



Annual Review 2020-21



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Forewords

Rooney Anand, Chairman, WorldSkills UK



The achievements of WorldSkills UK and the commitment of its staff over the last 12 months has been impressive.

Our rapid response to the challenges caused by the Covid-19 crisis has seen us find and implement new

ways to connect with our partners in education and industry and with our peers in the WorldSkills global network. In our new role as quality improvement partner for the Further Education and skills sector, we have worked tirelessly to ensure young people have still been able to develop their skillset and mindset to the highest possible levels, so they can build their confidence and potential.

I am delighted, that at a time when many young people have had their education and training unavoidably disrupted, we have been able to work with employers in sectors including health, digital, manufacturing and construction to deliver high level skills development and careers advocacy in technical education and apprenticeships to 150,000 young people across the UK. This direct action is also helping us address the misplaced snobbery about the value of technical education and apprenticeships, something I have been hugely passionate about throughout my business career.

At WorldSkills UK, we have long championed the role that high quality skills play not only in helping develop young people but in supporting employers to be competitive. That is why I am excited that we have been able to realise our ambitions to bring international best practice back to the UK over the past year, despite the difficulties we all have faced. By embedding insights from our global benchmarking programmes to raise standards in higher technical education and apprenticeships, we are supporting employers in every region of the UK to access a pipeline of talent that will support them to be internationally competitive, helping to attract more inward investment to fuel recovery and growth.

Looking ahead to the next year, we will keep championing innovation in training and harnessing our global network, bringing insight into international practice to boost standards in apprenticeships and higher technical education right across the UK. We know this will bring economic dividends and help tackle regional inequalities, supporting more young people, communities and employers to succeed.

Dr Neil Bentley-Gockmann OBE, Chief Executive, WorldSkills UK



Welcome to our 2020-21 Annual Review, which not only reflects on a period in which we all faced significant and unpredictable challenges, but one that also enabled us to create new opportunities to continue to drive forward the valuable work of WorldSkills UK.

I am proud, that by taking decisive and timely steps as the Covid-19 crisis hit last year, we have been able to remain focused on our mission of improving the quality of apprenticeships and technical education for all young people and employers. That is why over the last 12 months, through the successful adoption of new ways of working, we have transitioned, becoming a quality improvement partner for the further education (FE) and skills sector.

Our work in **helping mainstream global best practice to boost standards in teaching and training** has already been recognised and celebrated by UK governments, FE colleges and employers, as the development of high-quality skills are placed at the heart of plans for economic recovery and growth.

The launch of our new programmes including the [Centre of Excellence](#), in partnership with NCFE, which was recognised for its progressive approach to training in the Government's ['Skills](#)

[for Jobs'](#) white paper for England, and our [Innovation Network](#) and [Skills Development Hub](#) now see us work with 95% of UK colleges, sharing international best practice in teaching, learning and assessment.

Crucial to our new approach is our commitment to [equity, diversity and inclusion \(EDI\)](#) and this will always be a driving force behind our work. The members of our newly established advisory group will support and challenge us as we help more young people irrespective of their backgrounds, to make career choices that challenge and breakdown stereotypes.

By acting on the findings of our employer-focused research, such as our recent ['Disconnected: Exploring the Digital Skills Gap'](#) report and combining our unique insight into global best practice in skills development, we are ensuring more employers can be confident about accessing the high-quality skills they need to be internationally competitive.

We have bold ambitions at WorldSkills UK, and through the ongoing endorsement and co-investment of our 3,000 partners, for which we are hugely grateful, we will continue to play our part in ensuring more young people are emerging from their training highly skilled, confident and ready for work, helping to build a stronger economy and prosperity for all.

Mainstreaming excellence in technical education and skills

The ground-breaking Centre of Excellence was launched in September in partnership with NCFE to embed world-class practices to drive quality improvement in technical education. The launch generated media coverage with a circulation of 22.8m, which included live interviews on Sky News and LBC and contributed to a total circulation figure of 7.2m between September 2020 and March 2021.

We have drawn upon our unique insights into global skills systems and NCFE's expertise in curriculum development, to mainstream excellence in skills development. In our inaugural year, we have tested a range of methods and practices to disseminate and transfer world-class expertise to educators and influence standards across technical and vocational education and training.

Through the first year of this three-year pilot, we have delivered an exclusive continuing professional development (CPD) programme to 100 educators across 20 institutions in the UK to transform the quality of teaching, training and assessment, embedding world-class practices and techniques transferring insights from global skills systems and world-class practices. We have used the experience and expertise of our network of trainers to actively transfer our unique insights into global standards to invigorate and develop qualifications, standards and assessment practices in the UK.

"The Centre demonstrates the types of innovative approaches that are possible across the sector to achieve better outcomes in skills provision in this country and should serve as a rallying call to us all of what can be achieved together."

Gillian Keegan MP, Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills, England



Above: Laura Leong, one of our high-performance skills coaches, visiting educators at Middlesbrough College, one of our first cohort of organisations that are part of the Centre of Excellence

"By providing much-needed investment in technical educators through the WorldSkills UK Centre of Excellence, we will mainstream international best practice into programme delivery. We are raising the bar for technical teaching and helping to create a cohort of highly-skilled, employment-ready young people who can positively contribute to the workforce as we strive to rebuild the UK economy".

