concentrated in the professional and managerial sectors, so creating new room at the top.

Some studies (see figure 2l) suggest that between now and 2020 the economy will need up to seven million new professionals, with up to nine in ten of all new jobs likely to be in these sectors.

Progress in schools and education

The latest evidence suggests that the impact of family background on educational attainment has fallen for the most recent generation – those born in 1990 and who took their GCSEs in 2006 (see figure 2m). This offers hope for future social mobility as this generation progresses through education and into professional careers.

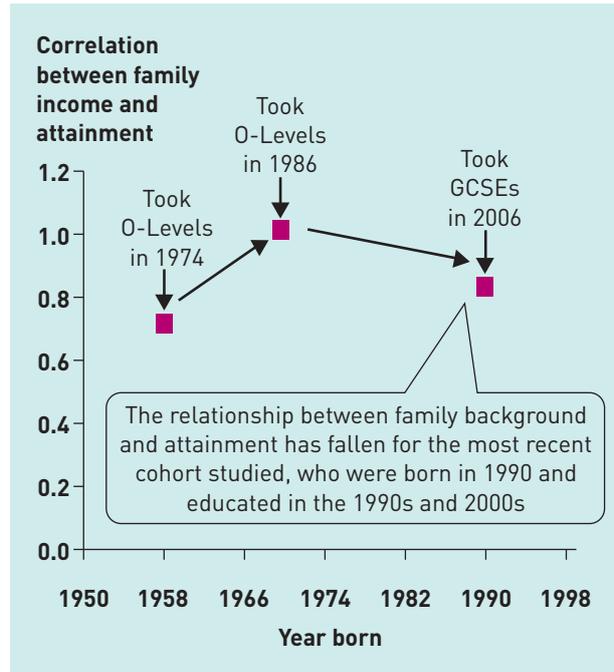


Figure 2m: Relationship between family income and GCSE/O-Level attainment⁴³

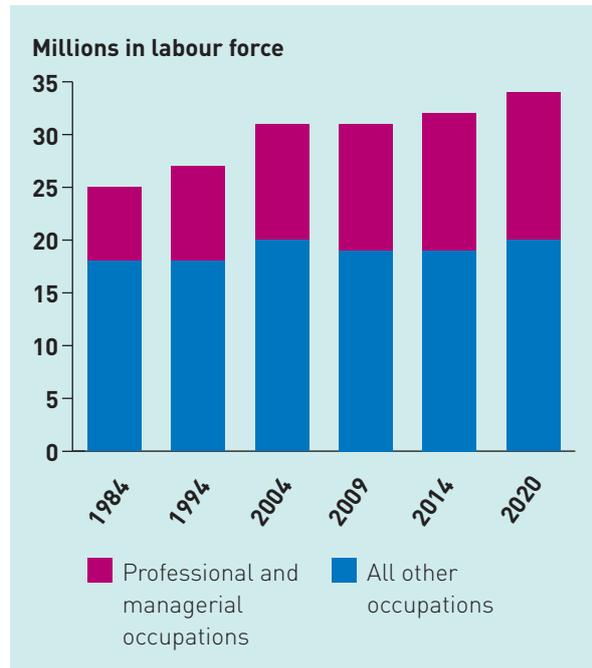


Figure 2l: Historical and forecast labour demand, by occupational class⁴²

Trends in poverty and inequality

Falling poverty rates and flattening levels of inequality may provide more equal opportunities for today's generation of young people to get on in life. Over the last decade or so, more than 500,000 children have been lifted out of relative poverty and over six million people have been lifted out of absolute poverty.⁴⁴ Levels of inequality have also flattened in recent years, after rising between 1978 and 2000 (see figure 2n).

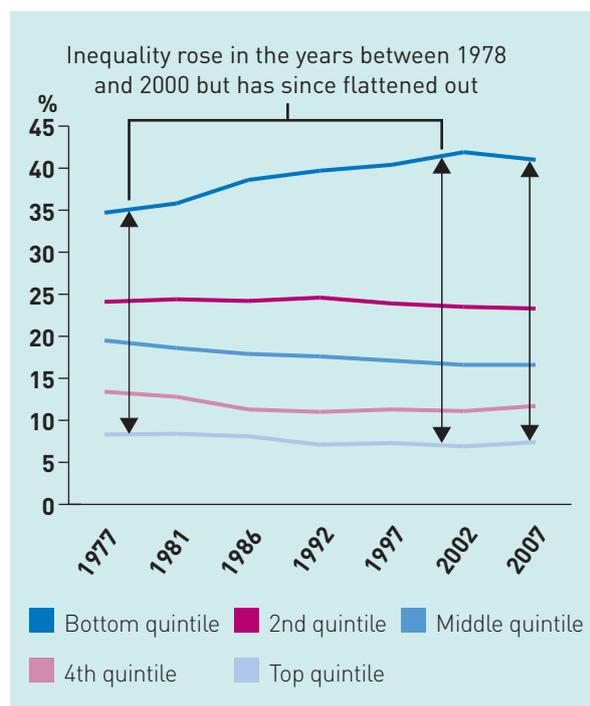


Figure 2n: Proportion of total household income, by income quintile

Growing global evidence base

Over recent years, an improved evidence base has emerged about what makes socially mobile societies. We believe this provides an opportunity for well designed policy interventions to improve life chances. Around the world, countries are focusing on social mobility:

- The US Government under President Obama has set out how to pair a new focus on social mobility with social responsibility – emphasising family support, the role of education and hard work

- The Australian Government is building partnerships between all levels of government, business and community organisations to address economic and social disadvantage and provide new opportunities for individuals and communities. The emphasis is on support for children, closing gaps in inequalities and on place-based interventions to support communities and neighbourhoods.
- The French Government is taking positive action to raise social mobility and improve employment outcomes. For example, a new equality drive to open recruitment to professional careers is being pursued through new legislation allowing candidates to send fully anonymous CVs when applying for jobs.
- The Swedish Government continues its emphasis on educational investment and reform. In the last 15 years, over 900 new schools have been established to drive up standards and reduce the educational inequalities that typically characterise socially immobile societies.
- The Finnish Government has placed educational standards at the heart of its social mobility programme. All pre-school and school teachers must now have a master's qualification. Alongside this, vocational routes are expanding and universities are being encouraged to build partnerships with schools, colleges and employers. For example, all students who are entitled to internships receive two-thirds of their funding from their university.
- The New Zealand Government is focusing efforts on aspiration-raising for a range of professional careers, including engineering, science and technology.

Conclusion

We believe that social mobility has many dimensions and is influenced by factors at every stage of an individual's life. We want to see a meritocracy, where individuals make the most of the opportunities open to them. The UK has not achieved as much in terms of social mobility as comparable countries. We believe, however, that there are new opportunities to be grasped for a second great wave of social mobility in the UK. We have heard from the leading experts on social mobility and have used this as the foundation for recommendations in our Report.

Generating greater social mobility relies on an overall policy framework that seeks greater equality and wider opportunity, rewards aspiration and endeavour, and demands responsibility and respect. Our approach is one where we want to see new opportunities opened up for everyone in society, while recognising that, without more targeted action, some will never have the chance to seize such opportunities. Many of the recommendations in this Report are universal: aimed at breaking open the closed-shop society. Others are more targeted: aimed at giving the most disadvantaged the opportunity of an equal chance in life.

Critically, our approach requires a grown-up relationship between the citizen and the state: between what governments can do and what individual citizens need to do. Governments can equalise opportunities throughout life; but, in the end, social mobility relies on individual drive and ambition. Put another way, if the job of the Government is to create more chances for people to get on, it is the job of the citizen to grab those chances.

It is this notion of a State that empowers citizens to realise their own aspirations to progress that underpins much of the thinking in this Report. Indeed, there is a strong case for the Government to apply this notion and that of a 'fair rules' approach across the whole reach of public policy – including in welfare, housing and education. The work of the Panel, of course, is limited to an examination of what would make for fairer access to the professions.

It is beyond our reach to make recommendations across every aspect of public policy that bears on social mobility. But we believe that the issue of social mobility is so central to the future of the UK that the Government should find new ways of driving this agenda forward.

Recommendation 1: Social mobility should explicitly be the top overarching social policy priority for this and future governments. The Government should develop new ways of embedding this priority across all government departments. It should develop new partnerships with civic institutions, professional bodies, community organisations and individual citizens to help deliver this priority.

Recommendation 2: Building on the *New Opportunities* White Paper, the Government should establish an expert social mobility commission. The commission should have at its core three key roles:

- **Research:** providing evidence on trends and policy on social mobility in the UK and internationally
- **Technical advice:** providing advice to government, other public bodies, and employers on policy measures to raise social mobility including by disseminating best practice from the UK and internationally
- **Transparency and accountability:** monitoring and reporting on the actions that government, the professions, employers and others take to improve social mobility and on their impact.

It should be comprised of a small number of independently appointed experts, meeting as an advisory board and supported by a handful of staff.

Chapter 3

New opportunities for a professional career



This chapter sets out:

- The case for fairer access to the professions
- The case against some of the myths we have encountered during our work
- The case for new opportunities being available at different stages of life
- The outline of the remainder of this Report.

Why social mobility matters

Social mobility matters to all of us because:

- Economic growth and efficiency rely on nurturing and on making the best of all talent in society
- Equality of opportunity is a value cherished across our society and the political spectrum
- Social cohesion, inclusion and a thriving civic life are better and more meaningful when people know there are no artificial barriers to them or their children getting on in life.

It is for the individual citizen to determine how to make the most of opportunities in life. Choices about which career paths to pursue inevitably involve trade-offs, which each individual will determine in ways that best suit their circumstances. But how opportunities are opened up to people depends on things that are beyond the individual's control – for example, their parents, family, peers and community, and the role of public policy and society more generally. We believe there is no single silver bullet that can deliver social mobility.

Nor do we believe that a fast-changing modern economy like our own can any longer be built on the notion that people get one chance in life. Rather, we believe that getting the best out of every citizen requires a new notion – that opportunities need to be made systematically available at every stage of life. We believe that opening up new opportunities in this way requires a partnership approach – between government, schools, universities and employers. We believe the professions must be at the heart of these new partnerships. In this chapter, we propose an outline of how this could work. Subsequent chapters fill in the detail.

Dispelling myths

Before we move on, we believe it is important to address some of the popular myths that we have heard in the course of the Panel's work. We believe such myths are simply that – excuses for a status quo that is not sustainable or acceptable as the professions expand and need more fully to embrace the notion of diversity and fairer access.

The assertions we have heard:

- Social disparities in who gets into top careers are a product of inherited intelligence
- Qualifications alone are the best guide to aptitude and capability
- Diversity means 'dumbing down'
- Fair access to professions will mean bright people losing out to less bright people in life
- Widening professional opportunities infringes professional self-regulation.

We understand where such arguments come from, but in each case we believe they are wrong and need to be dispelled.

Nature versus nurture

It is sometimes assumed that the social disparities in who progresses to a senior professional career are just a product of inherited differences in intelligence. We have looked closely at the latest research, which is part of a hotly contested debate related to the broader 'nature versus nurture' argument. We reject the notion that the disparities observed in who gets into top careers are a product purely of inherited intelligence. We do so for three reasons.

First, the evidence on whether intelligence is itself inherited is far from clear: estimates vary from zero to 80%.¹ Recent work suggests that genetics and environment interact in quite complex ways to determine intelligence and capability.

Second, the observed social disparities in who gets into a professional career are so large as to suggest that the inherited-intelligence argument could only explain the patterns if rates of inherited intelligence are very high (close to 100%), and if there are no other factors determining life chances either now or in the past.

And third, once we do control for intelligence, we know that many other factors play a role in determining life chances, as we detailed in chapter 2. For example, Breen and Goldthorpe² have reanalysed the research using the National Child Development Study and found that, while ability and effort do play a part, the effect of class origins on class destinations is, in fact, much stronger:

'Children of less advantaged class origins need to show substantially more merit than children from more advantaged origins in order to gain similar class positions.'

Were opportunities to get into professional careers truly meritocratic, we would expect to see substantially more social mobility in Britain than we do at present.

Qualifications – the best guide to aptitude?

We have listened to many experts and professions on the value and predictive power of qualifications. It is true that qualifications are an important guide to aptitude, and so are highly valued by employers. But employers nowadays also want a broader set of skills and capabilities. They recognise that aptitude and ability to perform on the job cannot be measured by qualifications alone.

One survey showed that soft skills such as adaptability were more valuable to employers than education or qualifications.³ We have received evidence that suggests the soft skills employers are looking for are (in order of stated importance):

- Communication skills
- Teamworking skills
- Confidence.

In another survey that we received, employers said that they found it increasingly hard to fill graduate vacancies because students fail to match academic achievement with leadership, teamwork and communication skills.⁴

There is good evidence that young people can develop these skills through, among other things, a richer school experience, such as extra-curricular activity and participation in clubs and societies. Our evidence also suggests that there are fewer opportunities for those from less-privileged backgrounds to benefit from such opportunities. The importance of developing a wider set of skills and capabilities now needed for a professional career has guided our recommendations, particularly in relation to education and schooling. The evidence we have received that too much emphasis is being placed on qualifications has also helped inform some of our recommendations on diversifying entry routes into the professions and on improved selection processes for university entry.

Diversity and ‘dumbing down’

Increasing fair access to professional careers is not about ‘dumbing down’, any more than it is about allowing young people who otherwise would not be bright enough to become doctors or lawyers. It is about making current access routes fairer and ensuring that those young people who succeed in gaining a top job do so on the basis of talent and merit alone. Throughout this Report, we point to clear evidence that at present there is not a level playing field in career opportunities. Despite good progress on many fronts in recent times, we know that a range of inequalities in opportunity remain:

- **Gender:** Women earn, on average, 23% less per hour than men. Women working part-time are paid around 40% less per hour.⁵ On current trends, the pay gap between men and women will not close until 2085, and it will take 20 years for women to achieve equal representation in professions like the Senior Civil Service.⁶
- **Ethnicity:** If you are of ethnic minority origin, you are 13% less likely to find work than is a white person.⁷ Variations obviously exist between ethnic minority groups, but on current trends it will take over 100 years for people from ethnic minorities to get the same job prospects as white people.⁸

- **Disability:** Disabled people are still more than twice as likely to be out of work as are non-disabled people⁹
- **Age:** Some 62% of over-50s feel that they have been turned down for a job because they are considered too old, compared with 5% of people in their 30s¹⁰

These inequalities persist. In this Report, we focus, however, on socio-economic inequality. The UK is a highly unequal society. Unfortunately, class background still too often determines life chances. Too many people – from middle-income as well as low-income families – encounter doors that are shut to their talents. The professions, despite many excellent efforts, still exhibit a closed-shop mentality.

Yet we know that the progress that has been made on some aspects of diversity – such as gender equality – has not led to a dumbing down of the professions. Rather, more diversity and improved performance have gone hand in hand. We believe that this approach needs to be built on. More diverse professions will foster innovative and imaginative thinking. And getting the most talented people from all backgrounds into professions is crucial for Britain’s competitiveness and success. At its simplest, a more diverse Britain requires the professions to become more diverse.

Some have suggested that the way to achieve this is through various forms of positive discrimination to reverse the inequalities in access to professional careers. We reject this. We believe it would not work, and instead could create new kinds of unfairness. Our aim should be to improve the overall quality of intake to the professions by widening the pool of qualified candidates, rather than by introducing new forms of discrimination that could undermine the principle of admission by merit. We set out in this Report the case for positive action and new partnerships to level up opportunities for all.

Bright people lose out

Some worry that fairer access would mean bright people losing out to less bright people when it comes to professional careers or even university places. We believe that fair access means exactly the opposite: namely that the brightest and most talented people get a fairer chance to progress. That is exactly why we reject artificially discriminating in favour of certain groups, but rather recommend policies to ensure that all get the fair chances and support they require.

It is particularly important to note that there is no fixed set of high-quality jobs, as the evidence points to a rapidly rising number of professional opportunities in the years ahead. So we do not believe the debate should be about how to reappropriate the existing pie of professional opportunities. Rather it should be about how we slice an expanding pie.

Professional self-regulation

Of course, the first duty of the professions is to provide high-quality services. This relies on the professions themselves taking ownership and responsibility for self-regulating and maintaining their high ethical standards. We make no comment on the regulation of the professions, since the subject is beyond our remit.

We do, however, recommend that the professions go further and faster in opening their doors to a wider pool of talent. We believe there is a compelling business case for doing so:

- With studies¹¹ showing that between now and 2020 up to seven million new professionals will be required in the labour force, the professions have a strong competitive interest in widening access to all who have talent

- Diverse professions cater better for a diverse society. As the problems confronting police officers and doctors, for instance, become ever more complex, the professions need those not just with the highest academic achievements but also those with wider, more varied experiences
- A more representative workforce may in turn generate higher levels of satisfaction and trust.

This business case is further strengthened by the fact that simple and affordable measures can make a big difference, and throughout this Report we provide detailed case studies on what can be done. For instance, we know that:

- Low-cost and easy-to-implement measures can go a long way and there is a body of existing best practice across a range of professions that shows the simple ways in which fair access can be improved
- There can be development opportunities for employees, for example, many professionals enjoy ‘giving back’ and helping ensure fair chances for others, such as by mentoring young people
- Helping to ensure fair access adds to an employer’s corporate social responsibility (CSR) portfolio and the reputation of their organisation.

New opportunities throughout life

We believe there is an overwhelming case for opening up new opportunities for professional careers. In the subsequent chapters of this Report, we propose recommendations to create this opportunity society. Our starting point is the need to change the prevailing notion in society from one that sees opportunities available to some people to one where they are available to all, and from one that has been about people having one chance in life, whether at age 11, 16 or 18, to one instead that makes opportunities available throughout life. The professions have exemplified the old notion that a limited pool of talent was enough to get by on. All too often their default setting has been to narrow access routes into a professional career. The result has been greater social exclusivity. Such elitism will no longer work in a modern global economy, where the UK’s competitiveness relies on using all of the country’s talent and where a rapid growth in professional jobs relies on broadening the pool of talent from which the professions recruit. In turn, that means finding new ways to open up opportunities at all stages of life, so that more people can potentially progress to a professional career.

Outline of the Report

The remainder of this Report details how we believe all this can best be achieved.

In chapter 4 we focus on the role of parents, families and communities in supporting young people's early aspiration for professional careers. We recommend new partnerships between the professions and government for:

- a new national career mentoring scheme, linking up young professionals with young people
- improved work experience, including structured 'taster' days or weeks in a professional job
- early visits to universities, possibly with parents
- more opportunities to build the soft skills vital to a professional career: communications, teamworking, confidence.

This would all be backed by a national 'Yes you can' campaign, headed by inspirational role models, to encourage more young people to aspire to a professional career.

In chapter 5 we focus on schools and colleges. We want every school to be good and to raise aspirations. But we know that, although many are world leaders, there remains a tail of under-performance. Our recommendations involve:

- closing the attainment gap by expanding the supply of good schools, particularly in disadvantaged areas, giving parents there new 'rights of redress'
- increasing the number of city academies, which have been a significant success, at both primary and secondary level
- transforming careers advice in schools and colleges, abolishing the careers advice part of Connexions service with a dedicated careers advisory service that is equipped to advise on access to the professions – and that starts from primary age
- changing the school curriculum to place more emphasis on soft skill development and extra-curricular activity
- requiring schools to change the way they measure pupil outcomes, focusing on their end destination rather than just qualifications.

In chapter 6 we focus on universities. A university degree remains the most effective route into all the professions – and the key to a much higher income throughout the graduate's lifetime. We recommend:

- changing the traditional academic calendar to a more flexible all-year academic calendar – offering different start times – and accrediting learning in smaller units
- investing more to support remote and online learning
- removing the artificial and increasingly indefensible division between part-time and full-time higher education in relation to funding, regulatory and student support frameworks.

In addition, in order to extend widening participation programmes, we recommend:

- New partnerships between universities and local schools, and between universities and the professions
- That all universities take into account the educational and social context of pupils' achievement alongside attainment levels and aptitude tests to inform university admissions procedures
- Publishing more data about who gets into university, to help assess the effectiveness of widening participation programmes.

Finally, we recommend a new vocational route to university through a programme of Apprenticeship Scholarships: targeted, fully funded packages for the most talented apprentices to continue their studies at university.

In chapter 7 we look at internships and work experience. These have become a key route into many professional careers. Our recommendations involve:

- Establishing a new internship code, which will create a fair and transparent system for advertising and recruiting to internships
- Introducing new forms of funding to support interns, including:
 - changing the Student Loan system, so that interns can draw down their loan in four parts rather than three, to support summer vacation work and reviewing the case for additional support through this window
 - offering micro-loans, perhaps managed by the Student Loans Company, to cover short internships
 - extending the scope of Professional and Career Development Loans
 - opening up university halls of residence to interns during the summer vacation, in order to provide low-cost accommodation.

We also propose that new guidance should be put in place for employers, and a new national Kitemark be introduced for internship schemes, recognising and rewarding best practice.

In chapter 8 recruitment and selection processes are examined to ensure that they allow people, regardless of background, a fair chance to get on. Our recommendations involve:

- The collection of data on the socio-economic background of all members of the Senior Civil Service
- Each profession carrying out a review of current practice within the profession – reporting publicly by the end of 2010, with an action plan for improvement.
- Updating the online Professional Recruitment Guide, and, with joint promotion by the professions and the Government, help employers to develop fairer recruitment practices.

In chapter 9 flexible entry and progression into the professions are examined. We consider new ways of opening up opportunities for a professional career, whether through Apprenticeships, entry later in life, or through switching careers. Our recommendations involve:

- New vocational routes into the professions, with each profession working with the National Apprenticeship Service and the relevant Sector Skills Councils to establish clear vocational progression routes into the profession
- Increasing the use of paraprofessionals in public services and the professions, and ensuring that there are clear progression maps from paraprofessional roles
- Extending the right to flexible working to all, once economic circumstances allow and supporting women and other returners back into careers
- Simplifying access to training, through a new system of Lifelong Skills Accounts, in which everyone is entitled to a training voucher up to the value of £5,000 at any time in their lives and for any training to be redeemed.

In chapter 10 we propose ways of delivering new opportunities. Our recommendations involve:

- The Panel on Fair Access meeting annually for the next three years to assess and report on progress
- A reinvigorated UK Professional Collaborative Forum (now part of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills) with a broader remit for sharing best practice and advising employers
- The creation of a new social mobility charter mark to recognise and reward employers' best practice
- Establishment of a new social mobility commission, tasked with overseeing progress towards increased social mobility, and with advising government and employers on policy measures to raise social mobility.

Conclusion

We believe there is every chance of a second great wave of social mobility in our country. But we do not believe it will just happen. It requires a change of attitudes to broaden opportunities in society and at different stages of life. The professions need to take a lead in rejecting the old elitist notion that the UK can progress on the basis of opportunities being available only to some people some of the time. Instead, we advocate an approach that will see opportunities becoming available to more people more of the time. We reject the myth that this entails either dumbing down or social engineering. Instead, we believe it will benefit the professions and help both our society and our economy to flourish. We argue that it will need action from more than one organisation or one part of society. It is certainly not just a job for government or the professions. It is a job for all.

Chapter 4

Raising aspiration: new opportunities for young people to learn about the professions



This chapter sets out:

- The importance of raising the aspiration of young people and the critical role of parents
- How mentors and role models can whet young people's appetites for a professional career
- How technology can reach and inspire young people
- Our recommendations, which involve:
 - A reformed Gifted and Talented programme in schools
 - A national programme for career mentoring and work 'tasters' for all talented young people in school
 - A national 'Yes you can' campaign headed by inspirational role models and founded on a national school alumni network
 - Sustained professional outreach into schools headed by a network of professional ambassadors
 - Harnessing technology to inspire and inform young people through a national technology challenge award, and to create a dedicated 'professions.com' portal
 - Financing our proposals through state and private partners working together, including through new 'social mobility bonds'.

Raising aspirations, unleashing talent

'...the expectations of families, teachers, peer groups and role models can have a profound effect on the aspirations and attainment of young people.' (Russell Group of Universities)

'I didn't have any aspirations and thought working in the City wasn't for me. The experience has given me a dream to aspire to working in the City.' (Pupil from Shooters Hill School)

Personal case study

As a teenager, Kelly-Anne Ferguson dreamed of a career in forensic science, but doing her GCSEs was difficult and she didn't get the grades that she needed. While Kelly-Anne was studying for A-Levels at a sixth-form college, her teachers recognised that she had outstanding academic talent. They encouraged her and this inspired Kelly-Anne to apply to university, even though nobody in her family had ever been themselves. Kelly-Anne received an offer from Oxford University.

'I can't believe I ever doubted it ... the opportunities you have to do things at university are amazing, things that you might never consider doing otherwise.'

Kelly-Anne is now studying for a PhD in chemistry.

Social mobility is defined above, all else, by the aspiration that people have to succeed in life. It is often set at an early age. For some, aspiration comes naturally. For others, it needs nurturing. Without support, information and access to social networks, even those with the greatest talents may miss out.

There are two key points in life where young people most need support:

- First, in developing early aspirations and goals.
- Second, in translating those aspirations into decisions about specific career pathways.

At both of these points the biggest influences on young people are their parents. Children naturally seek advice and guidance from those who care for them most. And parents want their children to do well in life. So ensuring that parents have the right support is critical in helping young people to make the informed choices that are right for them.

We have been given clear evidence by organisations like the Sutton Trust that the aspirations of parents are key to educational and occupational outcomes for their children.¹ Of course, most young people benefit from the natural support that comes from their parents, family and friends. For example:

- Twice as many parents in professional occupations expect their children to go to university compared to parents from lower socio-economic groups (see figure 4a)
- 56% of children whose parents have a professional career also wish to have a professional career. By comparison, only 13% of children whose parents are in semi-skilled occupations would contemplate a professional career.²

This aspiration gap needs to be closed if social mobility is to take hold.

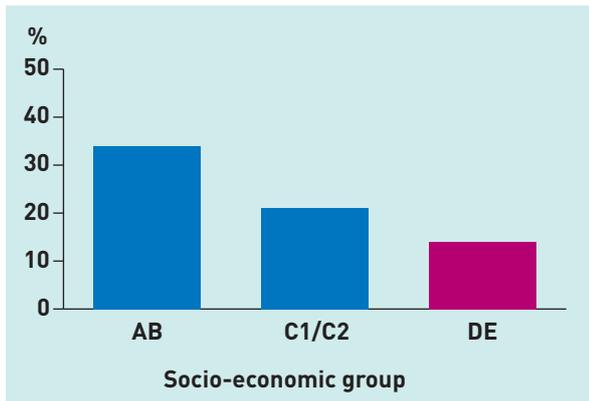


Figure 4a: Percentage of parents who think their children will go to university by socio-economic group³

Many other responses to our National Call for Evidence expressed concern that young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds have fewer social networks beyond their immediate circle, and that this in turn affects their desire and ability to chase professional jobs.

So parents are key, and in chapter 5 we suggest ways in which they can be better supported to help children aspire to a university place or a professional job. We have also been given evidence about the positive impact that inspirational mentors and role models can have on young people, particularly those from less advantaged backgrounds. We were told by the Brightside Trust that when young people meet successful professionals who come from similar backgrounds to them, they can provide living testimony of what can be achieved. icould also told us that the opportunity to experience work in a professional organisation can inspire young people, as creative technology also can.

When designed in the right way, initiatives of this sort can open young people's eyes and widen their horizons. We believe it is therefore right that where they can help to support young people and families, that the Government, professions and employers do so. Below we set out a number of ways of providing this support.

4.1 Reforming the Gifted and Talented programme

The Gifted and Talented programme focuses on (mainly 14–19-year-old) 'gifted' children who are academically bright, and 'talented' children who may excel at sport or other activities. Schools are expected to identify around 10% of school students as gifted or talented. Currently only 8% of primary school pupils are on the programme, compared to over 13.5% of those at secondary school.

The Panel believes that a programme of this sort could potentially be important in giving children from a wide variety of backgrounds the opportunity to realise their aspirations and aptitudes. However, the programme is not as effective as it could be. It is characterised by:

- Lack of direction as to how resources should be spent
- Limited resources being too widely spread over numerous schools and pupils
- Lack of support from many schools and colleges, particularly for the 'gifted' parts of the programme.

The Panel recognises that the programme is once again undergoing a period of transition. We believe that the Government should seize this moment to radically reform and rebrand the programme. We believe that it should become the umbrella programme which delivers a number of the recommendations set out in this chapter – particularly around mentoring, work tasters and soft skills. Rather than trying to identify gifted children and tagging them as such, the new programme – perhaps called ‘Raising Aspiration’ – should be open to all pupils who could benefit from help building up skills such as:

- Oral and written communication skills and personal confidence
- Dealing with information, IT and technology
- Developing the right attitude to success.

In addition, the new programme should provide the cohort of bright, disadvantaged students with new opportunities such as:

- Early visits to universities, including with parents
- Face-to-face contact with professionals
- Short and structured work tasters in professional jobs
- Mentoring by young professionals and undergraduates
- Parental participation in programmes.

Recommendation 3: The Government should reform and rebrand the Gifted and Talented programme to provide more opportunities to pupils in primary and secondary schools, including mentoring, work tasters and training in soft skills.

4.2 A national network of career mentors

The Panel’s work has unearthed a number of excellent initiatives that provide inspirational mentors for young people. These include schemes such as the Brightside Trust’s ‘Bright Journals’, which gives young people without the benefit of parental social networks access to young professional mentors. This has proven to be an effective way to change perceptions and raise aspirations.

