

How can we encourage employers to become involved in education?

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1 Introduction

This paper provides a brief overview of the ways in which employers currently engage with education and training. This is followed by a summary of the reasons why employers may choose not to engage with education and training and the motivations of those who choose to do so. In the final section some suggestions are made for ways in which to encourage employers to become more involved in education and training.

The review is largely restricted to the education, learning and skills sector, focussing on the involvement of employers with the 14-19 curriculum. There are other, perhaps more 'strategic', ways in which employers can become involved with the learning and skills sector, such as through curriculum development (eg by contributing to advisory boards for work-related education and training programmes, such as happens in the health education sector), by becoming involved in the process of development of occupational standards through SSCs, or more generally, by becoming involved in governance, eg sitting on governing bodies. However, these are qualitatively different types of involvement and have not been included in the review. Nor too has employer involvement in higher education been included, although many of the ways in which employers interact with HE are similar to those outlined here for the younger age group.

2 How are employers currently involved in education and training?

There are many ways in which employers can become involved in the education process:

- by offering work placements for pupils in compulsory or post-compulsory education, either as part of a work experience placement or as part of a young apprenticeship or (in the near future) diploma programme
- by speaking about their organisation and/or occupational sector to young people and those involved in their education and training
- by becoming a coach or mentor for young people (and, for employers who are female and/or from a minority ethnic group background, as a role model to young people from these under-represented groups)
- by offering an experience of the occupational environment to young people and those involved in their education and training (tutors, lecturers, etc.)
- in some sectors, through involvement in schemes such as Community Engineers, and
- by employing young people as apprentices.

Employers may do this either on an individual basis or through involvement in local education-business partnerships (EBPs). EBPs contract with, and are funded through, local LSCs to offer work experience, mentoring, workplace visits, enterprise activity and professional development for teachers and aim to develop and promote sustained links between education and business organisations for the benefit of students.

2.1 Work placements

Section 560 of the Education Act 1996, amended by Section 112 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, enabled students of compulsory school age to participate in

work experience schemes as part of their education. The entitlement applies to students at any point during their last two years of compulsory education.

In 2003 the requirement for statutory provision of 'work-related learning' was introduced for all young people at key stage 4. Guidance provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority for work placements (QCA, 2003) set out the rationale for their introduction:

Young people are increasingly concerned with the role of education in occupational success. They want to see the relevance of education to their future lives, and they want assurance that what they are learning is developing their employability. Work-related learning provides the connection between learning and earning, which is a strong motivator for many.

Many of the skills valuable for both higher education and future employment can be developed through work-related activities. Work experience and enterprise schemes, with their focus on social and personal skills, offer opportunities to stretch the most able students.

One of the barriers to participation in higher education is the low self-esteem and limited aspirations of many intelligent 14 to 16-year-olds. Improved knowledge of the labour market and employers' needs will raise the aspirations of some and help others make more informed decisions about suitable learning programmes post 16.

QCA (2003) p.5

While the legislation stopped short of making work placement experience compulsory, it was nonetheless expected that many young learners would in fact undertake work placements.

Work experience can be useful for a variety of reasons. A placement allows a young person the opportunity to view first-hand a variety of different types of job within an organisation as well as the one in which they personally are involved, which can help inform their future career decisions. A good placement can provide a young person with valuable experience of their intended career that will help them feel more confident that they are making the correct decision when that time comes. Equally, work experience may be valuable for a quite opposite set of reasons. A young person may obtain a placement in an area in which they initially believe they want to work, but, once they have experience of the work, discover that it is not really what they want to do. While this last point may not appear initially to be a positive reason for offering work placements, in fact it is of great value to employers as well as to the young person: this can save employers the cost of recruiting an employee for a training or apprenticeship position who then, a few months into their training, decides the occupation is not for them and leaves. In such situations the loss to employers can be substantial: not just in terms of the 'down time' while the post is empty and cost of re-advertising and re-filling the post, but, where an employee needs to attend a training course that only starts at certain times of year, then the time during which the new recruit is in post but unable to commence training may be considerable. Any contribution that placements can make to the reduction of such costly mistakes should be welcomed by employers.

