

**Partnership
for Young
London**

**Education
AND
Employers**



Erasmus+

From school to work in London

**Learning from Germany - education
and employers working together**

Full report,

June 2015

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Learning from Germany - education and employers

Summary report

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From school to work in London

Foreword:

This is an important report. There has long been a fascination in the UK (and many other countries) from policy makers and from practitioners about the German model of education and training. Interest is wholly understandable because the outcomes suggest, very strongly, that something is working very well in the land of Goethe and Schiller. In 2012, for example, when the UK youth unemployment rate hit 21% following the financial crisis of 2008, the German figure was just 8%. The difference is striking, but it can be dangerous to focus too much on the headline rate of youth unemployment when making international comparisons – the variation might simply reflect general levels of demand for labour in an economy rather than telling us anything about how well young people are doing in the search for work. A better measure is the ratio of youth to adult unemployment. That figure tells us how competitive young people are for available jobs and a comparison is striking. By 2012, in the UK, young people aged under 24 were 3.7 times more likely to be unemployed than older workers – in Germany the ratio was just 1.6. There is still a penalty in Germany which comes from being young, but it is considerably lower than that found in the British Isles. The essential truth is that young Germans are employed more readily than their British counterparts and while this may relate in some part to distinctive patterns of demand for skills or of labour market regulation, it is undeniable that this reflects something meaningful about the nature of education and training provision and its relevance to employer demands.

It should come as no surprise that the OECD has often highlighted significant strengths in German postsecondary provision. The Organisation argues, as does this report, that social partners are extensively engaged, that policy leadership is strong with clear division of responsibilities and that smooth school to work transitions provide a strong basis for skills policy¹. Many countries have long looked with envy at the high status and quality of vocational training in Germany. Policy officials have however often concluded their assessments with a heartfelt sigh: lamenting that the German model reflects a distinctive and unusually coherent culture, one which nurtures a genuine spirit of social partnership in ways which are unrecognisable (and assumed impossible) outside of Germany and its immediate neighbours. I will not be alone in recalling high-level policy discussions of German Apprenticeships which have abruptly concluded with the disappointed refrain that Germany is altogether another country, they simply do things differently there.

1. Fazekas, M. & Field, S. 2013. *A Skills beyond School Review of Germany*. Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

What this report offers is something new in the way it breaks down the elements of German practice. The report comes out of a distinctive and rare process: a structured investigation by engaged practitioners from one British region (London) into practice in a German region (North Rhine Westfalia). Twenty stakeholders each with professional interest and expertise pooled their diverse insights, experiences, ambitions and fears to engage in dialogue with German counterparts. Out of this process of investigation and curious enquiry, new thinking emerged which will interest all those working across the hinterlands of education and employment. The study represents an informed disaggregation of the German experience, examining it as a system of elements which through different structures and means connect and traverse the realms of education and employment. The process of collaboration is disentangled. The party asked why do employers connect with educationalists and how does the relationship shape the work of institutional providers and the experiences of young people themselves? How do relationships actually work? Who does what and when does it happen at different stages in the lives of young people? How does it work? In so doing, the report exposes more of the operational mechanics of the German system than is commonly the case in studies of this nature.

Three approaches identified within the report resonate particularly loudly within the British context. The high focus placed on personalisation in support of young people struggling to engage with the labour market speaks to the need for greater emphasis on diagnosing and addressing barriers. Personalisation can be seen as mitigating the risk inherent in the German system of tracking young people through inflexible pathways. In keeping with world-class practice, high regard is paid too to ensuring that experiences of work are as authentic as possible to young people. The example of Production Schools supporting those young people furthest away from the labour market is telling – learning processes take part as production procedures. Authenticity challenges the ‘school-weary’ within a supportive and responsive institutional structure.

And finally, the concept of vocational orientation, a process through which young people engage in a structured exploration of the labour market will capture British imaginations. At age 13/14 young people in Germany take part in three ‘practice days’ with different employers, allowing them to test three different vocations with career counselling on the process of vocational planning and decision-making. The process helps young people to make the most of three-week work experience placements the following year. Work by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills and others has highlighted just how important work experience is to the longer term employment prospects of young people, but also how unstrategic and inequitable access to placements can be².

2. Massey, D. 2014. ‘Work experience: the economic case for employers’ in Mann, A., Stanley, J and Archer, L. eds. *Understanding Employer Engagement in Education*. London: Routledge; Mann, A. 2012. *Work Experience: Impact and Delivery*. London: Education and Employers Taskforce.

German practice offers a model for helping to ensure that the opportunities work experience presents to understand a vocational area and to begin developing relevant skills and cultural familiarity are optimised. The practice is resonant of that in Switzerland. Swiss youth also undertake periods of orientation, with careers guidance rich in employer engagement proceeding periods of work experience. In Switzerland which has an Apprenticeship system which if anything is held in even greater regard by international commentators than the German system, the OECD reports that 61% of Apprentices were offered an Apprenticeship place after completing a work experience placement³. High quality career exploration is a distinguishing feature of these high quality Apprenticeship systems and intuitively help explain the excellent completion rates observed.

Of course, we should not be uncritical in our consideration of German mechanisms for connecting employers and educational providers. As the OECD has stressed, challenges remain. Transitions between academic and vocational streams are rare and the responsiveness of providers to rapid changes in labour market demand has been questioned. Federal systems like the German one, moreover, can lead to unwelcome variation in provision. And reports like this one of course generate further questions about the precise nature of delivery and its costs. The point is that the devil (and the angel) are in the detail – the more we understand that, the better placed we are as a community of interest to take lessons of value from the experience to inform our own practice. And the easier it is to see the greater, simpler truth: that to make it easier for young people to move from education into productive employment, we need to make it easier for schools and employers to interact and engage. And this, in and of itself, provides a lesson of value to us in the UK.

Dr Anthony Mann

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www.educationandemployers.org/research.

3. Turner, D. 2014. *Switzerland: postcard scenery, punctual trains and the world's best practice in education-employer partnerships*. Blogpost at: educationandemployers.org/research; OECD. 2012. *Learning for Jobs*.

Executive summary and recommendations:

Partnership for Young London (PYL) is the London regional youth work development unit, a charity supporting its 650 partner agencies (from youth clubs to local authorities to social enterprise) to enable the successful progression of young people to adulthood and to the labour market.

London has strong levels of participation in learning to 18. Young people in London benefit from highly successful colleges and schools, energetic youth enterprises, and experienced youth services.

Levels of young people aged 16 to 18 not in employment, education or training (NEET) continue to reduce and are the lowest they have been since 2004, with London having the lowest proportion nationally (3.4%)¹. Yet youth unemployment remains a major concern for over 20% of 16-25 year old Londoners, particularly those from vulnerable cohorts including some Black and minority ethnic groups^{2,3}.

Many young people find the transition to employment is straightforward, energising and liberating. For others it is a struggle along hazy pathways with difficult decisions and confusing information, and high walls to climb. To get the experience needed by employers seems difficult without having experience already. Not everyone can benefit from the vibrant links with employers provided by some schools or colleges. Yet with a multi-national highly skilled workforce, high levels of poverty alongside extreme wealth, and the complexities of a labour market dominated by SMEs, the routes to work for young people⁴ in London can feel haphazard.

The embedded involvement of employers in education in Germany is well known. In March 2015 twenty PYL members and partners undertook a study tour to understand why and how this is so. The group saw the extent of the breathtakingly systematic scale of employer engagement.

1. *NEET: Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training*, House of commons Library Feb 2015

2. *Guardian* 10 Mar 2015 Matthew Taylor

3. *NOMIS Labour Market Survey* 2014

4. *UK Data Service Labour Force Survey* 2014

The 20 study tour participants in 2 groups of 10 visited secondary schools, technical and commercial vocational colleges, employers and their federations, and youth support and training agencies. The visits led to a consistent view of 4 key areas:

i. **Comparable challenges**

The delegates noted many similarities in the challenges that face education and youth professionals in London such as the popularity of university study over vocational training, social turbulence and austerity, high levels of student mobility, the relative value of testing regimes and progression for young people with special needs. Not all employers were enthusiastically involved with the education process; and not all students could feel the benefits.

ii. **Underpinning stability arising from federal structures**

The study visits repeatedly highlighted a factor relating to the German federal structure of devolved responsibilities. Stability appeared to arise from a distance between regional/local delivery and the turbulence that can come from national political change.