Case study: The Brightside Trust’s Bright Journals scheme

Bright Journals, run by the Brightside Trust, is a healthcare careers e-mentoring scheme involved with Years 10–13, which pairs up pupils with undergraduates studying the subjects that they are interested in. The young people are all from under-represented groups in society. The scheme has helped over 6,000 young people in 700 schools, and runs across 23 medical schools/departments and NHS Trusts.

We have been impressed by the range of mentoring schemes that have been brought to our attention, such as Legal Futures and the UK Career Academy Foundation. The evidence seems to be clear about the benefits of such mentoring by young professionals:

- This kind of mentoring inspires and motivates the mentees; the enthusiasm of mentors is remarkable
- It raises the aspiration of young people to attend top universities and to enter the professions
- It provides young people with a concrete path that they feel is achievable for them to follow
- It helps young people to choose the right universities and the right courses for the careers that they have in mind
- It replicates the kind of informal advice and guidance that young people with parents who are already in professional careers often receive from family members and friends.

Many people already act as mentors. With the active involvement of universities and employers, we believe that hundreds of thousands could do so. Many of these mentors could undertake e-mentoring – linking up mentor and mentee through online messenger services. Such initiatives seem to provide clear benefits:

- They enable mentor and mentee to interact at a time and pace of their choosing, and for interaction to be ongoing rather than in formal mentoring ‘sessions’
- By operating online, they ensure that mentoring is convenient to both parties, rather than them having to meet physically in one location (this is particularly important for young professionals)
- They can be a more reassuring way for young people to receive mentoring, particularly for those who feel more at ease interacting online rather than face-to-face
- They represent a cost-effective and scalable version of mentoring when compared to intensive face-to-face sessions
- The interactions can be monitored to avoid child safety problems.

We have also been given clear evidence by the Social Mobility Foundation that career mentoring is most effective at two stages of a young person’s development:

- At Years 9, 10 and 11, before young people make their GCSE or A-Level choices. At this stage, mentoring by students embarked on professional training can help to ensure that young people make the appropriate educational choices for professional entry, as well as providing insight into a specific profession or professional life. Mentoring at this age is particularly important for young people aspiring to professions with strong vocational entry routes, such as veterinary sciences and architecture.
- At Years 12 and 13, while young people are undertaking their A-Levels. At this stage, mentoring by young professionals can inspire and encourage students, and assist them in making the right university applications as well as in providing specific advice and support about entry to the profession. It can be combined with other opportunities to gain insight into the profession, such as short internships. Mentoring by young professionals is best started at this age, because time is short for these valuable mentors.

In recent years there has been a flowering of mentoring schemes. But they tend to be ad hoc and uncoordinated. We believe that this should change. The Panel has investigated how a national scheme for mentoring by young professionals might work, by linking up young professionals (or students studying professional-entry degrees) with young people, particularly those from less advantaged backgrounds. Such a national scheme could:

- Target young people in years 9–13, for example through the reformed Gifted and Talented programme
- Initially focus on around 3,000 less privileged young people from across the country, based on an investment of around £1 million over three years⁴
- In time be extended to include all secondary schools, drawing on the involvement of all our country's universities and professions.

For a national mentoring scheme to succeed, professional bodies, employers, universities and third sector organisations with proven experience of delivering mentoring services will need to work closely with government, which would need to provide seed-corn funding and coordinate activity. The scheme would build on the lessons of existing mentoring programmes, which focus on encouraging young people into university and for which additional funding was announced in the Government's *New Opportunities* White Paper.⁵

Recommendation 4: The professions and the Government should together introduce a national scheme for career mentoring by young professionals and university students of school pupils in Years 9 to 13. The national mentoring scheme should involve partnerships with employers, voluntary organisations, universities and schools.

Recommendation 5: The professions and the Government should organise a 'Yes you can' campaign, headed by inspirational role models, to encourage more young people to aspire to a professional career.

4.3 School alumni networks

'It would be nice to be able to meet some famous journalists and maybe work with local ones for a day.' (Participant in the Panel's National Youth Forum)

Responses to our National Call for Evidence highlighted in particular the important roles that former pupils who come from a particular school or community can have in raising aspirations among young people from that school or community. They can be very effective role models and can help to raise pupils' aspirations. The University of Edinburgh Alumni Database, for example, holds details of alumni who are willing to help current students to gain an insight into the world of work by acting as career contacts and role models.

Many respondents felt that this model was highly effective, as individuals and groups are paired with people from the same background (educationally, socially or even ethnically). Morpeth School was cited as an organisation that systematically provides role models that pupils can relate to on their own terms.

Case study: Alumni mentoring and role model networks at Morpeth School, Hackney

Morpeth School in East London has successfully introduced new ways of motivating pupils to want to continue learning and/or go on to university. The school has developed a strong alumni base. Former pupils who have graduated act as role models and mentors by going back to the school to talk to current pupils at Key Stage 4 about university, and to give informal advice about which subjects to study for specific careers. Other elements of the programme include parental visits to universities. Of a group of 35 pupils who started on the programme, 25 continued to A-Level and 21 went on to university – all of them from families with no history of higher education.

But at present, such schemes rely on the initiative of individuals to drive and support them. The Panel has looked at how a simple website could be developed to match up volunteer alumni – university students or working professionals – with their former schools. The onus would be on schools, universities and professional bodies to promote the website and encourage people to register. The setting up and maintenance costs are estimated at around £400,000 over three years.

Recommendation 6: The Government, working with the professions and universities, should develop a national database of people willing to act as role models or mentors for young people in their former schools.

4.4 Opportunities to gain professional insights

'Accountancy is boring. Isn't it just about adding up numbers all day?' (Respondent to the Panel's Young People Survey)

Gaining practical insight into professional life can widen horizons and open up a world of new opportunities for young people. Short work placements, for instance, are important for improving young people's understanding of the professions. With four in five employers recruiting former interns, there is also compelling evidence that internships have become one of the most important routes into the professions.

At present, almost all 14–16-year-olds undertake some work experience, lasting one or two weeks. The Department for Children, Schools and Families provides £25 million a year of funding for the provision of work-related learning. At their best, such placements help to build up a CV and can be an invaluable aid in the process of choosing an occupation. However, a number of responses to our National Call for Evidence, including from the Career Development Organisation, highlighted the fact that the current statutory work experience at Key Stage 4 is limited in what it offers young people's career-related learning and development.

Case study: Smart Start Experience, Allen & Overy law firm

Allen & Overy, an international legal practice, is currently piloting an innovative new programme called the Smart Start Experience, which gives students a taste of what it is like to work in the business world. More than 100 Year 12 students have been recruited from 21 schools across 11 inner-London boroughs to participate in a week-long, interactive, work-based learning programme. It challenges students with activities such as negotiating the sale of a fictional football club or preparing a legal defence and presenting it in a courtroom environment to a judge and panel of jurors. The programme's aim is to help young people develop a set of skills (including analysis, debating, negotiation, presenting, networking and team working) that will be useful whatever career they choose.

Of the students who took part in the programme, 80% said they were feeling more confident and 82% said they were more ambitious.

Often the duration of a work placement is too short and employers can sometimes struggle to find constructive things for young people to do. Ofsted identified a proportion of work experience placements that did not lead to effective learning.⁶ Some others pointed out that, as with careers information advice and guidance generally, the organising of work experience programmes in schools too often lacked dedicated professionalised staff. Other respondents such as the Internship Network pointed out that those who receive the most relevant work experience organise it themselves through personal networks and contacts, so increasing their advantage over less well-connected young people.

The Panel echoes these concerns about the quality and effectiveness of schools' current work experience programmes.

Recommendation 7: The Government should undertake a radical overhaul of work experience programmes in schools – in conjunction with reforms to information, advice and guidance services and the Gifted and Talented programme – to ensure that they are professionally organised and better aligned with pupils' careers decision-making.

The Panel received evidence about the effectiveness of a range of alternative work experience schemes that offer short and targeted work 'taster' experiences. Such schemes seem to be very effective in helping young people (from less advantaged backgrounds particularly) to raise their aspirations, make inspired career choices and better understand career paths.

The Panel has explored how to develop a national programme of short work tasters targeted to young people who would benefit most from these. We have been impressed with schemes such as the Channel 4 Work Related Learning Programme.

Case study: Channel 4 and 4Talent

Channel 4, through 4Talent, has developed a work-related learning programme that seeks to attract a wider range of participants through formal and informal education routes. It aims to raise aspirations, provide inspiration and demystify the routes into the sector in order to break down barriers to entry. The strands of the programme are as follows:

- Work experience scheme: offering 80+ work experience placements in London to help students aged 14–19 learn about what it is like to work in the media
- Inspiration Week: a four-day event offering around 160 young people aged 14–19 the opportunity to get involved in a wide range of activities, including interactive sessions, talks with high-level media professionals, peer-to-peer learning and the opportunity to network
- Generation Next Programme: a 12-week placement for up to nine people that gives them a grounding to kick-start their media career. Placements could be in new media, film, law, advertising or commissioning.

While we welcome such schemes, we are disappointed that examples are sporadic rather than universal and we believe there is merit in creating a national scheme. The Panel was also impressed with the internship scheme for talented Year 12 students operated by the Social Mobility Foundation. The Panel believes that there is merit in creating a national and professional work taster scheme for the most talented young people during their A-Level years. This scheme would:

- Provide young people with a real insight into professional life, with short work tasters of between one and two weeks in top businesses, including the public sector and third sector organisations
- Be targeted to an initial 3,000 young people from disadvantaged backgrounds per year, based on a funding package of around £1.1 million over three years⁷
- Be extended over time to include all secondary schools
- Work in conjunction with the national project on mentoring by young professionals in order to maximise benefit for the targeted group.

Recommendation 8: The Government should establish a national work taster scheme for older school pupils, starting with those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds. The professions should identify employers willing to take part. Together the Government and the professions should provide financial support for the project, which should be linked to the proposed national scheme for mentoring by young professionals and university students.

4.5 Professional outreach

'I think that the Government should organise people from different careers to come in and talk about what they do and how they got there, and what type of grades they needed to get that type of career.' (Respondent to the Panel's Young People Survey)

'I think having more open days to various professions would be a major help' (Respondent to the Panel's Young People Survey)

Hearing directly from a professional about what a career means in practice often helps young people to make the right choices about their futures. The Panel has been impressed by the breadth and depth of school outreach programmes currently being run by the professions and third sector organisations. Professional outreach can take many forms, such as:

- Visits by employers to schools to talk about a profession;
- School visits being arranged to meet professionals; and
- Undergraduates and young professionals visiting schools.

Many responses to our National Call for Evidence cited examples of schemes that are highly effective. A number of universities, for example, have introduced programmes to widen participation rates by offering outreach programmes to under-represented socio-economic groups. The University of Sheffield's Outreach and Access to Medicine Scheme, for example, provides support and guidance to local Year 9–13 students with an interest in medicine and science, and the Citizenship Foundation coordinates a range of outreach initiatives.

Case study: The Citizenship Foundation

The Citizenship Foundation is an independent education and participation charity that is involved in the delivery of various initiatives aimed at giving young people from all backgrounds an insight into a variety of professions through interventions, both in curriculum subjects such as drama, English and citizenship and in extra-curricular settings.

Programmes include two national mock trial competitions, delivered in partnership with the Magistrates' Association and the Bar Council, which together involve approximately 6,500 students drawn annually from across the secondary age range in almost 600 state schools. These competitions rely on volunteer input from 300 barristers and 800 magistrates and other legal professionals, ranging from senior members of the judiciary to court staff. The Foundation also runs the National Youth Parliament Competition, a financial education programme, Paying For It, and the rapidly expanding Lawyers in Schools project – each of which engage senior professionals from politics, finance and law in the classroom.

The Panel was also impressed with the way in which some professions use young professionals as ambassadors in schools. A good example is the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Ambassadors programme. The ambassadors volunteer their time for free to act as inspiring role models to young people. The STEM Ambassadors aspire to make every school in the country aware of the programme. The target is to have over 27,000 STEM Ambassadors nationwide by 2011. Similarly, the Panel has been told about the Bar Council's initiative in providing young barristers to give talks in schools about legal careers. The Panel has considered how this might work with other professions.

Recommendation 9: Each profession should recruit and support a network of young professional ambassadors who would work with schools to raise awareness of career opportunities for young people. Professional bodies should recognise as continuous professional development the contribution of young professionals who volunteer their time.

A number of respondents to the Panel's National Call for Evidence felt that professional outreach was, on the whole, provided on an ad hoc basis, while others called for more support for professional bodies to introduce outreach into schools, including in primary schools. Good examples of outreach are demonstrated by the House of Lords and the Armed Forces.

Case study: The House of Lords

The House of Lords has an active and innovative outreach programme, which includes regular talks by Members to young people, an online blog and co-hosting of the student parliament. There are also plans to extend this work through outreach visits, events within Parliament, online initiatives and cross-platform projects. The House of Lords also supports the Peers in Schools initiative and the Lord Speaker's Competition.

Case study: The Armed Forces

The Armed Forces make over 11,000 visits to schools each year, 90% of which are to state schools. These visits are designed to encourage good citizenship and raise awareness of the Forces. Other initiatives include a vigorous recruiting and outreach programme to encourage more people from diverse backgrounds to join the Armed Forces.

The Sutton Trust has also told the Panel that young people from better-off backgrounds are often on a trajectory to further and higher education by age 11, while those from less advantaged homes often have little concept of where their education and career path might take them. It is therefore never too early for the professions to engage with schoolchildren, for example through outreach and visits to primary schools. On the other hand, one of the Panel's National Youth Forums concluded that while all young people would benefit from some general careers advice early on in senior school, pressure should not be put on young people to decide upon their future career too early.

The Panel believes that professional outreach has a part to play at both late primary and early secondary school age.

Recommendation 10: All schools should work with businesses and professions to promote and support professionally led outreach at late primary and early secondary age.

4.6 Harnessing technology to inform and inspire young people

The Panel has heard evidence about how best to reach and inspire young people – listening first-hand to young people from across the country at a series of youth forums, as well as examining the results of a survey of over 1,500 young people. It is clear that technology has an important role to play in inspiring and informing young people about a career in the professions.

There are several providers of online careers information, such as www.prospects.ac.uk and www.horsemouth.co.uk. In addition, some organisations are developing more interactive approaches to engage young people, such as Careers from Science provided by the Science Council.

Case study: icould.com website

icould is a free resource that offers an insight into real career stories told by real people, delivered through www.icould.com. It contains around 1,000 stories that are accessible to young people, many in video form. The stories cover a wide spectrum of experiences, occupations and career and education pathways across all sectors of work. Survey results provided by icould show that 36% of respondents wanted to work in a profession, with teaching (107 of 1,525), medicine (77) and law (64) being the top three career choices.

The Panel has looked at the innovative ways in which technology might best be used to reach young people and inform them about the careers options open to them. A well-marketed challenge award, with an award ceremony offering prizes for the best ideas on how to inspire young people, would be one such way to do this. It could be jointly delivered by government and a professional group, and would cost around £100,000.

Recommendation 11: The Government should work with a professional group to establish a ‘youth technology and innovation challenge’ award as a means of identifying and showcasing creative ways to inspire young people.

There is currently no shortage of information available to young people about careers and the professions but because little of it is coordinated, it can sometimes be hard to find the best sources of information. For example, the Panel’s Young People Survey found that two in three young people wanted more support, with one in six highlighting the need for clearer sources of information.⁸

A central ‘professions.com’ website could be created to provide a gateway to current schemes and initiatives that support young people, and to further information and advice about different career options.

Recommendation 12: The professions and the Government should create a ‘professions.com’ website to link young people to existing online information about professional careers and schemes, such as internship and mentoring programmes. The professions should provide relevant content and material to develop this website.

4.7 Financing these programmes through new partnerships

This chapter has made a number of practical proposals that might support young people to raise their aspiration. The Panel believes that government support is critical but also recognises that it cannot do everything, or do it alone – professions and employers also have an important role to play. One way of achieving this kind of partnership working is via co-funding to pool resources, bringing together government, employers and professional bodies.

Recommendation 13: The Government should bring forward seed-corn funding, in the region of £2.5 million to £3 million, to fund the recommended proposals on mentoring, work tasters and an online portal. Projects should be co-funded by a partnership comprising government, professional bodies and employers.

The Panel also believes that there are a range of innovative financial instruments that could be harnessed in order to drive forward the social mobility agenda in partnership between the Government, professional bodies and top employers. For example, the Prime Minister's Council on Social Action recently explored the model of Social Impact Bonds. These work by:

- Investors putting money into charities or social enterprises
- Government agreeing to pay the investors an interest payment over a period on the invested amount, with full repayment of the principal, conditional upon the demonstrable success of the initiative.

The private investor bears the risk of non-performance with clear rewards for success. The Panel believes such Social Impact Bonds could be a useful instrument for securing partnership investment in social mobility projects. The bonds could be branded as "Social Mobility Bonds" and be used to finance programmes targeted specifically at university social mobility and fair access.

Recommendation 14: The Government should use the model of Social Impact Bonds as a means of leveraging state and private investment into the delivery of social mobility interventions.

Conclusion

Having an aspiration to succeed is the foundation for a professional career. Without individual aspiration, social mobility simply flounders. Supporting and raising young people's aspirations is primarily a job for parents and families. But schools, universities and careers services also have a role to play. So too do properly organised programmes of mentoring and professional outreach. There are a plethora of such schemes at present, many of them truly inspiring. But they are poorly coordinated and ad hoc. We believe that there needs to be a new national drive to raise aspirations. We propose national projects for career mentoring and work tasters. We propose a national 'Yes you can' campaign, fronted by inspirational role models and underpinned by a reformed Gifted and Talented programme in schools. The new programme would include better mentoring and information services to give young people a far clearer insight into career choices. It would draw on the commitment of a national network of volunteers, including school alumni, drawn from university students and young professionals.

Chapter 5

Schools: new opportunities to learn and choose careers



This chapter sets out:

- How better schools can provide new opportunities for young people to learn and choose careers
- Our recommendations which involve:
 - Closing the attainment gap by expanding the supply of good schools, particularly in disadvantaged areas, and by giving parents new rights of redress in those areas
 - Enriching the school experience, expanding extra-curricular activity and increasing opportunities for pupils to develop a range of soft skills extra-curricular
 - Strengthening partnerships between private and state schools through a clearer public benefit test, to be assessed by the Charity Commission
 - Abolishing the Connexions careers service and replacing it with a dedicated, professional and flexible careers advisory service in every school and college
 - Measuring school performance in a rounded way, including a new focus on the outcomes that pupils achieve once they leave school through 'destination trackers'.

Better schools for the knowledge economy of the future

In a knowledge-based economy, education is the motor that drives social mobility. As the UK faces tougher global competition, not just in the manufacturing sector but also in services, the premium on acquiring and updating skills grows ever stronger. Those without skills get left further and further behind, with profound implications for social cohesion. Depending on the policy choices that are made, and their success in raising levels of attainment, education can either close the inequality gap or widen it.

In the UK our education system is characterised by world-beating centres of excellence, at every level from primary schools to higher education institutions. But we also have a long tail of educational underachievement, illustrated by the shameful fact that our country has the second highest level of young people not in education, employment or training (the so-called NEETs) in the OECD. It is no longer sustainable for our education system to

produce youngsters who lack the skills to compete in the modern labour market. The changing nature of our economy demands that every child must be given better opportunities to learn and choose careers.

In the last decade there has been a substantial effort on the part of government to raise educational attainment across the board. The priority given to education is most welcome and, in many regards, is paying dividends in improved results, modern schools and higher standards. We agree with the Sutton Trust, which argues that there is a strong correlation between education spending and levels of social mobility across a range of different countries. In particular, it is welcome that the Government has invested so heavily in early years education and in so doing has learned the lesson from the Scandinavian countries, where universal childcare has enhanced mobility and narrowed inequality. We hope that early years education will continue to be a priority for investment in the future.

In general, higher levels of education spending are associated with higher levels of mobility; we would be concerned if the economic recession and pressures on government spending led to reductions in education budgets. We also agree with the Sutton Trust, however, that more could be done to target resources on policies and programmes that enable children from all backgrounds to fulfil their academic potential. In this chapter we propose how the Government could build on the many excellent reforms it has introduced over recent years in order to further reduce educational disadvantage and further raise standards. We are not proposing to rewrite every aspect of education policy. Instead we focus on measures that we believe can address specific deficiencies in the education system which limit fair opportunities to get on in life or pursue a professional career.

Rising educational attainment

Educational attainment has risen over the last 15 years, as figure 5a shows. Over the last decade there have been substantial improvements in the number of young people obtaining good GCSE grades. A-Level passes have also continued to rise, year on year. Of students aged 16–18 in schools and colleges entered for all Level 3 qualifications in 2008:¹

- 95.3% of candidates achieved passes equivalent to at least two GCE/VCE/Applied A-Levels – an increase of 0.1 percentage points from 2007; and
- 12.1% of GCE/VCE/Applied A-Level candidates achieved three or more A grades at A-Level – an increase of 0.2 percentage points from 2007.

Considerable progress has also been made in reducing the number of schools deemed to be failing. Since 1997, over 1,500 schools that required special measures have been successfully turned round and a further 280 have been closed. At the end of the 1997/98 academic year there were 515 schools in special measures, but this figure had fallen to 229 at the end of May 2009.²



Figure 5a: Percentage of pupils achieving five or more GCSEs³

There is also evidence of progress in narrowing educational inequality. Children who receive free school meals have seen their GCSE results improve at a faster rate than those who do not. Similarly, some ethnic minority groups – such as black Afro-Caribbean boys – have also closed the attainment gap. Primary schools in the poorest areas have improved almost twice as fast as those in the most affluent areas, and among secondary schools City Academies are improving results at four times the national rate despite having twice the number of pupils on free school meals.⁴

But the social gap in attainment remains too large

Despite this progress, the attainment gap by social position is still substantial. And it starts very early in life – it is strongly evident by the age of five. Evidence from the Sutton Trust⁵ points to research from the United States showing that half of the school attainment gap is present at the start of school. This makes the case not only for continued investment in early years education, but also for better targeting of resources, alongside greater engagement of parents, so that the communities who most need support receive it. Similarly, in the UK, the attainment gap narrows at primary school albeit only slightly, before widening again after age 11.

Today the chances of a child who is eligible for free school meals – roughly the poorest 15% by family income – getting good school qualifications by the age of 16 are less than one-third of those for better-off classmates. Attainment at age 16 is key to children’s future life chances. Without it, the likelihood of a professional career or progression to university diminishes. As we discuss in the next chapter, there is more that universities could be doing to open their doors to a wider cohort of talent, but we agree with the current Vice Chancellor of Exeter University that increasing the pass rate for five GCSEs (including maths and English) for lower socio-economic groups is the most important factor when it comes to widening participation in higher education.

According to the Government's own figures nine out of ten students, whatever their class or background, who get two or more A-Levels then go on to university. The problem is that currently about 360,000 of the 660,000 16-year-old students each year do not achieve the minimum standards necessary to stay on to study for A-Levels, and each year 60,000 of those who were in the top 20% at some time in their education to age 16 do not go on to higher education by age 19.⁶

This pattern reflects the fact that in terms of attainment, only 37% of the lower socio-economic groups gain two or more A-Levels, compared to 59% of the higher socio-economic groups. This in turn reflects performance at 16; only about 34% of children from the lower socio-economic groups get five GCSEs at A–C grades, compared to about 65% from the highest socio-economic groups. For those eligible for free school meals that figure falls to 22%.⁷ The Panel believes that there is more that schools and the Government need to do to close this attainment gap. Otherwise the huge expansion that we are likely to see in professional career opportunities will be blocked off for a whole generation of young people.

Of course to pursue a professional career nowadays requires more than academic ability. Employers are increasingly focused on a wider set of skills, including soft skills. Schools therefore need to take on a wider role to ensure that young people are equipped to get on in life after leaving school. The remainder of this chapter sets out how a new focus on pupils' broader outcomes could be achieved.

5.1 Closing the attainment gap

Great efforts have been made by successive governments over the last two decades to try and close the attainment gap. Increased investment in recent years has modernised schools and expanded staff numbers. But reforms have been the key to raising standards:

- **Assessment and inspection:** in 1993 the responsibility for school inspections was transferred from HM Inspectors and local authority inspection teams to independent inspection teams, coordinated by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted). Parents are now able to judge schools' performances based on independent assessment and league tables
- **City technology colleges (CTCs) and Academies:** CTCs, first piloted in 1986, were created as independent, all-ability, non fee-paying schools for pupils aged 11–18. They offer pupils of all abilities the opportunity to study a curriculum that is geared, with the help of private sector sponsors, towards the world of work. CTCs are being encouraged to convert to Academies, which were launched in 2000. Focused in disadvantaged areas and on secondary schools that have been under-performing, City Academies harness private sector sponsorship and are a key element in the drive to raise standards in some of the most disadvantaged communities in the country. The National Audit Office found that GCSE performance in Academies had improved compared with predecessor schools, and that GCSE performance was improving faster in Academies than in other types of school, including those in similar circumstances. By September 2009 there will be 200 Academies in place
- **National Curriculum:** introduced into primary schools in 1989, with implementation across the primary and secondary phases continuing into the mid-1990s. Literacy and numeracy hours were introduced in September 2000 and were successful in raising standards in the basics in primary schools

- **Developing a world-class teaching profession:** teacher numbers and pay have both been increased over the last decade. More support has been given to teachers to develop higher skills. Teach First, for example, has recruited over 1,000 top graduates to teach in the most challenging urban secondary schools. To encourage more of the most effective teachers to apply to challenging schools, from September 2009 all eligible schools will have access to a package of support for new appointments including the opportunity to offer a three years' service 'golden handcuffs' bonus of £10,000
- **Extended schools:** schools have been extending the services that they offer. Many now open their facilities outside school hours for pupils, their families and the local community. So far, more than half of all schools in the country offer some 'extended services' for the pupils, families and communities they serve. By 2010, the Government wants this to be the case in all schools
- **National challenge:** The Government's National Challenge has established clear minimum standards for schools. It is providing £400 million so that by 2011 at least 30% of pupils at all secondary schools in England will achieve five GCSEs at A*-C including English and maths. In 1997 there were 1,600 schools below this threshold: today the figure is 440 and the number is falling sharply
- **Schools White Paper:** The recent Schools White Paper, published in July 2009, includes a new Pupil Guarantee which will ensure, amongst other things, an entitlement for every child to receive support from a personal tutor. A new School Report Card will also provide a rounded assessment of school performance and enable parents and the public to make better informed judgements about the effectiveness of each school

There is much to welcome here but this progress needs to be built upon. There remains, for example, a correlation between poor areas and poor schools. Over half of secondary schools located in the 10% most deprived parts of England do not achieve the Government's official benchmark for a non-failing school which is 30% of children getting five good GCSEs (including English and maths). In the 10% least deprived areas it is just 3% of schools that are failing.⁸ Better-off parents are often able to circumvent these problems by taking their child out of a state school and sending them to private school, buying extra private tuition or moving near to a good school; these choices are not available to poorer parents.

It is sometimes argued that parents in the most disadvantaged areas are less aspirational for their children than those in better-off areas. The figures on schools appeals repudiate such assumptions, with a large number of parents in disadvantaged parts of the country using the appeals system to try to get their children out of poorly performing schools and into better ones.⁹

Last year nearly 547,000 families received an offer of a secondary school place and 83.2% of families received an offer of a place at their highest-preference school – an increase of 1.1 percentage points from March 2008. But this still leaves one in six families without their first choice of school. Many parents use the appeals process to try to get their child into that school. Last year there were 39,230 appeals heard but only 13,860 appeals were decided in parents' favour – 35.3% of the overall number.¹⁰

The problem is not a shortage of parental aspiration. It is a shortage of good schools. The growing numbers of parental appeals – across the country as a whole – indicate that, despite recent progress in raising standards, there is a gap between demand for good schools and the supply of them. That is the case in many different sorts of communities but is especially so in the most disadvantaged. Further reform is needed. Several options have been proposed:

- City academies could be extended in both the primary and secondary sectors, extending out from the most deprived areas to become, over time, universal across the whole country¹¹
- The supply of school places could be opened up to greater competition, particularly in areas of school under-performance. Existing government legislation allows this to happen and new schools are now being set up. So far, 19 have opened, with a further 37 due over the next four years. New impetus could be injected by new partners, such as chains of state schools or schools sponsored by groups of parents, being invited to take over or work with under-performing schools
- In areas of disadvantage schools could receive additional funding, or each pupil from a disadvantaged background could attract a premium payment to recognise their particular needs. There are already higher levels of funding for deprivation, but money allocated nationally is not always allocated to schools with the most deprived pupils locally. As the recent 21st Century Schools White Paper set out, to ensure that additional funding for each pupil from a disadvantaged background is passed on, the Government could aim to ensure that 100% of deprivation funding is passed on to schools
- Individual parents in areas where schools are consistently under-performing could be given a new 'right of redress' to choose a better school for their child. They could be given an education credit worth 150% of the cost of the child's schooling to take them to a state school of their choice. The extra funding would incentivise good schools to expand their pupil numbers and broaden their social intakes.

These proposals are controversial and contested. For example, the Trades Union Congress and education sector unions argue that an educational credit system would exacerbate the divide between popular schools in better-off areas and those left behind in struggling schools, in more disadvantaged communities. Opponents of the Academy programme argue that expansion across the schools system, at an accelerated rate, would fail the test of an evidence-based policy approach. Others have suggested to us that the policy focus should be on how all schools in disadvantaged areas can be supported to deliver a high-quality education for all local children.

Recommendation 15: The Government should examine these and other educational reforms as part of a sustained new drive to close the educational attainment gap.