Research undertaken by IES (Hurstfield et al., 2005; see also Hillage et al., 1996; Hillage et al. 2001) has indicated that many pupils do undertake work experience placements and indeed are keen to gain experience of areas of work in which they are interested. However, for many it is a wasted opportunity. The research by Hurstfield and her colleagues revealed that the great majority of work experience placements failed to serve a useful purpose. Only a minority of young women said that their work experience placements had been useful, either as learning experiences or as sources of information about jobs. The majority of work placements were unplanned, unrelated to the young women's areas of interest, and presented few learning opportunities. Some young women had sought placements in sectors in which they hoped ultimately to find employment and, in addition, were areas of growth in which there was rising recruitment demand from employers, yet the young women had been told that there were no placements available. While the young people had lost the opportunity to learn more about the sector in which they hoped to work, there was an arguably greater loss to the employers, who had lost the opportunity to promote employment within their companies to enthusiastic potential future recruits. The research revealed that, when it came to obtaining a placement, the pupils and students had taken what they could get rather than doing something they were actually interested in pursuing as a career.

'I wanted to do something like working in a bank. They didn't have any of those options so then I went to do hairdressing.' Schoolgirl

'I had to work in some beauty school and they didn't have anything for me to do so I had to sit around and watch.' Schoolgirl

Providing work experience opportunities in these sectors is one way to promote job opportunities and promote the company as an 'employer of choice' to potential recruits. Given the very clear shortcomings in the work experience arrangements for many of the girls and young women interviewed during the research, there is an almost open field for any employer that decided to start offering placement opportunities to young people. And there is one further reason why employers should be interested in offering young learners work placement opportunities. In many cases employers put much effort – and considerable amounts of money – into trying to recruit graduates, with little or no impact:

'In 2001/2 the company ran a series of women in IT events. These were aimed at females at university who were just starting to think about their career options. There were three events which cost £80,000 between them. The events attracted 300 females. This generated a small blip in female applications...it is difficult to justify the cost as the company may only get a few extra applicants for a good deal of money.' IT employer

It would cost far less money for employers to offer work placements to young people, with the added likelihood that, caught young and provided with a positive work placement, the learners are likely to plan their future education arrangements to enable them to enter the company or sector of choice when they leave school or graduate.

2.2 Industry representative/role model

There is growing awareness of the influence that positive role models and industry representatives can have. Industry representatives and positive role models can be of particular use in two situations: those areas in which there is misunderstanding amongst the general population of the real nature of the work involved; and those areas in which employers are seeking to increase the diversity of the recruitment pool they attract (and hence their employee profile).

IES evaluation of the Young Apprenticeship programme (Newton et al., forthcoming) revealed that many of the partnerships running these courses saw an important role for employers in providing information about jobs and the industry to the young people. Where this was working well, teams had included employers in awareness raising, and, in a smaller number of cases, recruitment.

'I've been to their presentations, and one of the questions I've always asked the students is, 'Is this what you thought engineering was like before you came here?' And sometimes they say no, it's totally different, and I think that's possibly why there aren't any females, because their concept of engineering is hard graft. So it's wrong, because they just do not know, and if they came round and did work experience, it would open their minds.' Employer

'I know that was missing when I left school, the actual guidance on various types of jobs and the ins and outs of them and what they entail. We got very, very little information and so you made a decision based on not a great deal of thought. That's why I'm keen to be involved.'
Employer

However, some partnerships had worked hard to encourage employers to become more involved in awareness-raising and recruitment with little response. Where an employer has no previous experience of working with young people and/or with schools then they may need guidance from the school, college or training provider about what will be expected of them and how best to approach their role. It should also be borne in mind that schools, colleges and training providers might also need guidance in knowing what to ask for from employers. The Royal Society website gives useful information to employers contemplating becoming involved in such schemes. A series of links sets out guidance for role models can be found at: <http://www.royalsoc.ac.uk/page.asp?id=2785> and information on a study that the Royal Society conducted into role models is available at <http://www.royalsoc.ac.uk/rolemodels>. Another site that readers may find helpful is that of the UK Resource Centre for Women, which was set up as a resource centre to encourage women to enter science, engineering and technology field. The Centre facilitates mentoring services for women and help with mentoring for employers and for individuals can be found at <http://www.setwomenresource.org.uk/>.