The longevity of education staff in jobs and roles was notable and significant, apparently providing stability without stagnation. Partners and professionals alike appeared to be highly respected and enabled to deliver. Inspection outcomes informed internal reviews and were not published but focussed internally on development rather than blame. The group perceived no feeling of an educational market-place. Data and targets appeared to be top-level and outcomes-focussed, with delivery focussing on individual student progress.

The study tour delegates consistently noted:

- effective inter-professional relationships and referral structures, including co-location of services, rather than work in silos
- a focus on longer-term outcomes rather than short-term targets
- focus on collaboration between agencies
- focused delivery and respect for professional and technical know how
- apprenticeships and other progression pathways being well respected
- rich and mature links between education and business, with work-related and work-based learning valued and ingrained throughout.

iii. The systematic scale of employer engagement

Employers and employer federations including chambers of commerce provide diverse, mature, resourced, comprehensive and consistent value to education and labour market policy in a 'consensus for vocational education' and are fully involved in the local structures of the transition system through advisory boards. Employers see this as a chance to gain competitive advantage by recruiting and growing an excellent work force. It is not seen as social responsibility, but as talent matching.

Employers in Germany group into trade associations, business organisations, or federations to interact with government and regional policy, to support and develop their workforces, and to source the talent they need. They see an effective transition process as essential to informing young people about their opportunities, and train them in readiness to enter their workforces.

Employer federations are commonly funded by either a one-off capital investment to generate a working interest to fund educational activities, or through a set annual membership fee based on workforce-size, or an annual percentage of profit (or a combination).

The umbrella organisation of employers and of business associations in North Rhine-Westphalia includes state-wide business/industry associations, and regional and sectoral employers' associations. It represents the economic, labour market, social policy, educational, environmental and infrastructure concerns of 129 member associations, with 80,000 member companies and 3 million employees.

Widespread, systematic careers guidance enables member companies to support career exploration and internships, with various offers for career orientation and career information as well as practical career preparation. The employers are key partners in the school-to-work transition system *Kein Abschlus ohne Anschluss* (KAOA) - meaning 'no exit without a prepared next step' to support a 2 year career orientation phase including 3 experiences of work, STEM awareness and training, school and employer networks, sophisticated and valid apprenticeship opportunities, and pre-apprenticeship vocational training.

Employers saw their involvement in the journey of students towards work as normal, reasonable, necessary and essential activity. It enabled them to be 'the best'.

iv. A vibrant employer-focussed transition programme

KAOA, the comprehensive system to steer young people through from school to the work-place in the region arose in 2011 from a consensus on the value of vocational education across key partners including, the trade unions, the chamber of trade and industry, the ministries of labour, school and youth, the agency of labour, the local councils and employer associations.

A phase of career-orientation in school years 8 and 9 is led in each school by a coordinator appointed by the school's executive body to anchor the programme in the school. The programme provides standard elements for all pupils and includes interdisciplinary and process-oriented teaching projects for pupils to:

- make their own decisions about their life plans and their transition into the working world (decision and action competence)
- gain knowledge of the economic, occupational and education and training paths, including at universities
- have practical experiences and reflect on the learning in the classroom
- recognise their own career and development opportunities and the transition to formal education courses or study (property and judgment skills).

Employers, employer federations, college and universities feed into the information gathering and analysis with publications, Q and A sessions, audio visual activities, web-based features, evening career fairs also aimed at parents, and activities such as the career parcours.

In year 8 each pupil has 3 different practice days offered by local companies. This is a new element of vocational orientation, supported by the chamber of commerce by informing the firms and promoting it. Firms and schools co-operate organising work experience for pupils in year 9, usually 3 weeks long.

This process leads to an offer which has been developed throughout the process, arising after considerable discussion involving teachers, students, parents, employers, and colleges. There are offers to 3 routes to professional training for young people leaving school:

- the dual system combining training in firms and in vocational colleges
- professional training in vocational colleges
- the vocational preparation system, which offers no occupational certificate, but should lead to work.

Three issues, three recommendations

As a result of the study tour, PYL makes 3 recommendations for further developments in London. These are routed in 3 key issues:

1. Employers are keen to work with schools; schools are keen to work with employers. But very often both struggle to do so, unsure of who and how, overwhelmed with their own pressures, and concerned about costs.
2. As students transit from key stage 3 to key stage 4 and on to post-school learning or training, they may have a limited and un-informed view of their career options and therefore make poor decisions based on assumptions or ignorance.
3. Unemployed young people, especially those from challenged backgrounds, have seldom been able to gain experience in the workplace, and therefore have not had the opportunity to develop the skills required by employers.

The study group points to German experience to provide 3 key solutions:

A. A vibrant employer-focussed transition programme

Employer/education activity in Germany is far from haphazard. Employers invest in the commercial advantage it brings to their businesses through their workforce, with a range of structures including foundations funded by an employer contribution to their sector body, to chambers of commerce and trades funded through specified contributions from profits, or a single large employer (such as BP) funded through a foundation established for the purpose.

Similar yet different hub arrangements already exist in the UK. In London a range of bodies (a cross-section of which had delegates on the study tour) including education/business partnerships (EBPs) often re-formed as social enterprises, regional or national providers with regional or local contracts such as career companies, or the UK Education Business Task Force. Some major employers are very active partners. Many FE colleges have excellent employer links. Some schools have grouped together through various partnership arrangements to jointly source careers information and employer involvement.

Yet such arrangements are haphazard: schools and students may or may not benefit from such coordination and exposure to the workplace

and labour market, essential to informed decisions, motivated students and managed pathways.

Consistent and planned hub arrangements could provide efficient and equitable means to add value to existing activities of schools, colleges, training agencies and employers. Employers would benefit further from the organisation of their input into the curriculum, careers information, work placements and training. Schools and colleges would benefit from additional and efficient employer input. More young people would be making well informed and tested career decisions, be motivated to sustain the journey successfully, and become the means for business to be The Best through loyal, skilled, well selected and corporately committed employees. In Germany employer engagement is seen to provide commercial advantage.

We raise a question of who could take on a responsibility to grow the current disparate employer links into a dynamic network that benefits all school and college students in London and so adds competitive advantage to its employers.

Key development partners could include the London LEP, local authorities, major businesses with a high profile for education liaison, business education partners and enterprises, on-line providers of career information, colleges and schools, and student bodies. The means to their involvement would need to be considered.

B. A London employer/led key stage 3 career orientation programme

YEI EU delegates were able to see clearly the benefits and outcomes of the career orientation programme in the German equivalent of key stage 3. The delegates learned from staff, students and employer-federations about the rolling programme of careers information, provided largely by the staff of local industry and business. Events such as career speed-dating, career parcours gyms with rapid progression through a series of practical employer-delivered career-stations, career trade fairs, apprenticeship fairs, and many other creative programmes ensure that students gathered a wider knowledge of the range of careers and jobs available.

The career information is then taken into work-related learning through a series of 3 work placements, often only one day, to enable students to trust assumptions and compare and contrast 3 different work situations and skill areas. In key stage 4 a longer work experience period, usually 3 weeks, is arranged according to the outcomes for the 3 early episodes.

Young people in London cannot be guaranteed such experiences.

Such programmes can be seen in many UK schools, but often in key stage 4 when options are already decided and timetables are jammed with required learning and GCSE demands. Programmes such as Inspiring the Future respond to school interest in sourcing employers for and the staging of such events – education-business partnerships or social enterprises are engaged by schools to deliver similar activities in some areas.

The London YEI, including the development of a London Career Offer, could be in a position to move such a programme forward, working with a sample of large and small employers and with school and careers providers, to enable such career and pathway planning for London schools students in key stage 3.