David Gallagher, CEO, NCFE



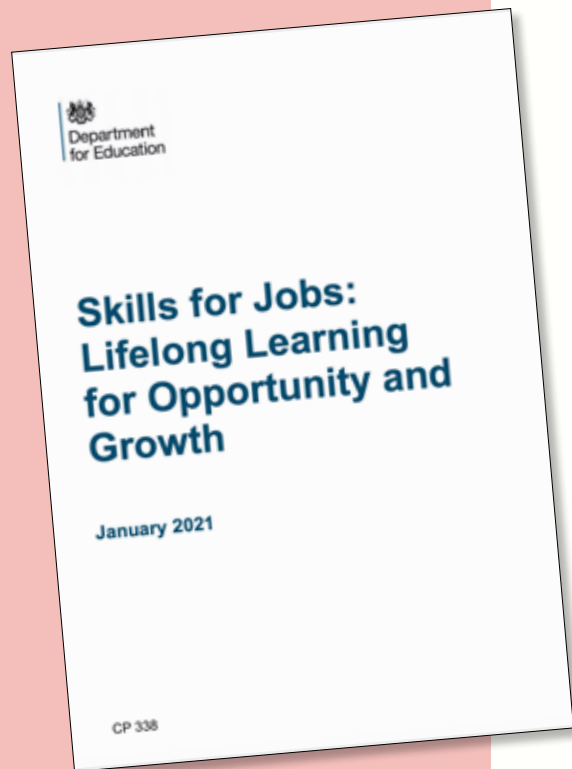
Gillian Keegan MP
Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills



Top: Gillian Keegan MP, Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills, speaking at our International Skills Summit

Bottom left: our new Skills Development Hub

Right: we were referenced as an example of best practice in the Government's White Paper



Introduction

2020-21 was an unexpected and testing year for many, ourselves included, yet it also provided opportunities for us to redefine and accelerate towards our strategic goals. Whilst the impacts of Covid-19 forced the rescheduling and curtailing of many of our established activities and events, in rising to the challenges we successfully pivoted and transitioned our focus towards how we can use international best practice to raise standards in apprenticeships and technical education so that more young people and employers succeed.

To achieve this, we introduced new ways to support employers to gain high-quality skills and help boost the UK economy, especially post-pandemic, through benchmarking against skills systems from across the world and initiating new high-quality training and

assessment practices to develop the skills of those teaching and training in technical education and skills.

We continued to inspire many thousands of young people to choose and succeed in apprenticeships and technical education through a wide range of relevant and engaging digital and online resources and experiences. Through these activities we are positioned as a quality improvement partners for the further education (FE) and skills sector.

These actions were designed to align closely with Government priorities in England and linked especially with key measures in the Department for Education's (DfE) 'Skills for Jobs' white paper, launched in January and with education and economic strategies in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.



Case study

UK-wide partnerships: Working with the devolved nations



Northern Ireland: Joint work in the year focused on working with FE colleges to access and share best practice in the development and delivery of skills on the national and international stage and supporting young people engaged in competition activities. We also worked to improve the match between our activities and Northern Ireland's skills and economic priorities and to embed regionally significant skills competitions into Northern Ireland's Curriculum Hubs. These activities further strengthened relationships with the Government and with the FE sector, setting a path for greater collaboration.

Scotland: Engagements with a wide group of stakeholders resulted in a raised profile and support for our work from various sector organisations such as Colleges Scotland as well as acknowledgement from a range of strategic influencers such as Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs). We are represented in various forums and are a member of relevant vocational

and technical skills committees. We commissioned bespoke research which highlighted the benefit to Scotland of deeper engagement with us. This was well received and has contributed to positive dialogue and positioning with the Scottish Funding Council and the Scottish Government.

Wales: Working with the Inspiring Skills Excellence in Wales project, that is supported by the Welsh Government, we developed closer relationships, exchanged approaches, shared best practice and liaised on decision-making. This included learning from Welsh local competitions and building links between the Welsh Ambassadors and our Skills Champions programmes. Mutual promotion of events and opportunities helped raise engagement and included the Welsh Digital Skills Month, the Welsh 'Skill Up' series of webinars and, increasingly, helped shift our joint focus over the year towards engaging employers and educators.



Top: Dr Neil Bentley-Gockmann

Bottom: Shane Mann, MD of FE week, and Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP, Chair of the Westminster Education Select Committee, at our International Skills Summit

Achievements through the year

The challenges presented by Covid-19 helped us to learn, adapt and grow in many ways across our organisation, through developing our longer-term strategy, resources and products and our people.

Despite uncertainties and change throughout the year, we worked with agility and creativity to introduce a new approach to our work, centred around the themes of **Innovate, Develop and Inspire**, all geared to a goal of growing excellence in technical education and apprenticeships enabling young people to choose and progress in skilled careers meeting employer and economic needs.