5.2 A richer school experience

Educational attainment unlocks social progress. That is why a focus on the educational basics – especially English and maths – remains vital and we would be concerned if this was in any way diminished. Schools need to be judged on their success in delivering good academic results, particularly at GCSE and A-Level since these open the door to a university degree and a professional career.

Fierce competition for university places and graduate-entry jobs, however, means that having an exemplary academic record is no longer a guarantee of success. Schools nowadays need to provide a rich experience for young people that goes beyond qualifications and that helps them to build up a CV of soft skills. Participants in the Panel’s youth fora noted that it is no longer just A-Levels that are taken into consideration by university admissions – extra-curricular activities are given much greater consideration now and were considered by some to be of equal importance as academic grades.

Employers are also increasingly looking for a wider range of skills. They increasingly assess non-academic experiences, as well as soft skills like presentation and confidence. Indeed, the Panel heard from one survey that soft skills such as adaptability were more valuable to employers than education or qualifications.¹²

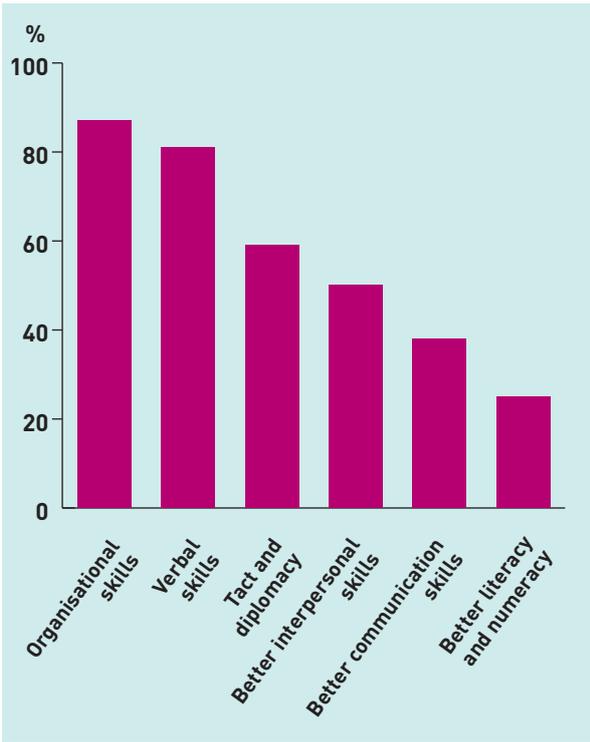


Figure 5b: Skills most in demand from employers¹⁴

The Government’s recently commissioned Rose Review¹³ looked at how primary schools could develop children’s personal skills in order to help them achieve academically. It is welcome that the Government has recognised that the earlier in a child’s life they start to develop soft skills, the better it will be for them in later life.

A sharper, more consistent focus on soft skill development could help to open up greater opportunities for more young people to access a professional career. Our National Call for Evidence heard about several outstanding examples of good practice that successfully help young people, from Year 9 to beyond graduation, to develop a range of soft skills.

Case study: Speak Out Challenge

The Speak Out Challenge runs one-day workshops for Year 9 students in schools across London and Essex to help them develop their public speaking skills. Benefits, which are well-evidenced, include developing life skills, supporting the National Curriculum and improving results for students from ethnic minority backgrounds. Costs for piloting the programme for Year 10 students across 15 cities are estimated to be around £530,000.

Case study: IntoUniversity

IntoUniversity works with children and young people who have talent and potential but who are at risk of underachieving. The majority are from ethnic minority backgrounds and other social groups currently under-represented in higher education.

IntoUniversity delivers high-quality, long-term academic support and helps young people to develop their soft and employability skills through a multi-stranded programme, which has the aspirations of each child at its heart. Initiatives include daily after-school academic support, mentoring with undergraduates and inspirational training courses. It is estimated that it would cost around an additional £3 million a year to roll the programme out across London or to provide cover nationally, to a lesser degree.

Case study: Fastlaners for graduates

Fastlaners is a two-week intensive course for graduates at risk of not finding suitable employment. Designed by the Young Foundation, and supported by the charity Edge, it focuses on the non-cognitive skills that are valuable to professional organisations, such as team working, communication and assertiveness. The programme has been piloted across East London for the past year and subsequent versions will be open to those still in full-time higher education and from other London boroughs, and then across the UK.

Participants in the Panel's youth fora were impressed by schemes run by third sector organisations such as the Brightside Trust, the Sutton Trust and the Social Mobility Foundation. The young people did, however, express concerns that many people do not know about these opportunities, and that opportunities of this sort are particularly important for some young people from less advantaged backgrounds. For example, students from non-professional backgrounds spend significantly less time in clubs, societies, councils and committees, and as course representatives, than their peers from higher socio-economic groups. They also spend significantly more time in paid employment than their peers from higher socio-economic groups.¹⁵

We believe that these initiatives can and should be replicated on a far wider scale so that pupils from all backgrounds can benefit. The Panel believes that there needs to be greater and more coordinated support for young people, regardless of background, in order to develop the wider skills and capabilities that are increasingly important for a career in the professions.

It is also important that the Panel's recommendations build on existing and well-evidenced packages of support already being run, such as the programmes described above.

Recommendation 16: The Government should scale up its support to third sector organisations providing soft skill development programmes for young people. It should ensure that cost-effective and well-evidenced programmes are available in all parts of the country. Soft skills that could be prioritised include team working, leadership and presentation skills.

The Panel heard with interest from the Headmaster of City of London School that what often differentiated independent schools from state schools was the former's support for pupils' extra-curricular activities. We also heard from the Russell Group of Universities how both universities and employers are using such extra-curricular activities to differentiate between candidates for places and jobs.

The Panel believes that all state schools also need to do more to build up their pupils' soft skills by ensuring that they are given the chance to participate in a range of extra-curricular activities – and that schools should be assessed on how well they do this.

Recommendation 17: Schools should place new emphasis on providing a range of expanded extra-curricular activities. The Government, working with Ofsted, should ensure that school inspections assess how well schools are providing good-quality extra-curricular activities.

We also believe that more could be done to foster partnerships between private and state schools in order to share the extra-curricular activities that independent schools so successfully prioritise, particularly in the most disadvantaged areas of the country. We welcome the steps that have already been taken through the independent and state schools partnerships (ISSPs) to harness this expertise, and the Panel heard about several examples of good practice where private schools are working closely with state schools.

Case study: Wakefield Grammar School Foundation

Wakefield Grammar School Foundation plays a key role in the Wakefield ISSP and has forged close links with local schools. Initiatives include: running ISSP music groups; A-Level examiners visiting local schools; inviting local schools to attend Oxbridge sessions at the sixth form careers conference with outside speakers from universities; and running the school's Junior Politics Society, through which candidates from all schools in the Wakefield area are involved in the elections for the UK Youth Parliament.

Of course, not all independent schools are as committed to partnership activities. But we hope more will become so. We believe that partnerships can be strengthened by applying the new public benefit test which all independent schools that are charities must meet. The Charity Commission has published guidance and examples of how fee-charging charitable schools, as recipients of around £100 million per year in tax relief through the taxpayer, can meet the requirement. These include:

- Allowing pupils from local state schools to use its educational facilities
- Allowing pupils from local state schools to attend certain lessons or other education events
- Supporting state schools to prepare A-Level students for entry to universities
- Collaborating with state schools to share respective skills and experience.

Recommendation 18: The Charity Commission’s assessment of independent schools for public benefit should include how they are sharing their expertise in extra-curricular activity and soft skill acquisition with state schools.

Extra-curricular activities, of course, vary from school to school. Popular activities include sports and drama, through to debating societies and the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award scheme.

‘I am doing the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award to Gold, as it looks good on your CV.’ (Respondent to the Panel’s Young People Survey)

Cadet Forces are another example of a popular activity. Cadet Forces (the Combined Cadet Force, Sea Cadet Corps, Army Cadet Force and Air Training Corps) are voluntary and promote the personal and social development of young people by offering a huge range of development opportunities to help them realise their potential and to develop skills and behaviours valued by professional employers, such as punctuality, responsibility, team work and leadership. However, the provision of cadet schools is currently weighted heavily towards the independent sector. Some Cadet Forces are based in communities, rather than a specific school, yet even these will need greater resources if they are to be able to support more young people in that region. And only 60 of the 250 cadet schools in the country are in state schools, which means that children from middle- and lower-income families are missing out as a result.

Recommendation 19: The Government should provide resources to ensure that every state school – starting with those in the most deprived areas – that wishes to participate in Cadet Force activities is able to do so.

A similar approach could be taken to other extra-curricular activities. The arts and cultural industries are a case in point. They will be one of our country’s major professions in future. There is strong evidence that children who are exposed to the arts early in life more actively engage with them when they become adults. And yet, middle- and low-income parents wishing their children to participate in a range of cultural activities often find there is no structure to support them in doing so. Of course, individual parents may be able to pay for some music lessons, enrol their child in a drama club or take them on a visit to the theatre. But what is missing is a structured and supported mechanism to provide children with a range of cultural activities.

Research shows that 71% of parents believe that there should be more or better cultural activities on offer in their local area.¹⁶ Less than 16% think that current provision is sufficient.

Recommendation 20: The Government should work with the arts and cultural industries to deliver cultural programmes to a network of 'Arts Explorers' aged 5 to 11 years. They would receive an annual programme of visits and training in arts and cultural activities, including music, dance, theatre, software and video making.

There is currently no systematic way of recording the accrual of soft skills through extra-curricular activities at either primary or secondary school. For pupils competing for university places and professional jobs, hard evidence of what they have achieved while at school could be a very useful device. Some secondary schools already encourage their pupils to keep a record of all their extra-curricular achievements, which can be used on their UCAS forms or to present to employers at interview, but the Panel believes that this practice should become universal and start while pupils are still at primary school.

Case study: King Edward VI Handsworth School

Each pupil keeps a written record of any achievements or successes in their school diary. Short-term targets may also be set. New Year 7 pupils are told about the Record of Achievement programme and encouraged to contribute. In Key Stage 3 and 4, parents are requested to monitor and sign their child's weekly diary and it is brought to parents' evenings, when families and teachers have the chance to discuss successes and support needs.

The Panel has looked at how extra-curricular activities could be recorded in a systematic way. Respondents to our National Call for Evidence argued that many potential employees from diverse backgrounds have actually developed extensive soft and inter-personal skills through part-time work, but that these are not always acknowledged by employers. They also argued that due to a lack of careers guidance, young people are unaware of the need to develop these skills or, indeed, once they are mastered, the importance of emphasising them at interview and in applications.

Recommendation 21: All schools should ensure that pupils from Year 6 upwards have a record of achievement that brings together all their extra-curricular and soft skill activity.

5.3 Reforming careers advice

For some young people, their career paths come naturally to them. But the majority need support and advice to help them make informed choices. This can come from parents, schools and friends. It can also come from online sources and from careers advisers.

Professional careers services have a particularly critical brokerage role: linking young people, and their parents, to employers and different sources of information. Careers services have undergone a lot of change. Early careers guidance was based on a 'matching model'. It worked

on the theory that it was possible to identify people's traits and, from these, careers to which they were suited. In the context of a changed working environment, in which young people can expect to change jobs and careers many times, this model is generally considered to be outdated.

The new model we are proposing involves young people finding out about their options for themselves, on the basis that if young people are personally inspired to take a certain path then they will be more motivated to achieve more. Ages 11–14 are particularly important, as this is when many young people lose their aspirations. High-quality information, advice and guidance (IAG) is crucial in helping young people to develop ambitious but achievable plans, which are more likely to lead to positive outcomes.

History of careers advice in schools

- **1973:** Local education authorities were given statutory responsibility to provide a career guidance service to young people up to the age of 18
- **1991–95:** Privatisation of the careers service – contracts awarded via competitive tendering
- **1998:** Careers services focused on the most disadvantaged young people
- **2001–03:** Roll-out of Connexions partnerships (coterminous with Learning and Skills Council (LSC) boundaries) provided holistic IAG services
- **2008:** Responsibility for Connexions services transferred to local authorities.

The current system of IAG is a 'one-stop shop' and is most commonly provided through the Connexions service, which was created to provide a comprehensive service to meet young people's needs for IAG – but with a primary focus on those at risk of not being in education, employment or training (NEET).

Ofsted recently reported finding good IAG provision in 12 out of 16 areas visited and satisfactory provision in three others, but satisfaction levels with provision among young people are low.¹⁷ Some of the younger participants in the Panel's youth forum felt that teachers were generally getting better at providing careers advice in schools. They found that younger teachers had more connections and were more aware of access routes to different professions. Others told the Panel that Connexions was generally unhelpful for those aspiring to enter the professions and suggested a new service aimed at higher-achieving students aspiring to a professional job.

'I had career advice from school with a Connexions career adviser, although I felt it was designed for those less academic and it was not very useful at all.' (Respondent to the Panel's Young People Survey)

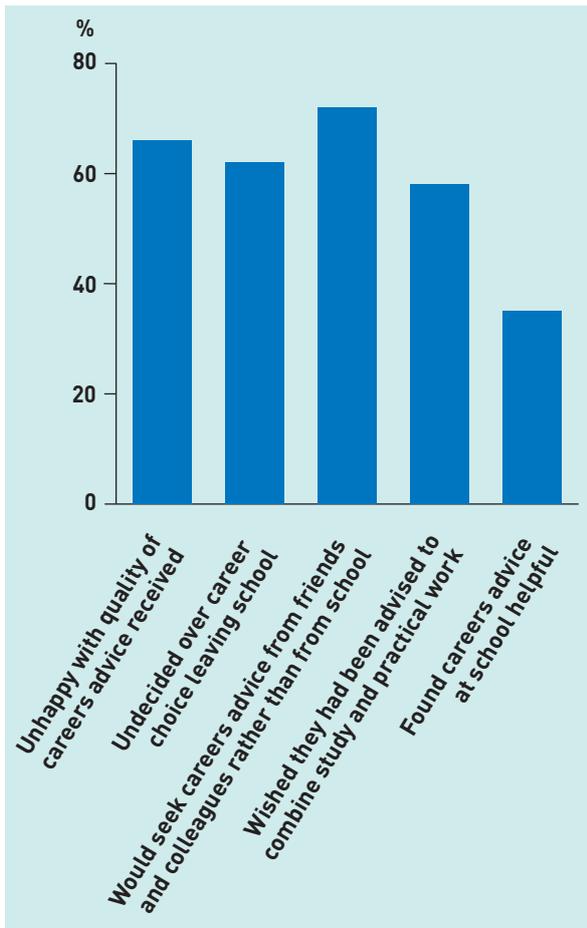


Figure 5c: Dissatisfaction levels with careers advice¹⁸

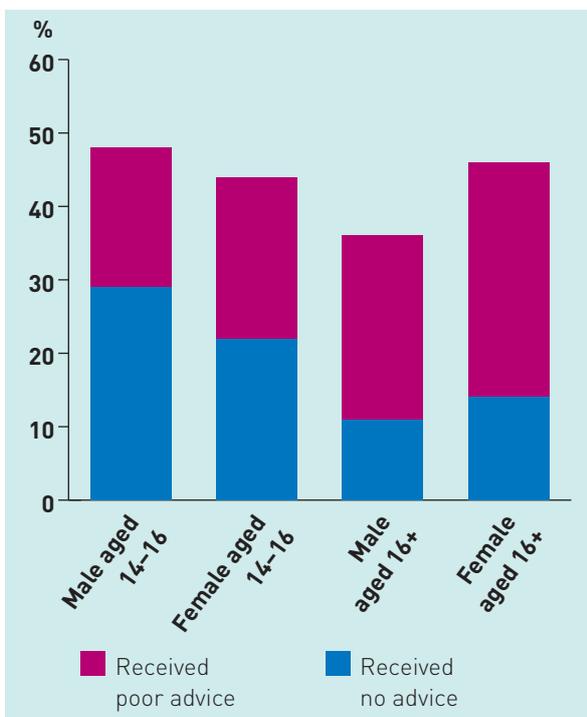


Figure 5d: Level of dissatisfaction with careers service, by age and gender¹⁹

Several surveys reiterate this sense of dissatisfaction.

A further survey of young people, carried out by the youth charity YouthNet, heard that only one in five 16–25-year-olds found Connexions helpful. In fact, Connexions was the source that young people looking for careers advice were least likely to have used, with nearly half (47%) never having tried the service. And in response to an icould survey on how useful Connexions' careers advice had been, around 45% reported it as being poor or worse.

In a complex labour market, good careers guidance is absolutely essential. The Panel has learned that much careers advice is currently provided by staff who are full-time teachers, rather than professional advisers. It is not acceptable that the futures of young people rely on teachers having to provide advice and support above and beyond their normal teaching duties. While many teachers are well-meaning and dedicated to helping young people get on in life, careers advice is a professional and specialist service and should be operated on that basis.

Throughout our work we have barely heard a good word about the careers work of the current Connexions service. We can only conclude that its focus on the minority of vulnerable young people is distracting it from offering proper careers advice and guidance to the majority of young people. This is simply not good enough and the service requires a radical rethink.

We recognise that IAG does not have all the answers but believe that, if organised in a different way, it could ensure better results for all young people from primary age upwards – including those who are bright and talented – with the potential to go on to work in the professions. For this to happen, we believe that schools and colleges need to be given direct responsibility, working with local authorities, for making their own decisions about IAG. In practical terms, this would mean schools having the budgets and powers to commission

support for careers brokerage and advice. If they so chose, individual schools and further education colleges could forge partnerships and, for example, share careers officers. Schools should be free to commission from local authorities but sources of IAG can be provided in diverse ways, with a range of providers already supplying high-quality, accessible and impartial advice.

The implication of all of this is that the current Connexions service should be broken up, leaving a residual specialist service free to focus on young people not in education, employment or training. Connexions currently has a budget of £470 million that is used to provide a wide range of services, one of which is careers advice.

With responsibility for managing Connexions budgets now devolved to local authorities through the Area Based Grant, the Government can no longer regulate the quality or quantity of the IAG provision. Informal estimates, however, indicate that around £200 million is spent on non-targeted provision.²⁰ We believe that this needs to be delivering much better value for money and that it should be delegated to individual schools.

Recommendation 22: Schools and colleges should have direct responsibility for providing information, advice and guidance, with a professional careers service located in every school and college – starting from primary age.

Recommendation 23: The Government should remove careers responsibility from the Connexions service. It should reallocate an estimated £200 million to schools and colleges in order to give them the freedom to tender for careers services from a range of providers.

Submissions to our National Call for Evidence highlighted the important role that parents play in influencing a child's aspiration and ability to access professional jobs. Evidence also shows that parents' aspirations for their children's careers seem to have more impact upon them than teachers.²¹ Good IAG has to engage more fully with parents. It is important, for example, to ensure that children and their parents are given the right support when applying to university. This could include induction visits to universities for those parents who have not been to university themselves and preparation advice and guidance for young people applying for university places.

Recommendation 24: Schools should broker information and advice for children, and parents who have not attended university themselves. The package of advice should include support in completing UCAS forms, preparing for admissions interviews and arranging for parents to visit local universities.

Parents have a critical role to play in encouraging their children to attend university and consider pursuing a career in one of the professions.

'I wanted to study medicine, but being from a family where nobody had studied at university level, my family, although encouraging, could provide very little in terms of actual knowledge, support and experience in terms of considering university, and more specifically, a career in medicine.'
(Young Fabians' response to the National Call for Evidence)

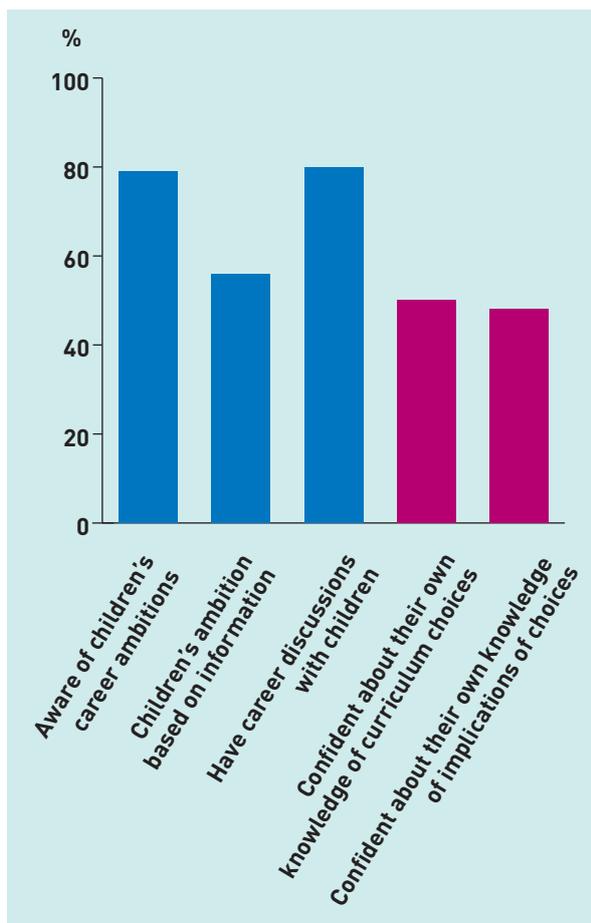


Figure 5e: Percentage of parents stating influence on career planning at school²²

However, some respondents to our Call for Evidence believed that parents often have very little idea of what career opportunities are available. Participants in one of the Panel's youth fora suggested that perhaps it would be useful to send parents packs of information about application processes and professional careers in order to help them support their children's choices.

Recommendation 25: Schools, colleges and professions should work in partnership to produce career prospectuses and online information sources aimed at parents. Information could include routes into different professions and the remuneration and costs involved.

Ofsted is currently evaluating IAG provision and the support provided by schools for young people's economic well-being. It is due to report in autumn 2009. The Panel has considered how to strengthen the delivery and accountability for IAG based on a new strategic role for schools.

Recommendation 26: Ofsted should be given new powers to inspect schools on the quality and performance of their information, advice and guidance provision as part of the Ofsted inspection framework.

5.4 Schools focusing on pupils' outcomes

The Panel strongly supports the focus that schools have been given to raise standards. Improving levels of educational attainment is vital if the UK is to successfully compete in a global knowledge-based economy. And a renewed drive to close the attainment gap is vital if future generations of young people, regardless of their backgrounds, are to be able to seize the new opportunities that a major expansion in professional employment will bring.

These new opportunities mean that schools need to focus on producing well-rounded citizens with a raft of skills and competencies. The Panel believes that while academic performance is important, qualifications alone do not necessarily equip young people with the soft skills that will help them go on to succeed in accessing a professional job. We know that there has been much debate about whether schools are too narrowly focused at present on simply delivering exam results, or whether they should be focusing instead on citizen development. The Panel believes that it is not a question of 'either/or'. It is both.

We welcome the new School Report Card that is to be introduced in 2011 as part of the 21st Century Schools agenda. This report card will set a wider range of indicators on what schools are doing and will provide a clear, well-balanced and comprehensive account of each school's performance. Details are still being finalised, following a consultation, with pilots being run from autumn 2009. Proposed indicators include:

- Attainment
- Pupil progress
- Wider outcomes
- Narrowing gaps
- Parents' views
- Pupils' views.

Report cards will be published every year and can be read in conjunction with the school's Ofsted report, providing parents with a more complete picture of a school's performance. However, while this represents encouraging progress, the Panel believes that the report card could go further still. It is important in particular that incentives are put in place so that schools also focus on the later outcomes of their students.

Recommendation 27: The Government should use the School Report Card to provide greater transparency and accountability in regard to schools' performance on improving pupils' outcomes. The Government should develop and introduce appropriate destination indicators and data to assess the progress that pupils make between starting school, leaving school and their destinations after school.

Recommendation 28: The Government should consider how schools could be better incentivised – including financially – to improve pupils' overall outcomes.

Conclusion

A good school opens doors to a good career. The best schools give young people the right opportunities to learn about and choose careers. They have an unswerving focus on helping pupils to achieve academically and develop personally. We want every school to have a culture of aspiration in which every child is helped and encouraged to fulfil their potential – whether to go to university or pursue a professional career. Despite rises in investment and in standards, too many schools are still not providing children with the opportunities they need. We propose reforms that are universal and will help to provide every child with good careers advice, more extra-curricular activities and the opportunity to acquire the soft skills that employers value so highly. We also propose targeted reforms aimed at giving power to parents who do not currently have access to a good school. We believe that these reforms will deliver a better and fairer education system – with positive implications for social mobility and for the ability of many more young people to pursue a professional career.

Chapter 6

Universities: new opportunities to pursue higher education



This chapter sets out:

- The important contribution that universities can make to social mobility
- How the shape of higher education is changing and the new opportunities this opens up for the future
- Our recommendations, which involve:
 - Accelerating part-time, remote and modular-based learning: including by promoting an all-year academic calendar and more credit-based modular learning
 - Building a new vocational bridge between vocational and higher education: including through 3,000 – rising to 10,000 over time – fully funded university ‘Apprenticeship Scholarships’ for talented apprentices every year
 - Widening participation by developing university partnerships with low-attaining schools and with the professions, and supporting admissions policies that take account of the social and educational context of pupil achievement
 - Ensuring that finance is not a barrier to university participation through a sustainable student finance settlement that can better support local learning, postgraduate education and the targeting of support for under-represented groups
 - Designing more professional work experience into higher education courses
 - A new focus on rewards for long-term labour market outcomes for students.

Universities as an engine for social mobility

A university education is the route into many rewarding professional careers. Three years after graduating, around 77% of graduates are in graduate-level occupations and the wages of these graduates are typically 60% higher than those with no qualifications.¹ In the course of their lifetime, graduates will typically earn over £160,000 more than non-graduates.²

For many people who were part of the post-war wave of social mobility, a university place was often a first for the family. It changed lives. By the 1960s there were 200,000 university students. Today there are over 2.5 million.³

And as student numbers have grown, so the traditional concept of university education has changed:

- The university as the preserve of the 18–21-year-old full-time undergraduate is now a thing of the past: such students now represent only one-third of the total student population
- The proportion of students studying flexibly and part time continues to rise substantially. At some universities, part-time students are already in the majority
- The number of mature students has grown; there are now 1.2 million mature students, almost half the total 2.5 million student population⁴
- There are many new entrants among providers of higher education: for example, the '157 Group'⁵ of further education colleges and private sector providers
- The proportion of students on postgraduate programmes is rising rapidly. Many of these are vocational, such as the Legal Practitioners Course
- The 'local' university is becoming increasingly important as student numbers grow, resources diminish and many more students with family responsibilities aspire to a university degree
- The middle-class 'baby boomer' and soon-to-be-retiring generation has a huge appetite for learning and is potentially a significant new market for universities.

In the future, higher education could open even more opportunities for professional careers.

The changing shape of higher education provides many opportunities for a second wave of social mobility. We believe universities will be able to make the biggest contribution if they:

- Accelerate flexible higher education, opening up new, diverse learning routes for young and old alike, including part-time, remote and modular-based learning (which offers more flexibility to combine learning with a professional career)
- Establish easier and clearer progression routes from vocational courses to university
- Mainstream efforts to widen participation, building on the good work and progress already made in expanding university access rates for traditionally under-represented groups
- Help address financial fears about university participation
- Design and accredit professional experience into academic courses, recognising the balance to be struck between developing academic skills and preparing young people for professional careers
- Support a wider focus on the long-term outcomes of students.

6.1 Accelerating flexible higher education

Almost three-quarters of a million university students now learn part time.⁶ There are good social and economic reasons for supporting this:

- It provides opportunities for people to gain a university education – such as those wishing to combine a career and learning, or those with family and caring commitments. Part-time learning provides new 'second chances' for more people to get into professional careers if they did not go through the traditional 18–21 route

- It meets the modern skill needs of the economy. With the pace of technological change increasing, and more people moving between careers or different sectors, lifelong learning and upskilling will become ever more important. Part-time and remote higher education has a vital role to play here.

Part-time and remote learning is not a new concept. The Open University, for example, was founded in 1969 and is now the largest higher education institution in the UK. And in the USA, open-learning content has become ever more popular: for example, MIT's 'OpenCourseWare' gets over a million unique visitors each month.⁷ Remote e-learning can transform people's life chances and opportunities.

Part-time learning is increasingly popular for all age groups – around one in 10 part-time learners are under 21⁸ – unlocking the talents of younger and older people alike. It can be combined with the opportunities provided by new learning centres through the internet or digital television – none of which are campus or time dependent.

But accelerating part-time and remote learning means dismantling a number of barriers.

First, the traditional academic calendar does not allow part-time and remote learners to enrol and undertake university courses in a flexible manner that fits around their lives or careers. More entry points fitted around the semester system would provide greater flexibility here.

Second, while some universities have arrangements in place to accredit individual modules of learning, this is not commonplace, and individual models are typically not eligible for Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) funding. This was a focus of the Burgess Report in 2007.⁹ It argued that the classification system is no longer fit for purpose and '*does not do full justice to the range of knowledge, skills, experience and attributes of a graduate in the 21st century*'. A shift to a more modular-based system and accreditation of individual units should be supported, including through clear and consistent funding and credit-transfer arrangements.

Third, part-time learners in higher education do not receive as much support as full-time learners. For example, part-time students are not eligible for Student Loan support. The student support system is, of course, complex and multifaceted, and in the fiscal context ahead there will be trade-offs to be made between support for part-time and full-time learning. But this divide in funding, regulatory and student support is now increasingly indefensible and cannot be sustained.

Recommendation 29: Universities and the Government should actively promote a range of entry points through an all-year academic calendar in order to allow learners to enrol on, and undertake, courses at more flexible times throughout the year.