Key development partners could be involved in designing and piloting KS3 career orientation programmes and a series of work-placements or other exposures to employers in a range of boroughs, especially with schools from which more young people become NEET, with the expertise of experienced and respected partners linked to industry such as the Education and Employers Task Force, schools, colleges, careers providers and other education business initiatives to jointly agree a programme per borough targeted to increase transitions where needed through early and powerful career planning and work-related/based learning

We suggest that such career and pathway planning be achieved for London schools students in key stage 3.

C. London models of social enterprise companies for unemployed young people aged 18 to 25

In Germany the study tour delegates visited local bespoke, small scale alternative provision known as Production Schools to support the cohort of young people entrenched long-term in unemployment.

In England these young people often fall between the cracks. Such provision in England appears in various forms but is either on large and anonymous scale or is qualification-based, classroom-bound and academic in outlook. Through local vocationally-based re-engagement provision, the Production Schools offered an approach which was felt could in the English context fill this gap in an affordable, local and creative way.

The Germany Production Schools appeared to provide a solution to the blockage to employment experienced by so many longer-termed

unemployed young people – real experience of the work place. As in Germany, they could provide in London systematic transition from learning to work in a real work environment.

The German Productions Schools, or social enterprise companies for unemployed young people, provide both training in a supported training environment, and work through delivery of real products in a live commercial environment. Young people learnt that if they do not correctly plan, prepare and deliver, their restaurant or shop cannot open, and their contract to tend a hotel's gardens or to paint the front of a house would be lost. They learn real team, project, marketing, production and customer service skills while training. All trainees work for a year, many for much longer, retaining their social benefits and usually receiving a small sum from profits, to make the move into fully-paid work. We propose that versions of this model could be tested in London to provide:

- training and experience of real work for young people entrenched in unemployment, for example referred by Job Centre Plus, through youth offending services or with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including a variety of age cohorts (e.g. 15 to 18, 17 to 20, 18 to 24)
- local small scale provision to capture specific local market sales opportunities through a social enterprise
- partnerships of funding to protect social and unemployment benefits of participants, and meet teaching and youth work costs, including Job Centre Plus, European Social Funds, the London Youth Employment Initiative, post 16 training/education sources and local charitable bodies
- links to capture the work of colleges, training providers, and other youth and community agencies seeking solutions for long-term unemployed young people from vulnerable cohorts, including 'supported internships via a real employer' funded for young people with special needs
- opportunities for London to creatively re-engage long term unemployed young people through new and productive local partnerships bridging employment and education and responding to the skills agenda within arrangements for City Devolution.

Other areas of work which caught the attention of the study group delegates included the School and College STEM Charter Mark, providing a quality reward denoting excellence in preparing young people for technical and science-based work, and the model of company-employed apprentice coordinators and trainers, ensuring training and corporate need was coordinated to benefit all parties, and truly embedding trainees into the corporate environment. These are left to the experts in those fields, to build on already impressive activities in London.

The project

What, who, where and why

Partnership for Young London is the London regional youth work development unit, a charity supporting its 650 partner agencies (from youth clubs to local authorities to social enterprise) to enable the successful progression of young people to adulthood and to the labour market.

London has strong levels of participation in learning to 18. Young people in London benefit from highly successful colleges and schools, energetic youth enterprises, and experienced youth services.

NEET levels for those aged 16 to 24 continue to reduce. In February 2015 London having the lowest proportion nationally (11%)⁵. Yet youth unemployment remains a major concern for over 20% of 18-25 year old Londoners, particularly those from vulnerable cohorts including some Black and minority ethnic groups⁶.

Many young people find the transition to employment is straightforward, energising and liberating. For others it is a struggle along hazy pathways with difficult decisions and confusing information, and high walls to climb. To get the experience needed by employers seems difficult without having experience already. Not everyone can benefit from the vibrant links with employers provided by some schools or colleges.

A wealth of reports (see box 1) from major employer and education establishments amplifies the issues, while impressive initiatives have added profile and value, including the Evening Standard Ladder for London, and the government recognition of 12 leading companies for their commitment to youth training and jobs pledging to take the message out to other businesses to ensure young people have a better chance of getting on the jobs ladder. Yet with a multi-national highly skilled workforce, high levels of poverty alongside extreme wealth, and the complexities of a labour market with high levels of small and medium enterprises, the route to work for young people in London can feel haphazard.

The London University Institute of Education is clear that successful transition at age 17 appears to be a key factor in determining successful outcomes at 18 or 19 for young Londoners.

5. *House of Commons Library Youth Employment statistics Feb 15*

6. *Guardian 10 Mar 2015 Matthew Taylor*

7. *UK Data Service Labour Force Survey 2014*

Research highlights that “a significant number of 17 year olds began to change course, move to another institution, reduce their volume of study or drop out of education and training altogether”. It is vital that young Londoners participate, attain and progress “to add significantly to their knowledge and skills after the age of 16 to have a greater opportunity to enter the highly competitive London labour market or progress to higher education”.⁸

The Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) supported by the British Government and the European Union is being developed in response to the need to retain and progress young people aged 17 and above. From September 2015 it will target areas that have a youth unemployment rate of 25 per cent or above (particularly City of London, Camden, Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, Haringey, Islington, Kensington and Chelsea, Lambeth, Lewisham, Newham, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Wandsworth and Westminster).

The entire European Social Fund (ESF) Youth allocation will be combined with YEI in order to create a London-wide programme covering all boroughs focussing on: preventing young people becoming NEET (not engaged in education, employment or training), NEET Outreach, targeted NEET interventions, a London Careers Offer, and employability support. The programme will incorporate some elements of the European Social Fund youth programme.

To learn from European policy and practice on the mobility, social capital and successful labour market integration of young people and to add value to the London YEI, PYL set out to explore transition programmes in Germany where unemployment levels are reported at under 10% and employers and the education sector work together to ensure easy routes to work for all young people.

Why Germany?

With populations of 18 million and 8 million North Rhine Westfalia (NRW) and London are national economic powerhouses. Both have considerable diversity in the economy and in the workforce, along with the challenges of high mobility. Both have overall unemployment levels lower than the national average (around 9%) and considerably lower for 16 – 18 year olds, but for young people 18 to 24 Germany maintains less than 10% and the UK higher than 20%⁹. Germany has a GDP per capita of 44,469 USA dollars compared to 38,452 in the UK.

8. 17+ participation, attainment and progression in London: Key findings and recommendations. Ann Hodgson and Ken Spours Institute of Education, University of London. October 2014

9. Data supplied by GIB, NRW

The German and NRW process of transition is designed to enable young people to become involved with the workplace as they progress from school to work. London aims to build on current practice to provide similar advantages to its young people.

The programme

Solid consultation with key partners including London Councils was facilitated to ensure that the programme focused on cross-transferrable learning. PYL secured funding from Erasmus Plus for a 4 day study-visit in March 2015 for 20 sector leaders and practitioners to visit the Northwest Rhine urban conurbation in Germany to see how schools and employers work together, how successful routes to work are defined and delivered, and how the challenges to success are met.

The intended outcome for the programme is for better access to work for London's young people.

Our parameters

The views expressed in this report are of those of the 20 delegates on the study tour and provide the impression gained from the visits, further informed by conversations with the project partners from policy support agencies in the NRW region. They do not intend to provide an authoritative or empirical analysis of all education providers in the region, but are drawn from experience and the emergence of areas of consistency across the visits.

Most importantly, the study tour (and consequently this report) focused on education-employer liaison, and was in no place to make judgements on teaching and learning, or learner support.

A route to work?