Our focus on excellence included developing and launching a range of new initiatives, based in particular on our access to global skills networks and knowledge and transferring insights and best practices to the UK, and on strengthening and advancing our existing activities.

Across all our work, we have continued to run a thread of attention and focus on improving equity, diversity and inclusion, responding in particular to the inequalities in opportunity across the UK and the risk of these being exacerbated by the effects of Covid-19.

We **innovated** by raising skills standards to better meet economic and employer demand, through international benchmarking and insights to support inward investment and help meet future skills needs and increase productivity and growth. Our products and resources included:

- **strategic partnerships and employer-focused research**, through which we have better understood the demand for high quality skills and tailored our programmes to help build a pipeline of world-class skills to power the UK's economic recovery
- [international partners](#) to create sustainable platforms to access international best practice and to explore progressive development and research, performance and research
- a programme of [International Skills Summits](#) to inform and promote how embedding skills excellence can help economic recovery
- collaborations with employers and expert sector organisations, to **research and analyse global skills issues** including digital skills and the future of the labour market in the UK.

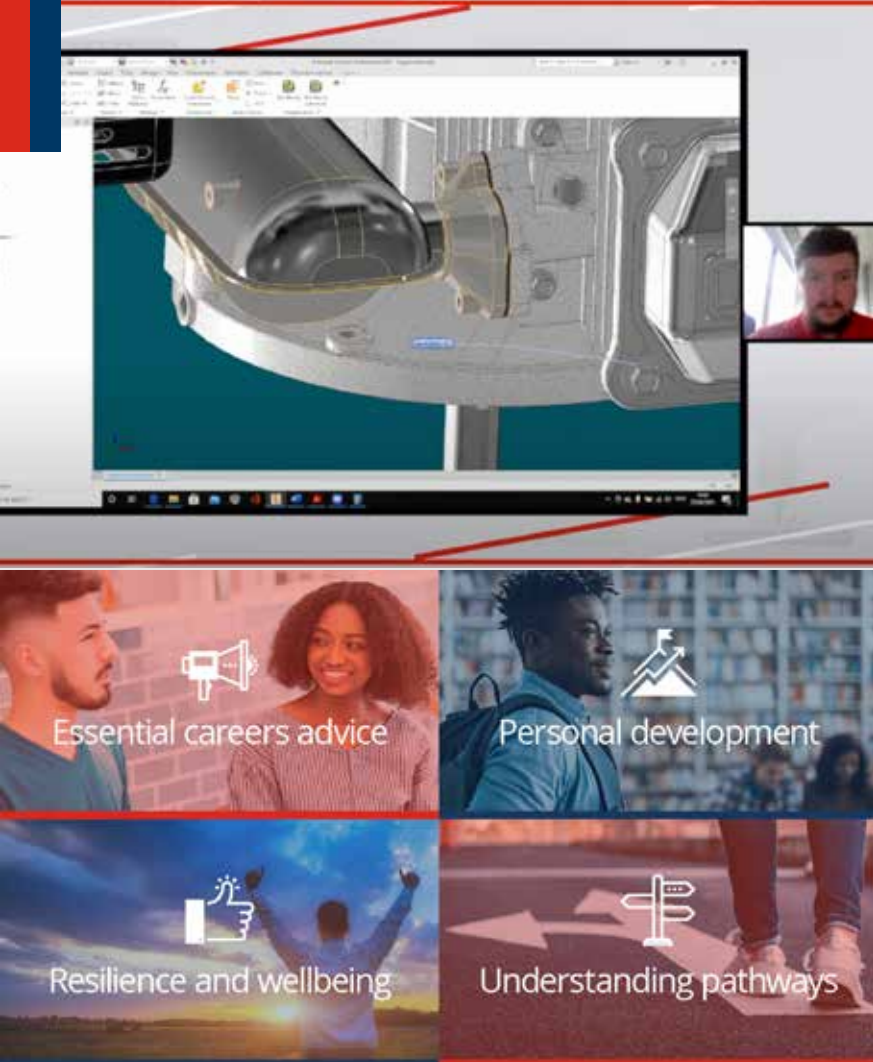


We **developed** the quality of teaching, training and assessment through professional development networks and resources to increase standards of teaching and assessment in FE and technical education, including:

- the **Centre of Excellence**, in partnership with NCFE, a ground-breaking continuing professional development (CPD) programme drawing on our unique insights into global skills systems and NCFE's expertise in curriculum development to mainstream excellence in skills development.
- an **Innovation Network** to create a community of best practice amongst UK colleges using our knowledge and tools to embed and mainstream excellence
- a bank of learning resource modules within a new **Skills Development Hub** for educators to use with learners and apprentices remotely and in the classroom, building on our international training best practice to grow technical skills and potential and to provide personal motivation and stretch for young people
- **Best Practice Virtual Exchanges** to transfer global best practice to learning organisations in the UK to champion higher quality training standards.



Top: Pete Walters, one of our high performance skills coaches, visiting educators at Doncaster College
 Middle: Skills Development Hub
 Left: Our Mechanical Engineering Best Practice Exchange saw experts across the world sharing expertise



Top: a competitor taking part in one of our new Virtual International Pressure Tests

Above: our Careers Advice Toolkit

We **inspired** young people of all backgrounds to choose and succeed on technical and employability pathways by growing their skills and increasing the prestige of technical education through competitions-based training and careers advice advocacy.