The science, engineering and technology sector is probably the sector in which most activity has taken place in trying to promote individuals to become mentors or role models, and this is for two main reasons: firstly, because it is a sector with some of the most enduring stereotypes to overcome; and secondly, because a chronic shortage of

supply of recruits has led employers to focus on ways of increasing the pool of potential applicants. Engineering in Britain in particular continues to suffer from image problems. For this reason the Neighbourhood Engineers scheme (now Science and Engineering Ambassadors scheme) was introduced, to provide the opportunity for pupils to meet role models and/or mentors from local engineering communities. An evaluation of the scheme by SQW (2002) found that on the one hand, professional engineers who had visited schools had portrayed their profession in a positive light.

Links with 'real people' was an important experience for pupils, in particular, contact with people doing 'real jobs.' Neighbourhood Engineers were particularly praised by teachers and pupils at the schools involved (three of the case study schools). Contact with those employed in engineering and science based companies was seen by teachers as one of the best ways to counteract the negative perception of the employment opportunities available.

In this context, who the girls meet is important. Initiatives providing an opportunity to meet a range of individuals, and not only senior management, were praised. Engaging with high achievers can sometimes put off those with lower abilities, who might be encouraged by someone who is working at a less senior level, which seemed more attainable to them. SQW (2002)

However, the evaluation also suggested that some of the engineers had served to confirm pupils' stereotypes about engineers and engineering. The report says:

[During] visits to local engineering companies girls were put off engineering as a career by the more negative attitudes of the engineers in some of the companies towards their jobs.

Therefore, both providers and employers may wish to consider which individual(s) would be the most likely to promote the image of the sector they wish to project. The scheme eventually evolved into the Science and Engineering Ambassadors Programme, which brought together a number of companies that had previously been engaged in similar activities. These included BAE SYSTEMS, BP, IBM, Ford and Unilever. The Ambassadors fulfil a similar role to that of the neighbourhood engineers, going into primary and secondary schools to explain the importance of science to everyday life and the career opportunities that are available in the sector.

The need for more employers to serve as role models or become involved in mentoring schemes is emphasised by the following comments from the IES work evaluating Young Apprenticeships.

'As far as gender segregation goes, in my honest opinion, engineering needs earlier work to get young people progressing through. It's too late to leave it until they have left school. We need more role models – more successful female engineers going into schools. How often do girls get to meet female engineers?'

This emphasises again the value of employers becoming involved with younger age groups if they hope to influence career decisions. Employers – and indeed schools – may need some help in thinking about how to organise events, but the following shows how

relatively simple ideas can be used to great effect, with relatively little effort on behalf of the employer (or indeed, employee).

In Year 9 we have an equal opportunities morning, we make a conscious effort to bring in for example a female police chief, a male nurse, female engineer, and do a sort of 'What's My Line' with them, the pupils have to ask them questions and work out what their job is.' Example given by Ernesford Grange school, in Newton et al. (2006)

The training provider TDR is involved in offering Young Apprenticeships in engineering and as part of the subject selection process offers schools the opportunity of an Industry Day for their pupils. At each of the Industry Days, the YA Lead makes a presentation about engineering and then introduces employers to the pupils. The employers give a presentation about work-placements in their organisation and answer questions from the pupils. Following this, there were activities for pupils to work on such as building a crash barrier or wind tunnel and other such practical activities. Employers helped out with these practical activities, which had the added benefit that they got to know the young people who might come to them on placement. Example given by TDR, in Newton et al. (forthcoming).

The extent to which employers are able to field a 'diverse' range of mentors or role models will of course depend largely on the diversity of the local sector workforce and the nature of the companies with which the partnerships are engaged. On the whole, fielding somebody who is enthusiastic and friendly is likely to be the most important factor on which to focus in the first instance. Just being able to get pupils talking about their views of the sector can be valuable, as the example below shows:

In one of the employer-led activities, a chemical engineer asked the pupils to draw a picture of what they thought that her organisation (ie, where she worked) looked like. All of the pupils drew a picture with smoke billowing out from a factory. The employer was then able to say that it was not at all as they thought – in fact her company gave out no atmospheric emissions at all. This led into a discussion about the kinds of assumptions people make about different jobs and work environment. Example given by TDR, in Newton et al., (forthcoming).

2.3 Offering an experience of the work environment

The section above outlines how employers can get involved in person, either by giving information about their sector or occupation at an open day or other school event, or by becoming a mentor or coach to a young learner or young employee.