Recommendation 30: Universities and the Government should develop a transferable credit-based learning system to recognise student achievement in discrete modules or mini-courses, building on the findings of the Burgess Report.

Recommendation 31: The Government, working with the Higher Education Funding Council for England, should prioritise investment in e-learning infrastructure to extend the possibilities of remote and online learning.

Recommendation 32: The Government, working with the Higher Education Funding Council for England, should examine how to remove the artificial and increasingly indefensible division between part-time and full-time higher education in relation to funding, regulatory and student support frameworks.

6.2 Vocational routes into higher education

In chapter 9 we detail how many professions have increasingly become graduate-only. It is an unfortunate fact that today there are few direct vocational training routes into the professions. Evidence further shows that only 0.2% of Apprenticeship learners progress to further or higher education.¹⁰ In chapter 9 we recommend a series of measures to expand vocational entry routes into the professions.

But the lack of progression from vocational routes to higher education itself must be addressed. We believe that the silos that divide vocational and higher education are an impediment to social mobility and must be swept away. The evidence is clear that once they are at university, those who progress through vocational qualifications perform at similar levels to those who enter through traditional A-Level qualifications:

- 32% of vocational entrants to university achieve a first or upper-second class degree, compared to 38% of those who enter university by traditional A-Level routes
- 47% of vocational entrants to university are employed six months after graduating, compared to 55% of those who used traditional A-Level routes.¹¹

In recent years good progress has been made in more vocational routes into higher education. For instance, Foundation Degrees were introduced in 2001 as a vocational higher education qualification. Typically two years long, Foundation Degrees are designed to be accessible to students in work. In 2008, around 72,000 students were enrolled on Foundation Degrees, with over half studying at further education colleges.¹²

More recently, over 30 Lifelong Learning Networks have been established to facilitate progression, provide information and support, and produce progression agreements that set out what is expected of learners. Over 250 higher-level courses have been developed or adapted through these networks.¹³

We believe both innovations are to be welcomed. But to truly accelerate vocational progress we advocate a new bridge being built between vocational and higher education. It should have three foundations.

First, ensuring that Apprenticeships are appropriately recognised in the UCAS points framework, so that people who qualify as an apprentice are able automatically to start on the university degree ladder.

As Anthony McClaran of UCAS told the recent Skills Commission report into Apprenticeships:

*'Attributing UCAS tariff points to frameworks is paramount to progression and creates something symbolically very important to aspiration. It shows that apprenticeship is part of the family of qualifications through which you can progress onto higher education.'*¹⁴

Case study: Progression from Apprenticeships to university

When Rachael Hoyle approached school leaving age she was unsure about what career she wanted. But the more she learned about Apprenticeships, the clearer things became. *'I could go and begin a career, learning from people who are experts in their own right. I felt I could get involved in real work while applying my favourite subjects, like physics and maths, and continuing to learn.'*

Rachael gained an Apprenticeship place with BAE Systems in one of its aircraft engineering divisions. There her tasks varied from fixing parts and crawling around the aircraft in overalls, to analysing data and liaising with shop-floor and aircraft designers to answer technical questions. Her commitment and enthusiasm were immediately apparent, and she was soon taking on more responsibilities, including running a crucial package of work that helped secure a contractual milestone for the company.

Having achieved her Advanced Apprenticeship, Rachael has now begun a full-time role in the structural engineering department at BAE Systems. She has now progressed to university and is working towards a Bachelor of Engineering degree at Manchester Metropolitan University.

The Government's *New Opportunities* White Paper (2009) signalled an intention to develop a tariff points system for Apprenticeships by 2010. The Panel welcomes the Government's commitment and believes it is essential to expanding progression from vocational qualifications to a university degree.

Recommendation 33: The Government should ensure that it delivers on its commitment to incorporate apprenticeship frameworks into the UCAS points system by 2010.

Second, by establishing targeted, fully funded packages for the most talented apprentices to continue their studies at university. The concept of skill scholarships has been proposed by David Willetts MP.¹⁵ We believe there is much to commend this notion.

Funding vocational routes to higher education would provide a new ladder of opportunity into university. Apprentices would receive full support to combine their study with working part time. It is estimated that it would cost in the region of £50 million per year for 3,000 'Apprenticeship Scholarships' at university per year. These could be funded from the existing £925 million per year Train to Gain budget and would not require new money. Apprenticeship Scholarships could be particularly relevant for subjects such as engineering, science and technology.

Recommendation 34: The Government should fully fund an initial 3,000 Apprenticeship Scholarships to higher education, rising over time to 10,000 every year, to give the most talented apprentices the chance of a university education. Funding should come from existing Train to Gain budgets.

Third, by making the concept of 'HE within FE' a more universal part of university provision. Across the country, many universities have developed new partnerships with further education colleges, in particular to deliver Foundation Degree courses. These partnerships make a university degree more accessible to many people – particularly to mature students, whose family responsibilities often make it impossible for them to move in order to study. But they have another advantage too. Since colleges tend to have close working relationships with local employers, these new partnerships help strengthen the relationships between universities and the labour market, with benefits for both.

Case study: Darlington College and Teesside University

Darlington College is one of the largest further education colleges in the North East, offering an extensive range of qualifications, including Higher National Certificates (HNCs) or Diplomas (HNDs), Foundation Degrees, degrees, postgraduate courses and work-based qualifications such as NVQ Level 4. As part of a long-term partnership with Teesside University, a new free-standing university building has been developed. The £35 million development is expected to help the number of learners in higher education to top 1,000 per year by the end of the decade.

Recommendation 35: Universities and colleges, working with the Government, should make the concept of 'HE within FE' one that is universal across the country so that many more mature students, in particular, are able to study for a degree.

6.3 Widening participation further

Social class has, and remains, a strong determinant of participation in higher education, and this gap has not closed substantially in the last half century (see figure 6a).

Today 40% of all young people go to university and the Government's target is for a 50% participation rate. As the UK economy becomes ever more skills-based, universities will need to ensure that they are genuinely open to all those with the talent and potential to progress.

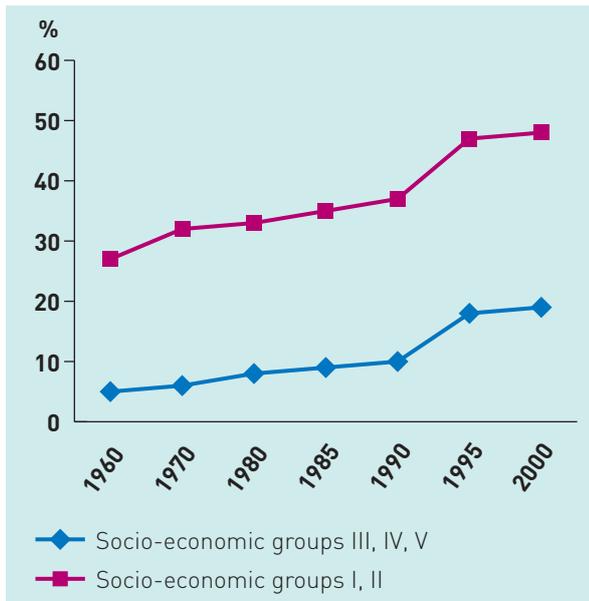


Figure 6a: Higher education participation rates by socio-economic group¹⁶

In the Panel's survey of young people and its series of Youth Fora, young people reaffirmed to us the importance of higher education as a route to get on in life:

'More places at university give more people an opportunity to get into the course they want and more opportunities to get into the careers they want.' (Respondent to the Panel's survey of young people).

In recent years, universities as a whole have warmly embraced the concepts of wider participation and fair access. The Panel has been struck by the enthusiasm with which so many universities have developed innovative and radical policies and programmes to reach out to under-represented individuals and communities, and to those from more disadvantaged backgrounds. The Panel believes that the university sector deserves praise for its efforts.

For example:

- The University of Southampton runs the BM6 (Bachelor of Medicine in six years) programme to widen access to the medical profession for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. This involves them studying for an extra year on a specially designed foundation course before joining other students on the conventional BM5 programme
- Birmingham University offers a Junior University, making facilities available to young people over the age of 14 who are studying for GCSE and A-Level examinations, particularly English, maths, science and IT. The university is also developing initiatives that encourage participation and that impact on educational underachievement. Events include summer university, higher education summer school, Easter revision, exam preparation and seminars for parents.

Efforts to widen participation are supported with public money through the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). This is based on annual 'access agreements', which the universities submit to the Office for Fair Access. Over the last five years £392 million has been allocated to activity designed to widen participation.¹⁷

Current activity to widen participation is largely in three forms:

- **Outreach-type schemes that focus on raising aspirations and attainment** (rather than admissions to a specific institution). For example, the Aimhigher programme supports young people of primary-school age and above to raise their aspirations by means of such things as campus visits, mentoring, summer schools and information support. Many universities spend significant resources on careers advice and outreach work in both primary and secondary schools.

- **Marketing and recruitment strategies linked to a specific institution or department.**

These typically involve a large number of schools, with thousands of young people regarded as participants. For example, 53 schools and 11 colleges currently have a compact relationship with the University of Derby; Kingston University has 23 partner schools and expects this number to grow significantly. Indeed, Kingston has had over 800 compact entrants since 2006.¹⁸

- **Institutional and collaborative agreements that make modified offers, or provide additional support for young people from under-represented groups.**

For example, the King's College Extended Medical Degree Programme provides 50 medicine places a year with reduced entry requirements for students from non-selective state schools and low-income families in the 15 worst-performing London boroughs. Students receive additional support throughout the six-year course. These students have to sit the same exams and attain the same standards as other students attending the college. A 2008 evaluation found that these students now make up over 10% of the medical student population at King's, and the highest achieving are consistently in the top 15% in their whole year group. Retention rates are high at 90% and are well above the UK average (83%).¹⁹

The Panel welcomes these innovations. We have received clear evidence that over the past decade they have resulted in a steady increase in the number of traditionally under-represented groups going on to higher education:

- In 2000–01, 39,900 young people from less advantaged socio-economic groups entered higher education, representing 25.0% of all young people entering higher education
- In 2006–07, 48,900 young people from less advantaged socio-economic groups entered higher education, representing 29.1% of all young people entering higher education.²⁰

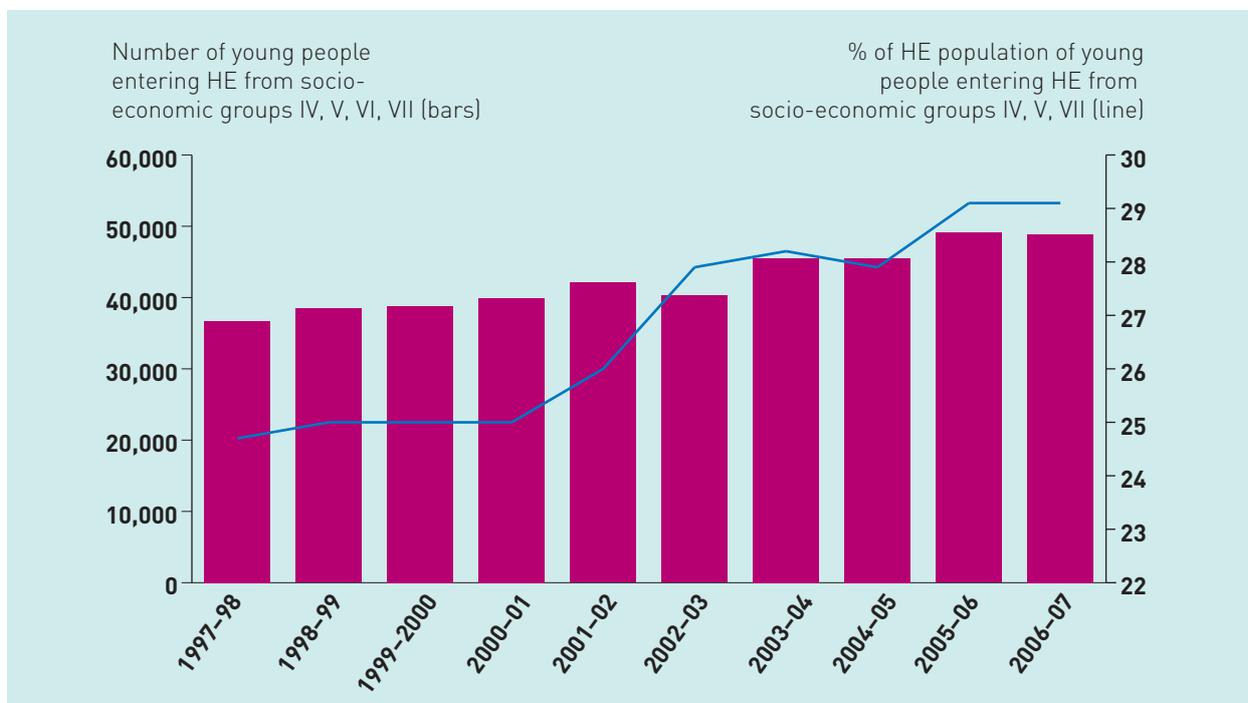


Figure 6b: Widening participation: young people entering higher education from under-represented socio-economic groups IV, V, VI and VII²¹

Despite the progress made by universities in recent years, two problems remain. First, uneven participation rates persist: rates still vary enormously by parental background. Second, the more selective universities remain relatively over-populated by students from wealthier backgrounds, often privately educated.

Uneven participation rates persist

Despite the progress made, participation rates still vary by parental background:

- Almost three times as many young people with parents in professional positions attend university as young people whose parents are from routine occupations (see figure 6c)
- Only 29% of university students are from lower socio-economic backgrounds, despite this group comprising over half of all young people in England²²
- Participation in higher education by age 21 from the highest three socio-economic groups is around 50%, but for those in low participation neighbourhoods, the rate is only 13.5%.²³

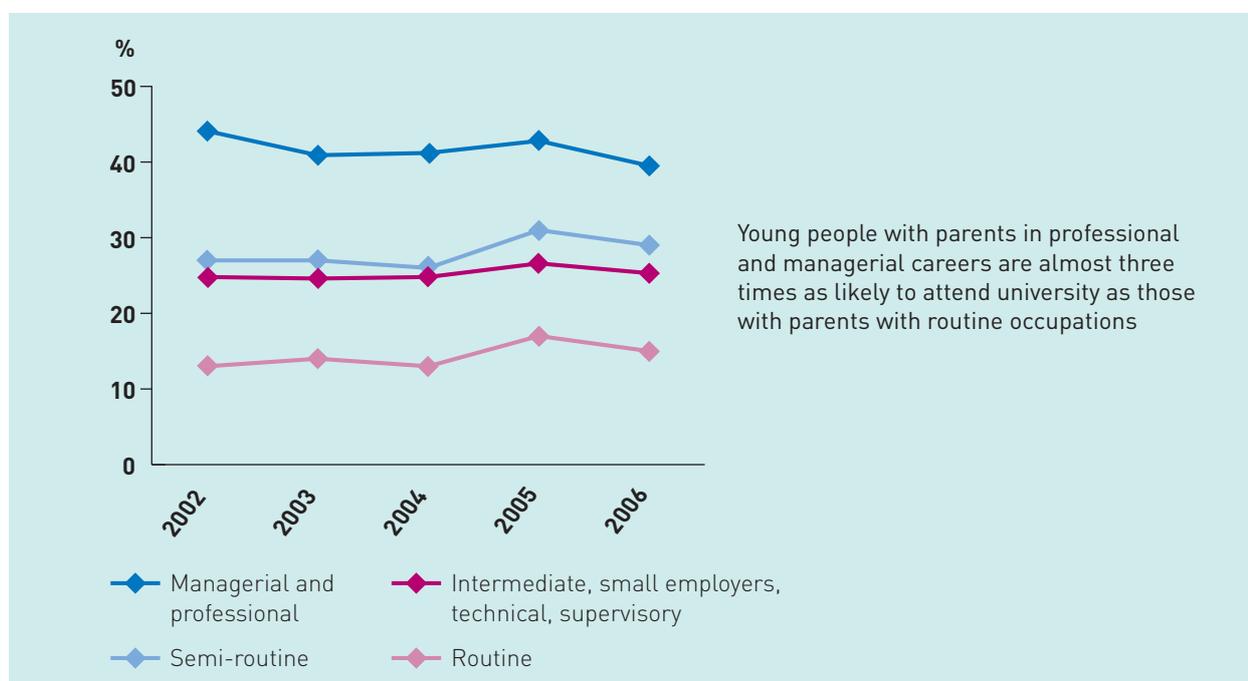


Figure 6c: Participation rates in higher education by parental background²⁴

Of course, as we discussed in chapter 5, this is, in good part, a function of the differential performance of schools and a wide (though narrowing) attainment gap at age 16. The priority is to expand the pool of school leavers who can compete for a university place. This was rightly identified by the National Council for Educational Excellence as the key to the overall widening participation agenda.²⁵

...and the social gap is most acute at selective universities

The UK is very fortunate to have a group of universities that are among the finest in the world. They are world centres of research excellence and they compete on a global scale. Of the top 10 universities in the world, four are in the UK.²⁶

The focus of these more selective, research-intensive, universities is on the very highest academic standards. In recent years, however, they have sought to maintain this focus on excellence and, at the same time, broaden the social base of their student intake.

For example, the Russell Group universities currently employ well over 100 widening participation staff, and funding devoted by Russell Group universities to outreach programmes has grown by nearly £5 million since 2006. These institutions have also formed strong links with schools in deprived areas, enabling thousands of staff and students to tutor and mentor local pupils. These volunteers play a crucial role not only in raising pupils' attainment, but also in providing advice and guidance and inspiring role models for children who may not have any family members who have been to university. Many university staff are school governors or teach classes.

In addition, the *New Opportunities* White Paper announced that the 'group of 11' research-intensive universities will pilot ways to identify talented students from groups currently under-represented in higher education.

Nonetheless, despite considerable efforts being made, the difference in the participation rate at more selective universities remains very wide:

- Only 520 students from lower socio-economic backgrounds got into Oxbridge in 2006/07. Meanwhile, over 2,500 got into Oxbridge universities from private schools.²⁷
- Only 16% of students at the Russell Group universities are from lower socio-economic backgrounds.²⁸
- There are more students of black Caribbean origin at London Metropolitan University than at all the Russell Group universities combined.²⁹

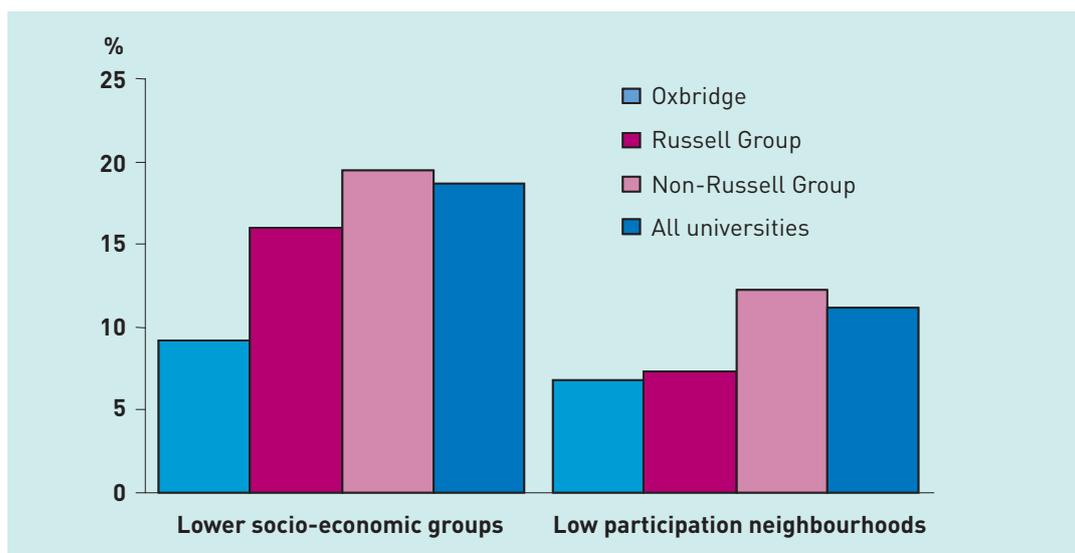


Figure 6d: Proportion of student intake from under-represented socio-economic groups (IV, V, VI and VII) and low participation neighbourhoods, by type of university³⁰

The Sutton Trust estimates that about 3,000 state school students each year are ‘missing’ from what it defines as the 13 leading universities in the UK. Their places are taken by independent school students with equal A-Level grades.³¹

‘Sutton Trust 13’ intake	1997/98	2001/02	2002/03	2005/06	2007/08
% from independent schools	39	35	32	33	33
% from state schools	61	65	68	67	67
% from lower social classes	13	14	16	17	16
% from low participation areas	6	7	8	8	4

While the Panel welcomes the progress that has been made in widening participation, it believes that the continued social gap in university participation must be addressed. We also believe that the growth in the number of young people entering university from average and less well-off backgrounds needs to be set against the volume of expenditure on widening participation activity, as well as programmes that may have contributed to this rise, in particular the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), which supports young people from less well-off backgrounds to stay in education until the age of 18. We are not convinced that current widening participation funding is necessarily delivering value for money.

In the last six years, around £392 million³² has been spent on widening participation activity. Over this period, 40,700 more young people from under-represented socio-economic groups have entered university than the trends in previous years would have suggested. Assuming this entire growth is the result of widening participation initiatives, the cost per additional entrant is almost £10,000.

The Panel believes this is compelling evidence for taking stock of the progress made on widening participation in the past, in order to refocus efforts for the future.

During our Evidence Hearings, we heard about the many excellent partnerships that now exist between local universities, schools, colleges and the professions in this country. Many of these initiatives seem to have paid – affordable – dividends in widening university participation.

Case study: ‘Pathways to the Professions’, Edinburgh University

Pathways to the Professions is a scheme run by Edinburgh University to encourage children from local state schools into law, medicine, veterinary science and architecture through a programme of work observation, pre-application advice and interviews, shadowing undergraduates and information sessions for parents.

The programme runs across all 46 state secondary schools in Edinburgh and the Lothians and has 600 pupils registered.

The scheme has been widely commended for its success: to date over 500 students have progressed through the programme to enter university.

The Panel believes that such partnerships provide an innovative means of widening access to professional careers and should become universal in the next phase of universities' widening participation efforts.

Recommendation 36: Sustainable, concrete links should be established between individual schools, particularly those with low progression rates, and local universities, including specialist help to increase the number of pupils achieving five GCSEs at grades A*-C (including English and mathematics). All universities should offer a representative to join the governing bodies of such schools. And, as we propose in recommendation 4, all universities should enlist students to act as role models and mentors for pupils in local schools.

Recommendation 37: All universities should work with schools to ensure that higher education related information, advice and guidance, and outreach and mentoring programmes are provided from primary school level onwards.

Recommendation 38: The Government should redirect an element of widening participation resources into supporting these local partnerships.

Recommendation 39: Each profession should develop partnership compact arrangements with university faculties. These arrangements might include linking up recent professional entrants as personal mentors with young people in schools, and issuing guidance about the profession and how to get into it. (See recommendations 4, 9 and 12)

Judging whether such widening participation efforts have been successful will depend, of course, on good data being available. The Panel believes more needs to be done here. A recent House of Commons Select Committee report concluded:

*'The Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills and the Higher Education Funding Council know too little about how universities have used the £392 million allocated to them over the last five years to widen participation.'*³³

A requirement to report on widening participation activities is being introduced, and this will provide clearer accountability at the individual university level. In recent years, the Government, through the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), has also been publishing annual performance indicators of the progress being made by universities on widening participation. We welcome the publication of this data. However, to get a true benchmark for participation levels – and better relate this to effectiveness of expenditure on widening participation – a number of issues need to be addressed.

At present:

- There are a large number of learners for whom no data exists about their background: for example, last year background information for over 50,000 full-time entrants to university was not known.³⁴

- Data is self-reported and concerns were voiced to us that the coding of this information is therefore difficult
- The information does not provide a clear breakdown – for example to participation levels by course or college.

We believe that transparency and openness are key to ensuring the effectiveness of expenditure on widening participation. It will be particularly important to demonstrate results and value for money, given the fiscal context in the years ahead.

Recommendation 40: The Higher Education Statistics Agency should publish information on student admissions at university, college and course level, with more detail on pupils’ backgrounds. This should be published annually, with year-on-year progress tracked. It should be provided in a format that enables a transparent assessment of the effectiveness of widening participation expenditure at the individual university level.

The Panel has received compelling evidence in support of measures to ensure that higher education opportunities are genuinely open to the widest possible social spectrum. Evidence from HEFCE shows that, once at university, a typical state-educated pupil will perform at the equivalent level to an independently schooled pupil with A-Levels between one and two grades higher (see figure 6e). Put another way, a state-educated pupil typically outperforms an independently schooled pupil with the same grades.

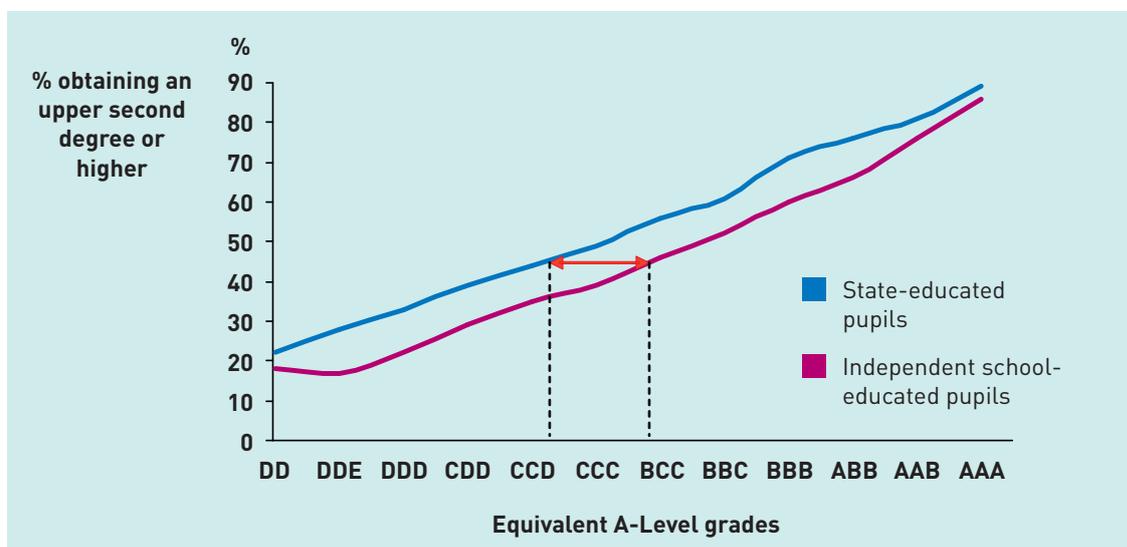


Figure 6e: The ‘schooling effect’ – university achievement by A-Level grades, by type of school attended³⁵

Admissions procedures determine who gets into university. It is obviously right that academic attainment remains the key to a university place. We have seen compelling evidence, however, that predicted A-Level grades are not a wholly accurate guide: as a report from Ofsted demonstrated, only 42% of those who got three As at A-Level were actually predicted to do so. The report further confirmed that it is students from the lowest socio-economic groups for whom

predicted grades are most often wrong: only 39% of predicted grades were reliable for students from routine backgrounds, compared to 51% of students from professional backgrounds.³⁶ This highlights the importance of continued training and development for teachers.

It is a welcome development that in future pupils will be able to trade up once their results are known; but even then there are wider factors that universities will want to consider in determining admissions, particularly for students who wish to undertake vocational degrees. Here, successful professional careers rely increasingly on aptitude as well as ability. Some universities are already using alternative aptitude testing.

The Peninsula Medical School is one of the medical schools that use the Graduate Medical Schools Admissions Test (GAMSAT) to assess academic aptitude to study medicine and to ensure that the candidates selected have the best combination of mental abilities, attitudes and professional behaviours required for doctors and dentists to be successful in their clinical careers. The 90-minute test requires no specific preparation as it aims to probe innate skills and competencies and seeks to assist candidates rather than pose an additional hurdle.

We have also looked at other countries approaches to widening participation. Many of these seem to involve the use of various forms of quota systems to broaden universities social intakes. For example:

- In Australia, the government is negotiating targets with university institutions. These include targets for participation levels by under-represented groups. The Government will use a model of outcomes-based funding, with universities receiving resources based on mutually agreed targets. Universities retain control of their admission processes. This negotiating process is currently under way and is expected to be complete by 2011. Universities that agree arrangements by 2010 are set to receive additional reward payments from a total pot of \$135 million per year.³⁷
- At Harvard University, in the United States, affirmative action has been used for 40 years at the School of Medicine. Since 1969, over 800 doctors from various minority groups have graduated. Studies have demonstrated that Harvard's proactive recruitment approach, followed by its commitment to support educational experiences with a robust programme, has resulted in successful careers for minority doctors and has increased the number of minority doctors in leadership positions in the field of medicine.³⁸
- In Texas, in the United States, all students in the top 10% of relative performance in their school gain automatic admittance to the Texas University of their choice. This has had some success:
 - Students admitted under the 10% rule get better grades than other students and graduate at higher graduation completion rates
 - Economic and geographic diversity has improved. For example, before the law took effect, the University of Texas campus drew from 616 high schools. Now it draws from 853 schools.³⁹
- In South Africa, since 1994, universities have used value-add measures to widen participation to higher education. The approach is labelled by some as 'Flexible on access, firm on success'. All students must achieve to the same levels.

Having looked at the various quota systems from around the world we do not believe they are appropriate. We do believe, however, that there is a strong case for universities to use data that takes account of the educational and social context of pupils' achievement. Many are already doing so.