Our activities, events and resources included:

- further developing, with our network of Competition Organising Partners (COPs), our **[national competition operating model](#)**, to ensure the skills selection and standards in 2021 matches the UK's economic priorities and employer demands for high quality skills
- training and developing our **squad of young people** in preparation for the resumption of international competition and WorldSkills Shanghai in 2022

- **[Virtual International Pressure Tests](#)** to support young people and experts preparing for international competitions to collaboratively train and compete against other nations
- a new pilot programme, **[Inclusivity in Excellence](#)**, using competition-based practice to improve accessibility and opportunity for success in FE for young people of all backgrounds
- **[Spotlight Talks](#)**, bringing together the UK's leading employers and apprentices to inspire young people, of all backgrounds, to take up technical career routes and apprenticeships
- further developing a digital **[Careers Advice Toolkit](#)** as a resource for teachers and advisers to use remotely or in the classroom to provide young people with engaging and relevant employability skills and careers information.

These strategies and activities have worked together to position us more strongly as a key player in the FE and skills landscape, with a focus on quality improvement. This was evidenced by our Centre for Excellence pilot programme being cited in the Skills for Jobs White Paper for England, launched in January 2020.

Our contribution to the public policy agenda has also been demonstrated through the outcomes of an independent economic review which calculated a return on investment for the taxpayer (from our established activities) of at least £2.40, suggesting high value for money.



Left: students at Gower College competing virtually with students from across China

Case study

Virtual International Pressure tests and Best Practice Exchanges

We piloted six [Virtual International Pressure Tests](#) (VIPs) with Best Practice Exchanges (BPEs) in the period from October to March, covering a broad range of skills, including Computer-Aided Design (CAD) where four countries competed against each other in modules developed to replicate typical WorldSkills Competitions and real-world situations and showcased global standards to 37 UK educators. In 3D Game Art we competed against Finland and Singapore, giving seven young people the chance to pitch their skills levels.

In total, 11 countries, including China, South Korea and Brazil, have been involved in VIPs to date, testing the skills levels of 50 young people and sharing experiences and standards with 100 educators.



As well as being virtually exposed to a global network of peers engaged in the same subject area, creating a valuable online community, competitors also gained exposure to international standards of excellence and the opportunity to benchmark their own skills and understanding against these. Relevant organisations from respective countries used the space for virtual exchanges of best practice with presentations and discussions.

We continue to learn from and develop virtual competitions and we are looking at whether they can be an option for future national competition-based training programmes.

Case study

Inspiring young people to take technical education and skills pathways

In November 2020 we launched a new digital event, [Spotlight Talks: Inspiring Careers Excellence](#). Our goal was to ensure that throughout the pandemic young people still had access to high quality inspirational careers advice about technical and apprenticeship pathways and that this was mapped against the latest frameworks, including CBI and Gatsby. The November event, which was supported by BAE Systems, aimed to tackle vocational snobbery by bringing together some of the UK's biggest employers to provide inspirational talks from young roles models to highlight the career opportunities and career pathways available to them. Our second event, in March, was themed around sectors including digital, design and build, public services and engineering.

Our [Skills Champions](#) (past participants of the skills competitions development programme who act as role models and career advocates), were prominently featured throughout both events. They showcased the impact our competition-based training programme had on their careers. By using our unique digital platform alongside our expertise in delivering large scale events aimed at engaging young people we were able to forge new relationships with leading employers such as GSK, NHS, Science Council and PWC. A total of 900 organisations and 41,000 young people took part in the two events with very positive feedback.



"Spotlight Talks are a fantastic opportunity for young people of all ages, and especially during these difficult times. It was well received by all of our students, including one who produced his own computer programme after watching one of the talks."

Lisa Milward, Careers Lead at Erdington Academy



Key outcomes and impacts

Innovate

- an independent assessment calculated that we deliver a high return on investment of between 2.4x and 4.5x in public funding benefit per pound of DfE investment

104
MILLION
media circulation

2.4
high return on investment of between 2.4x and 4.5x in public funding benefit

- our profile continues at strength, with:
 - 260,000 social media engagements, 480,000 video views and our social media following grew by 5,700 (16%)
 - 104m media circulation
 - 457k website page views and 119k users on our website
- International Skills Summit: 200 attended; 92% rated it as excellent/good and 88% considered topics thought provoking and interesting.

Develop

- we engaged with over 4,500 educators in 2020-21 and with over 95% of UK FE colleges
- 85% of educators said they were better able to advise young people about technical skills routes after engaging with WorldSkills UK
- 20 institutions and 100 teaching staff became part of the new Centre of Excellence, in partnership with NCFE, benefitting from a total of 1,800 hours of CPD between January and March
 - 50+ pieces of press coverage, 27,000 social media engagements and media circulation of 7.2m
- 100 educators across 35 colleges covering all regions of England and all devolved nations engaged in 14 Innovation Network events and activities
- Skills Development Hub created with 80 learning modules; opportunities for 25 hours of CPD for educators and 45 hours of learning for students; 1,500 educators and 1,100 young people registered in four months.