The other option that arguable requires less involvement is for the employer simply to offer the chance for young people to visit their premises and see what goes on. One example is the forthcoming 'Year of Food and Farming' initiative (for further information see <http://www.yearoffoodandfarming.org.uk/>) that will run from September 2007 to July 2008. At present the web site is taking registrations from organisations and schools and the full site is live from September 2007. The initiative allows pupils the opportunity to see what happens on a real-life farm and experience what the countryside can offer. When it goes live the website will put organisations in

touch with schools; at the time of writing (August 2007) the website was inviting organisations to say what they are able to offer schools and young people. After September this will appear on a 'megamap' that will map out the various opportunities on offer. The website has a set of frequently-asked questions for farmers who would like to get involved in working with schools (available at <http://www.yearoffoodandfarming.org.uk/General/FAQs.aspx#12>). As part of the initiative the website also hopes identify funding and sponsorship to assist with associated costs, for example the cost of travel for visitors.

2.4 Employers of young people in jobs with training

Finally, perhaps the most obvious way in which employers can engage with education or training is to offer an apprenticeship or other training position to a young person. Without such involvement, the apprenticeship route would not be able to function (or at least, not in its current format).

The apprenticeship route has its origins in the Guilds structure of the City of London. Apprentices were indentured to a craftsman and served a term of seven years before qualifying and becoming a journeyman. Since the introduction of NVQs the time-serving element has, in principle, been removed (although in many sectors there is the expectation that a young person will spend three or four years in apprenticeship). It is access to employment as an apprentice that is the main 'choke point' for young people who wish to undertake work-based learning: the majority of places on apprenticeship programmes are offered only to those employed in apprenticeship positions¹ and there are, quite simply, not enough apprenticeship positions to cater for all the young people who wish to enter work-based training². This situation significantly hampers attempts to increase uptake of apprenticeships, as this extract from an interview with a member of the national LSC indicates:

The TV advertising campaigns generated a lot of interest and the leads were passed on to local [LSC] offices. But the campaign was a victim of its own success. There was much interest from potential trainees but the problem was we had no employers offering training places. NLSC, cited in Miller et al. (2005)

In summary, the various potential forms of involvement for employers can be categorised as follows:

¹ Programme-led apprenticeships offer a full-time education route but have not been embraced with much enthusiasm from either employers or sector skill councils.

² The government does not sanction access by young people to NVQs only (ie to NVQs on their own as stand-alone qualifications rather than full apprenticeship frameworks) in sectors in which apprenticeships are available.

- those that seek to raise the general awareness of the 'world of work' and prepare young people for the demands they will meet in the workplace
- those that seek to raise the career consciousness of young people in respect of particular sectors
- those that seek to provide experience of the world of work, either in general or in a specific sector
- those who are more directly involved in the provision of training per se, through apprenticeships etc.

In addition, the type of involvement can be seen to vary according to the particular group with whom the employers become involved: with an institution (or year group) as a whole versus individual learners or teachers; and within these categories, whether they are engaging with the young people themselves (ie, the learners) or with adults (ie teachers or tutors).

It is useful at this point to consider the factors that can influence employers' decisions on this range of issues. The factors that encourage or discourage employer involvement in education and training therefore constitutes the subject of the next section of this report.

3 What factors influence the involvement of employers in education and training?

Work by Jim Hillage at IES for the then Department for Education and Employment, investigated the reasons for employer engagement in the range of education business links (Hillage, Hyndley and Pike, 1995). The study indicated that only a minority of employers – around one-third – were actively involved with education at the time the research was conducted.

Hillage et al. explored the motivations that underlay employers' involvement with education and found that there were three broad groupings:

- **Narrow self-interest** – some employers formed links with education to gain specific benefits for themselves, such as developing recruitment channels, gaining a better understanding of modern qualifications, or building up a good marketing profile in the local community.
- **General or enlightened self-interest** – such as aiming to increase the industrial or economic understanding of young people, influencing young people's attitudes towards work, improving the image of the sector and demonstrating the range of careers available within their sector.
- **Benevolent interest** – more philanthropic motivations such as the desire to 'give something back to the community', influence education and/or to give education the benefit of employer management expertise.

Source: Hillage, Hyndley and Pike, (1995) Employers' Views of Education Business Links

The work therefore suggests that, in the first place, if education and training institutions made more efforts to make contact with local employers this would be likely to pay off in a majority of cases. Second, while the last of these three groups of motivations is most likely related to the individuals' personality and attitudes and, therefore, less amenable to change, the first two groups of reasons provide strong arguments that educationalists could use in their approaches to employers. In addition, the research also indicated that

education business links were not clearly evaluated, which meant that there was little evidence to demonstrate to employers the value of their involvement. If education and training bodies instituted some form of evaluation of the opportunities provided by businesses then this might help employers to see the value arising from their efforts.

