

Politics essays - government training and development



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Government Training and Development

Government initiatives

Government is emphasizing the importance of training and development as they aim to remove the barriers of employability of those that have fewer opportunities to do so. This is where the idea of ' life-long learning' is becoming the main initiative of the government to create such opportunities to a wide-range of communities and backgrounds. The life-long learning aim is remove and combat social exclusions which will then help to promote employability and active citizenship amongst communities.

The aim of life-long learning is to:

- Increase the demand for learning, using vocational learning to create a fun and stimulating learning process
- Develop world class training, to satisfy the UK and European domestic markets, and also to satisfy the needs of the economy
- Give people the opportunity to re-develop their skills, without having to continually take courses, but to simply update their current skills and knowledge.

The basic education provided by schooling only provides a foundation for learning, however there are then gaps in the skills required for young people to development the skills that they are able to transfer into the workplace. This is also aimed at adult learners, whom have not been able to seek and sustain employment due to their gaps in skills. The life-long learning project aims to remove the barrier of the lack of skills and tries to help those that

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are not equipped for workplace environments to gain the confidence to do so.

The encouragement to keep life-long learning an important part of someone's life is being encouraged by the government's continuous investment in education and training; not just for young people but also for adults with no basic skills which are needed in the workplace.

"£200M for national challenge to raise standards in schools- at least 30% of pupils in every school to achieve five good GCSE's including English and Mathematics by 2011". Examples are shown here from the recent budget which I have taken the main investments with training that the government plan to do to encourage continuous learning:

The chancellor has also brought forward an additional budget of around £60M of resources for the DIUS (Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills) to provide adults with the skills required to become employable and to unlock potential talents.

Skills Secretary John Denham said:

This is great news for adult skills, allowing more people to get the advanced skills they need to get work, and to get on in work.

This investment moves us a step closer to realising our ambitious vision for skills accounts, equipping adults who need to develop their skills with the resources to do so.

Employers tell us we need to increase the level of advanced skills, equivalent to A-levels, in the economy. We'll prioritise this funding to meet this need, to tackle bottlenecks in the supply of skills and to support more employers to access the training they need to improve their productivity.

Source: [http://www. dius. gov. uk/press/13-03-08. html](http://www.dius.gov.uk/press/13-03-08.html)

Education and training has been a high agenda politically for the government, which came apparent when Tony Blair came into power in 1997. His emphasis was 'education, education, education', has the table below showed that education was a good starting point for the Labour government's campaign. The National Curriculum Tests have improved over the years and has become their main aim in recent campaigns. However economically there are also advantages to training and development of individuals i. e. improved skills and opportunities.

The government has published a Green Paper on life long learning (DfEE 1998), which states:

' We stand on the brink of a new age. Familiar certainties and old ways of doing things are disappearing. Jobs are changing and with them the skills needed for the world of tomorrow.... Learning is the key to prosperity - for each of us as individuals, as well as for the nation as a whole... The fostering of an enquiring mind and the love of learning are essential for our future success... To achieve stable and sustainable growth, we will need a well-educated, well-equipped and adaptable workforce. To cope with rapid change we must ensure that people can return to learning throughout their

lives. We cannot rely on small elite: we will need the creativity, enterprise and scholarship of all our people.'

Life-long learning globally:

- South Africa have created telecommunication sector, ISETT SETA, which is a body that was created by the government to encourage such learning initiatives. This is part of the governments Skills Development Act 1998, which is financed by the employers pay roll budget
- Singapore have developed training initiatives, including the Skills Redevelopment Programme, which allows employees the training needed, if employers' refuse to invest into the training and development in the workplace.

The impact of life long learning is the development of global skills and improvement of social, economical and political outlook.

" In education there has been a shift towards employability and equipping young people and adults with the skills for ' life in a global society and work in a global economy ". (DFES 2004)

Life-long learning is primarily an economical target for ages between 18-30, to provide skills and training; to gain economical global participation and economy knowledge.

" Within life-long learning practices and policies little attention has been paid to the ways in which education, training, the workplace and interpretation of skills are all highly gendered, ' raced' and class areas ".

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Source:

Main issues that have encouraged lifelong learning policy:

Political: Politically, if successful, this could create the party involved economical stability and the party's stability. As stated before, Labour government's main aim was to increase and improve education and give the resources and funding to allow the opportunities for every individual. Having a successful educational system and training will give the UK a stable economy and job satisfaction and would give political stability to anyone that may have doubts.

Social: Creating skills for people will allow them to be able to remove themselves from poverty and become part of society. The aim of life-long learning is to create well-being and happiness for individuals to be able to give them the resources and confidence to prosper forward. This will then encourage development of skills within the future, particularly for public and private sectors, which may see a shortage in certain skills.