We engaged with over
4,500
educators

85%
of educators said they were better able to advise young people after engaging with WorldSkills UK

150,000

young people provided with skills development or careers advocacy in technical pathways

82%

of young people reported being inspired by their engagement with us

41,000

young people and

875

educators engaged with our two Spotlight events

79

% of young people better understand technical routes

Inspire

- we provided over 150,000 young people with skills development or careers advocacy in technical pathways
- 82% of young people reported being inspired by their engagement with us, exceeding our 70% target
- 79% of young people reported a better knowledge and understanding of their options around technical routes and apprenticeships after engaging
- 108 young people in Squad UK received training and development towards international competition
- six Virtual International Pressure tests gave 50 young people opportunities to test their skills against peers in 11 countries, with 110 educators engaging
- 1,600 educators and 33,600 young people engaged with our digital Careers Advice Toolkit
 - 93% of educators thought students had a better knowledge of employability skills
 - 84% stated students increased their knowledge of career pathways
 - 79% felt the Toolkit improved their ability to advise young people about technical skills routes
- 41,000 young people and 875 educators engaged with our two Spotlight events
 - educators' knowledge of technical education and careers improved from 43% rating this as good/fair before the event to 85% post event
 - 71% of parents felt better able to advise young people to consider apprenticeships
 - 78% of teachers and parents agreed young people were inspired by the events and 75% believed they gained knowledge or skills towards technical and vocational routes
 - 71% of student/apprentices agreed the Spotlight Talks had motivated them to continue with their current qualification
 - 79% were new audiences to us, having not previously attended our LIVE or Skills Show events
- our Skills Champion team of past competitors engaged with 4,900 young people through role modelling via online case studies.

Partnerships

During the year, we increased the number of organisations we work with to over 3,000. This was partly as a result of our newer activities, such as our digital careers advocacy events and our new CPD resources.

This means we now engage with over 95% of General FE colleges and that our school engagement is higher and more distributed across the UK than before when it was focused on areas which could access our physical events. Both figures are the highest we have ever reached.

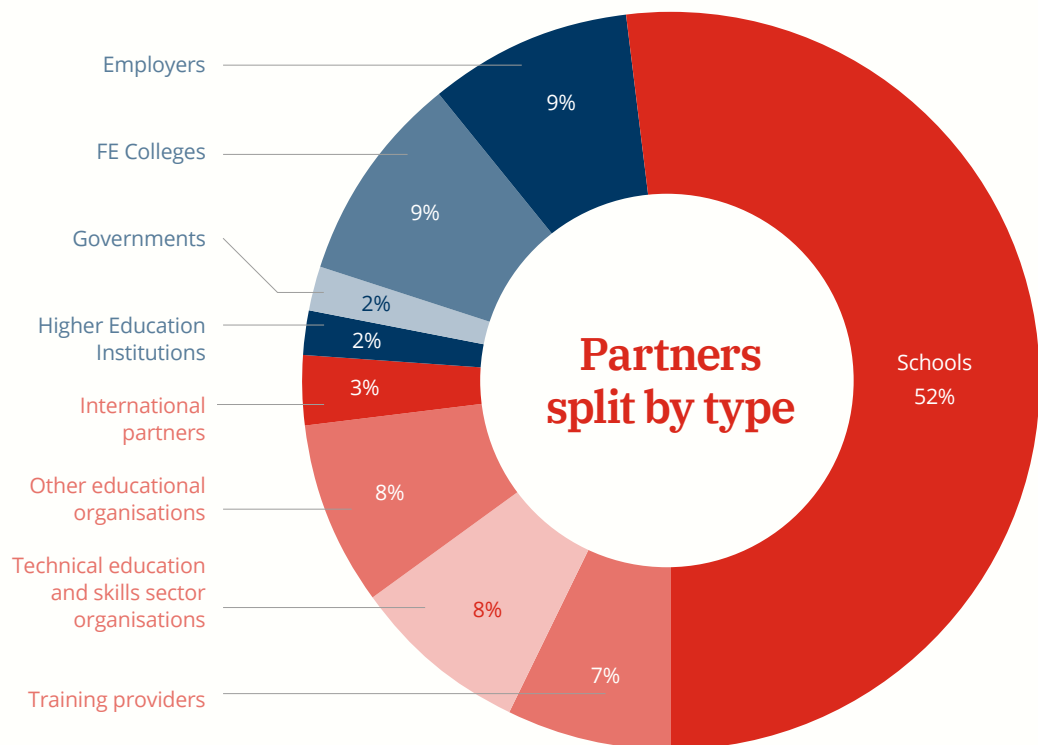
The number of organisations we work with increased to over

3,000

We now engage with over

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Left: the 11 countries we started negotiations with for an international partnership

Case study

Advancing international partnerships to gain global insights and knowledge

As in previous years, we continued to work with global partners and WorldSkills member countries to share global best practice in skills development. We went further this year, seizing the opportunity presented by increased digital working arrangements to advance our international skills partnerships, driving innovation and excellence in the quality and delivery of technical and vocational education and training. We initiated and started negotiations for partnerships with 11 nations during the year including Chinese Taipei, South Korea, Japan, France, Russia, India and Kenya, identifying chances to progress joint actions in policy, workforce development, best practice exchanges and skills development. This work set a high bar for partnership activities of other WorldSkills nations.