This idea is supported by more recent research by IES. Many of the training providers and employers interviewed during the young apprenticeship evaluation indicated that the young apprentices were progressing into full apprenticeship positions at 16 (Newton et al. 2006; forthcoming). This suggests that employers are right in believing that outcomes such as the development of 'recruitment channels' are likely to arise from closer affiliation with schools and colleges.

This reinforces the suggestion that assessment of the impact of visits and placements on outcome measures such as young people's views of the sector and range of jobs available, and their employment intentions, would provide employers with some evidence of the value of their efforts. This is something that providers might, therefore, wish to build into their future activities.

3.1 Barriers to engagement

3.1.1 Perceived lack of value, interest or knowledge

Hillage et al. (1995) reported that, despite support for education-business links amongst most employers, the majority also saw such activities as being largely peripheral to business. The research revealed that, in many cases, the involvement of employers in the first place had depended either on an educational organisation taking the initiative in making contact or else arose out of chance contacts. As might be expected, employers who had links with education business partnerships were more likely to be proactive. It was estimated that around one-third of employers did have some form of link with education and, where they did not, the main reason given for not being involved was lack of time, although some said it was because they did not believe involvement to have any value. Mostly though, employers did not get engaged because they simply did not know how to be involved and nobody from education had ever approached them.

3.1.2 Competition and costs

When considering the employment of young people as apprentices, many employers have real concerns that prevent them from taking on and developing young people. Our work for the EOC (Miller et al, 2005a, 2005b) revealed that, in many of the sectors employing large numbers of apprentices, a significant proportion of the workforce is self-employed or employed within micro-businesses. Small employers have particular concerns about taking on apprentices, as these extracts from Miller et al. (2005b) reveal:

It is a very thin business case to invest in apprentice training, where it is likely that in the region of 80 per cent of trainees will turn to self-employment and [the employer] will not benefit in the long run. CITB-Construction Skills

Today's apprentice is tomorrow's competition. SummitSkills (the sector skills council for the building services engineering sector)

Such fears often turn out to be well-founded, as this quote from a survey undertaken by IES on behalf of the Electrical Contractors' Association (ECA) indicates:

Training is expensive and once trained they leave and set up in competition with you.
Employer, ECA survey

We end up training our own, only for them to leave when trained. Employer, ECA survey

However, this is not always the case. In some sectors, employing apprentices is seen as the main way in which the sector can maintain professional standards against a backdrop of (apparently) declining standards:

Training enthusiastic apprentices is the only way I can maintain company standards.
Employer, ECA survey

The ECA commissioned the survey to discover what were the main barriers to training within the electrotechnical/electrical installation sector and the types of incentive that might encourage employers to provide more training (including taking on and developing apprentices). One-sixth of employers reported that poaching constituted a disincentive to their providing training at the current time and one-fifth said this was a reason for not providing training in the future.

Asked what would be likely to encourage them to take on more apprentices, the suggestion that was endorsed by the largest proportion of individuals (over 80 per cent) was the proposal that a tax allowance be given for each additional apprentice employed. The suggestion that an allowance be made against total tax liability was supported by fewer, but still a significant majority (three-quarters) of the respondents. Raising the age limit for the funding of apprentices was supported by just over half of respondents.

3.1.3 Bad experiences

Occasionally during our work on the young apprenticeships we did hear reports of employers deciding to withdraw from offering work placements subsequent to their having bad experiences with a particular young person. Obviously this is unfortunate (not least because it is rare for employers to re-engage in such situations) and schools and training providers would be advised to be fairly rigorous in applying their selection criteria to ensure that only young people of sufficiently mature demeanour should be selected for such programmes.

3.1.4 Insurance and health and safety concerns

One issue that emerged at the national conferences for young apprenticeship partnerships held in Leeds and London during 2006 was the question of insurance. Several partnerships said that employers had offered places but had then had to rescind their offer when their insurance companies objected to young people being on the premises. Although it was the opinion of the DfES¹ that there is no real legal basis for this restriction, for obvious reasons employers felt that they had to abide by insurance company decisions. Similarly, some employers believe that there could be serious implications should a young person have an accident whilst on the premises. As long as a full risk assessment has been carried out and all due steps have been taken to minimise risks – as should be the case when employing people as well as when offering work placements – then there should be no additional concerns². Regarding the former point, it would be of obvious value if the government could enter into a dialogue with the insurance companies to clarify the position regarding work placement pupils on business premises and issue guidelines on this point.