Economical: Skills are important to grow the economy and improve productivity. Skilled workers are more productive, have the capability to take on sophisticated tasks and are more flexible as they have greater capacity to absorb and learn additional skills. Comparatively low educational attainment and skills levels are often cited as one of the principal reasons for the productivity gap between the United Kingdom and other leading economies.

Bratton and Gold (2003) explains that it is good news that more investment is being put into human resources development, and sees an encouraging impact on the economy;

- At the individual level, there is a close relationship between learning and job prospects, especially in terms of minimizing unemployment and increasing overall earnings
- At the organization level, HRD is a central feature of a bundle of HRM practices which have been shown to impact on corporate performance. HRD itself contribute less readily quantifiable benefits, such as employee commitment and organizational flexibility.
- At the level of national economy and society as a whole, there is a demonstrable connection between school enrolments, the proportion of the labour force in higher education and the level of growth of the national's gross domestic product (GDP).

Strategies to encourage lifelong learning:

- Skills for life priority group: the priority group includes the unemployed, prisoners and those supervised in the community, low-skilled employees and others' at risk including:
 - Gypsy/travelers
 - homeless people
 - refugees
 - asylum seekers

- drug users

Literacy help is also available to young people who are not in education or training, or at work. Parents are targeted through a number of family programs such as:

- Sure-start
- Step into learning
- Skills for families

They are now also focusing on adults that have dyslexia; with a publication that followed to allow basic skilled teachers to have a better understanding of the condition.

- Gremlins campaign: a national 'get on' campaign encourages adults to overcome their fears of learning and 'get rid' of their gremlins. The Learn Direct helpline encourages and provides information about how to get help with literacy, numeracy and language difficulties. Many local education providers and those that are funding programs have taken the idea on board to try and encourage learners.

The initiatives given are going to encourage some to improve their basic skills, however there has to be the direct funding available for them and the need to work around their family commitments are also very important.

MCI

The MCI was set up in 1988, as an operation as part of the Management Evaluation and Development. Their aim is to:

- Define generic standards of assessment for management competency
- Promote best practice in management education, training and development.
- Develop ethical and qualification standards with the view to the eventual 'professionalising' of management under a chartered body.

This looks at the core competences of management and how well they are performing against the standards of role that are required of them. There are four levels of management which are meant against criteria:

- Senior management standards: this looks at management at a strategic level. This involves understanding the environment and its influencers, whilst setting out a strategic plan and evaluating and improving the performance of the business.
- Middle management standards: this type of management looks at them involved at an operational level. This role applies to all senior or middle managers who are responsible for departments or having other managers report to them.
- First line management: this looks at management allocating resources or delegating work to others'. Management are limited in their responsibilities and restricted to following the company's policy: non-business decision makers.

The idea of the MCI is to give managers a professional recognition and set them apart from others' in the industry. However, this initiative does not leave room to discover and investigate how different managers work and learn. As one style of management may work for one individual, it may not

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work for another, and the guidelines set do not compensate for those who have styles that differ.

Competency movement:

The idea of the competency movement is to look in developing skills and knowledge of trainees and workers at the job in-hand. The competence development looks at:

- Knowledge
- Skills
- Performance abilities; performing these skills and improving those that they already do day-to-day

Competence-based training and assessment is fully promoted by the government, looking to also promote management development i. e. MCI.

Their general aim is:

- Supporting the career and development aspirations of learners without the historical bias towards formal academic achievement; i. e. there are no formal pre-entry qualifications required for NVQ, therefore removing the barriers of learning
- Supporting flexible and job-relevant learning, through on-going training and assessment in the workplace, with no pre-determined time frame and completion, and potentially minimal inputs from education providers

- Supporting employers' objectives for HRD, by focusing on relevant job skills. Competence frameworks and assessments also support a range of HR planning and performance management applications.
- Supporting employees' employability objectives. NVQ for example are structured to meet the needs of the organization through continuous training on updating their knowledge on the equipment and technology the learner users at work

The NVQ, first introduced in 1986, was formed by the National Council for Vocational training, which has enable those of all ages to gain a practical qualification that can be transferred to the workplace. The assessors of the NVQ courses look at the following:

- identify what they can do already
- agree on the standard and level they are aiming for
- analyse what they need to learn
- choose and agree on activities that would allow them to learn what they need

The Review of Vocational Qualifications in England and Wales (RVQ) Working Group report in April 1986 recommended the introduction of NVQ's to address weaknesses in the then current systems of vocational qualifications. Amongst the weaknesses it identified were:

- no clear, readily understandable pattern of provision as well as considerable overlap, duplication and gaps in that provision

- many barriers to accessing vocational qualifications and inadequate arrangements for progression and transfer of credit
- assessment methods biased towards testing of knowledge rather than skill or competence
- insufficient recognition of learning gained outside formal education and training
- limited take-up of vocational qualifications.