For example:

- At Bristol University, the formal admissions principles and procedures guide states: 'Admissions staff are expected to use professional judgement in assessing the academic potential of individual candidates, taking a number of factors into consideration, including educational and social context.'⁴⁰
- At Durham University, guidance states that, alongside academic performance, merit should be judged on 'the educational context of an applicant's formal achievements.'⁴¹

These universities look at the context within which pupils achieve good results – such as if they are from a poorly performing school in a disadvantaged area – to make a more rounded assessment of their performance.

In recent years education authorities have also developed better indicators to measure the relative performance of schools. For example, these now include metrics on deprivation weighting, using postcode information, and on the proportion of pupils in receipt of free school meals.

More universities are now taking these wider education and social factors into account in assessing pupils' academic achievements. The evidence from a number of universities which already take into account the social and educational context of pupil achievement is that this approach improves rather than lowers standards.

At Exeter University, admissions guidance reflects school context information, but also wider factors, including family circumstances, socio-economic background, home responsibilities, and periods of disruption to schooling.⁴² Average UCAS Tariff scores at Exeter have increased (from 387 in 2006–07 to 411 in 2008–09) as entrants from lower socio-economic groups have increased from 16.7% to 20.2%. Completion rates are high and the percentage of first and upper second degrees is one of the highest in the sector.

In 2008, the National Council for Educational Excellence recommended that higher education institutions should continue to use 'all the information available to them to identify the best students with the greatest potential and ability'.⁴³ We welcome this and believe that higher education institutions should be supported to take into account the social and educational context of pupils' achievement. We believe the evidence from data on relative pupil performance and on predicted grades clearly supports a shift to more context-based admission procedures.

Recommendation 41: By law it is for universities to determine their admissions procedures but we hope that all universities will take into account the educational and social context of pupils' achievement in their admissions process.

6.4 Addressing financial fears

In the course of its work, the Panel received evidence from many professions indicating that concerns about the cost of a university education may deter some aspirant professionals from undertaking higher education courses. For example, in its submission to the Panel's Call for Evidence, the British Medical Association (BMA) argued that student debt has a disproportionate effect on professional entry courses such as medicine because of the length of the course and the lack of opportunities to undertake paid work outside of study commitments.

We have looked closely at the evidence on tuition fees and believe that, in financial terms, there remains an overwhelmingly strong case for people to enter higher education: the salaries of graduates are typically 60% higher than the wages of those with no qualifications⁴⁴ and graduates typically earn over £160,000 more during their lifetime than non-graduates.⁴⁵

We do, however, believe that more could be done to ensure that the fear of debt does not dissuade talented young people from applying to university and that clear information can help address these concerns.

Recommendation 42: In order to overcome financial fears, universities should help schools to inform children before they reach the age of 16 – together with their parents – about the grants and financial support to which they would be entitled if they progressed to university.

We also believe that the Government should use the opportunity presented by its commitment to commission a review of the impact of variable tuition fees to consider the case for more targeted financial support for students. The introduction of variable tuition fees (a maximum of £3,145 per year) has raised an additional fee income of around £1.4 billion for universities annually.⁴⁶ Around £100 million of this is currently spent on support for lower-income students.

In the years ahead – particularly in the context of constraints on public spending – clear trade-offs will have to be made between university fee income, student numbers and student support. We believe the Government should initiate a national debate about the relationship between the level of fees that universities are able to charge and their ability to expand student numbers. We understand that higher fees are anathema to many. Equally, higher fees could generate extra income, which could both increase student places and provide higher levels of financial support for students who need it most.

This debate will need to recognise the validity of alternative routes into professional and other careers, including vocational and further education programmes. It will also need to include the issue of postgraduate degrees. These have increasingly become an important route into many professional careers – in the law, creative industries, the Civil Service, management professions and others. But these courses are substantially more expensive than undergraduate degrees – often costing up to £12,000 per year – and there is no student support framework equivalent to the framework for undergraduates. If fair access is to be possible, this issue will need to be addressed. We welcome the Government's commitment to work with banks to support 45,000 more private 'Professional and Career Development Loans' with low rates of interest. But this is only a drop in the ocean. New proposals need to be formulated to establish a clear, transparent and fair system of student financial support for postgraduate learners.

Decisions about fee levels and student numbers also open up options for new packages of targeted student financial support. For instance, some commentators have made the case for a system of more targeted national bursaries. The Higher Education Policy Institute has argued that a top slice of universities' variable fee income could be used for this purpose.⁴⁷

And as local universities in cities and towns across the country become more important, particularly for the growing number of mature students, more innovative student financial support systems could be developed for non-residential local learners. One model for this could be to extend the Education Maintenance Allowance principle – which has been successful at raising education participation to age 18 – to local learners at university. We also believe there is a strong case for local students who are living at home and studying locally to have the opportunity of 'fee-free' higher education. It will be important that this model does not impact upon the quality of teaching and academic support, or lead to a two tier system of higher education.

Recommendation 43: The Government should use the opportunity of its review of the impact of variable tuition fees to consider a radical reshaping of the student support system. It should initiate a national debate on the trade-offs between higher fees, growing student places and increasing financial support for students. It should consider fairer financial support for those undertaking postgraduate and part-time courses, more targeted packages of financial support for students from average and less well-off families, and new support for students living and learning at their local university, including 'fee-free' higher education.

6.5 Integrating professional experience into academic courses

As we set out in more detail in chapter 7, work experience and internships have become an important route into many professional careers. We have heard good evidence that other countries are moving toward a more integrated higher education experience, which combines traditional academic skills with an emphasis on practical professional experience. For example:

- In Australia, the Government is considering a national internship scheme to allow students to undertake structured work-based learning during their studies. Under this scheme, students would receive income support
- In Finland, all university students must complete a work placement as part of their undergraduate degree. The university pays two-thirds of the cost of the internship, and the hosting employer the remaining one-third.

The precise nature of what professional experience and work placements could look like will vary from course to course but could include:

- Internships out of term time that are brokered or facilitated by university faculties
- Year-out placements, which have traditionally been common in such subjects as engineering and sciences
- Placements integrated into particular modules on a part-time basis, such as the London School of Economics (LSE) Parliamentary Internship Scheme
- Short one-off placements during term time.

Recommendation 44: The Government should work with universities to develop proposals to integrate a flexible element of professional experience into all higher education courses.

6.6 A new focus on student outcomes

In chapter 5 we recommended a new emphasis on school destination trackers – to encourage schools to focus more on the long-term outcomes of their pupils. This is, of course, also important at the university level, where there are currently two such surveys:

- Six months after graduating, the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) contacts graduates to establish what type of employment or further study they are engaged in and their income
- Three and a half years after graduation, a second stage of the survey is conducted to find out what graduates have been doing after a longer period of time.

Around 60,000 students complete the DLHE each year. The survey can be highly influential in student choices, and is used in many university league tables. However, the outcomes are not currently linked to university funding. An element of funding incentives based on employment outcomes would:

- Acknowledge that readying students for careers is an important component of the university experience
- Reward universities with particularly high rates of student destinations in professional careers or advanced study.

A further benefit of longer-term destination tracking – beyond the current three and a half year period – would provide a basis for facilitating relationships between alumni and local schools and other outreach activity.

Recommendation 45: The Government should support universities to collect and publish a rounded picture on student destinations, building on the existing leaver surveys. The Government should reflect on the merits of linking data to financial incentives and may wish to redirect some of the Widening Participation funding to this end.

Conclusion

The expansion in university education has provided new opportunities for tens of thousands of people. Universities are the gateway to the professions now and for the future. As our economy relies ever more on high levels of skills and education, universities will become an even more significant driver of social mobility.

The UK is blessed with some of the greatest universities in the world, and we must do everything we can to preserve and improve their global standing. Equally, universities must not just keep pace with economic and fiscal change; they must adapt fundamentally to changes in the nature of the student population. Students in the future will be more mature, more part time and more vocational in their outlook. That all bodes well for social mobility – provided the right reforms are made to the way universities operate.

We propose major reforms to make part-time modular learning part of the core modern university offer, so that many more people can aspire to higher education. We want to see universities build on their excellent efforts to open their doors to a wider cohort of students – by developing better relationships with schools, taking into account the socio-economic context of pupil achievement and breaking down the silos that exist between further and higher education.

We want to see student numbers continue to expand, but we believe this will require an open national debate about the fees universities can charge and the financial support they can offer students. We believe, in particular, that many more people can be given a second chance of higher education if local learning is provided on a fee-free basis. And to ensure that universities focus on their critical role in building in the UK a globally competitive economy, we propose closer integration between work experience and academic study and better tracking of long-term student destinations. We believe our proposals will allow universities to play a central role in delivering a second great wave of social mobility in our country.

Chapter 7

Internships: new opportunities to get onto the professional career ladder



This chapter sets out:

- How internships have become a part of the professional career structure and why fair access to internships is vital for social mobility
- Our recommendations which involve:
 - Establishing a fair and transparent system of opportunities through a new Code and through transparent advertising of internships
 - Recognising the best practice of employers through a new national Kitemark for internships and work experience
 - Ensuring that internships are affordable for all: removing financial constraints through Student Loan finance, securing new financial support from the professions; and, through more partnerships with universities, to open accommodation to young people from different parts of the UK.

Internships are an essential part of the career ladder in many professions. They are part and parcel of a modern, flexible economy and are useful both for interns and for employers. Indeed many professional employers put a great deal of time and effort into their internships. Where once they were an informal means of gaining practical insight into a particular career, today they are a rung on the ladder to success.

Undertaking an internship is an important access point for entry to a career in the professions – while undertaking one prior to university helps to secure a place at a top institution, undertaking an internship during or after university helps to secure entry to a profession.

Yet, by and large, they operate as part of an informal economy in which securing an internship all too often depends on who you know and not on what you know. This chapter discusses the importance of internships, some of the problems associated with getting access to them and what the Panel is proposing for reform. In doing so, the Panel is minded of the importance of avoiding unnecessary regulation and bureaucracy – so it is suggested that the professions take the lead with others in taking forward these proposals.

Internships as an access point to top universities

Some professions require specialist qualifications, such as a medical degree for medicine or an architecture degree for architecture. Places on such courses are limited, and competition for them is often fierce. Undertaking an internship of relevance to the proposed course of study shows that the candidate has:

- Commitment to the subject
- Taken responsibility for their own learning and development
- Experience of professional work in that field.

These factors can often make the difference between two applicants with equal academic records. The Social Mobility Foundation's research on internships shows how they improve the chances of access to the top universities: 96% of interns said that it enhanced their personal statement.¹

According to the career development organisation CRAC, undergraduates at all stages of their degree courses ranked work experience and internships either as the most or second-most influential factor in their career decision-making process.

Internships as an access point to the professions

The Panel has heard a great deal of evidence about the advantages that internships confer when competing for entry to professional jobs. By and large, someone who has undertaken an internship will be more attractive to an employer because they will:

- Be able to demonstrate their commitment to the profession
- Have developed important skills and behaviours
- Understand better the recruitment processes and the types of candidate that the profession is looking for
- Understand better their own skills and abilities and whether that career path is right for them
- Have already been able to build up a network of contacts in the profession.

Research has shown that internships increase the chances of securing a professional position, as shown in Figure 7a.

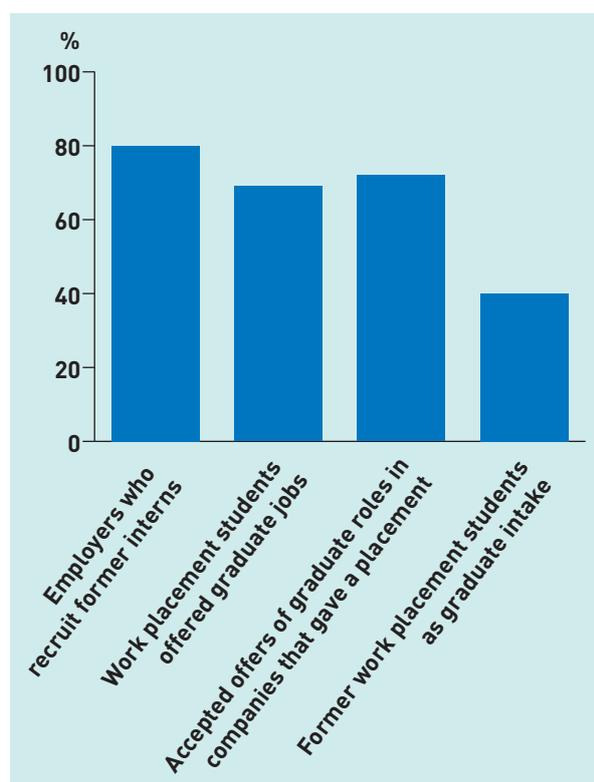


Figure 7a: Percentage of opportunities opened up through internships²

Responses to the Panel’s National Call for Evidence show that for some professions, such as journalism or veterinary science, students are now highly unlikely to be able to progress into the profession without a minimum amount of relevant work experience.

Internships become even more important in the light of evidence that the Panel received about the current scheme for school pupils’ work experience at Key Stage 4. It is seen as having little value in terms of career-related learning and development. A submission received from the Career Development Organisation said that placements are often of little relevance to the young person’s ambitions and that securing a high-quality placement is often dependent upon contacts among friends and family. Short work tasters of this type are discussed more fully in chapter 4.

Inequalities in internship opportunities

Opportunities to undertake internships are not fairly distributed. You are less likely to be able to do an internship if:

- You lack the means to work for free (socio-economic factors)
- You lack the means to travel or live near to the internship (geographic factors)
- You come from a background in which a professional internship is never considered or discussed (information factors).

The consequence is that some professions draw their interns from a limited pool of talent. For instance, the National Union of Journalists’ (NUJ’s) submission to the Panel stated that the largest-ever independent survey of people entering the journalism profession (conducted by the Journalism Training Forum in 2002) indicated that under 10% of new entrants came from working-class backgrounds, with just 3% coming from homes headed by semi-skilled or unskilled workers.

Cost of undertaking an internship

The cost of undertaking an internship can put many people off. Internships are often low-paid or not paid at all. Those with the least financial resources are less likely to be in a position to forgo the opportunity to earn more in order to undertake an internship. We have been shown research demonstrating that the less advantaged are most put off by the costs of undertaking an internship, as shown in Figure 7b.

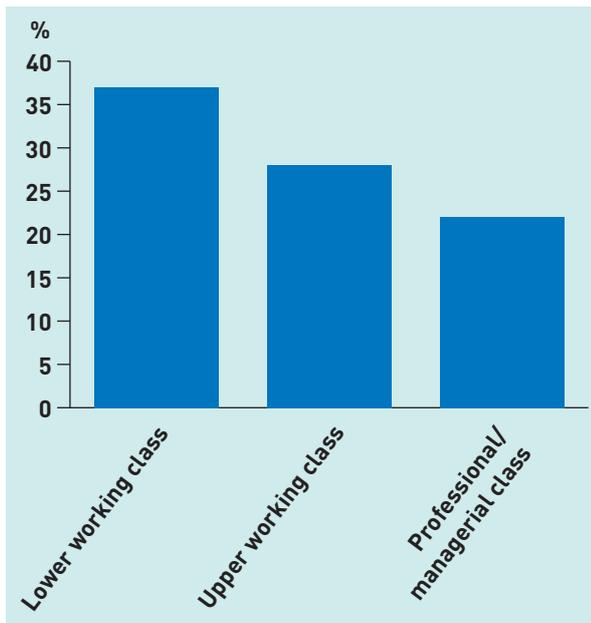


Figure 7b: Percentage of respondents stating that finances impacted upon educational decisions³

Some submissions to our National Call for Evidence were very clear on this point. For instance, VETNET and the Lifelong Learning Network believed that the low pay associated with internships was the most important factor in discouraging applicants from lower socio-economic groups from pursuing a professional career. They argued that the current structure of internships restricted the talent base from which employers could ultimately draw their employees.

It should, however, be noted that a submission from the consultancy sector, provided as part of the National Call for Evidence, said that while internships implied upfront costs, the payback – in terms of access to a professional career – ultimately represented good value for money, even if initially it involved people borrowing money.

Geographical difficulties in undertaking an internship

Geography also plays its part in getting access to an internship. Many internships linked to the professions are in London or the South East (see figure 7c), although not for professions such as engineering.

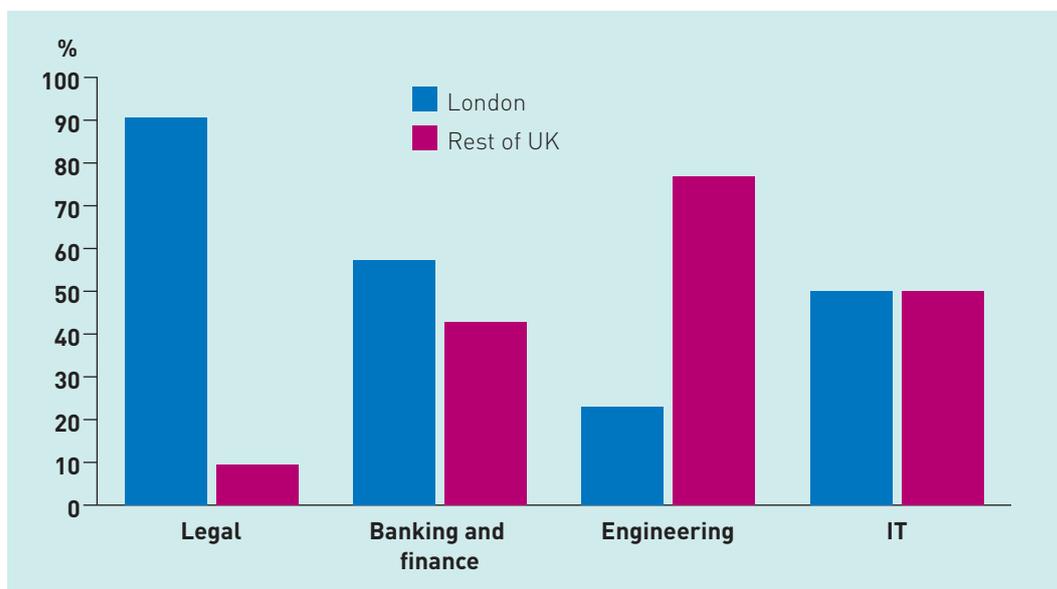


Figure 7c: Location of internships by industry sector⁴

Data from the Office for National Statistics shows that 50% of all jobs in the Greater London region are professional, rising to over 75% in central London and the City. This compares to less than 33% of jobs in the North East and fewer than 20% in some local areas. The Institute

of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA) said that 70% of jobs with IPA member agencies were in London.

If a prospective intern does not live a commutable distance from London or does not have friends or relatives to stay with, then the cost of the internship can be very high. For instance, a two-week internship can cost as much as £500 for accommodation, food and travel, before taking into account the earnings foregone by choosing to take a low paid/unpaid internship. Together, this can make it prohibitive for less well-off or average income families living in other regions.

Informational barriers to undertaking an internship

Those from a background in which internships are commonplace are not only more likely to know of their existence but also, through contact with relatives or friends who employ interns, have the social networks to know the qualities that internship schemes are looking for. Research carried out by the Internship Network demonstrates the importance of family networks, as shown in Figure 7d.

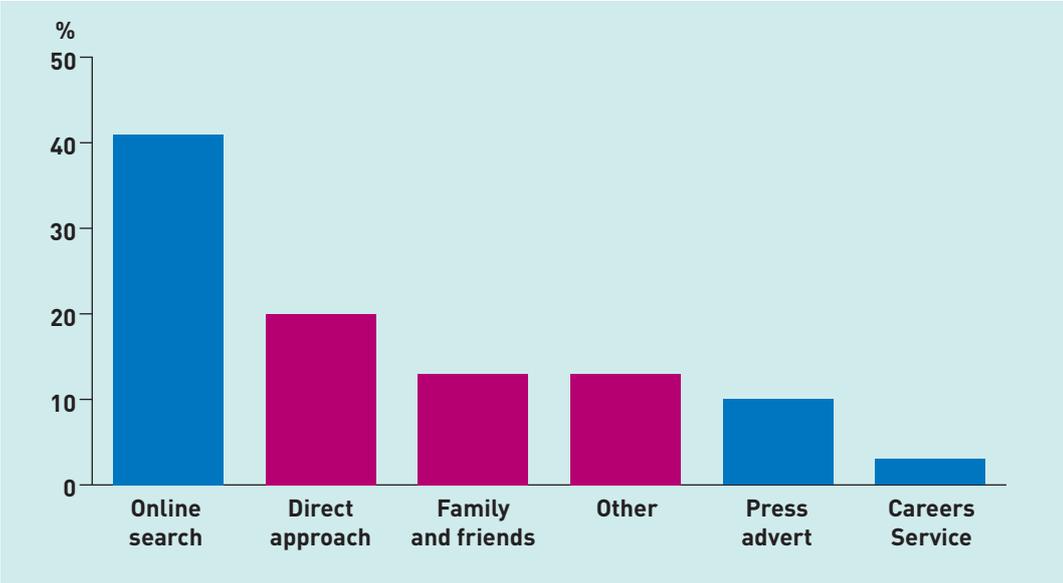


Figure 7d: Method of securing internship, survey response⁵

Variable quality of internships

Internships are of variable quality. Some are very poorly run, with interns undertaking low-grade, repetitive and non-developmental tasks. Others are run to a very high standard, with a comprehensive induction, clear role and set of responsibilities for the duration of the post and regular feedback on performance.

The Panel has heard evidence that some companies use interns as a low-cost way to cover positions that would otherwise be filled by a permanent full-time member of staff. Such a situation is unlikely to lead to a highly developmental internship experience. The National Union of Journalists submission to the National Call for Evidence showed that of the 640 new journalists surveyed, more than 50% had completed post-qualification work experience 'with the majority of them receiving little if any payment for their work'. Of those who had material published or broadcast, 78% received no payment for their work and 25% said that the organisation they worked for would not be able to function normally without interns.

The Panel believes that the opportunity to undertake an internship should be open to all. The best and most talented should be able to compete for internship places based solely on intellect, talent and potential. Background and social network should not be the critical factors in determining or allocating internship opportunities. The Panel has looked closely at how to open up more opportunities for internships, and believes that there are three broad elements that the professions – working with government and others – should take action on. These are:

- Making a fairer and more transparent system
- Recognising best practice
- Removing financial barriers.

We set out a new collaborative approach based around these three principles in this chapter. We believe that, in the first instance, a voluntary approach based on partnership between the Government, professions, employers and others is the best way to ensure fair opportunities for internships. We also believe that the Government should review in due course whether this voluntary approach has been successful, and at that point consider stronger measures for compliance, including through new legislation.

Recommendation 46: The Government should review how effective the Panel's voluntary approach on internships has been by the end of 2012, with a view to enacting stronger means to ensure compliance if satisfactory progress has not been made at that point, including through new legislation.

Case study: The City Brokerage Scheme

The City Brokerage is an independent not-for-profit organisation working in partnership with City employers to create a pathway to the City for young residents of London's inner-city boroughs.

The Brokerage works with local schools and colleges to enable City firms to engage with students aged 14–18, with a view to raising their future career aspiration. Through its internships and direct hire programmes, it enables employers to gain access to a diverse group of talented young people.

'Though I'm confident in my ability it can sometimes be hard to find avenues where I can prove myself. The Brokerage workshops and internship provide a platform for me not only to show employers what I'm capable of – but also for me to realise my own potential and ability.'
(Chisom Chigbo, 2008 intern at UBS)

The Brokerage City Careers Programme

This programme puts talented undergraduates from across London in touch with key City recruiters. Companies are able to publicise events and opportunities directly to students. Participating students are able to find out about any internships, networking events and graduate opportunities that City companies are offering. They are also able to post their profiles and CVs online for City recruiters to access.

7.1 Establishing a fair and transparent system for internships

Many professional employers run internship schemes that are openly advertised, have a clear, transparent and objective recruitment process and provide quality, focused developmental tasks for the intern. The Panel considers schemes run in this way to be examples of best practice. They are not only fairer to candidates, reducing the chance of unadvertised internships being allocated to friends or relatives, but also to attract a much broader, and better-quality, range of candidates applying for the internships on offer. Many of the submissions put to the Panel as part of the National Call for Evidence called for a greater degree of guidance around internships and work experience placements.

But many internships, perhaps the majority, are not run so well. Some organisations prefer to run their internship schemes in an informal manner, while others who would like to run theirs in a better way do not have the time or knowledge of how to go about doing so. A submission to the National Call for Evidence from the IPA said that internship opportunities in the advertising sector were scarce, and that successful candidates had often secured the place through 'friends and family' networks.

The Panel has looked into the issue of remuneration for interns. Many interns are not paid or are low-paid. We recognise that there are many different sorts of internship. It is important that employers continue to create internships, and many already put huge effort into making them a successful experience both for the intern and for the business. We want to see many more high-quality internships being offered. A high-quality internship involves the intern undertaking meaningful and valuable work for the organisation. In this way the intern learns and benefits most from the internship and the company gets most business value from the intern. The Panel believes that there should, in general, be fair recognition of the value an intern brings to the organisation in remuneration levels.

It should be noted that some submissions to the Call for Evidence expressed caution over measures to improve the quality of internship schemes. A submission from the Engineering Council UK, for example, argued that there was little incentive for many small- and medium-sized companies to run internship schemes, or to run those that they do to a high standard, because a far better strategy for them is to recruit those completing internships in other companies. This approach allows companies to recruit staff with the skills that an internship brings without having to invest the time and development costs needed to run a scheme of their own.

A best practice code for running high-quality internships would provide a set of minimum standards against which internship programmes could be modelled. Such a code would provide those employers who wish to run a high-quality scheme with the information and advice needed to run one, and those that wish to continue informal systems a challenge to change their approach.

The code, which could be further tailored to particular professions, should cover (at a minimum):

- Commitment from the employer to running a quality internship or placement
- Openly advertised positions
- Fair and transparent recruitment and selection processes
- A suitably comprehensive introduction to the organisation, enabling the intern to be effective in the post in as short a time as possible

- A quality induction process
- A quality learning experience, with appropriate measures of assessment and support
- Guidance on possible approaches to remuneration or reward making clear reference to the National Minimum Wage and other legal obligations
- Evaluation, monitoring and review of the internship or placement.

Recommendation 47: The professions, the Government, trade unions and the third sector should together produce a common best practice code for high-quality internships.

In order for a best practice code on high-quality internships to effect change, employers must be aware of the code and encouraged to use it. Professional bodies should take the lead in ensuring that this happens.

Recommendation 48: Each profession should make employers in its field aware of the best practice code and encourage them to adopt it for all relevant internship and work experience placements (including university 'sandwich' courses).

In addition to the open and transparent recruitment processes that mark out a good scheme, the advertising of internship opportunities in a well-known and easily accessible space would increase the visibility of such positions and, through greater competition (among both recruiters and potential interns), drive up the quality of internship placements.

We welcome the Government's recently launched Talent Pool Internship Portal. It aims to be the central website for the advertisement of graduate internship opportunities. The Panel considers this to be an ideal vehicle for advertising pre-graduate internships.

Recommendation 49: The Government should develop the Talent Pool Internship Portal to become a single website for all pre- and postgraduate internships.

The portal will have no effect unless prospective interns know of it. Much effort must be put into advertising the portal in order to ensure that it has a high profile not only among those that intend to undertake internships anyway, but also among those that would not otherwise think of undertaking an internship. Small- and medium-sized companies should be actively encouraged to use the portal, as should employers in the newer professions, such as media and green technology.

Recommendation 50: The Government should ensure that the Talent Pool Internship Portal has an advertising budget that is sufficient to ensure that it has a high-profile launch. It should target students who would otherwise not be aware of these opportunities, pre-university students who might not know that financial help towards a professional career is available, and schools with a high proportion of children on free school meals.

7.2 Recognising best practice: a national Kitemark for employers

Even with an agreed and well-publicised best practice code on high-quality internships, many schemes will continue to fall below desired standards. In order for potential interns to better understand which schemes are well run and which are not, an external and independent quality assurance process would be useful.

A quality mark awarded after independent assessment of an internship scheme would provide benefits to all parties. It could ensure that minimum standards are met; increase the quality of interns (through increased competition for a quality marked scheme over a non-marked scheme); and act as a guide for the intern as to which internship schemes offer a high-quality, developmental experience.

Such Kitemark schemes are already in existence, albeit on a relatively small scale. The Panel has examined the scheme run by the National Council for Work Experience (NCWE) as a leading example of what could be done.

Case study: National Council for Work Experience

The NCWE believes that in order for both the employer and the student to benefit from a period of work experience, standards should be set in the form of a quality mark. The mark enables the student to make a more informed career choice, while providing employers with an excellent recruitment tool.

Created by the NCWE, the NCWE Quality Mark is a standard that is designed to recognise and accredit employers that meet a national standard for work experience provision. Accredited employers are recognised for their contribution to positive workforce development, student learning and society as a whole, thereby adding to their corporate social responsibility portfolio.

The Quality Mark is based around six main elements. In order to be accredited, the employer must show that it complies with comprehensive criteria within each element. The elements are:

- Commitment
- Recruitment
- Induction
- Learning, assessment and support
- Partnerships
- Programme evaluation and monitoring.

Companies are encouraged to: prepare a submission to the NCWE, with help from an NCWE adviser; receive a visit from an NCWE assessor; and are reviewed by an external board of career professionals. Once accredited, the employer is provided with formal recognition, which allows it to invest further and more easily attract future talent.