Most employers find the education leavers they take on to be well or very well prepared for work, although as many as four in ten employers taking on school leavers at 16 described the recruits as poorly prepared. UKCES¹⁰

The career aspirations of teenagers at all ages can be said to have nothing in common with the projected demand for labour in the UK between 2010 and 2020. UK EETF¹¹

Business leaders are facing skills gaps, threatening to hamper economic growth. UK employers are struggling to recruit, yet hundreds of thousands of unemployed young people are desperate for work. PT, HSBC ¹²

Training and work opportunities for young people should be targeted at specific skills and industries rather than a broad-brush approach aimed at general skills acquisition...with area-wide strategies...including volunteering and work experience. NFER ¹³

Young people may lack the necessary work experience, putting them at a disadvantage against older workers. Young people need to be trained for jobs in sectors like construction and engineering, where vacancies are more plentiful. IPPR¹⁴

All young people need to understand different types of businesses, the qualities needed to enhance employability, the choices available, what is required to for particular jobs, with visits from local businesses and work experience places. AoC¹⁵

...encourage employers, colleges and schools to work together to increase apprenticeships, traineeships and work experience for young people. NAO¹⁶

The social status of apprenticeships remains a problem which needs to be overcome ...schools need to build better partnership with employers. Demos¹⁷

10. UK Commission's Employer Skills Survey 2013: UKCES 2014

11. *Nothing in common: The career aspirations of young Britons mapped against projected labour market demand(2010-2020)* UK Education and Employers Task Force

12. *The Skills Crunch: Upskilling the workforce of the future.* The Prince's Trust. 2014

13. Nelson, J and O'Donnell, L. (2012). *Approaches to Supporting Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training: a Review*(NFER Research Programme: From Education to Employment). Slough: NFER

14. IPPR's new report – *Remember the Young Ones* 13 August 2015 <http://www.ippr.org/publications/remember-the-young-ones-improving-career-opportunities-for-britains-young-people>

15 *The Association of Colleges. Careers Guidance: Guaranteed.* May2014

16. NAO *16- to 18-year-old participation in education and training.* 3 September 2014

17. *The Commission on Apprenticeships.* Demos. 2015

What was learned:

While the study tour specifically aimed to explore transferable aspects of employer-engagement in the German education system, the group perceived a number of underpinning factors that appeared to provide a context of stability and professional respect.

Underpinning stability arising from federal structures

The German federal state legislates nationally for nationwide educational provision, to meet the laws that form the national constitution and to provide the necessary organs of delivery. The 16 regional governments interpret the national legislation and agree the delivery programmes to fit local economies and characteristics. The local engagement of providers (schools, colleges, employers, etc) and local authorities ensures that the appropriate design enables delivery.

- The study visits repeatedly highlighted a stability that appeared to arise from a distance between delivery and the turbulence that can come from national political change.
- The longevity of education staff in jobs and roles was notable and significant, apparently providing stability without stagnation.
- Partners and professionals alike appeared to be highly respected and enabled to deliver.
- Inspection outcomes informed internal reviews and were not published but focused internally on development rather than blame.
- The group perceived no feeling of an educational market place.
- Data and targets appeared to be top-level and outcomes-focused, with delivery focussing on individual student progress.

The study tour delegates consistently noted:

- effective inter-professional relationships and referral structures, including co-location of services, rather than working in silos
- a focus on longer-term outcomes rather than short-term targets
- a focus on collaboration between agencies
- focused delivery and respect for professional and technical know how
- apprenticeships and other progression pathways being well respected
- rich and mature links between education and business, with work-related and work-based learning valued and ingrained throughout.

Comparable challenges

The study tour group noted many similarities in the challenges that face education and youth professionals in London such as the popularity of university study over vocational training, social turbulence and austerity, high levels of student mobility, the relative value of testing regimes and progression for young people with special needs. The perceived stabilities outlined above appeared to support the transition system, including the involvement of employers, in the progression of many students.

TRANSITIONS FROM SCHOOL TO WORK IN THE NORTH RHINE WESTFALIA (NRW) REGION OF GERMANY

The NRW transition system is not unlike that in the UK and London: each young person is expected to develop a career route before leaving compulsory schooling and to move into a post-16 destination to prepare for work or further learning, with added support for those who need additional help to make the journey. In both countries virtually all young people progress from school to education or training. In Germany the level of participation remains at 90% or more up to and beyond 18, while in the UK it drops significantly at age 17, and becomes steadily worse between the ages of 18 and 25.

Responsibilities for the transition process

In England	Schools and colleges	No longer required	Schools and colleges	Local authorities for their own residents	Local authorities
<i>Who is responsible?</i>	<i>Careers info, advice and guidance to plan a route toward work</i>	<i>Work experience</i>	<i>An offer of a place in upper secondary, training or work with training in years 12 and 13</i>	<i>Tracking to see which students did not progress to their offer</i>	<i>Support to re-engage</i>
In Germany	Schools and colleges	Schools and colleges	Schools and colleges	Schools and colleges	Local authorities

In the UK the transition process is set out as the September Guarantee informed by school-led careers advice and guidance; in Germany it was redesigned in 2011 and named Kein Abschluss Ohne Anschluss, KAOA.

The German transition system: regional participation and responsibility

Germany has long provided students at secondary school and beyond with an opportunity to study in the classroom and in the workplace in parallel – a thorough work-based learning programme known as the Dual System. This system has strong parallels with the UK system of apprenticeships, with additional vocational preparation for those who need it.

Apprenticeships in England	Apprenticeships in Germany
1 - 4 years	3 or 4 years
Part of the skills strategy and raising the participation to age 18 - the age to which young people are required to continue in education or training	Part of the dual education system, and are a basic requirement for most employment. 342 recognised trades where an apprenticeship can be completed
Preparation programmes of 1 term or 1 year are aimed at those not yet ready (including elements of traineeships and other study programmes)	Vocational preparation programmes (usually 1 year)
3 levels: Intermediate Apprenticeship, level 2 Advanced Apprenticeship, level 3 Higher Apprenticeship (level 4/7)	3 levels of structure: apprentice (3 or 4 year) Journey-man (qualified and employable) Master (high status workers). Masters who educate apprentices require a specific license.
The government pays for training, usually through training providers who enrol students and agree work activity with local employers (some of whom pay trainees an allowance). Funding is reduced by 50% for training those over age 19. Significantly more London employers recruit apprentices aged 19-24 than 16-18 ¹⁸ .	Training agencies and vocational colleges are paid to deliver training in conjunction with employers. Apprentices are usually aged 18 or over, having finished the upper-secondary level and preparation for apprenticeship.
Employers currently receive a first-time payment of £1500 for new trainees, for a max of 5.	Employers receive a support payment for apprentices with special needs.

18. *Apprenticeship Evaluation: London Employers Report, BIS 2014*

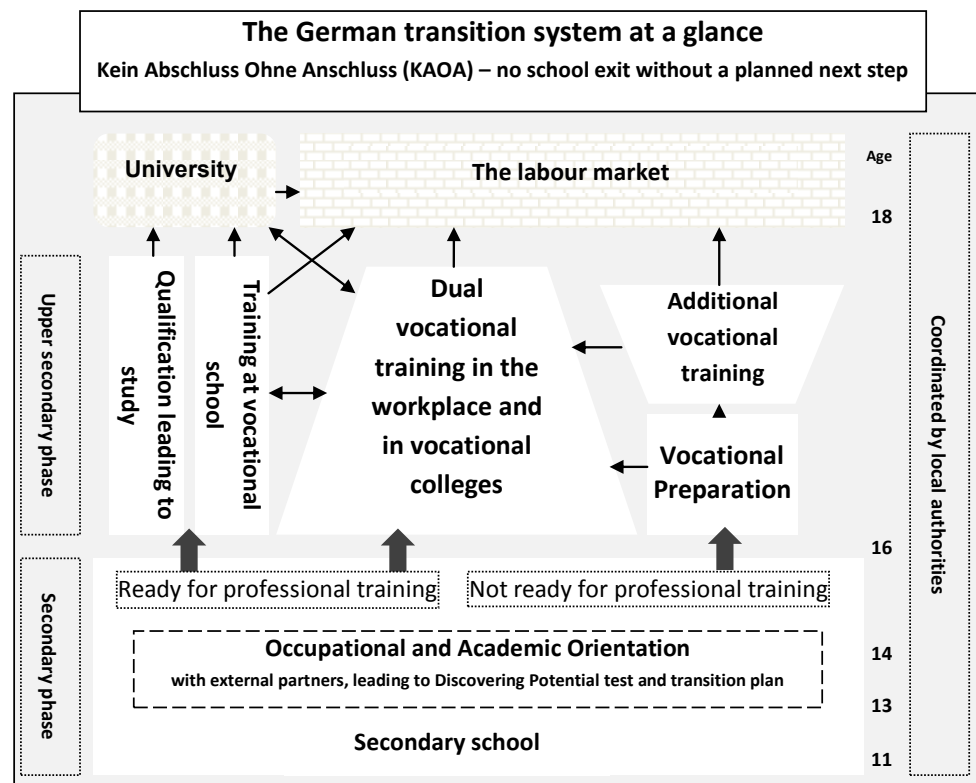
Training providers receive funding for training including recruitment, sourcing employers and matching trainees with employers.	Employers generally drive apprenticeship places, valuing the process of selection, recruitment and training to embed the loyalty and expertise of future workers.
School students seeking apprenticeships for a position through the National Apprenticeship Service vacancy matching website or through training provider.	School students seeking apprenticeships have to hunt on the open market or through vocational colleges for a position.
5% of 16 – 19 year olds are on apprentices; 27% of 14-16 year olds think that apprenticeships are aimed at those who do not do well at school ¹⁹ .	51% of all young people under 22 have completed an apprenticeship ²⁰ .