We also participated, in partnership with the Department for International Trade and the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security in China, in the first ever international virtual competition

in industrial electronics, with Gower College Swansea pitching the skills of students (and winning) against a number of colleges in China. This paved the way for us to establish an expansive programme of Virtual International Pressure Tests for 2022 to support young people across the globe preparing for future [international competitions](#).

"This master exchange class and online skill-friendly match reflects the common creativity and determination of the skill circles of the two countries. We hope that through the partnership between Chinese and British institutions, we will continue to promote cooperation in the development of skills between the two countries and jointly cultivate a team of highly skilled talents with international standards."

John Edwards, British Trade Envoy to China from the Department of International Trade

Finance

For every pound of charitable income, we spent

97p

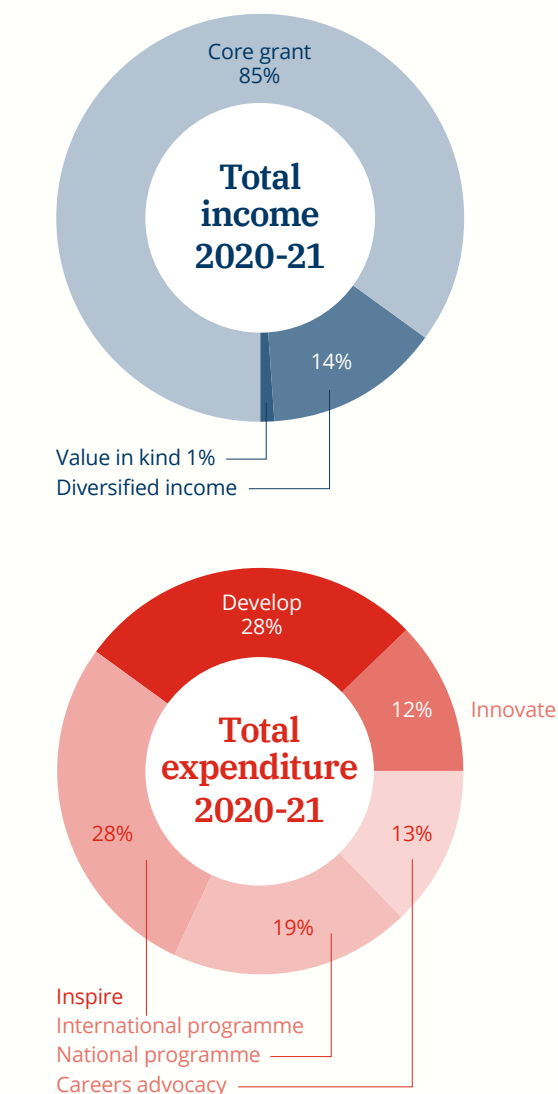
on the delivery of charitable objectives

Like everything in 2020-21, our income was impacted significantly by Covid-19 and reduced to £6.8m, (compared with £15.6m in 2019-20). Despite the challenges and the many changes we had to make, we spent 97p in every pound of charitable income on the delivery of charitable objectives.

With the suspension of face-to-face competition-based training and the cancellation of LIVE 2020 we were less able to leverage funding and resources from commercial and partner organisations against our grant income from the DfE. Our funding balance for the year was 15% diversified income against grant funding, in comparison with 53% in the 2019-20, demonstrating the impact the Covid pandemic has had on our funding model.

We were, however, able to use the challenges of the Covid-19 situation to progress a number of important developments in diversifying our funding.

Our new partnerships included a three-year relationship with NCFE, which supports the Centre of Excellence, and our emerging Innovate work attracted considerable support from a number of new partners. We further developed



existing partnership arrangements with employers including BAE Systems and Toyota. As a result, we brought in over £1m of diversified income during the year, including direct cash sponsorship income.

For the first year, the Northern Ireland Government supported us through a grant agreement, and we further strengthened our funding arrangements with Welsh Government via the Inspiring Skills in Excellence in Wales project.

Despite the uncertainties and difficulties of the year, our repositioning and new product base placed us strongly to further diversify funds and build new investment partnerships in the future.

Case study

Evidencing a high return on public investment from WorldSkills UK

Frontier Economics was commissioned to conduct an independent cost benefit analysis on the return on investment to the public purse from our activities. The return against Department for Education (DfE) spending was calculated by assessing the value of increased tax returns to public funds from each pound of DfE funding over the 2018-20 period. Frontier Economics conservatively calculated a return on investment for the taxpayer (from our established activities) of at least £2.40 and as much as £4.50 for every pound invested, suggesting high value for money.

They calculated that an even higher return is likely to be achieved by the investment in the Centre of Excellence, with public funding future benefit per pound of DfE investment between £4.40 and £5.10, indicating a very high rate of return.