Case Study: Internocracy

Internocracy is a social enterprise committed to lowering the barriers and raising the bar in internships. Internocracy's work focuses on promoting fair access to internships as a key route into employment in the professions, and working to raise the quality of internships across organisations and sectors throughout the UK.

On the basis of research into best practice in internships in the UK and abroad, they work with organisations to design internship programmes from scratch, making them easy for the organisation to manage and sustain and a worthwhile experience for interns.

Alongside this, Internocracy is currently rolling out the I.SIP (Internocracy Star Internship Programme) accreditation mark – a Kitemark for outstanding internship programmes based upon the lived experience of interns rather than solely on internal HR structures in organisations.

Recommendation 51: The professions, the Government, trade unions and the third sector should agree an Internship Quality Kitemark scheme for high-quality internship programmes. The Kitemark should set out the criteria that a high-quality internship placement should meet (based on the common best practice code for high-quality internships proposed in recommendation 47).

In order for the Internship Quality Kitemark to effect change, employers must be aware of it and encouraged to use it. Professional bodies should take the lead in ensuring that this happens.

Recommendation 52: Each professional association should make the acceptance and use of the best practice code and Kitemark a condition of being a member of the professional association, and accept responsibility for making employers in its field aware of both.

In addition to the professions and employers doing all they can to spread best practice, to use the Kitemark and to promote and advertise internship opportunities, educational establishments and associated groups also have an important role to play.

Recommendation 53: Universities should take responsibility for ensuring that their 'sandwich' courses are in line with the common best practice code for high-quality internships and meet the Kitemark standards.

Recommendation 54: The National Union of Students, Trades Union Congress and the Government should work together to take forward an outreach programme to ensure that students from all backgrounds give due consideration to undertaking an internship.

Providing more information about particular internship schemes to prospective interns is a powerful way of encouraging employers to increase the quality of the internships that they provide. The internet provides new opportunities for this. For instance, internet retailers often have customer reviews posted alongside the product. Such reviews provide information that:

- Is detailed
- Is aggregated
- Gives a balanced account of the product, rather than a binary 'good' or 'bad'
- Is constantly updated
- Is written by people who have bought the product.

The same principle can also be applied to internships, and should have a similarly beneficial effect.

Recommendation 55: The Talent Pool Internship Portal should go further in developing and promoting its forum where ex-interns can post reviews of the internships that they have undertaken.

7.3 Affordability: removing financial constraints

Addressing affordability issues is important if internship opportunities are to be more fairly available. Government has a number of mechanisms through which it could provide more support to high-potential, disadvantaged interns.

Student Loans are a means by which the Government provides learning opportunities for those that would not otherwise be able to afford them. Student Loan repayment is income dependent. Loans are relatively easy to access and are calculated to cover the costs of study and living. But they do not currently cover periods of internships.

Recommendation 56: The Government should allow students to draw down their existing Student Loan entitlement in four parts, rather than the current three, so enabling students to be able to cover the additional costs of undertaking a short summer internship. The Government should review how to appropriately target additional loan support to such students through this window.

Using a mechanism similar to the current Student Loans to support interns could be another highly effective way of helping people to meet the costs of an internship. 'Micro-loans' could be made available that are sufficient to cover, at a minimum, a short internship of one or two months' duration.

Such an approach would have many advantages:

- Companies would be saved the expense and administration of learning how to administer loans. The Student Loans Company is already well set up to do this

- Using the Student Loans Company for the provision of micro-loans would also help companies and the public to view internship loans as something beneficially associated with career education and development
- In order for the micro-loans to be targeted at those that most need them, means testing should be used. The Student Loans Company already has means testing systems established and so is well placed to provide the necessary expertise
- In addition to managing access to the micro-loans, means testing could also be used in setting differential repayment periods dependent upon future earnings.

Recommendation 57: The Government should explore ways of providing means-tested micro-loans to interns to cover the cost of living and commuting for a short internship period.

Better support for interns from lower socio-economic backgrounds will be to the advantage of employers, as interns will be drawn from a wider pool of talent. It is therefore fair that employers should make some contribution to the costs of providing this support. This could be through either setting up their own systems for better supporting disadvantaged candidates (as recommendations 61 and 62 set out) or they could contribute towards a percentage of the costs incurred by the Government in its efforts to provide support.

Recommendation 58: Companies offering internships should be given the option to pay a small part of their tax contribution directly to the Student Loans Company to cover the cost of the internship loans and associated administrative costs.

Case study: Step Enterprise

Shell Step is the UK's leading nationwide and project-based work placement programme, run by a specialist team at Step Enterprise.

Shell Step brings together students and graduates who want to gain valuable experience on real work placements with companies who want an injection of fresh ideas, talent and enthusiasm to inspire and build their business.

Every year, over 600 Shell Step students take on live business projects for small- and medium-sized companies throughout the UK, and achieve outstanding results.

Shell Step gives businesses a cost-effective, short-term, highly skilled resource to help get a new or outstanding initiative off the ground.

Another potential means for offering financial support to interns is the Professional and Career Development Loan (PCDL). Using such a loan is often the only means by which a high-potential, disadvantaged, aspiring professional can finance the necessary postgraduate or technical qualification. The PCDL is only available for certain types of learning, and is not currently available for internship or work experience activity.

But an internship is arguably just as developmental as formal studies of a professional field, and may have more of a bearing on eventual success in entering a profession. There is a strong case, therefore, for the Government to set up a mechanism similar to a PCDL in order to allow people who could not otherwise meet the costs of an internship to undertake one.

Recommendation 59: The Government should work with banks and other lending institutions to provide internship support loans to be used to cover the costs associated with undertaking an internship. Such loans could be made along similar lines to Professional and Career Development Loans.

Recommendation 60: Provision of all government-brokered or -supported financial assistance for interns should be dependent upon the internship placement in question having received the Internship Quality Kitemark. Professions should stipulate a similar restriction upon any financial assistance provided or brokered by them for similar purposes. Universities should support the Kitemark scheme by advertising it to students who are looking for internships.

Case study: London School of Economics

The London School of Economics' (LSE's) Parliamentary Internships, created in 1998 together with Barry Sheerman MP, offer invaluable opportunities both to graduate students and to MPs, peers and political organisations.

Graduate students from any department are given the opportunity to apply for an unpaid Parliamentary Internship at Westminster. The scheme matches LSE students with MPs in order to give first-hand experience of the House of Commons and the wider British political process. Typical assignments include writing briefings and speeches, working on specific projects and assisting with constituency work.

The Panel has heard from the professions themselves that it is they that benefit from having the best and most talented interns working for them. The legal profession made a particularly strong case in this regard. So the professions should act in their own interests and take the lead in providing more support to high-potential but disadvantaged interns. Provision of support, if correctly targeted, could tap into a group of otherwise unreachable highly talented potential professionals.

Recommendation 61: The professions should provide more support for interns from lower socio-economic backgrounds through grants and loans. The Government should recognise the efforts of those employers that provide such support for interns by granting tax relief on money that is provided for grants and loans.

Some professions have already made arrangements with financial institutions to provide means of support for disadvantaged potential professionals. For instance, the Bar has arranged privately brokered financing through HSBC in order to provide support for the Bar Vocational Course. Other professions should follow suit.

Recommendation 62: Professions should work directly with banks and other lending institutions to provide privately brokered financing for those studying for relevant professional qualifications.

Submissions to the Panel's National Call for Evidence showed that many professions already provide a great deal of financial support to aspiring professionals from disadvantaged backgrounds. However, it is sometimes difficult to identify the sources of support and the manner in which it is provided. Bringing all relevant information about available support together in a single, accessible and visible place would greatly assist those that need it most.

Recommendation 63: The professions should create an online resource that sets out the range of profession-specific financial support that is available for prospective interns and students of professional qualifications. The online resource should set out what support is available, where it can be accessed, the criteria used to disburse it and the various application methods and deadlines. Such information should be advertised on professional websites, as well as on the Government's Talent Pool Internship Portal.

Accommodation is the single biggest expense in undertaking an internship if the intern cannot lodge with friends or family within commuting distance of the internship site. Many internships are undertaken during university holidays. This is also the time when many university halls of residence are vacant or only partially full as students return home. The universities may be able to provide a lower-cost alternative to renting or hotel rates for those undertaking internships in the area.

Recommendation 64: Universities should provide low-cost or free accommodation for young people undertaking internships during university vacations. Universities should work with the Government to set up a matching service for prospective interns.

Conclusion

Internships are accessible only to some when they should be open to all who have aptitude. Currently employers are missing out on talented people – and talented people are missing opportunities to progress. There are negative consequences for social mobility and for fair access to the professions. A radical change is needed. We propose ways of making internships more accessible, more transparent and more widely available to many more people. We do so in a way that is fair to employers as well as to interns. We welcome the good work that some professions are doing already and want to support others to follow – making the prospect of an internship a possibility for all.

Chapter 8

Recruitment and selection: new opportunities for talent to shine



This chapter sets out:

- Why fair recruitment and selection processes are needed so that people have fair chances to get into the top jobs
- What best practice looks like in the public and private sectors
- Our recommendations which involve:
 - A pilot programme in which data is collected on the socio-economic background of the entrants to the Senior Civil Service, just as it is for gender, race and disability
 - Expecting action from the professions to review their performance on fair access, with each profession setting out action plans to widen access by the end of 2010
 - Promoting fair standards through a guide for employers and sharing of best practice.

Unlocking Britain's talent

Fair selection is essential to improving access to the professions. Improved efforts at school, college and university may help to equip young people with the right skills and the ambition to become a professional, but without the proper recruitment practices and commitment from the professions they will not have the opportunity to compete fairly for professional employment.

And having fair access to the professions not only helps the applicants; it is good for the professions, businesses and the wider economy, too, for several reasons:

- All applicants have a fair opportunity to show their talent and potential to employers
- Businesses get the widest and richest pool of talent from which to select candidates
- Businesses are able to identify the candidates with the most potential
- Having the most talented individuals in our professions will help Britain compete in a global economy.

We have received strong evidence that supports the need for fairer recruitment and selection:

- Around 70% of graduate recruiters target fewer than 20 university campuses, even though there are currently 109 UK universities and 169 higher education institutions¹
- Our National Call for Evidence found weaknesses in both assessment centres and interviews when recruitment to professional jobs
- Top employers often sift as far back as school in order to distinguish between candidates²
- The process of sifting applications rarely recognises attributes and experiences beyond academic achievement
- The Professional Associations Research Network (PARN) found that under 25% of the organisations surveyed considered diversity in their strategy documents.³

The Panel is asking both the Government and the professions to take action to improve fair access, because neither can do it on their own. Real change relies on the professions, and particularly employers, taking the initiative and developing solutions themselves.

Just as progress on gender and race has involved a culture change, so here the professions need to lead a major change in how they are seen and how they see themselves. Evidence from a consultation workshop held by the Panel with the creative industries suggested that some ethnic minorities do not regard publishing as a top-tier profession. Other submissions in response to our National Call for Evidence cited the frequent practice of professions recruiting from existing cultural circles, and so excluding many potential candidates who are regarded as 'outside' the circle.

Some employers are already starting to actively improve their recruitment and selection processes. For example, the Civil Service has been widening the number of universities it targets for guidance entrants into its Fast Stream programme.

Case study: Civil Service Fast Stream

The Civil Service Fast Stream is now promoted at over 50 graduate on-campus career fairs and is focusing efforts on widening the talent pool to encompass the best graduates from the post-92 universities as well as Russell Group institutions.

Other initiatives aimed at widening participation include newsletters for careers advisers and half-day skills workshops for groups of 20 to 30 students. These include a policy game that illustrates many aspects of a career in the Civil Service.

Indeed, we have been given many good examples of where professions and employers are improving their assessment practices.

Case study: Ernst and Young

Ernst and Young has diversity and inclusion policies and fairer recruitment practices that make it a leader in its field. For example, it uses a broad range of media channels to target a wider pool of applicants, particularly from under-represented groups. It seeks advice from a specialist disability recruiting company, and is involved in recruitment fairs for gay and lesbian graduates.

Case study: Doughty Street Chambers

Doughty Street Chambers was set up in 1990 by barristers seeking to break the mould of traditional chambers. Here diversity is seen not only as ethical, but also as good business practice and as a way of widening the sort of business the chambers can attract. Bias is avoided by involving several people in the selection process and by building on best practice developed by other companies.

The Panel also received feedback from the professions, seeking clear guidance on how to improve their selection processes and open their doors to a more diverse and talented workforce. Here the Government could help by providing guidance, support and encouragement to the professions on improving access.

The Panel has looked closely at how best to support fair selection processes. We have examined evidence submitted to us in three areas:

- Collecting and publishing data on socio-economic status
- Professions planning to ensure fair access
- Providing best practice guidance on fair selection.

8.1 Collecting data on socio-economic background

The evidence gathered by the Panel suggests that there is no systematic collection of data on the social background of those applying to and entering the professions. Without this, there is no way of determining accurately the extent of the problem or the progress to be made from the recommendations in this report.

The Government has already taken action here. The Equality Bill currently before Parliament will place a new duty on government ministers, departments and key public bodies, such as local authorities and the NHS, to consider the action they need to take to reduce socio-economic inequalities. It will enshrine in law the role key public bodies have in narrowing gaps in outcomes resulting from socio-economic disadvantage. The bill also requires the Equality and Human Rights Commission to take responsibility for monitoring implementation of and adherence to the new duty.

The collection and publication of data on gender, race and disability have opened minds and changed behaviours. Yet at present most professions and employers are unable to say with any confidence what the social make-up of their workforces is. At a Panel Evidence Hearing,

representatives from the veterinary and medical professions said that a more systematic collection of data on social background was needed in order to plan more effectively how to widen access.

Evidence set out in this report suggests that the professions as a whole have become more socially exclusive over time. But data is, by and large, not available at the level of the individual organisation. The Panel believes that the publication of such data could have a powerful influence on public sector bodies, but we are anxious to avoid unnecessary bureaucracy. The same concerns are amplified many times over when it comes to private sector employers, particularly at this time of economic difficulty. We have therefore concluded that, although there is merit in collecting and publishing data on socio-economic background (in a similar way to that in which data on gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability is currently collected), such a change should not be made widespread across the public sector unless there is careful evaluation of its benefits and its costs. We have, however, identified the Senior Civil Service as a group that has traditionally been socially exclusive in its make-up but which has been making big efforts to broaden its intake. We believe it should be the focus for a pilot programme which can then be subject to appropriate evaluation.

Recommendation 65: The Government should collect and publish data on the socio-economic background of applicants and entrants to the Senior Civil Service, drawing on the lessons that have been learned from collecting and publishing data on gender, race and disability.

8.2 Professions planning for fair access

Evidence submitted to the Panel suggests that the professions are beginning to take a lead in reviewing and reforming their recruitment and selection processes. We believe it is vital that the professions take the initiative and develop solutions themselves. It is certainly preferable for the professions to reform themselves than to have to respond to a mandate from the Government.

One challenge faced by the Panel when developing its recommendations was the plethora of professions and their very different sizes and structures. We recognise that a 'one size fits all' solution will not be the most effective means to improve access. So we look to the professions to take a lead.

Here we believe the legal profession has taken the initiative through the Neuberger Report.

Case study: Neuberger Report

In 2007, as part of a project to increase diversity, a working party led by Lord Neuberger reviewed the selection and recruitment procedures used by the Bar. The result was a report recommending a set of proposals designed to increase significantly the number of able people from disadvantaged backgrounds at the Bar. One key recommendation was to create an access monitoring group to ensure progress in implementing the recommendations and to report twice a year, monitoring the situation and making further recommendations.

The Neuberger Report highlights the fact that selection processes go wider than the assessment or interview. They include outreach activity undertaken at schools and colleges, the reputation and image of the profession, its culture, and the retention of a diverse workforce. The professions need to take a wide-ranging look at the issues they face. Commissioning a report along the lines of the Neuberger Report would allow each profession to do so.

Recommendation 66: Each profession should carry out a review of current practice on fair access to its profession, with a view to developing practical ideas for improvement. The professions should report publicly on these by the end of 2010, with a clear set of recommendations and an action plan for implementation.

8.3 Promoting fair standards: a guide for employers

The methods used to select suitable applicants for professional jobs vary considerably – not only across the professions, but within them. A fair selection process is essential to ensure that the best candidate is chosen for the job.

Respondents to our National Call for Evidence had mixed views about current selection processes. Many thought that current processes were sufficiently structured to ensure relative fairness; a number suggested that despite otherwise unbiased bureaucratic processes, the selection criteria often favoured groups with high socio-economic backgrounds. A submission from the Centre for Research into Diversity in the Professions suggested that selection methods tend to be discriminatory because of the advantage given to candidates with the right contacts and cultural capital. This was supported by a number of other submissions, which acknowledged the often important role that friends and family play in recruitment.

Other respondents were resistant to the idea of compromising on selection practices or entry requirements in order to broaden access, as they believed that this would reduce the standards of their profession. We heed this point of view but we also heard compelling evidence that the professions want to develop the best recruitment and selection processes to identify the candidates with the most potential. Our evidence suggests that current practices do not always result in the best getting through:

- Many graduate employers rely on automatic sifting and outsourcing to reduce the number of applicants for consideration. This can lead to 'non-conventional' applicants being rejected at the first hurdle
- Around 88% of *The Times*' Top 100 Graduate Employers use assessment centres.⁴ Evidence submitted in response to our Call for Evidence suggested that selection criteria often favour groups with higher socio-economic background because the use of online applications, automatic sifting and a focus on extra-curricular activities do not take account of possible social disadvantages
- A recent survey found that 47% of interviewers made their decision on each candidate within 30 minutes.⁵ Evidence from the creative industries workshop supports the view that smaller firms, in particular, do not have the resources to procure trained human resource expertise, hold expensive recruitment campaigns or negotiate contracts with assessment centres.

Evidence submitted to the Panel suggests that some employers are already taking steps to improve their selection processes in order to give all applicants a fairer chance to succeed.

Case study: BBC Vision Intake Pool

The BBC Vision Intake Pool is an entry-level programme designed to develop a more diverse pool of talent within the BBC, the better to reflect the diversity of its audiences. The focus is on selecting people with a passion for and interest in the media. The programme targets people with a real understanding – or direct experience – of the issues facing the diverse communities that make up the UK. Potential is more important than any prior experience or qualifications. As such, qualifications are not part of the sifting process.

Many more would like help to do so. Earlier this year, the former Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills and the Professional Association Research Network launched their online Professional Recruitment Guide.⁶ The guide provides advice and examples to help firms look beyond their usual recruitment processes in the drive to access a wider pool of talent. We believe the guide is a useful tool, but it needs to be amended to ensure the inclusion of socio-economic background as an issue of diversity in recruitment. It also needs to take account of broader recruitment techniques, such as mentoring, school outreach schemes and internships. It should then be actively promoted by the Government and the professions.

Recommendation 67: The Government's online Professional Recruitment Guide should be amended and should be jointly and actively promoted by the professions and the Government to help employers to develop recruitment practices that can ensure fairer access.

Conclusion

Selection processes are the funnel through which the professions recruit their workforces. Some employers use wide-ranging techniques that open their doors to a wider pool of talent. Others do not. We believe that this is for employers to decide, but we also believe that many want help to widen their recruitment. We also believe that information is power. Without it, bad practice goes unheeded and problems remain undetected. We have seen how the collection and publication of data on gender, race and disability have shone a light on discrimination and have changed behaviour. We believe that a similar approach is needed in relation to data on socio-economic background, and in particular that taxpayers have a right to know how well public bodies are doing in improving fair access. We also want to help private sector employers do the same. And we want to see the professions themselves take the lead on this agenda. Our proposals are geared to helping this to happen.

Chapter 9

Flexible professions: new opportunities for career progression



This chapter sets out:

- How the professions are missing out on talent because of inflexible entry and progression routes
- How by devolving functions and providing smoother career paths the professions can become more accessible to non-graduates
- Our recommendations which involve:
 - Expanding entry points to the professions, including new vocational routes and extended paraprofessional roles
 - Supporting mid-career entry and re-entry into the professions
 - Encouraging more flexible working patterns, led by professional bodies and regulators
 - Creating a more flexible and empowering training system where individuals have their own government-funded Lifelong Skill Development Accounts with vouchers worth up to £5,000
 - Freeing up further education and shifting to a tax and incentives scheme for employer-funded training.

A narrowing of the funnel of opportunities

During the first great wave of social mobility, access to professional jobs was open to people from a wide variety of backgrounds who possessed a broad range of qualifications. Many people who entered at the bottom had the opportunity to work their way up to the top of the professions. The professions not only contributed to the country's social mobility, but they themselves were extremely socially mobile.

Since then, the professions have (with some notable exceptions, such as the police and the Armed Forces) become increasingly the preserve of those with a university degree and, as we highlighted in chapter 1, of a more socially exclusive cohort of people.

Of course, it is vital that the professions should be staffed by people with appropriate qualifications. None of us would want to be treated by an under-qualified doctor – any more than we would want to employ the services of an amateur architect. But in the course of our work, we have heard a growing chorus of concern about the professions inadvertently closing their doors to a raft of talent. Whereas, in the past, the journalist might have worked his way up through the local newspaper, the lawyer through the article route, or the accountant by starting out as a bookkeeper, such opportunities have become a thing of the past.

There are fewer chances for people to work their way up from the bottom to the top of the professional career ladder because of the aggregate impact of a series of incremental changes:

- Increased labour specialisation, leading to job silos that block career paths
- Technological change stripping away routine entry-level jobs
- Qualification inflation, with the advent of a near-universal minimum graduate-entry requirement
- Increased regulatory and accountability demands, leading to a more risk-averse culture.

The effect of these changes is that those with the inherent ability to perform in a professional career but who perhaps lack entry qualifications have now become less likely professional entrants. This, combined with a growing inflexibility in how people can climb the career ladder, has had serious consequences for social mobility. Just as importantly, if this is not addressed, it will have serious consequences for the ability of the professions to recruit the many millions of extra staff they will need to take on in the decades ahead.

A new definition of the professions is needed. The current default assumption that the professions can only be formed from those who possess one set of qualifications at the point of entry is out of date. A modern definition of the professions should instead take as wide a view as possible of the roles that can be classified as professional, and should positively encourage entry through a wide set of routes. In their policies, practices and literature, the professions should make clear that non-graduate jobs are as professional (and as valued) as graduate jobs, and that in most sectors there will be many discrete professional occupations.

It is vital that the professions, while retaining the highest standards, find ways of opening up opportunities for people at different stages of their life through more flexible entry and progression routes.

We are clear that opening up such opportunities is a core component of the overall social mobility picture:

- Not everyone ‘gets it right first time’, and people may wish to train for and enter professional careers later in life
- Many aspirant professionals will wish to access a career through different training routes or work their way up from entry-level positions
- Aspirant professionals from non-traditional backgrounds often require more flexibility in their working patterns
- Today’s professionals demand more choice and control in how they train and develop, and increasingly want to move between different career sectors over their lifetime.

Creating more diverse entry and progression routes relies on:

- Having a range of entry points into the professions, with visible paths for the aspiring professional
- Promoting flexible working patterns to ensure that people from all backgrounds can access professional jobs and progress in them
- A training and development system that empowers individuals to develop their skills and capabilities in a flexible way that is suited to their needs and lifestyle, and that does not artificially discriminate between alternative training paths.

Our recommendations in this chapter provide a framework for opening up professional opportunities. But there are no simple answers – the entry points and training routes to each profession will necessarily be different. The framework we set out here is intended to provide a platform for sustained dialogue and shared lessons on these themes within and between the different professions.

9.1 Extending the ladder of entry points into the professions

Articled clerks might belong to the past, but the concept of an extended career ladder is one that will be important for the future. In this section, we discuss how to stretch entry ladders into the professions through:

- New vocational routes
- Broadening paraprofessional entry roles and ensuring progression routes from these
- Supporting mid-career, career interchange and career returner opportunities.

New vocational routes into the professions

Not all aspirant professionals will want to go to university in order to access a professional career. But in recent years, many professions have adopted a graduate-only entry policy: nursing and social care are but two recent examples. When we took evidence, we heard different views about this shift to graduate entry – for some it is a welcome drive to raise qualification levels, while others have raised concerns that potential good entrants to the professions may as a result miss out on careers.

We have received clear evidence that fewer non-graduates now get into professional careers:

- Only one in four of *The Times* Top 100 Employers now accepts non-graduate entrants¹
- Many more professional careers now require at least an undergraduate degree – and often further qualifications.

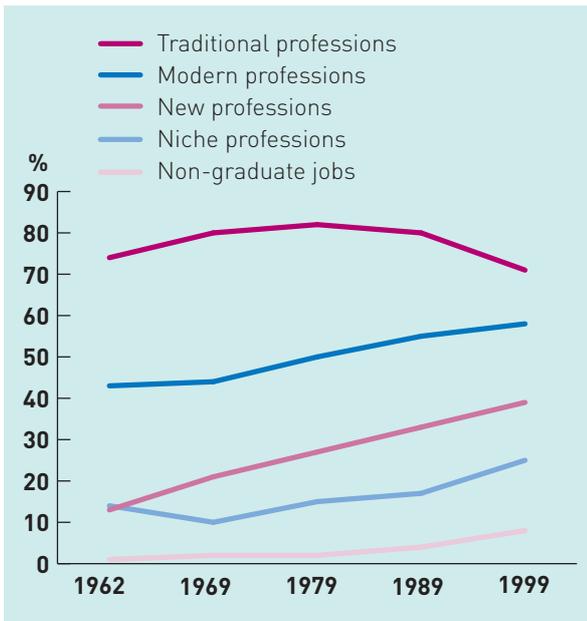


Figure 9a: Percentage of jobs requiring a degree, by professional type²

This shift in the pattern of professional employment has been detrimental to social mobility, as the evidence shows:

- More than twice as many young people from lower socio-economic groups choose vocational routes as do young people with parents in professional occupations (see figure 9b below).
- Only 0.2% of Apprenticeship learners progressed to further or higher education in 2007/08, and few went directly into the professions.³
- There is a social divide in participation rates at university: only 15% of young people with parents in routine occupations get into university, compared with 41% of young people with parents who are already professionals.⁴

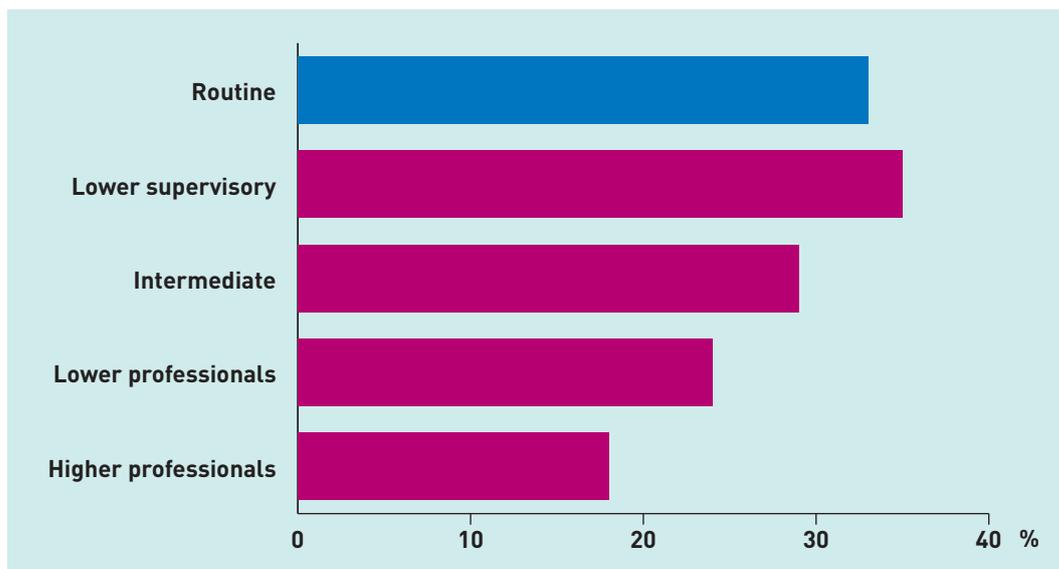


Figure 9b: Main study aim at age 16, by parental occupation: percentage reporting aiming for a vocational qualification⁵

Many professions have become increasingly concerned about these developments and have taken the lead in developing innovative new levers to prise open the professions. For instance, the major accountancy institutes all offer non-graduate routes to entry: the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) launched a Certificate in Finance, Accounting and Business in 2008. This provides an entry-level qualification, as well as being a stepping stone to the full Associate of the Institute of Chartered Accountants (ACA) qualification.

In other professions, such as engineering, there is a very wide spectrum of entry routes into the sector. The same is true of the police and armed forces, where a single point of entry makes for a wide social funnel into valuable professional careers. Elsewhere, professions like the arts and the cultural industries have developed multiple points of entry, so that talent, regardless of background or qualifications, has the opportunity to develop and thrive.

Case study: The engineering profession

There are a variety of registration routes for engineers entering the profession. Those who do not have the exemplifying academic qualifications may demonstrate that they have the required knowledge and understanding in various other ways. It is also possible to enter through vocational routes, such as Business and Technology Education Council qualifications (BTECs) and Apprenticeships.

From the evidence we received, it is clear that vocational routes will not be appropriate for all professions. But we do believe they can form part of a diverse set of routes into professional careers.

Recommendation 68: Each profession should work with the National Apprenticeship Service and the relevant Sector Skills Councils to establish clear progression routes from vocational training into the professions, and ensure that learners are aware of these routes.

Recommendation 69: The Government and the professions should provide a repository of best practice setting out practical ways in which vocational routes can be expanded into the professions.