19. Apprenticeships and traineeships for 16-19 year olds: Commons Education Committee, 30 April 201

20. Apprenticeships, Wikipedia

The transition system Kein Abschluss ohne Anschluss (KAOA) - no school exit without a planned next step

KAOA was created in 2011 to account for a drop in popularity of the Dual System as parents and students increasingly aspired to a university education, compounding concerns of a future lack of qualified young people entering the labour market due to a reducing youth population).



The system arose from a consensus for the value of vocational education across key partners and included the participation of:

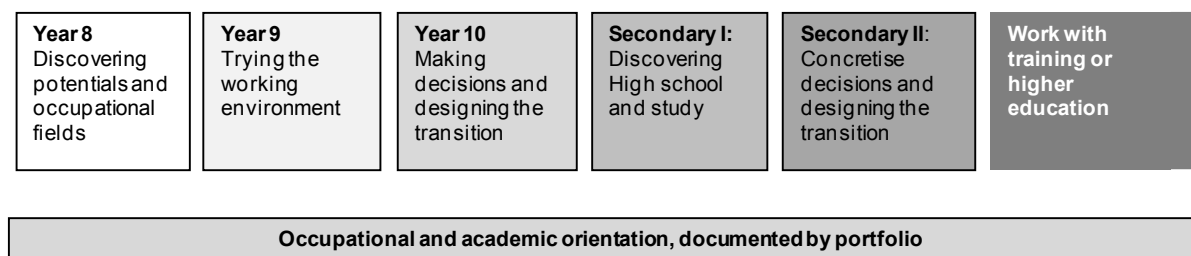
- the trade unions
- the chamber of trade and industry
- the chamber of handicrafts
- NRW ministries of labour, school and youth
- regional direction of the agency of labour
- the municipal organisations
- employer associations.

It offers 3 routes to professional training for young people leaving school:

- the dual system combining training in firms and in vocational colleges
- professional training in vocational colleges
- the vocational preparation system, which offers no occupational certificate, but should lead to a profession.

The career-orientation process

The process of vocational orientation at school underpins KAOA:



This phase of career-orientation is led in each school by a coordinator appointed by the school's executive body to anchor the programme in the school. The coordinator is responsible for programme development, inclusion, organisational development and quality assurance, and is the contact person to link school and employer interests and initiates internal and external activities. The post may sit within the role of a deputy head, or other senior staff member, and is funded from the school budget.

The programme provides standard elements for all pupils and includes interdisciplinary and process-oriented teaching projects for pupils to:

- make their own decisions about their life plans and their transition into the working world (decision and action competence)
- gain knowledge of the economic, occupational and education and training paths, including at universities
- have practical experiences and reflect on the learning in the classroom

- recognise their own career and development opportunities and the transition to formal education courses or study (property and judgment skills)

The content of the career-orientation programme

Employers, employer federations, college and universities feed into the information gathering and analysis with publications, Q and A sessions, audio visual activities, web-based features, evening career fairs also aimed at parents, and activities such as the career parcours. A portfolio (usually on-line) is built by each student although its value is a focus of debate - many colleges prefer a content-related portfolio that tracks learning and skills, rather than one focused on personal development.

Various set-piece activities are fed into the programme. In a south German region a decision-making and goal setting seminar series (BEST) is funded by a regional government for input per school year for the management and organisation of 2 day seminars in schools – a day of training to explore using varying methods and forms of their interests and skills, the orientation test that records personal interests and individual abilities and study options with possible courses, and a “guided tour” of the main reliable internet portals; and a day to consider the results of orientation tests, options for study and career choices and decisions on pathways. At the end of the orientation, students should know the training opportunities open after school (including details of content, length, etc.), limitations or special considerations, realistic career goals, personal development needs, and application processes.

Pupils usually discover reality in the workplace through 3 differing practice days to test 3 different vocations, organised by the coordinator and class teachers, with considerable support from pro-active employers, employer federations and colleges.

The transition offer

The career orientation programme leads to an offer, which has been developed throughout the process, arising after considerable discussion involving teachers, students, parents, employers, and colleges. Young people who are able to finish professional training successfully are offered an apprenticeship opportunity within the dual system. Professional training based in firms has first priority. All young people, who are not able to finish professional training, get a specific training-offer, which meets their needs and will lead towards professional training. The offer is usually taken-up as it is developed collaboratively with students, teachers and parents throughout the career-orientation process.

Local authorities lead the KAOA process to:

- identify all relevant partners
- achieve a common understanding about responsibilities
- clarify rolls and tasks
- agree arrangements between partners
- embed existing structures into the career-orientation process
- build a trustful cooperation between the partners.

Each local partner is responsible for the implementation of the various elements of the transition system, with the main principle being coordination, not governance.

Challenges and tensions

Local tensions and challenges with the new transition system became apparent to the study tour groups, particularly the testing at year 8 (usually aged 13/14) to achieve a recommended transition route toward 'academic' and 'vocational' learning, with concerns about flexibility for subsequent options for change.

The risk of prescription and stereotyping was also a challenge, particularly for migrants with little previous schooling, or with language issues. While the process aims to be inclusive and provide opportunities, the barriers to 'upward mobility' are strong and imbedded in family, cultural, economic or personal expectations and limitations. As can be the case in London, young male migrants risk being led into motor-vehicle maintenance or similar, and young women into hairdressing or childcare.

THE ROLE OF EMPLOYERS IN THE TRANSITION PROCESS

Employers and employer federations including chambers of commerce provide diverse, mature, resourced, comprehensive and consistent value to education and labour market policy in a 'consensus for vocational education' and are fully involved in the local structures of the transition system through advisory boards. Employers see this as a chance to solve the problem of talent shortage.

EXAMPLES OF LOCAL COOPERATION BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND SCHOOLS

In year 8 each pupil has 3 different practice days offered by local companies. This is a new element of vocational orientation; the chamber of commerce supports it by informing the firms and promoting it

Firms and schools co-operate organising work experience for pupils in year 9, usually 3 weeks long

Chambers of commerce coordinate ambassadors of vocational training – trained young apprentices go into school classes to inform pupils about vocational training, coordinated and supported by coordinators employed by the Chambers of Commerce and financed by the Ministry of Labour

The Employer Federation leads on STEM initiatives and quality marks through creative and active programmes in schools

SCHULEWIRTSCHAFT is a network bringing together schools and companies, organised in 80 regional working groups in NRW to enable smooth transition from school to work and to strengthen economic and STEM education.

Chambers offer Q and A events with experts from companies for schools

Higher-level vocational training within the Dual System will be promoted; so young people can gain a higher school degree during vocational training to get access to academic studies

Employers in Germany group into trade associations, business organisations, or federations to interact with government and regional policy, to support and develop their workforces, and to source the talent they need. They see an effective transition process as essential to informing young people about their opportunities, and train them in readiness to enter their workforces.