3.2 Why should (more) employers get engaged?

The recent research reported gives a brief overview of some of the issues involved in engaging employers in various ways at different stages of the education and training system. There are real benefits to employers who do become engaged; these benefits remain much in line with those identified by the employers surveyed over ten years ago by Hillage et al.

Perhaps the strongest reason is the fact that, in many cases, young people who are offered work placements do go on to seek employment within the placement sector, and typically with the employer with whom they undertook their placement. This can save employers effort and money in attempting to recruit, especially in situations where there is a restricted pool of potential recruits. The employer can also feel more confident about recruiting where they have had the opportunity to see the young person in action over time.

Other reasons include being able to generally influence the quality of skills supply (as well as improve particular recruitment routes) and to provide development opportunities for their own staff. Lastly, at a time when corporate social responsibility is moving up the political agenda, it provides a way to demonstrate that the company is indeed contributing to society.

¹ Now DCSF.

² The exception to this being those workplaces where there are statutory limitations on the age of those who can be employed, such as the prohibition of anyone aged under 18 from working on a garage forecourt, for example.

4 What needs to happen?

From this review it is possible to identify some actions that would encourage more employers to become engaged in education and training.

Be proactive. If schools, training providers and other relevant bodies were more proactive in approaching employers, this would be likely to pay off: many employers do not become involved simply because they do not know how.

Help make links. What would be helpful would be an easy way by which employers can register their interest in becoming involved. A good example of this is provided at the Year of Farming website which offers a registration service that allows schools and farms to make contact with each other. A central registration forum and database could be established that would allow employers to register their willingness to be involved; this might be undertaken by either the Department for Children, Schools and Families at national level or by local education authorities, LSCs or education-business partnerships at local level. Alternatively this is something that Sector Skill Councils might become involved with at a sectoral level.

Make it simple. There are many ways in which employers could be involved; it does not have to be through a work placement or apprenticeship. Giving a talk about the company or the industry at a career event, arranging a day visit, offering mock interviews are all less time-intensive yet valuable ways in which employers can become involved. If a school or other education and training provider is going to approach an employer then it would be useful for them to provide a list of the different ways in which the employer could become involved and contact details for the person with whom they should get in touch should they decide that they are able to offer some type of input.

Assess and publicise the benefits. Where employers are involved in activities, evaluate the impact and value of their involvement – this will help keep the present employers engaged and help you demonstrate to other employers that involvement with young learners can have real benefits, such as promoting jobs in their company and making them an ‘employer of choice’. If the school is a member of a young apprenticeship

partnership and employers have taken on young people as apprentices after completing their placement, publicise this to other employers.

Give guidance. Many employers are willing to help but have limited time and resources to give to finding out what is wanted. Provide guidance – in many cases there is guidance already available that can be used or adapted for your situation, such as that provided by the Royal Society on being a role model and the Frequently Asked Questions for farmers who are considering inviting schools to their farms (see pages 6 and 7 for contact details). Alternatively, the development of simple guidance for employers on a range of activities is something that education-business partnerships might consider funding.

Reduce legal concerns. There is evidence that insurance and health and safety concerns lead some employers to avoid becoming involved who otherwise might. This is an area that will probably require some intervention from government to resolve. It would be helpful if government could enter into a dialogue with insurance companies regarding the situation of work placements and issue guidelines on this point.

Provide incentives? One last suggestion is that the government might consider rewarding those employers who do give their time and energy to contribute to the education and training of young people. Some form of tax allowance based on input would indicate not just that employers' efforts are being recognised but are being rewarded too. However, this might be difficult to administer (in terms of auditing the types of activities provided) and there is evidence that in some cases fiscal incentives in fact have little impact: for example, an evaluation of the Employer Training Pilots revealed that wage compensation had little impact on employers' decisions regarding whether or not to participate. Furthermore, there would be a significant issue of "dead weight" – that is, a relatively large sum of money would go to the tens of thousands of employers who already support education entirely voluntarily, with the possibility that only small numbers of additional employers would become involved as a result of this large expenditure. Therefore it is not entirely clear whether fiscal incentives would necessarily be the best way to promote employer involvement.

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