For many people growing up in the 1950s and 1960s the apprenticeship was a route to a career in professions like engineering or journalism. In the 1960s, there were around 240,000 people undertaking an apprenticeship every year. But apprenticeship routes declined in the 1970s and 1980s, so that, by 1990, only 53,000 people got a place on an apprenticeship.⁶ Since 1990, successive governments have revived the apprenticeship model:

- In 1993, the Government announced plans for a new apprenticeship scheme called 'Modern Apprenticeships'.
- In 2000, a new Level 2 Apprenticeship was created.
- In 2005, the Apprenticeship blueprint was introduced to provide updated guidance to Sector Skills Councils on Apprenticeship frameworks.

Apprenticeship numbers have now grown back to 180,000 per year and cover sectors ranging from engineering to hospitality, and construction to retail. We welcome this and believe more can be done to make the Apprenticeship a new route into the professions.

In the *New Opportunities* White Paper, the Government committed to 21,000 new Apprenticeship places in public services. We believe that public service professions have an opportunity to lead the way in demonstrating how these vocational routes can provide a stepping stone to professional career positions. We also believe there may be opportunities to extend the Apprenticeship model to the Civil Service and local government. Each Government department could establish an Apprenticeship scheme for roles such as administrators, statisticians and researchers. On successfully completing their training, apprentices could then be eligible to apply to the Civil Service's Fast Stream talent programme.

Recommendation 70: The Government should extend apprenticeships in professional areas of employment in government departments. Where applicable, these should be explicitly linked to existing management development programmes such as the Civil Service Fast Stream.

We also believe that the professions should more fully embrace the Apprenticeship concept. It could have a major impact on making the professions less socially exclusive.

Recommendation 71: The professions should consider how to introduce apprenticeship schemes as part of their reviews of fair access processes in recommendation 66.

Paraprofessional entry routes into the professions

In recent years, many professions have taken a long hard look at the range of functions they discharge, with a view to devolving some to new classes of paraprofessionals. In education, for example, classroom assistants now take the load off teachers. In the NHS healthcare assistants do the same for nurses. Police community support officers (PCSOs) work alongside police officers. We also heard evidence from the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) about how their Legal Trainee Scheme includes training for people with no prior former legal training. Many have progressed from this scheme to become Chief Crown Prosecutors for the CPS.

We believe these developments are welcome. These recognise that not every professional function has to be discharged by the highest-qualified professional. Instead, many functions can be devolved. There are many benefits to such an approach:

- The public would receive more accessible and often additional services
- Senior professionals would get more support
- More people would get a first foot on the professional career ladder
- Taxpayers would get better value for money.

Case study: Paraprofessional opportunities in the public services

Paraprofessional opportunities have been opened up into many public service professions, including nurse practitioners, teaching assistants and police community support officers (PCSOs). A national survey of PCSOs carried out by the Home Office in 2005/06 found that 42% said they had joined as PCSOs as a stepping stone to becoming a police officer.

Recommendation 72: Each profession should examine the potential to devolve functions to paraprofessionals. The Government should ensure that, across all of the public services, reform programmes are being introduced to do the same.

The creation of new entry points, however, brings its own problems. We heard evidence from professions such as teaching that there are currently low rates of progression from paraprofessionals to more senior roles. This is clearly an issue of concern. It would be tragic if, when a new rung is created on the professional career ladder, people find themselves unable to make use of it.

Recommendation 73: The professions should work with the Government and others to set out clear progression maps from paraprofessional roles, and ensure that training systems support these routes.

Creating a clearer progression ladder relies, in good measure, on the professions encouraging mid-career opportunities and more flexible working patterns. It also relies on government developing a more flexible training system.

9.2 Opening up mid-career opportunities

Many aspiring professionals may wish to enter a career at a later stage in their lives. Some will want to start their training later in life, while others will wish to move career or re-enter a profession after taking a period of time out. In a modern and flexible economy, it is right that professional opportunities should be open to them. As retirement age increases, and as more people want a diverse and varied career, the likelihood of people changing career may well also increase. The professions will need to adapt.

The Panel heard evidence from the accountancy profession about the benefits that mid-career entrants can bring to employers. Such employees often make a major commitment in order to train as an accountant – for example, by taking a cut in pay from a previous career and ploughing time and energy into professional exams.

Anecdotally, it seems that this commitment results in fewer mid-career entrants leaving the accountancy profession after qualifying (relatively common among those who start work directly after graduating). Mid-career entrants often bring not only a mature and professional attitude, but also a wealth of skills and competencies from their previous career. Catering for mid-career entrants does require employers to be flexible – for example, by waiving or adjusting initial entry requirements and recognising experience, relying on subsequent stages of recruitment to ensure that appropriate selection procedures are followed.

At present, relatively few professions recognise qualifications and accreditations gained in other sectors. This can make it difficult for professionals to move between sectors without having to take a step back in role, or substantially retrain. The Panel took evidence, however, about professions looking to promote more interchange – for example, in teaching, the Fast Track scheme was successful in attracting high-flying graduates into the profession and opening up opportunities for them to progress into other careers after two years.

Similarly, a planned fast-track scheme will enable experienced professionals from other sectors to enter the classroom after six months of training, rather than the usual 12.

Case study: The architecture profession

The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) is promoting a long-term programme designed to encourage and increase connections between design and construction industry professionals. The programme aims to migrate professions away from a tribal identity (i.e. by profession) to a knowledge identity, centred around areas of expertise like sustainability, business and management of architecture, and conservation of historic buildings. Web-enabled knowledge communities are being established to encourage this programme.

Case study: Teach First

Teach First is a programme designed to encourage top graduates, who would not normally enter teaching, to teach for at least two years in challenging secondary schools in London, the North West and the Midlands. With tailored leadership training, developed with over 100 employers, Teach First aims to bring through the leaders of the future.

There are also plans for a fast-track teaching qualification for high-calibre candidates from other professions.

We also heard about a number of good programmes that support career returners, such as Capability Jane. Such schemes work closely with employers and career returners to provide training, among other things, to refresh skills and boost confidence.

Case study: Capability Jane and Towry Law's Return to Work programme

Capability Jane is an organisation that works with employers to help support women returners. It is built around developing seven pillars of support:

- 1. Professional flexible roles:** quality, professional part-time/flexible jobs within a reasonable commute and/or with opportunities for remote working.
- 2. Professional work placement opportunities:** e.g. the ability to work on a temporary basis.
- 3. New career direction programmes:** providing access to opportunities to retrain.
- 4. Professional re-entry programmes:** e.g. programmes that refresh the skills of qualified professionals.
- 5. Technical and professional training:** e.g. access to technical training to update skills.
- 6. Confidence, soft skills and career coaching.**
- 7. Signposting to business start-up support.**

For example, Capability Jane has worked with the wealth advice firm Towry Law, which takes on six Return to Work candidates at a time and puts them on a structured training programme to become wealth advisers. The six-month training programme runs for three days a week and incorporates classroom teaching, leading to five modules of examinations, in addition to practical work alongside established advisers. The training programme leads to the Certificate in Financial Planning.

Recommendation 74: Professional bodies and professional regulators should encourage businesses in their sector to ensure that they meet best practice in mid-career changes and career interchange routes. Regulators should publish information on how successful professional employers are being in providing more flexible entry and progression routes.

Such schemes have a clear wider benefit to the economy and society. For instance, the evidence suggests:

- Re-entry of professional women to the workplace will make a significant contribution to GDP: increased women's participation in the labour market could be worth between £15 billion and £23 billion or 1.3% to 2.0% of GDP.⁷
- Greater participation by women in the labour market could help to offset the effects of an ageing, shrinking population, and hence support growth.⁸ There may also be an economic and social case for government providing targeted support for such schemes, in order to capture the full benefits.

Recommendation 75: The Government should review how best to support return-to-work programmes for mid-career changes and professional re-entrants, for example through incentives for employers who adopt such schemes early.

9.3 Encouraging more flexible working patterns

We have received evidence highlighting the importance of flexible working patterns for social mobility. A number of arguments have been put to us:

- If flexible arrangements are not available, many people will be dissuaded from applying for professional positions in the first place.
- Without flexible arrangements to balance work and home commitments, it can make it harder for many groups – women in particular – to progress once in work.

The evidence suggests that flexible working patterns are important to a significant proportion of professionals – for instance:

- Part-time work is a particularly significant part of women’s lifetime patterns of employment, with 42% of women in employment working part time.⁹
- While the majority of jobs up to 2014 will be part time,¹⁰ those working part time do not always receive equal training opportunities.¹¹
- Over 3.1 million people work from home, of whom 2.4 million are teleworkers.¹²

We believe the lack of good-quality part-time roles is frustrating for the individual and a personal financial cost. It is also not using the full potential of the workforce and represents an underuse of experience and skills for the economy. Flexible working patterns are important for many people – not just parents with children under the age of 16, who currently have the right to request flexible working from their employers.

In April 2009, the right to request flexible working was extended to parents and carers with children up to the age of 16 (from the previous right for parents and carers with children aged up to 6 years old). These rights need to be balanced with their potential impact on businesses and employers – but in time could be extended to other employees.

Recommendation 76: Once economic circumstances allow, the right to request flexible working should be extended to all employees.

9.4 A new demand-led training system that empowers learners

We have heard compelling evidence that people seeking to progress up the career ladder are faced with a training system that is increasingly complex and inflexible. At the simplest of levels, the current training system means that a classroom assistant who aspires to become a teacher would have to give up work, possibly find childcare, and sacrifice income in order to retrain and then progress. Of course, professionals – and would-be professionals – often need to make such sacrifices in order to get on. But the way our training system is structured makes it very difficult – sometimes impossible – for many people to do so.

In the first place, it is highly complex and difficult to navigate:

- There are different funding systems for different courses. For example, young people on the New Deal or on any government-supported training scheme are not eligible for Education Maintenance Allowances (EMAs), whereas young people on Learning and Skills Council-funded courses or in full-time further education courses are eligible.
- There is no common standard to recognise the value of different qualifications: for example, some qualifications (such as BTECs) are recognised for university access, while others (such as NVQ Level 3 qualifications) are not.

Secondly, current training regimes tend to be inflexible, as funding is directed towards institutions rather than meeting individuals' requirements. For instance:

- Part-time learners in higher education do not receive as much support as full-time learners: part-time students are not eligible for student loan support
- Those wishing to follow vocational entry routes are substantially less supported than those following higher education routes into the professions: those taking vocational training routes typically receive around £12,000 in course entitlement and maintenance support, compared to over £33,000 for those studying through higher education routes (see figure 9c)
- There are fixed eligibility rules by qualification and age. For instance, NVQ Level 2 and 3 qualifications (such as Apprenticeships) are only funded for those aged under 25 (and who have not already gained an equivalent-level qualification).

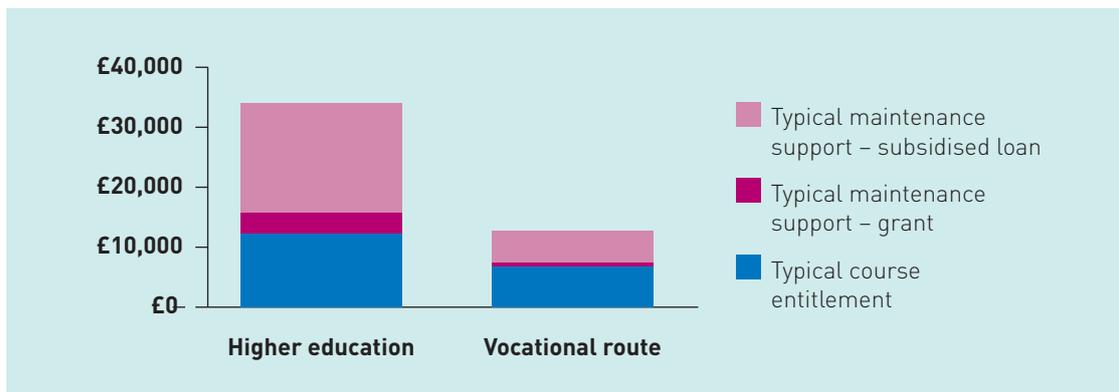


Figure 9c: The financial support that a 'typical' student doing vocational and academic training might expect to get¹³

This may explain why vocational qualifications have much lower levels of take-up in the UK than do traditional academic courses (see figure 9d).

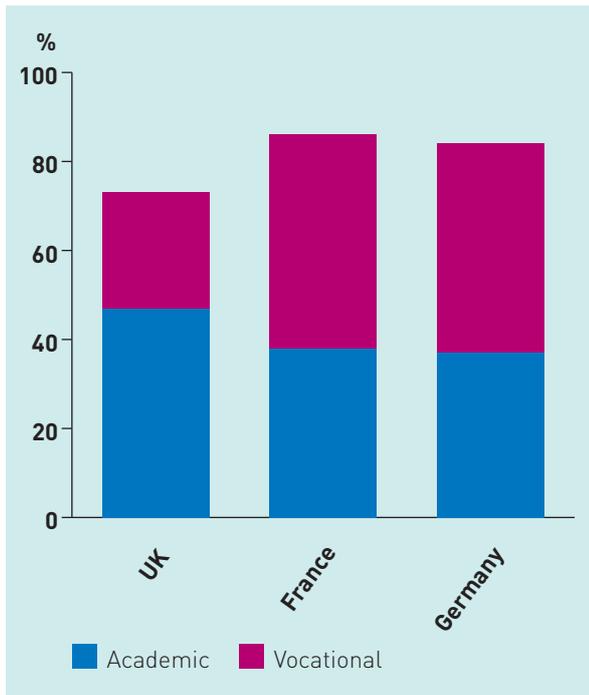


Figure 9d: Percentage of national populations aged 25–28 at Level 2 and above, by type of qualification held¹⁴

Many aspiring professionals would benefit if training and professional qualifications were more flexible and tailored to their circumstances – for example, those returning to work after a period of time off who may want to change career, or those who need to complete qualifications on a part-time basis. Women are likely to be particular beneficiaries of a more flexible system.

Our Call for Evidence provided much detail on why a more flexible training system could improve access to the professions. For instance, in our consultation with the Professional Associations Research Network, a number of professional bodies suggested a widening of accreditation routes and the provision of more flexible support for them.

Respondents also noted that the flexible learning routes currently available to students and professionals need to be supported. These include e-learning options, flexible accreditation practices, support for part time higher education, and support for mature students to enter or change professions.

Case study: The Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) – Craig Wolfe, International Accounting Director

‘At the age of 15, during the build-up to my GCSEs, I had a few problems in life. I went off the rails a bit; ended up hanging out on the streets and getting up to mischief rather than studying. As a result, it wasn’t a surprise that my exam results weren’t great.

My Nan found an ad in the local paper for a Youth Training Scheme at Heathrow Airport, whereby I could work, earn money, and spend a day at college studying for an NVQ in Business and Finance. This was a two-year course, and in that time I also decided to study for a GCSE in maths at night school. When qualified, I decided I needed to start to advance my career and found myself in a job as an accounts assistant.

My manager recommended the Association of Accounting Technicians to me. When I did some research, I found that I was exempt from some parts due to the qualification I gained through the Youth Training Scheme. In my spare time I studied the AAT qualification through a part-time evening class, and when I was looking for a new job, potential employers were really impressed that not only was I studying the AAT, but in my own time as well.

My firm gave me great support both financially and time off to study. When I qualified with the AAT, I went on to become a full member, and having the letters MAAT after my name has given me a great sense of achievement in my life. The AAT is a qualification that gives people like me a second chance to progress.’

We believe there is a good case for developing a more demand-led system for training and development:

- **Efficiency and use of public resources:** a Department for Children, Schools and Families report¹⁵ found that between 85% and 90% of training funding channelled through employers is deadweight – in other words, it funds training that would otherwise have been paid for by the employer. There may be additional efficiency benefits of a more demand-led system that relies on competition between training providers.
- **Empowerment, choice and control:** a more demand-led system would enable people to develop their own individual training and learning plans, and to pursue a specific career at a time that is right for them, rather than at a time that is dictated by the education system.
- **Fairness and equity:** the current training system does not fund learners on an equal basis: for example, part-time students in higher education are not eligible to receive student loans, and vocational learners receive substantially less funding.

Some countries, such as Scotland and Australia, do have a greater element of demand-led funding. We believe we should learn from such examples.

Case study: Individual Learning Accounts in Scotland

Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) provide up to £200 support for a wide range of courses offered by a variety of learning providers approved by the Scottish Government's ILA Scotland Scheme. These include private and community-based providers, colleges and universities.

ILAs also provide up to £500 a year for flexible part-time higher education courses. Learners pay a small contribution and providers are approved, in order to ensure high-quality provision.

The Government is currently piloting a model of 'Skills Accounts' in England. These are based on a portal that provides information about opportunities and funding entitlements. It is anticipated that by 2015 £1.5 billion of public finance will go through Skills Accounts. However, this money will not be truly demand led: individual 'entitlements' will in reality operate through existing supply-driven training schemes, such as the Government's Train to Gain model. Skills Accounts will provide some choice, but will not, for example, enable learners to take their entitlement to the provider or course of their choice.

A genuinely demand-led training system would offer people more choice and control to learn flexibly over their lifetime and to enter professions through diverse routes, including learning while working. We believe there is merit in moving toward a more demand-driven model of training. This could:

- Give learners an individual budget, which they could redeem for different courses and different providers, and combine more flexibly with their own or their employer's contribution
- Provide a flexible entitlement: for example including Apprenticeships, professional qualifications, and units of higher education part time
- Be tied to the individual learner number, so that a person could carry the learning entitlement throughout their life. This would enable people to learn in different ways and at different stages of their career.

Recognising the lessons learned from the previous experience of Individual Learning Accounts in England, we acknowledge that clear safeguards and design features would need to be in place to guarantee high-quality, efficient and effective training programmes. These design principles should be based on:

- **Quality assurance:** with Sector Skills Councils maintaining a 'preferred provider' list of training suppliers. Quality could be further enhanced by a risk-based inspection and regulatory approach
- **Clear individual entitlement:** with accounts worth up to £5,000 for all post-compulsory education and training (i.e. from the age of 18 from 2013). Individuals would carry accounts throughout their life
- **Co-funding:** with individuals and employers able to co-fund training packages. Different courses would be eligible for different levels of public co-funding, depending on their relevance to national economic and social priorities
- **Targeting to national skill priorities:** with resources deployed towards long-term national skill priorities. Some courses would not be eligible for public funding purchase through the Lifelong Skill Accounts, but others, for example basic adult skill programmes, would be eligible for a high level of public co-funding because of their social and economic benefit
- **Personal empowerment:** with the accounts maximising individual power and control in choosing appropriate training, and with the soon-to-be launched Adult Advancement and Careers Service providing personal adviser support to help people make informed choices
- **Sustainability:** with providers – including further education colleges – being able to compete fairly to provide training purchased through the Lifelong Skill Accounts. This might include some basic guarantees for funding streams.

Further work will be required to translate these design principles into a new training delivery model. Resources would be redeployed by redirecting existing skill and training budgets that currently go to providers to the hands of individual purchasers. We believe that this would induce keener competition among providers and better align training provision with local labour market needs.

Recommendation 77: The Government should reconfigure the existing Skills Accounts programme to establish a truly demand-driven system of Lifelong Skill Accounts. They could comprise a voucher up to the value of £5,000 that could be topped up through contributions from individuals and employers with a wide range of entitlements, including to apprenticeships, professional qualifications and to part-time further and higher education programmes, for example.

Recommendation 78: As part of a shift to a more demand-led model of training the Government should review how to redirect support for employers through tax or other direct incentive schemes.

9.5 Recognising the contribution of further education as a driver of social mobility

Further education has an important role to play in the training system and in boosting social mobility. For example, further education colleges are central to supporting flexible training routes for:

- **Part-time learning:** Of the two million adults in further education colleges, 71% are learning part time, which (as this chapter has identified) is important to progression through the professional ranks.¹⁶ More than half (57%) of further education learners give 'developing their career' as the top employment-related reason for starting a further education course.¹⁷
- **Diverse training qualifications:** Although further education colleges do provide traditional academic qualifications, this forms around only 5% of all provision.¹⁸
- **Local training:** There are over 350 further education colleges in the UK, providing training to local communities. Over two million adults enrol in further education courses every year. As one young person in the icould national youth survey put it:

'I have the opportunity of a good college within walking distance from home.' (Respondent to the icould national youth survey).

We believe that the important work of further education colleges needs greater recognition as a driver of social mobility:

- 56% of 17-year-olds in full-time education in further education colleges come from the bottom three socio-economic groups, compared with 31% in sixth form colleges and 22% in maintained school sixth forms.¹⁹
- 14% of further education learners are from non-white ethnic groups, compared with 8% in the overall population.²⁰

In many other countries with high rates of social mobility, the further education system has a more prominent role.

Case study: International models of further education

In Sweden and Finland, further education is at the heart of the national objectives for lifelong learning and training. Colleges are encouraged to build partnerships with universities, schools and employers.

In Australia, the government of Victoria has developed a demand-led model of further education that is being championed across the country. This provides a co-payment entitlement, based on an individual's educational attainment and/or occupational status. The government buys time in the workplace to enable employees to access training. On the supply side, a registered list of accredited organisations and a drive for self-accreditation of specialist institutions are among the measures to increase flexibility and responsiveness.

Further education colleges are currently funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), based on the Government's supply-side funding of training. From 2010, the LSC will be replaced by three separate agencies – the Skills Funding Agency, the National Apprenticeship Service and the Young People's Learning Agency.

A shift to the more demand-driven model of training characterised by our idea of Lifelong Skill Accounts could help free up wider aspects of the further education system:

- **Reduced training bureaucracy:** a more demand-driven skills system would free up colleges from over 17 oversight bodies, which, in his review of further education, Foster termed a '*galaxy of oversight, inspection and accreditation bodies*'.²¹
- **Improved responsiveness to need:** as the 2006 Leitch Review of skills noted, the current supply-side training system has strong downsides: '*history tells us supply-side planning of this sort cannot effectively meet the needs of employers, individuals and the economy*'.²²

Recommendation 79: As part of a shift to more demand-led training, the Government should review how it can free up the oversight and control of further education.

Recommendation 80: The Government should ensure that future increases in spending are better aligned between further and higher education, recognising the important contribution of further education colleges for social mobility, particularly as providers of diverse training routes into the professions.

Conclusion

Access to a professional career has become more and more inflexible over time. Graduate-only entry has become a mindset across the professions, and that has profound implications for social mobility. During the UK's first great wave of social mobility, the openness of the professions to people of talent coming into professional employment through various routes created new opportunities for a whole generation of young people from middle and low-income backgrounds. Today, many of those routes have been closed off. We believe it is time to open them up again. The professions will not flourish unless they extend – not limit – the rungs on the professional career ladder. Some are already doing so. Others need to follow their lead. Our proposals are aimed at helping them to do so.

We propose a radical and fundamental overhaul of how people are trained and how they gain access to a professional career. Apprenticeships should become as normal in the professions as they are in industry. Functions should be devolved to new classes of paraprofessionals. Mid-career moves and flexible working patterns should be encouraged. Vocational education, and the key role played by further education colleges, should be better supported. And, above all else, people who want to train should be empowered to make the choices that are right for them. By widening the funnel through which the professions recruit, our proposals will help reverse their growing social exclusivity. In the process, we believe they help lay the foundations for a second great wave of social mobility in our country.

Chapter 10

Delivering the recommendations



This chapter sets out the mechanisms by which the Panel believes its recommendations should be delivered. These are:

- Maintaining momentum through continued Panel oversight of delivery and reporting on progress
- Ensuring sustained dialogue and activity between government and the professions through a new UK Professional Collaborative Forum
- Embedding responsibility for delivery with the strategic regulators of the professions
- Encouraging employers' leadership through corporate social responsibility (CSR) activity and the creation of a new fair access charter mark.

Action on fair access

Publishing this Report will not in itself make access to the professions fairer. But we hope that it will motivate the professions, government and others to make change that will last. The good practice that we have highlighted in this Report – led by the professions and others – needs to be far more widely spread. A culture change is needed. Some changes can happen quickly, others will take time. Change cannot be one-off; sustained effort is required through mechanisms being put in place to deliver and monitor progress.

Our recommendations are for both government and the professions, and this chapter sets out how each can go about implementing them, through a change in attitudes and priorities.

10.1 The ongoing role of the Panel

The Panel's Report contains a total of 88 recommendations. The Panel expects the Government to respond to this Report in the autumn, with a similar expectation for the professions. We hope that their responses address each of the recommendations and detail how they will be implemented and supported.

Some of our recommendations, including our proposed national projects on career mentors, role models, work tasters and a new code of best practice for internships, can, and should, be implemented in the near term, and we would expect both government and the professions to take early action to do so. The Panel recognises that other recommendations, including how new routes to the professions can be opened up and a more demand-led approach to the training system, will require more planning before implementation.

In order to ensure that momentum is maintained, however, the Panel should meet annually to check on progress and report publicly on its findings. This will provide the scrutiny and continuity that is required over the long term to ensure that the best intentions of this Report do not fall by the wayside.

Recommendation 81: The Panel on Fair Access should meet annually to carry out a stock-take of progress that the Government and the professions have made in implementing its recommendations. After each meeting it should publish its findings, with any additional recommendations it sees fit to make. The Government should support the Panel in carrying out these tasks.

10.2 A UK Professional Forum

Many of the recommendations in this Report will require close cooperation between Government and the professions. We believe that a mechanism for continued dialogue between government and the professions is needed to ensure implementation.

The former Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills ran the Gateway to the Professions Collaborative Forum, which aimed to encourage more effective joint working between professional bodies, Sector Skills Councils and higher education institutions.

The Forum would benefit from including representatives from a wider range of professions including the arts, media, creative industries and the Armed Forces.

The Panel believes that a reinvigorated forum should take responsibility for continuing this dialogue. The new UK Professional Forum could:

- Review progress against the recommendations made in the Panel's report
- Advise on the activity being undertaken by the professions to increase fair access
- Share best practice examples of effective measures to make access fairer
- Advise on the best mechanisms for promoting and marketing fair access strategies to all professions and employers
- Continue the debate on how to make access to the professions fairer, and bring forward further policy proposals as necessary.

Recommendation 82: The Government and the professions should agree to continue the Gateways to the Professions Collaborative Forum in the form of a UK Professional Forum. The new Forum should be chaired at ministerial level and should comprise senior representatives from a diverse range of professions.

10.3 Professional regulators

Many professions have regulators who oversee and scrutinise professional standards, qualifications and accredited membership. These regulators are ideally placed to support and oversee the implementation of the Panel's recommendations within their professions.

With the backing and encouragement of the main representative organisations of the professions, we would hope that the professions' regulations could embed the fair access agenda as a mainstream element of the professions' business culture.

Recommendation 83: The statutory and approved regulators of individual professions should embed the social mobility and fair access agenda into strategic plans.

Recommendation 84: Regulators should consider how to embed more widely the fair access agenda permanently into the work and strategic planning of their professions and take the appropriate regulatory action to do so.

10.4 Corporate social responsibility

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is an umbrella term for self-regulated ethical and public interest activity that businesses undertake. There is no single definition of CSR, although the Government provides guidance on its different elements and what activity can support them. The four pillars are as follows:

- Local community and social responsibility: how businesses affect the local community and wider society and what businesses can do to be positively involved with the community
- Environment: how business activity affects the environment and practical measures to reduce waste
- Employees: how employees can benefit from CSR activity
- Suppliers: the impact of choosing different suppliers and how employers deal with them.

Taking action to make access to professions fairer would contribute directly to the first and third pillars. Participation in mentoring programmes, outreach activity, fair internships and work experience programmes are examples of activities that professional bodies and employers could undertake which would affect the local community and their own employees beneficially.

Recommendation 85: The professions should routinely report on activities that are aimed at making access fairer as part of their established corporate social responsibility reporting arrangements.

Recommendation 86: The Government, through Business Link services, should provide comprehensive guidance on what type of activity could be taken to make access fairer and that would meet corporate social responsibility objectives.

Recommendation 87: The Government should explore the case for targeted support, such as tax incentives, to leverage additional measures from employers to open up access.

10.5 A fair access charter mark

In the course of its work the Panel has seen a great deal of excellent work by professional bodies and individual employers in making access fairer. Much of this excellent work currently goes unrecognised. Yet elsewhere, schemes such as Investors in People awards have acted as an incentive to employers to improve their practices and have become highly sought after.

We believe that there are lessons here for fair access to the professions. We propose that a fair access charter mark should be introduced to recognise and reward instances of best practice among professional bodies and employers. Such a charter mark would, we believe, encourage others to follow suit.

A fair access charter mark could be awarded to those who have:

- developed an open and transparent internship scheme (one that is eligible for the proposed Internship Quality Kitemark);
- fostered particularly productive links with local schools and colleges; and/or
- introduced a reward scheme for employees who devote time to community outreach work.

Such a charter mark would be voluntary, but should have real currency with businesses and become something that potential clients look for as a sign of a socially responsible organisation.

Recommendation 88: The Government should introduce a fair access charter mark to recognise and reward those professional bodies and employers that take direct, effective and meaningful steps towards making access to their profession fairer.

Conclusion

This Report is a beginning and not an end. We hope that it kick-starts a fundamental process of change – in communities, schools, colleges, universities, employers and professions, local and national government. We hope that it puts fair access, equal opportunities and social mobility at the top of all of their agendas. We believe that in our country, future success – economically as well as socially – relies on that happening. From all that we have seen during our work – the inspiring projects that the professions have helped initiate and the efforts that the Government is making – we are optimistic. This is an issue whose time has come. But we know that change does not just happen. It has got to be made. So we propose ways to embed change – in government, in the professions and among employers. And we plan to continue our own work as an independent Panel to report on the progress we hope to see.