In modelling the return on investment, the value was recognised of our activities across our Innovate, Develop and Inspire strands, reinforcing each other to support skills development among young people in the UK.

Established activities

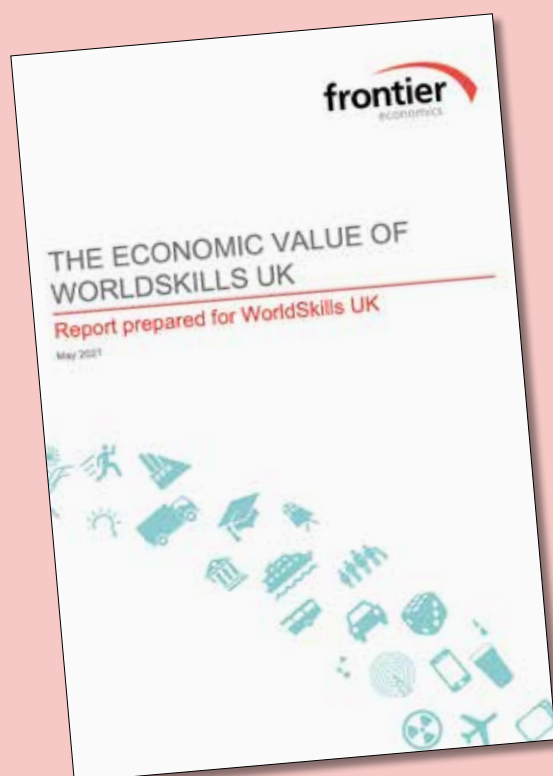
A calculated return on investment of at least

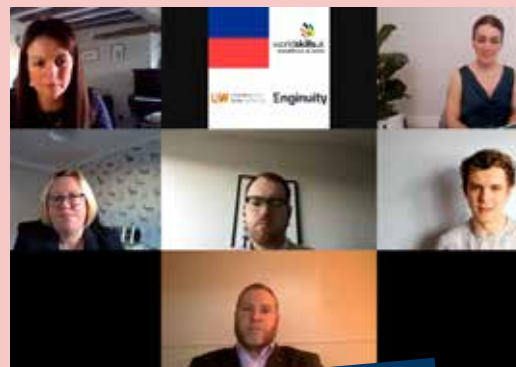
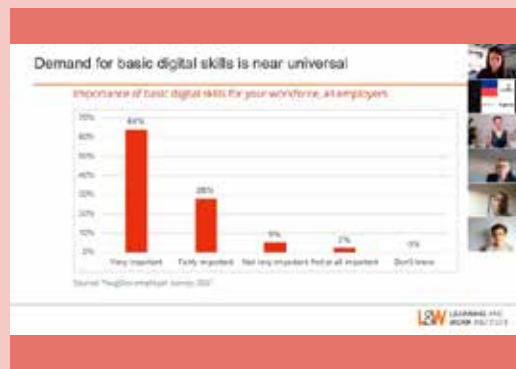
£2.40

and as much as

£4.50

for every pound invested





Case study

Understanding employer demand for high quality skills: A focus on digital skills

In March we published our digital skills report '*Disconnected: Exploring the Digital Skills Gap*', in partnership with Learning & Work Institute and Enginuity. The report explored digital skills and the future of the labour market in the UK, examining the perspectives of employers in terms of demand for skills and the digital skills gap, as well as the views young people have of digital skills. The basis of the report was formed from surveys of over 1,000 businesses, more than 2,000 young people, an employer focus group and a review of existing evidence.

Over 130 attended the launch and heard keynote addresses from Ian Wiltshire, Engineering Director at QinetiQ and British tech TV Presenter Georgie Barrat.



The report was popular on social media and generated keen interest in the media, including a Sky News interview with our CEO, Neil Bentley-Gockmann, and online coverage in the Guardian and BBC News websites. We received 42 pieces of coverage in the media, with a total circulation of 95m, with related content being seen 99,000 times across our social media channels, attracting 3,620 engagements.



Case study

A new approach to transforming Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in FE

As we continue to address the problem of the supply of underrepresented groups into our competition-based training programmes, 2020-21 saw a repositioning of our strategic vision.

Going forward, our EDI purpose is to ignite the national and global movement to help more young people, succeed regardless of their background. Through our activities we are working to achieve our ambition of a society where young people's lives are transformed by skills education and where commitment to apprenticeships and technical education excellence is universally respected.

One of our key actions has been our [Inclusivity in Excellence](#) pilot programme that was launched this year. We are working with four colleges in England to improve access and opportunity to skills and competitions-based training, to support colleges in

using our programme as a platform for change, and to support college teams to link skills inclusivity with local community engagement and diversifying recruitment.

To guide our EDI work, we formed the EDI Advisory Group, chaired by Marion Plant OBE, Principal and Chief Executive of North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College and Deputy Chair of WorldSkills UK. The group, comprising employers, colleges, sector associations and Skills Champions, join our shared action to improve inclusion in the skills system, drive systemic change and hold us to account for our programme delivery.

We continued to showcase best practice through our annual [Diversity and Inclusion Hero Awards](#). The second year saw double the volume of entries across five award categories with over 230 attending the virtual ceremony in January 2021.