The VAK learning styles model provides a very easy and quick reference inventory by which to assess people's preferred learning styles, and then most importantly, to design learning methods and experiences that match people's preferences:

Visual learning style involves the use of seen or observed things, including pictures, diagrams, demonstrations, displays, handouts, films, flip-chart, etc.

Auditory learning style involves the transfer of information through listening: to the spoken word, of self or others, of sounds and noises.

Kinesthetic learning involves physical experience - touching, feeling, holding, doing, practical hands-on experiences.

1. The competency based approach is only concerned with observable outputs. The journey or route of how one achieved competence does not really matter. As a result the system relies heavily on assessment skills. All trainers/HRD developers must gain assessor skills to assess the different units and levels of competence including APL/APEL skills.

2. All trainers/HRD developers should be able to put together a training programme which offer the work-based experiences needed to meet the stated elements and units of competence. Trainers need therefore programme development, management and design skills.

3. It may be necessary for employer's in particular occupational sectors to set up a national network such as the Sector Skills Councils who would set out the competence frameworks for each occupational sector.

4. It may also be necessary to set up a national data-base for the recording of individual competency achievement by workers and professionals.

Key government policies and Initiatives

Lifelong learning is not a single programme but rather a general policy covering all post-16 education and training. There are many providers and facilitators of learning opportunities, for example, universities and colleges, private sector training providers and employers.

Key policies and initiatives include:

- The Learning and Skills Council (LSC): The establishment of the LSC has successfully combined the responsibility for all planning and funding of post-16 learning (except HE) into a single body, overcoming the complexity and incoherence of the previous arrangements.

- A key aim of the LSC is to bring about greater participation and attainment in post-16 learning, so that by 2010 people in England will have the knowledge and skills to match the best in the world.

·The Connexions Service: This is the Government's front line support service for all young people aged 13-19 with 47 Connexions Partnerships in operation. The service provides an integrated advice, guidance and personal development service to help remove the barriers to learning and ensure that young people receive the support necessary to allow them to make a smooth transition to working life.

·Financial support for learners: Education Maintenance Allowances (EMAs) support the Government's aim of improving participation, retention and achievement in post-16 learning by providing financial support. Eligible young people can receive an allowance of up to £30 a week if they stay on at school or college. Evaluation shows EMAs have increased participation in learning.

·Enhanced learning opportunities using ICT: By designating ICT as the third essential Skill for Life the Government has made a commitment to ensuring that all ICT learning and qualifications are part of a coherent, high quality framework and delivered by teachers or learner support staff who are appropriately trained and qualified. There are currently over 2, 000 learndirect ICT learning centres offering over 500 online courses, including topics such as literacy and numeracy, IT skills, and business and management skills. Learn direct also provide a telephone helpline to provide information and advice to learners. There are 6, 000 UK online centres which provide access to the Internet and to a broad range of services linked to ICT and learning.

- Improving adult basic skills: The *Skills for Life* strategy was launched to improve adult literacy and numeracy skills. The strategy includes work to boost demand for learning, improve the quality of teaching in literacy and numeracy provision, and increase learner achievement.
- Investors in People (IiP): This is a national standard which aims to improve organisational performance through the development of people. There are currently over 37, 500 IiP recognised organisations in the UK and a further 25, 500 organisations, including many schools, working towards the standard.
- Union Learning Fund: The ULF is a source of funding to help trade unions use their influence with employers, employees and others to encourage greater participation in learning at work. £34 million over three years has been allocated for projects ranging from basic skills to continuing professional development.
- 14-19 Reform: On 23 February a White Paper *14-19 Education and Skills* was published. The publication sets out clear proposals for reform which offer high-quality vocational routes of learning. One of the aims is to ensure every young person is secure in the basics that they need for life and work, while providing the opportunity for every child to develop their full potential and be rewarded for their success.
- Skills Strategy: The Skills Strategy White Paper *21st Century Skills — Realising Our Potential* was launched July 2003 and sets out the skills challenge and how it will be met. The Strategy aims to strengthen the UK's

position as one of the world's leading economies by ensuring that employers have the skills to support the success of their business, and that employees have the necessary skills to be both employable and personally fulfilled. In July 2004 a one-year-on progress report was published by the Skills Alliance of Government Ministers, TUC, CBI and the Small Business Council.

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=12>