Annex A

Membership of the Panel

The Panel comprises 18 representatives from a range of professions. They are all influential and high-profile members of their professions. The Panel provides expertise from the perspective of particular professions, but it additionally looks at issues of fair access to professions as a whole. On the panel are two independent experts on social mobility and fair access issues.

The Panel:

- Chair: Rt Hon Alan Milburn MP
- Academia: Professor Madeleine Atkins, Vice-Chancellor, Coventry University
- Accountancy and business advice: Neil Sherlock, Partner, KPMG
- Architecture: Sunand Prasad, President, Royal Institute of British Architects
- Armed Forces: Major General David McDowall MBE
- Arts: Jude Kelly OBE, Artistic Director, Southbank Centre
- Civil Service: Gill Rider, Director General, Civil Service Capability Group
- Engineering: Philip Greenish CBE, Chief Executive, Royal Academy of Engineering
- Expert: Trevor Phillips OBE, Chair, Equality and Human Rights Commission
- Expert: Geoffrey Vos QC, Chairman, Social Mobility Foundation
- Finance: Azeem Ibrahim, founder, European Commerce and Mercantile Bank
- Journalism: Elinor Goodman, freelance journalist and former Political Editor of Channel 4 News
- Law: Lord David Neuberger PC QC
- Local government: Katherine Kerswell, Chief Executive, Northamptonshire County Council
- Media: Michael Grade CBE, Executive Chairman, ITV
- Medicine and dentistry: Professor Sir John Tooke, Dean, Peninsula College of Medicine and Dentistry
- Police: Sara Thornton, Chief Constable, Thames Valley Police
- Politics: Baroness Gillian Shephard, Conservative Peer
- Publishing: Dame Gail Rebuck CBE, Chair and Chief Executive, Random House Group Ltd
- Science: Lord Martin Rees of Ludlow, President of the Royal Society and Astronomer Royal
- Trades unions: Frances O'Grady, Deputy General Secretary, TUC

Annex B

Table of Recommendations

Theme	Recommendation	Who to deliver	When by
CHAPTER 2: New Opportunities: what drives social mobility?			
Social mobility as the overarching social policy priority	<p>1. Social mobility should explicitly be the top overarching social policy priority for this and future governments. The Government should develop new ways of embedding this priority across all government departments. It should develop new partnerships with civic institutions, professional bodies, community organisations and individual citizens to help deliver this priority.</p>	Whole of Government	Ongoing
Establishing a new Social Mobility Commission	<p>2. Building on the <i>New Opportunities</i> White Paper, the Government should establish an expert social mobility commission. The commission should have at its core three key roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research: providing evidence on trends and policy on social mobility in the UK and internationally • Technical advice: providing advice to government, other public bodies, and employers on policy measures to raise social mobility including by disseminating best practice from the UK and internationally • Transparency and accountability: monitoring and reporting on the actions that government, the professions, employers and others take to improve social mobility and on their impact. <p>It should be comprised of a small number of independently appointed experts, meeting as an advisory board and supported by a handful of staff.</p>	A new Commission independent of government	Within six months

Theme	Recommendation	Who to deliver	When by
CHAPTER 4: Raising aspirations: new opportunities for young people to learn about the professions			
Reforming the Gifted and Talented programme and rebranding to a new “raising aspirations” programme	3. The Government should reform and rebrand the Gifted and Talented programme to provide more opportunities to pupils in primary and secondary schools, including mentoring, work tasters and training in soft skills.	Department for Children, Schools and Families	Within nine months
A national network of career mentors	4. The professions and the Government should together introduce a national scheme for career mentoring by young professionals and university students of school pupils in Years 9 to 13. The national mentoring scheme should involve partnerships with employers, voluntary organisations, universities and schools.	The professions Department for Children, Schools and Families Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 12 months
	5. The professions and the Government should organise a ‘Yes you can’ campaign, headed by inspirational role models, to encourage more young people to aspire to a professional career.	Department for Children, Schools and Families Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within nine months
School alumni networks	6. The Government, working with the professions and universities, should develop a national database of people willing to act as role models or mentors for young people in their former schools.	The professions Department for Children, Schools and Families	Within 12 months
Opportunities to gain professional insights	7. The Government should undertake a radical overhaul of work experience programmes in schools – in conjunction with reforms to information, advice and guidance services and the Gifted and Talented programme – to ensure that they are professionally organised and better aligned with pupils’ careers decision-making.	The professions Department for Children, Schools and Families Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within nine months

Theme	Recommendation	Who to deliver	When by
CHAPTER 4: Raising aspirations: new opportunities for young people to learn about the professions continued			
	8. The Government should establish a national work taster scheme for older school pupils, starting with those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds. The professions should identify employers willing to take part. Together the Government and the professions should provide financial support for the project, which should be linked to the proposed national scheme for mentoring by young professionals and university students.	The professions Employers Department for Children, Schools and Families Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within nine months
Professional outreach	9. Each profession should recruit and support a network of young professional ambassadors who would work with schools to raise awareness of career opportunities for young people. Professional bodies should recognise, as continuous professional development, the contribution of young professionals who volunteer their time.	The professions Department for Children, Schools and Families Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 12 months
	10. All schools should work with businesses and professions to promote and support professionally led outreach at late primary and early secondary age.	Department for Children, Schools and Families The professions	Within six months
Harnessing technology to inform and inspire young people	11. The Government should work with a professional group to establish a 'youth technology and innovation challenge' award as a means of identifying and showcasing creative ways to inspire young people.	The professions Department for Children, Schools and Families Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within six months
	12. The professions and the Government should create a 'professions.com' website to link young people to existing online information about professional careers and schemes, such as internship and mentoring programmes. The professions should provide relevant content and material to develop this website.	The professions Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Department for Children, Schools and Families	Within six months

Theme	Recommendation	Who to deliver	When by
CHAPTER 4: Raising aspirations: new opportunities for young people to learn about the professions continued			
Financing national programmes through new partnerships	13. The Government should bring forward seed-corn funding, in the region of £2.5 million to £3 million, to fund the recommended proposals on mentoring, work tasters and an online portal. Projects should be co-funded by a partnership comprising government, professional bodies and employers.	Department for Children, Schools and Families Department for Business, Innovation and Skills The professions	Within 12 months
Social Mobility Bonds	14. The Government should use the model of Social Impact Bonds as a means of leveraging state and private investment into the delivery of social mobility interventions.	All government departments	Within 12 months with bonds to last for up to five years
CHAPTER 5: Schools: new opportunities to learn and choose careers			
Closing the attainment gap	15. The Government should examine these and other educational reforms as part of a sustained new drive to close the educational attainment gap.	Department for Children, Schools and Families	Ongoing role for the Department for Children, Schools and Families
A richer school experience	16. The Government should scale up its support to third sector organisations providing soft skill development programmes for young people. It should ensure that cost-effective and well-evidenced programmes are available in all parts of the country. Soft skills that could be prioritised include team working, leadership and presentation skills.	Department for Children, Schools and Families	Within six months

Theme	Recommendation	Who to deliver	When by
CHAPTER 5: Schools: new opportunities to learn and choose careers continued			
	17. Schools should place new emphasis on providing a range of expanded extra-curricular activities. The Government, working with Ofsted, should ensure that school inspections assess how well schools are providing good-quality extra-curricular activities.	Department for Children, Schools and Families OFSTED	Within 12 months
	18. The Charity Commission's assessment of independent schools for public benefit should include how they are sharing their expertise in extra-curricular activity and soft skill acquisition with state schools.	The Charity Commission	Within 12 months and ongoing
	19. The Government should provide resources to ensure that every state school – starting with those in the most deprived areas – that wishes to participate in Cadet Forces activities is able to do so.	Ministry of Defence Department for Children, Schools and Families	Within 12 months and ongoing
Arts Explorers	20. The Government should work with the arts and cultural industries to deliver cultural programmes to a network of 'Arts Explorers' aged 5 to 11 years. They would receive an annual programme of visits and training in arts and cultural activities including, music, dance, theatre, software and video making.	The creative industry professions The Department for Culture, Media and Sport	Within 12 months
	21. All schools should ensure that pupils from Year 6 upwards have a record of achievement that brings together all their extra-curricular and soft skill activity.	Department for Children, Schools and Families	Within 12 months
Reforming careers advice	22. Schools and colleges should have direct responsibility for providing information, advice and guidance, with a professional careers service located in every school and college – starting from primary age.	Department for Children, Schools and Families Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within nine months

Theme	Recommendation	Who to deliver	When by
CHAPTER 5: Schools: new opportunities to learn and choose careers continued			
	23. The Government should remove careers responsibility from the Connexions service. It should reallocate an estimated £200 million to schools and colleges in order to give them the freedom to tender for careers services from a range of providers.	Department for Children, Schools and Families Department for Communities and Local Government	Within nine months
	24. Schools should broker information and advice for children, and parents who have not attended university themselves. The package of advice should include support in completing UCAS forms, preparing for admissions interviews and arranging for parents to visit local universities.	Department for Children, Schools and Families Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within nine months
	25. Schools, colleges and professions should work in partnership to produce career prospectuses and online information sources aimed at parents. Information could include routes into different professions and the remuneration and costs involved.	Department for Children, Schools and Families Department for Business, Innovation and Skills All professions	Within nine months
	26. Ofsted should be given new powers to inspect schools on the quality and performance of their information, advice and guidance provision as part of the Ofsted inspection framework.	Department for Children, Schools and Families Ofsted	Within 12 months
Schools focussing on pupils' outcomes	27. The Government should use the School Report Card to provide greater transparency and accountability in regard to schools' performance on improving pupils' outcomes. The Government should develop and introduce appropriate destination indicators and data to assess the progress that pupils make between starting school, leaving school and their destinations after school.	Department for Children, Schools and Families	Within 12 months
	28. The Government should consider how schools could be better incentivised – including financially – to improve pupils' overall outcomes.	Department for Children, Schools and Families	Within 12 months

Theme	Recommendation	Who to deliver	When by
CHAPTER 6: Universities: new opportunities to pursue higher education			
Flexible higher education	29. Universities and the Government should actively promote a range of entry points through an all-year academic calendar in order to allow learners to enrol on, and undertake, courses at more flexible times throughout the year.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Universities	Within 18 months
	30. Universities and the Government should develop a transferable credit-based learning system to recognise student achievement in discrete modules or mini-courses, building on the findings of the Burgess Report.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Universities	Within 12 months
	31. The Government, working with the Higher Education Funding Council for England, should prioritise investment in e-learning infrastructure to extend the possibilities of remote and online learning.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)	Within 18 months
	32. The Government, working with the Higher Education Funding Council for England, should examine how to remove the artificial and increasingly indefensible division between part-time and full-time higher education in relation to funding, regulatory and student support frameworks.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)	Within 18 months
Vocational routes into higher education	33. The Government should ensure that it delivers on its commitment to incorporate apprenticeship frameworks into the UCAS points system by 2010.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 18 months
Apprenticeship Scholarships	34. The Government should fully fund an initial 3,000 Apprenticeship Scholarships to higher education, rising over time to 10,000 every year, to give the most talented apprentices the chance of a university education. Funding should come from existing Train to Gain budgets.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 12 months

Theme	Recommendation	Who to deliver	When by
CHAPTER 6: Universities: new opportunities to pursue higher education continued			
“HE within FE”	35. Universities and colleges, working with the Government, should make the concept of ‘HE within FE’ one that is universal across the country so that many more mature students, in particular, are able to study for a degree.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Ongoing
Widening participation further	36. Sustainable, concrete links should be established between individual schools, particularly those with low progression rates, and local universities, including specialist help to increase the number of pupils achieving five GCSEs at grades A*-C (including English and mathematics). All universities should offer a representative to join the governing bodies of such schools. And as we propose in recommendation 4 all universities should enlist students to act as role models and mentors for pupils in local schools.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Universities Department for Children, Schools and Families	Within 12 months
	37. All universities should work with schools to ensure that higher education related information, advice and guidance, and outreach and mentoring programmes are provided from primary school level onwards.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Universities Department for Children, Schools and Families	Within 12 months
	38. The Government should redirect an element of widening participation resources into supporting these local partnerships.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 12 months
	39. Each profession should develop partnership compact arrangements with university faculties. These arrangements might include linking up recent professional entrants as personal mentors with young people in schools, and issuing guidance about the profession and how to get into it. (See recommendations 4, 9 and 12)	The professions Universities Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 18 months

Theme	Recommendation	Who to deliver	When by
CHAPTER 6: Universities: new opportunities to pursue higher education continued			
	40. The Higher Education Statistics Agency should publish information on student admissions at university, college and course level, with more detail on pupils' backgrounds. This should be published annually, with year-on-year progress tracked. It should be provided in a format that enables a transparent assessment of the effectiveness of widening participation expenditure at the individual university level.	Higher Education Statistics Agency Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 12 months
	41. By law it is for universities to determine their admissions procedures but we hope that all universities will take into account the social and educational context of pupils' achievement in their admissions process.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Universities	Within 12 months
Addressing financial fears	42. In order to overcome financial fears, universities should help schools to inform children before they reach the age of 16 – together with their parents – about the grants and financial support to which they would be entitled if they progressed to university.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Department for Children, Schools and Families	Within 12 months
	43. The Government should use the opportunity of its review of the impact of variable tuition fees to consider a radical reshaping of the student support system. It should initiate a national debate on the trade-offs between higher fees, growing student places and increasing financial support for students. It should consider fairer financial support for those undertaking postgraduate and part-time courses, more targeted packages of financial support for students from average and less well-off families, and new support for students living and learning at their local university, including 'fee-free' higher education.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 12 months

Theme	Recommendation	Who to deliver	When by
CHAPTER 6: Universities: new opportunities to pursue higher education continued			
Integrating professional experience into academic courses	44. The Government should work with universities to develop proposals to integrate a flexible element of professional experience into all higher education courses.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Universities	Within 12 months
A new focus on student outcomes	45. The Government should support universities to collect and publish a rounded picture on student destinations, building on the existing leaver surveys. The Government should reflect on the merits of linking data to financial incentives and may wish to redirect some of the Widening Participation funding to this end.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 18 months
CHAPTER 7: Internships: new opportunities to get on to the professional career ladder			
A three year voluntary approach to fair internships	46. The Government should review how effective the Panel's voluntary approach on internships has been by the end of 2012, with a view to enacting stronger means to ensure compliance if satisfactory progress has not been made at that point, including through new legislation.	The professions Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	By 2012
Establishing a fair and transparent system for internships	47. The professions, the Government, trade unions and the third sector should together produce a common best practice code for high-quality internships.	The professions Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 12 months
	48. Each profession should make employers in its field aware of the best practice code and encourage them to adopt it for all relevant internship and work experience placements (including university 'sandwich' courses).	The professions	Within nine months
	49. The Government should develop the Talent Pool Internship Portal to become a single website for all pre- and postgraduate internships.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills The professions	Within 12 months

Theme	Recommendation	Who to deliver	When by
CHAPTER 7: Internships: new opportunities to get on to the professional career ladder continued			
	50. The Government should ensure that the Talent Pool Internship Portal has an advertising budget that is sufficient to ensure that it has a high-profile launch. It should target students who would otherwise not be aware of these opportunities, pre-university students who might not know that financial help towards a professional career is available, and schools with a high proportion of children on free school meals.	The professions Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 12-18 months
Recognising best practice: a national Kite Mark for employers	51. The professions, the Government, trade unions and the third sector should agree an Internship Quality Kitemark scheme for high-quality internship programmes. The Kitemark should set out the criteria that a high-quality internship placement should meet (based on the common best practice code for high-quality internships proposed in recommendation 47)	The professions Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Trade Unions The third sector	Within 12 months
	52. Each professional association should make the acceptance and use of the best practice code and Kitemark a condition of being a member of the professional association, and accept responsibility for making employers in its field aware of both.	The professions	Within 12 months
	53. Universities should take responsibility for ensuring that their 'sandwich' courses are in line with the common best practice code for high-quality internships and meet the Kitemark standards.	Universities	Within 18 months
	54. The National Union of Students, the Trades Union Congress and the Government should work together to take forward an outreach programme to ensure that students from all backgrounds give due consideration to undertaking an internship.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Trade Unions Congress National Union of Students	Within 12 months

Theme	Recommendation	Who to deliver	When by
CHAPTER 7: Internships: new opportunities to get on to the professional career ladder continued			
	55. The Talent Pool Internship Portal should go further in developing and promoting its forum where ex-interns can post reviews of the internships that they have undertaken.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within six months
Affordability: removing financial constraints	56. The Government should allow students to draw down their existing Student Loan entitlement in four parts, rather than the current three, so enabling students to be able to cover the additional costs of undertaking a short summer internship. The Government should review how to appropriately target additional loan support to such students through this window.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 12 months
	57. The Government should explore ways of providing means-tested micro-loans to interns to cover the cost of living and commuting for a short internship period.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 12 months
	58. Companies offering internships should be given the option to pay a small part of their tax contribution directly to the Student Loans Company to cover the cost of the internship loans and associated administrative costs.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 18 months
	59. The Government should work with banks and other lending institutions to provide internship support loans to be used to cover the costs associated with undertaking an internship. Such loans could be made along similar lines to Professional and Career Development Loans.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 18 months
	60. Provision of all government-brokered or supported financial assistance for interns should be dependent upon the internship placement in question having received the Internship Quality Kitemark. Professions should stipulate a similar restriction upon any financial assistance provided or brokered by them for similar purposes. Universities should support the Kitemark scheme by advertising it to students who are looking for internships.	The professions	Within 18 months

Theme	Recommendation	Who to deliver	When by
CHAPTER 7: Internships: new opportunities to get on to the professional career ladder continued			
	61. The professions should provide more support for interns from lower socio-economic backgrounds through grants and loans. The Government should recognise the efforts of those employers that provide such support for interns by granting tax relief on money that is provided for grants and loans.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 18 months
	62. Professions should work directly with banks and other lending institutions to provide privately brokered financing for those studying for relevant professional qualifications.	The professions	Within 18 months
	63. The professions should create an online resource that sets out the range of profession-specific financial support that is available for prospective interns and students of professional qualifications. The online resource should set out what support is available, where it can be accessed, the criteria used to disburse it and the various application methods and deadlines. Such information should be advertised on professional websites, as well as on the Government's Talent Pool Internship Portal..	The professions Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within six months
	64. Universities should provide low-cost or free accommodation for young people undertaking internships during university vacations. Universities should work with the Government to set up a matching service for prospective interns.	Universities	Within 12 months
CHAPTER 8: Recruitment and selection: new opportunities for talent to shine			
Collecting data on socio-economic background	65. The Government should collect and publish data on the socio-economic background of entrants to the Senior Civil Service, drawing on the lessons that have been learned from collecting and publishing data on gender, race and disability.	Cabinet Office	Within nine months

Theme	Recommendation	Who to deliver	When by
CHAPTER 8: Recruitment and selection: new opportunities for talent to shine continued			
Professions planning for fair access	66. Each profession should carry out a review of current practice on fair access to the profession, with a view to developing practical ideas for improvement. The professions should report publicly on these by the end of 2010, with a clear set of recommendations and an action plan for implementation.	The professions	Within 18 months
Promoting fair standards: a guide for employers	67. The Government's online <i>Professional Recruitment Guide</i> should be amended and should be jointly and actively promoted by the professions and the Government to help employers to develop recruitment practices that can ensure fairer access.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within six months
CHAPTER 9: Flexible professions: new opportunities for career progression			
Expanding the ladder of entry points into the professions	68. Each profession should work with the National Apprenticeship Service and the relevant Sector Skills Councils to establish clear progression routes from vocational training into the professions, and ensure that learners are aware of these routes.	The professions National Apprenticeship Service Sector Skills Councils Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 12 months
	69. The Government and the professions should provide a repository of best practice setting out practical ways in which vocational routes can be expanded into the professions.	The professions Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within six months
	70. The Government should extend Apprenticeships in professional areas of employment in government departments. Where applicable, these should be explicitly linked to existing management development programmes such as the Civil Service Fast Stream.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Cabinet Office Public sector employers and other public bodies	Within 12-18 months

Theme	Recommendation	Who to deliver	When by
CHAPTER 9: Flexible professions: new opportunities for career progression continued			
	71. The professions should consider how to introduce Apprenticeship schemes as part of their reviews of fair access processes in recommendation 66.	The professions	Within 18 months
Paraprofessional entry roles to the professions	72. Each profession should examine the potential to devolve functions to paraprofessionals. The Government should ensure that, across all of the public services, reform programmes are being introduced to do the same.	The professions Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 12 months
	73. The professions should work with the Government and others to set out clear progression maps from paraprofessional roles, and ensure that training systems support these routes.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills The professions	Within 12 months
Opening up mid-career opportunities	74. Professional bodies and professional regulators should encourage businesses in their sector to ensure that they meet best practice in mid-career changes and career interchange routes. Regulators should publish information on how successful professional employers are being in providing more flexible entry and progression routes.	The professions Professional regulators	Within 12 months
	75. The Government should review how best to support return-to-work programmes for mid-career changes and professional re-entrants, for example through incentives for employers who adopt such schemes early.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 12 months
Encouraging more flexible working patterns	76. Once economic circumstances allow, the right to request flexible working should be extended to all employees.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Government Equalities Office	Within 18 months

Theme	Recommendation	Who to deliver	When by
CHAPTER 9: Flexible professions: new opportunities for career progression continued			
A new demand-led training system that empowers learners	77. The Government should reconfigure the existing Skills Accounts programme to establish a truly demand-driven system of Lifelong Skill Accounts. They could comprise a voucher up to the value of £5,000 that could be topped up through contributions from individuals and employers with a wide range of entitlement including to apprenticeships, professional qualifications and to part-time further and higher education programmes, for example.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 18 months
	78. As part of a shift to a more demand-led model of training the Government should review how to redirect support for employers through tax or other direct incentive schemes.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 12 months
Recognising the contribution of further education as a driver of social mobility	79. As part of a shift to more demand-led training, the Government should review how it can free up the oversight and control of further education.	The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 12 months
	80. The Government should ensure that future increases in spending are better aligned between further and higher education, recognising the important contribution of further education colleges for social mobility, particularly as providers of diverse training routes into the professions.	The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 12 months
CHAPTER 10: Delivering the recommendations			
Ongoing role of the Panel	81. The Panel on Fair Access should meet annually to carry out a stock-take of progress that the Government and the professions have made in implementing its recommendations. After each meeting it should publish its findings, with any additional recommendations it sees fit to make. The Government should support the Panel to carry out these tasks.	The Panel on Fair Access to the Professions	To meet on an annual basis

Theme	Recommendation	Who to deliver	When by
CHAPTER 10: Delivering the recommendations continued			
A UK collaborative professional forum	82. The Government and the professions should agree to continue the Gateways to the Professions Collaborative Forum in the form of a UK Professional Forum. The new Forum should be chaired at Ministerial level and should comprise senior representatives from a diverse range of professions.	The professions Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within three months and ongoing
Statutory regulators	83. The statutory and approved regulators of individual professions should embed the social mobility and fair access agenda into forward strategic plans.	Statutory regulators Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within three months and ongoing
	84. Regulators should consider how to embed more widely the fair access agenda permanently into the work and strategic planning of their professions and take the appropriate regulatory action to do so.	Statutory regulators Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within three months and ongoing
Corporate Social Responsibility	85. The professions should routinely report on activities that are aimed at making access fairer as part of their established corporate social responsibility reporting arrangements.	The professions	Every 12 months
	86. The Government, through Business Link services, should provide comprehensive guidance on what type of activity could be taken to make access fairer and that would meet corporate social responsibility objectives.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within six months
	87. The Government should explore the case for targeted support, such as tax incentives, to leverage additional measures from employers to open up access.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 12 months
A Fair Access Charter Mark	88. The Government should introduce a fair access charter mark to recognise and reward those professional bodies and employers that take direct, effective and meaningful steps towards making access to their profession fairer.	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	Within 12 months

Annex C

Funding the recommendations

In this report the Panel has set out a vision for releasing a second wave of social mobility in the UK, with the professions taking the lead in making this happen.

Many of the recommendations in this report are cost-neutral and involve new partnership working rather than new spending. However, other proposals will require funding to be released from existing programmes. This annex sets out how much our proposals will cost and recommendations for their funding. Overall our recommendations seek no new expenditure.

Recommendation	Estimated cost	Efficiency savings	Mechanism
CHAPTER 4: Raising aspirations: new opportunities for young people to learn about the professions			
4. National career mentoring scheme	Around £1 million for a three-year programme	Rebranding of the Gifted and Talented programme: central spend around £10 million – £15 million a year	Reallocation from within Department for Children, Schools and Families spend
6. National alumni database for school mentors	£400,000 for establishment and maintenance for the first three years	Reallocation from within the Department for Children, Schools and Families' Harnessing Technology Strategy	Co-funded by professions and government 50% – reallocation from within Department for Children, Schools and Families spend 50% – professions
8. National work taster scheme	£1.1 million for a three-year programme	Rebranding of the Gifted and Talented programme: central spend around £10 million – £15 million per year	Reallocation from within Department for Children, Schools and Families spend

Recommendation	Estimated cost	Efficiency savings	Mechanism
CHAPTER 4: Raising aspirations: new opportunities for young people to learn about the professions continued			
11. 'Youth Technology and Innovation challenge' award	£100,000	Reallocation from within the Department for Children, Schools and Families' Harnessing Technology Strategy	Reallocation from within Department for Children, Schools and Families spend
12. 'Professions.com' information portal	£100,000–£150,000	Reallocation from within the Department for Children, Schools and Families' Harnessing Technology Strategy	Co-funded by professions and government 50% – reallocation from within Department for Children, Schools and Families spend 50% – professions
Chapter 5: Schools: new opportunities to learn and choose careers			
22 and 23. A new careers service in every school and college, with freedom to tender flexibly	Around £200 million per year	Reallocation of the Connexions budget: estimates indicate that around £200 million of the annual £470 million Connexions budget is allocated to its careers component	Department for Children, Schools and Families Communities and Local Government
Chapter 6: Universities: new opportunities to pursue higher education			
34. 3,000 fully funded higher education Apprenticeship Scholarships	Up to £50 million a year	Train to Gain programme: currently has planned spending of over £1 billion a year by 2010–11	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
Chapter 9: Flexible professions: new opportunities for career progression			
79. Lifelong Skill Accounts	Individual vouchers worth up to £5,000 per account	Train to Gain programme: currently has planned spending of over £1 billion a year by 2010–11	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

Annex D

Contributors to the Panel on Fair Access to the Professions

A large number of individuals and organisations provided invaluable input to the work of the Panel through contributions in response to the Panel's Call for Evidence as well as participation in the Panel's Evidence Hearings, consultation events and individual meetings. We are grateful for the evidence provided to the review.

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Association of Colleges
Association of International Accountants
Association of Taxation Technicians
Association of University Administrators
Bar Council
Barclays Bank
BDO Stoy Hayward LLP
Brightside Trust
British Association for Print and Communication
British Broadcasting Corporation
British Dental Association
British Institute of Facilities Management
British Medical Association
Broadcasting Entertainment Cinematograph and Theatre Union
Centre for Market and Public Organisation
Centre for Research into Diversity in the Professions
Channel 4
Chartered Institute of Management Accountants
Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists
Chartered Institute of Bankers in Scotland
Chartered Institute of Building

Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals
Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport
Chartered Institute of Patent Attorneys)
Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy
Chartered Institute of Public Relations
Chartered Institute of Purchasing & Supply
Chartered Institute of Taxation
Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers
Chartered Institution of Wastes Management
Chartered Insurance Institute
Chartered Management Institute
Citizenship Foundation
City Brokerage
City University London
Clifford Chance LLP
College of Law
Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment
Comprehensive Future
Connexions
Construction Industry Council
CRAC: The Career Development Organisation and icould
Crown Prosecution Service
Dental Schools Council
Equality and Human Rights Commission
Employability Forum
Engineering and Technology Board
Finers Stephens Innocent LLP
Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP
General Council of the Bar
General Medical Council
General Optical Council
General Osteopathic Council
General Teaching Council for England
Homes & Communities Academy
Higher York
icould
ifs School of Finance
Institute for Archaeologists
Institute of Career Guidance
Institute of Careers Advice
Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales
Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment
Institute of Healthcare Management
Institute of Hospitality
Institute for Learning
Institute of Legal Executives
Institute of Paralegals
Institute of Practitioners in Advertising
Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation

Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators
Institution of Chemical Engineers
Institution of Civil Engineers
Institution of Engineering and Technology
Institution of Highways & Transportation
Institution of Occupational Safety and Health
International Association of Book-keepers and Institute of Financial Accountants
Internocracy
IntoUniversity
King's College London School of Medicine
Landscape Institute
Law Society
Law Society of Scotland
Legal Services Board
London School of Economics and Political Science
Medical Schools Council
Million+
National Association of Head Teachers
NASUWT
National Union of Journalists
National Union of Teachers
NHS Employers
Organisation for Professionals in Regulatory Affairs
Pure Potential
Professional Associations Research Network
Professional Oversight Board
Royal Academy of Engineering
Royal College of General Practitioners
Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons
Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland
Royal Institute of British Architects
Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
Royal Town Planning Institute
Russell Group
St George's, University of London
Science Council
Skillset
Social Mobility Foundation
Society of Information Technology Management
Solicitors Regulation Authority
Sutton Trust
UK Resource Centre for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology
Unison
University of Edinburgh
University of Greenwich
University of Leeds
University of York
VETNET Lifelong Learning Network
Working Families
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The Panel is independent of HM Government. This report is therefore not a statement of HM Government policy.

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