Employer federations are commonly funded by either a one-off capital investment to generate a working interest to fund activities, or through a set annual membership fee based on workforce-size, or an annual percentage of profit (or a combination). As an example, the Düsseldorf Manual Trades Federation seeks an annual payment of 100€ – 300€ per employer depending on size plus 0.85% of the reported net annual income.

The umbrella organisation of employers' and business associations in North Rhine-Westphalia (called *unternehmer NRW*) includes state wide business/industry associations, and regional and sectoral employers' associations. It brings together the experiences, perceptions and goals of entrepreneurs in NRW, and represents their interests in areas such as:

- economic and labour conditions
- educational, economic, environmental, and labour market policies
- social security
- labour and social court jurisdiction.

It represents the economic, labour market, social policy, educational, environmental and infrastructure concerns of 129 member associations, with 80,000 member companies and 3 million employees.

Widespread, systematic careers guidance enables member companies to support career exploration and internships, with various offers for career orientation and career information as well as practical career preparation.

The Excellent STEM School network and quality mark is lead by *unternehmer nrw*, with 120 schools certified for their long-term exemplary work in the STEM subjects and for generating 'wise and creative people with expertise and know-how in these areas'. Network activities include for example the annual STEM Day, various STEM Camps for students as well as educational events and internships for STEM teachers.

The STEM programme aims to engage children and young people in business from an early age. A recognised and supported STEM quality kite mark encourages schools to aspire to be part of, and to gain access to additional resources to help pupils to explore their career option, with a pro-active approach designed and delivered with schools and colleges to engage young people in STEM activities.

The BP Stiftung (foundation) is a further example, funded from a single capital donation to generate working income to support a proactive programme of school career orientation in scientific and industrial fields, training for vocational readiness, STEM skills promotion and apprenticeships.

[The experiences and outcomes of the joint delivery of apprenticeship programmes by employers and colleges](#)

The Study Tour groups explored engagement in the transition system with employer Sparkasse Bank in a regional town, Mode Braun, a major regional fashion retailer and Siemens, the major metal and infrastructure engineers.

Employers worked jointly with the vocational colleges to prepare students and support them on apprenticeship programmes. For example, Braun recruits 20 apprentices per year from the local vocational college and through open-recruitment, with a full time company-funded coordinator providing training and support throughout, and qualified work-based assessors. Braun sees their investment as enabling them to be the best – their well-selected and developed apprentices enable their success.

These employers, along with many others begin the apprentice selection process early through visiting school careers information evenings for parents and year 8 students, where they begin to develop relationships with potential apprentices. A CV is requested, and a discussion at the employer premises is offered to look further at expectations and skill areas, as part of a gradual process of joint assessment.

The Sparkasse Bank works with the college to take 90 work-placement students per year, with training at college and in the bank, leading to 20 apprentices annually, with highly creative training in groups and individually, and mentoring from older apprentices. The CEO of the bank had himself been an apprentice on the same programme, illustrating its potential value. Motor dealers in the region, particularly major German brands, gather annually in the grounds of the Mercator college with stalls and demo-stands set-up and staffed by current college students on placement in the firms, to reach-out to younger students studying sales in the automotive industry and seeking placements or apprenticeship opportunities.

Employers, schools and colleges

The school at Hexbachtal provided a strong illustration of *Kein Abschluss ohne Anschluss* (KAOA). Career orientation fed into career choice. Varied measures and modules enabled all students to learn their own skills, strengths and weaknesses. Career support companions and work readiness activities helped students prepare and position – e.g. social competence training, skills training, job search, career passports, analysis of potential, labour market information, career orientation camps, career-buddy projects, careers and apprenticeship fairs, career speed-dating, interview practice, and career springboards.

Strong personalised support (rather than a focus on performance data) was seen frequently by the study group to enable individual students to find the solution that worked for them. Time and again across their visits, delegates noted the value of an approach to support that focused on ‘stage not age’, reflected in the pastoral care given by teachers, managers and school social workers or social pedagogues.

As in London, immigration is a major factor for the region, with time and care needed to support students as they learn German, catch-up in the German curriculum, and integrate as individuals.

Over 50% of students at this secondary school progressed into apprenticeship programmes (in common with many similar schools), as a result of the substantial involvement of local business in the career orientation process and the development and testing of career pathways, following considerable personal support and pre-vocation learning for recently arrived students needing to gain German language and study skills.

In colleges students outlined their varied satisfaction with work-placements, from highly inclusive and enthralling, to boring, menial and disappointing. They were able to compare and contrast with other experiences, given the 3 required in early school years, leading to a more substantial and chosen placement at college.

Success is routed in the achievement of the school leaving qualification (at school or later at college), the progression from school to positive outcome, be it vocational preparation, dual work/school programmes leading into an apprenticeship, or higher-education preparation leading to university, alongside specific vocational qualifications in colleges.

Strong practice noted in the study visits by the study group:

- Lively joint relationships between the college and employers backed-up by their values, beliefs and interest in vocational training
- Close working relationship with Siemens and the apparently seamless delivery model
- The refreshing commitment invested on all sides including the employers and staff of the college
- Colleges, job centres and businesses working together on a comprehensive programme that leaves no student behind, with a continuing lively debate on how best to do it
- While students have mixed views about their futures and choices, staff were dedicated to see them progress
- Employers had dedicated tutors for their apprentices, clearly understanding practical and theoretical learning, very committed to on the job training, and applying rigorous recruitment and assessment processes
- Through employer-links, young people were more aware of the commercial and industrial opportunities in their area
- The focus on preparing the whole person as a citizen rather than just their skills
- The 'European' feel to the school and the obvious care and attention

- given to relationships with partner employers
- Pride and responsibility for finding jobs for their pupils
- Great models of social and youth work to school support young people into careers.

HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE FURTHEST FROM THE LABOUR MARKET

The Youth Job Centre Düsseldorf

The Youth Job Centre Düsseldorf has since 2005 joined the work of the Job Centre/employment agency, the welfare department and youth social services to provide the focal point for professional orientation and guidance, training placements, welfare arrangements and social care for all adolescents and young adults.

The target groups are:

- Students seeking training of general education schools and vocational colleges
- Unemployed youth and young adults with and without qualifications
- Students who leave school without qualifications
- Those seeking pre-vocational training
- Students who are looking for an apprenticeship
- Adolescents and young adults with social or personal problems, unemployed or at risk of unemployment, with limited capacity, or with difficult integration opportunities through a migration background.

The region of NRW and the City of Düsseldorf for labour market measures provides local level funding: vocational preparation and apprenticeships, re-engagement of early leavers, and stabilising youth training.

Each young person is offered a “hand-made” solution to fit. Together with the experts, an individual solution is prepared, every young person or young adult receives an accurate offer.

Tackling youth unemployment is a top priority for the state capital Düsseldorf. Through integrated teams, it believes that custom solutions can be developed and implemented faster.

The key learning areas and challenges;

- The Vision - Keep it Simple – refreshing and inspiring
- All the relevant agencies working in cooperation under one roof
- The collaborative approach to work with and support young people into a positive pathway

- Cooperative and collaborative working to support young people's entry to the labour market
- Positive approach that promoted caring and preventative solutions to youth unemployment
- The coordination of each professional group, to enable each to talk with each other to get the right solutions for each young people
- The simplicity of overcoming barriers to information sharing - co-location, and good communication
- Using professional judgement as a team to ensure the best interests of young people.

Youth Career Support - Chance for a future: Jugendberufshilfe Düsseldorf²¹

An integral element of KAOA in many towns in NRW is the local Youth Career Support agency, providing training in vocational and social skills leading to work for young people furthest from the labour market. Since 1980, the agency in Düsseldorf has supported young people up to 25 years of age who are not able to make the transition from school to work on their own.

All clients are referred from the Youth Job Centre, and all referrals are offered a programme. Targets of 75% positive education, training or employment outcomes are usually met. The study group noted synergies with the UK commissioning culture with a greater focus on targets linked to a commissioning process, in contrast to the lower profile of targets in the state-run German school and college sectors.