Looking forward

As we progress into the 2021-22 year, we will build on last year's successes, learnings and new developments to strengthen our position as a quality improvement partner for the FE and skills sector leveraging international best practice to focus on delivering excellence across technical education and skills.

To achieve this, we will deepen our engagements with employers and educators, while maintaining our core goal of enabling more young people to succeed in technical careers, meeting the evolving skills needs of the post Covid-19 economy.

Our progressive portfolio of activities and our international expertise and networks uniquely place us to continue this.

We will continue our journey to digitise our programmes where relevant and effective and across our work. We will maintain our focus on embedding EDI, monitoring and improving both reach and impact and increasing our commercial sustainability.

Our headline activities for 2021-22 include:

Innovate with employers

- forming an independent high-profile business [Skills Taskforce for Global Britain](#) to set out a roadmap for how to build a world-class skills economy by 2030 to help attract foreign investment in key growth sectors to help create high-quality jobs across the UK
- implementing 11 partnerships with international counterparts to increase our impact as quality improvement partner powered by international benchmarking.



Develop skills of educators

- building on the success of the first year of the Centre of Excellence, we will recruit a further 12 colleges/training providers, delivering to 450 educators, and 5,000 learners, through the year. We will also grow our Innovation Network community of best practice
- working with partners leading in improving teaching and assessment skills in technical education to deliver the [Developing excellence in teaching and training](#) online CPD event for 1,000 staff.

Inspire young people in technical skills

- resuming our national competition-based training programme of over 50 skills focusing on skills needed for economic recovery and further improving the quality of the operating model
- training a squad of young people to represent the UK at the highest standard on the global stage at WorldSkills Shanghai 2022
- growing our Inclusivity in Excellence programme to 10 colleges/training providers to use competition-based training to encourage more participation and achievement for disadvantaged young people
- supporting young people making critical career choices through two further Spotlight Talks events, with a focus on opportunities in digital and sustainability careers



Case study

Creating a good practice FE network

In January 2021 we launched the exclusive **Innovation Network** for 35 colleges across the UK. The network created a community of best practice amongst UK colleges so they could work together, using our knowledge and tools to embed and mainstream excellence into their own organisations. A programme of monthly activities facilitated college professionals, from principals to lecturers, gaining insights from international skills experts, employers and partners who shared their best practice and their own experiences. The network also hosted mindset masterclasses for college students and provided introductory sessions and access to data dashboards which enable colleges to benchmark their performance in competitions against others and WorldSkills standards.

A grant scheme funded eight projects that produced showcasing, celebratory, instructional and masterclass instructional videos, to guide and support learners, including Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) learners, through their technical skills journeys.

"I have greatly valued the opportunity to be part of this network, learning new skills and understanding across the WorldSkills UK agenda"

Sandra Bull, Dean of Study for Service Sectors, Education and Counselling, Weson College



Case study

Providing a forum to promote and discuss global best practice in technical education

Our inaugural International Skills Summit took place in November 2020, featuring a dynamic range of sessions with educators, employers, politicians and members of the WorldSkills global network promoting the importance of delivering skills excellence to build back better. This exciting digital offering focused on the key themes of developing digital skills to help attract foreign investment, how international benchmarking in skills can drive productivity and the need to embed excellence across the skills systems to help economic recovery.

We heard keynote addresses from both Gillian Keegan MP, Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills and Ken Skates MS, the then Welsh Minister for Economy and Transport, on how they see us and skills competition training methods playing a key role in embedding excellence in technical education. Attendees represented colleges, governments, employers, the third sector, industry associations, and training providers. The event generated much interest amongst the education trade press, featuring in numerous articles across both the Times Education Supplement and FE Week.

Key partners

Accenture	Glasgow Clyde College
ACTAN	Hikvision
Air Products	Inspiring Skills Excellence in Wales
AoC Sport	Institute for the Motor Industry
Army	Kaplan
Association of Colleges	Leonardo
Association of employment and learning providers	L'Oréal
Association of Professional Landscapers	Middlesex University
Autodesk	National Skills Academy for Financial Services
BAE Systems	NCFE
BPEC (British Plumbing Employers Council)	NET (National Electrotechnical Training)
British Council	New College Durham
British Floristry Association	New College Lanarkshire
Cambrian Training	Northumberland College
CBI	NHS
The Careers and Enterprise Company	Northern Ireland Government
Cheshire College (South & West)	North Warwickshire & South Leicestershire College
CITB / SkillBuild	PwC
Coca-Cola Europacific Partners	RAF
Coleg Cambria	Royal Aeronautical Society
Coleg Gower	Royal Navy
College Development Network	Sandwell College
Colleges Scotland	Science Council
Complete Forensics	Siemens
Craft Guild of Chefs	Skills for Security
CSL	Texecom
Datateam Business Media Group	The Goldsmiths' Company
Engineering Skills Competitions CIC	The Manchester College
Enginuity	Toyota Manufacturing UK
EY	Trade Union Congress
FANUC	Unite the Union
Festo Didactic	Welsh Government
Gatsby Foundation	Weston College



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