At JBH the study group was impressed by

- The robust relationship between local authority, employers and the voluntary sector to deliver sustainable programmes for vulnerable young people
- Impressive and creative processes of recycling old PCs
- Care and warmth for young people's well being, and the role of level 4 qualified social pedagogues (combining education and welfare skills and knowledge) embedded in the Production Schools to help trainees overcome barriers and achieve social and education goals
- The advanced and lower level mechanical workshops, bridging a real skills gap
- A very simple solution for helping young people into work AND showing funders a sustainable model of delivery
- Infectious energy and uncompromising quality to develop economically inactive young people

21. Data on production schools is provided by GIB NRW, and available from PYL

- The determination to give focused and intensive support to the most vulnerable young people so they had a chance of a positive future.

Pre-vocational training is offered on behalf of the Employment Agency Dusseldorf. The measured goal is the successful placement in training or work practically and theoretically qualified professional in:

- commercial/warehouse
- hotels and restaurants
- home economics and catering
- metalwork
- gardening and landscaping.

Football project

The project 'through ball into professional life' provides social integration through football including the introduction to the world of work and the teaching basic professional knowledge and skills with appropriate partners and businesses in the motivating environment of football. Young people are trained as children's coaches, team managers and referees, gaining personal, social, labour market and key skills necessary for a desired vocational training or employment.

In addition cross-professional competences (e.g. the EC driving license) for successful entry into working life are taught as professional qualifications. Internships are arranged for the 2nd phase of the project, which are targeted to training or employment.

A number of crime prevention projects capture partnership support and engagement opportunities, and funding from the court system, to develop skills and awareness and to move towards qualifications and sustainable work.

Production Schools

Production Schools are social enterprise businesses, which attempt to provide a solution to the need for an unemployed young person to gain the experience needed by employers to gain work.

The programme is integrated in the general school-to-profession transition system as 'systemisation of the transition after secondary school through lean and clearly structured offers'.

These training programmes are for young people who have not found an apprenticeship training position after finishing school, are without regular

entrance qualifications, and have high pedagogic support and 'retro-socialisation' needs.

They provide a special practice-oriented vocational preparation, connecting professional learning and practical work to produce products and services and offer them to real customers in company-like structures. Production procedures provide the learning processes.

Nationally since September 2014, based on this selection and authorisation procedure, a total of approximately 1,900 training places are being sponsored, of which approx. 1,000 places have co financing from employment funding, 850 places have social security co financing, and 50 places have youth service co financing. NRW has had 510 places in Production Schools since September 2013 and other German regions have similar volumes. Participants are usually male, aged over 19, may have a school-leaving certificate but are tired of learning, not open to theory, and therefore not suited to standard career preparation. They commit to 35 hours per week for a year or longer. Stability follows dropout in the first 12 weeks of 34% (lower than other training programmes).

As well as specific vocational-related qualifications, about 20% of the participants complete their Certificate of Secondary Education and receive remedial education. Positive progression into EET lies at 80 percent.

Production Schools, or Social Enterprise Companies employing unemployed young people

Quality

The production school sponsors and partners adhere to these quality standards:

- Product orientation: which products and/or services are provided by the production school for which businesses and customers
- Business-like structures and market-oriented production and services
- Pedagogical vision: How the pedagogical vision is implemented with the creation of products and the provision of services
- Theoretical reference: The practical implementation of the theoretical concept in the production school practice
- Association of learning and work processes: Learning and working at the production school do not take place isolated from one another, but rather interconnected.

Curriculum

The production school uses its own curriculum. Participants join a team

with support workers (1:6 ratio) who jointly deliver services or products commissioned by paying customers. A team-base is the location for business planning, social-pedagogical support and learning.

Additional work placements of 4 to 8 weeks in different commercial settings are an important part of the wider skills development of preparation for paid employment. Trainees receive a weekly payment funded from sales income, and reducing daily for non-attendance to galvanise motivation to attend. They gain qualifications required for 'near-production' processes.

Funding

Funding depends on the model. There are 2 measures that track the production school approach:

1. job preparation with a productive approach, which is funded by the Employment Agency. These young people get a vocational training payment to the maximum €262 per month. For these productive activities, participants will receive no additional consideration.
2. an activating and employability approach, which is funded by the job centre. These young people will usually receive unemployment benefit depending on family circumstances and in addition "training money" of 1€ per hour worked amounting to approx. 160 € per month in addition to the other benefits, for which they apply through the job centre.

Customers

'Customers' are state-services such as education and housing. Services and goods offered in this market place by Production Schools include restaurants for seniors or poverty-line local restaurants, canteen facilities in hospitals, corporate gardening maintenance contracts, a hotel, bespoke and production-line metal garden furniture, fresh fish caught by a school finishing boat. For example, the "Nature" factory comprises several production lines, including Harvest, Firewood, Fruit and Fruit Products lines and the Apiary line. In each of the factory's product lines, the participants also develop specific strategies for the marketing of natural products: from advertising and sales at the farm shop through to delivery to the customers. A programme focussing on electronics delivers the electrical-appliance checking service for Düsseldorf's schools.

These commercial activities are agreed with the trades unions and Chambers of Commerce on the basis of sales through government-funded partners such as social housing providers, with market pricing but built-in timescales to allow for the training element.

The study group noted how:

- The painting and decorating was engaging young people in something REAL that they could be proud of, with positive goal setting and support rather than punishment. It is definitely the way to go.
- It was positively thought provoking. The production school model was very simple, sustainable and generates income.
- A really inspirational model of a production schools based in a hospital supporting young people and the community...
- There were similarities with our Build It programme in south London. It would be good to explore how agencies like London Youth can continue to share learning.

Appendix 1:

The study visits

In March 2015, London stakeholders committed to improved access for young people to the labour market through their leadership of London-wide, borough and specialist youth participation, re-engagement and development services, were invited to undertake a study visit to the North Rhine Westfalia region of Germany for which Erasmus Plus funding from the European government had been secured.

Twenty senior staff and key practitioners were selected for their strategic potential to deliver the statutory requirement for local authorities to secure the participation of young people until age 18, their involvement in the design of the London Youth Employment Initiative which will from Autumn 2015 deliver a major new programme of re-engagement and progression through UK and European government funding, and through expertise at supporting the participation of individual young people with significant barriers to their involvement.

The intensive four-day visit covered the following:

An orientation seminar with detailed presentations from German colleagues and debate on:

- The German transition programme from school to the labour market: Kein Abschluss ohne Anschluss (KAOA) - no graduation without progression

- Employer involvement in shaping qualifications, training and career orientation: Rebecca Hof, Handwerkskammer Düsseldorf/Chamber of Manual Trades Düsseldorf

- Young people needing more help: Pre-apprenticeships in Herten - the House of Vocational Preparation.

Field visits by 2 parallel groups to expand on the themes of employer engagement, school/college preparation, and support for those further from the market place:

An employer education foundation, Unternehmer NRW and Bildungswerk NRW representing members (including national trade associations, business associations, and regional employers' associations) on economic, labour market and social policy as well as the educational concerns of 129 member associations with 80,000 member companies and 3 million employees, providing a model of the coordination of borough/city cluster of employers and education, linking hundreds of employers with primary and secondary schools, colleges and youth support agencies, and delivering programmes of career orientation, work-related learning and work-based learning, including STEM.

www.unternehmernrw.net; www.bwnrw.de

The Youth Jobcentre enabling young people under 25 who are looking in Dusseldorf for training or work to find all of its key service in one place, linking the employment agency, the youth welfare department and youth social services to provide a truly integrated approach to joined-up solutions for individual young people.

https://www.duesseldorf.de/jugendamt/akt/top_060.shtml

A secondary school, die Schule am Hexbachtal, Mülheim an der Ruhr to explore the methodology and outcomes of the two year careers orientation programme and pathway assessment in years 9 and 10, in the initiative Übergang Schule-Beruf (Routes from school to career) to retain and progress students. <http://www.hauptschule-duempen.de/>

A technical vocational college Berufskolleg Stadtmitte der Stadt Mülheim an der Ruhr to consider pre/apprenticeship programmes, year 10 and 11 basic vocational workshops, STEM and media services, and to meet employers including Siemens involved in specialised classes of vocational training to access chemical engineering, electrical engineering, automotive engineering, colour and space technology, information technology, personal care, metal technology, physics technology, event technology. <http://www.bkmh.de/>

A business vocational college Mercator Beruf Kolleg training for the sales professions including automotive sectors, call-centres, retail businesses, banking and fashion to retain and progress students. <https://www.mercator-berufskolleg.de/>

A technical vocational college Franz-Jürgens-Berufskolleg teaching trainees in 22 occupations including mechanical engineering, automotive engineering, machine construction technology, heating, ventilation, air conditioning and building services. In addition to the vocational school are qualifying educational programmes for school students and school leavers without a training relationship, a basic vocational school, or a vocational technical school. <http://www.fjbk.de/>

Discussions with employers including at the Spaarkasse Niederhein (a major bank), Mode Zenter Braun a leading fashion retailer and the major metal works Siemens on their involvement with schools, and the development and delivery of apprenticeships to retain and progress students

The youth employment and youth social work agency in Düsseldorf JBH Chance for a Future for young people up to 25 years who do not make their way from school to work on their own. Young people are readied for jobs or training through a wide range of programmes for those who have not finished school, are without work or are seeking a training place, in order for these young people to enter a profession or training. They provide programmes for beginners and advanced students including profession-orientation (specific guidance and training or work-placements in 1 year youth workshops), pre-vocational training practically and theoretically as qualified professionals in commerce and warehouses, hotels/restaurants, laundry, metalwork, and gardening/landscaping. Production Schools provide a real business environment delivering commercial services to provide active business skills and work-readiness. <http://www.jbh.de/>

Each host agency was briefed to help the study group to explore how schools, colleges and large and small employers work together to:

- shape the curriculum to provide work-ready students
- provide careers orientation
- assess vocational qualifications
- enable students to experience the workplace
- provide STEM programmes to promote skills and careers in the technology sectors
- support employers and young people through apprenticeships, to increase retention and success
- involve young people at risk in apprenticeships.

An employer education foundation, Unternehmer NRW and Bildungswerk NRW representing members (including national trade associations, business associations, and regional employers' associations) on economic, labour market and social policy as well as the educational concerns of 129 member associations with 80,000 member companies and 3 million employees, providing a model of the coordination of borough/city cluster of employers and education, linking hundreds of employers with primary and secondary schools, colleges and youth support agencies, and delivering programmes of career orientation, work-related learning and work-based learning, including STEM.

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The House of vocational preparation, Herten (presented at orientation seminar)

The delegates heard from staff at this programme which over 5 years has prepared 140 highly motivated students with mediocre grades who were unlikely to find a place in vocational education after finishing school.

The students committed to additional studies in the last half-year at the final school year on Friday afternoons, Saturdays and in the school holidays to 290 hours of orientation and qualification and 280 hours of practical training in business (preferably at only one company as the main target is a direct start of the vocational education at this company) through:

Orientation- und Profiling phase (2x 2,5 hrs. p.w.)

- knowledge about vocations
- self-representation
- senior documents
- prepare and search for the first practical training

Qualification phase (2x 2,5 hrs. p.w.):

- vocational basic education:
- metal, carpenter, stock and economy, health service
- periodically reflection with the participants and instructor

The close relationship with youth social workers was key to the retention and success of the students. Many (not every) problems could be solved by the youth social workers with much communication between the involved persons and the professional knowledge of the social network in the region. The inclusion of the whole family system is important to solve problems.

Funded by the BP Foundation, Deutsche Bank Foundation, Grohe Foundation, IHK Nord Westfalen, Bundesagentur für Arbeit, Jobcenter, City of Herten to the level of €800 000 for five years, the results were strong: 97 students started the project, 66 students successfully completed the project to enter vocational education or a vocational college.

Appendix 2:

List of delegates

Name	Organisation	Role
Yolande Burgess	London Councils	Strategy Director, Young People's Education and Skills
Jo Margrie	Hackney Learning Trust	14-19 Programme Manager
Julie Ralphs	LB Croydon	School Improvement Adviser: Commissioning & Post-16
Miriam Hatter	LB Camden	Integrated Youth Support Manager
Sam Armitt	CLC Building Futures	Programmes Manager
Marlena Topple	Prospects	Senior Consultant (International Projects)
Hayley Hyman	Duke of Edinburgh's Award London Region	Operations Officer
Joanne Young	King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	Training Manager
Zoe Eccles	Community Links	Director (Employment & Training Links)
Matthew Dronfield	London Youth	Employer Engagement Manager
Felicity Hunt	Peabody	Youth Project Manager
Vicki Harrison-Carr	Epic CIC	Ambition Theme Manager/EPIC Learning Principal
Charlotte Lightman	Education and Employers Taskforce	Schools Liaison Manager
Eamonn Gilbert	Royal Borough of Kingston	14-19 Partnership Manager & Lead Commissioner
Charlotte Blant	Youthforce	CEO
Ashley McCaul	Bexley Youth Training Group T/A Skills for Growt	CEO
Joyce Harvie	Greater London Authority	Project Manager
Lauren Thomas	Inspire EBP Hackney, Camden, Islington	Programme Manager WRL
Toby Connick	Talentino Ltd	Business Development Manager/Researcher
Barbara Hamilton	City of London	Head of Adult Skills and Education

Name	Organisation	Role
PYL Support Team		
Sharon Long	Partnership for Young London	Strategic Director
Lucy Sandford	Partnership for Young London	Development Manager
Chris Heaume	Partnership for Young London	Trustee
Our formal partners		
Herbert Beck	Mercator Berufskolleg Moers	Principal
Karen Shepers	German National Careers and Guidance Forum	Chair
Our German advisory Partners		
Jochen Bösel	Gesellschaft für innovative Beschäftigungsförderung	Youth and occupation, SGB II implementation
Albert Schepers	Gesellschaft für innovative Beschäftigungsförderung	Dept for Youth and Work
Theo Verhoeven	German National Careers and Guidance Forum	Member of the Forum, Consultant
Hajo Naumann	Mercator Berufskolleg Moers	Consultant
Christofer Godde	Ministerium für Arbeit, Integration und Soziales NRW	Vice Head of Department of College Projects
Kay Bruegmann	Ministerium für Schule und Weiterbildung NRW	Head of Unit 411
Our German host agencies		
Herr Brodka	Berufskolleg der Stadt Mülheim an der Ruhr	Principal
Tanja Nackmayr	Unternehmen NWR	Head of Department Education Policy
Christian Graack	Mercator Berufskolleg Moers	Vice Head of Dept, College Projects
Frau Nixdorff	Schule am Hexbachtal	Head Teacher
Juergen Parussel	Schule am Hexbachtal	Depts of German and Economics
Manfred Uchtmann-Göttinger	Franz-Jürgens-Berufskolleg	Principal
Bernhard Nagel	Youth Job Centre Düsseldorf	Head of Service
Julia Klein	Youth Job Centre Düsseldorf	Employment Agency
Simone Wagener	Youth Job Centre Düsseldorf	Job Centre
Holger Pfeffer	Youth Job Centre Düsseldorf	Job Centre

Name	Organisation	Role
Our German host agencies cont.		
David Rättger	Herten JBH, House of Vocational Preparation	Programme Manager
Jörg Stein	Herten JBH, House of Vocational Preparation	Project Leader
Dirk Hedt	Production school Schwerte	Programme Manager
Mike Theisen	Jugendberufshilfe Düsseldorf	Public Relations and Partnership Manager
Rebecca Hof	Handwerkskammer Düsseldorf	Mobility and Partnership consultant
Phase 2 delegates		
Albert Schepers	Gesellschaft für innovative Beschäftigungsförderung	Dept for Youth and Work
Christian Graack	Mercator Berufskolleg Moers	Vice Head of Dept, College Projects
Mike Theisen	Jugendberufshilfe Düsseldorf	Public Relations and Partnership Manager
Brigit Reusrath	Schule am Hexbachtal	Teacher
Jurgen Renner	Sparkasse am Niederrhein	Head of HR Department

From school to work in London
Learning from Germany - education and
employers
Full report
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