

UCU submission to the Commission on Adult Vocational Teaching and Learning

Introduction

1.1 The University and College Union (UCU) represents more than 120,000 academics, lecturers, trainers, instructors, researchers, managers, administrators, computer staff, librarians and postgraduates in universities, colleges, prisons, adult education and training organisations across the UK. Over 40,000 UCU members work in the FE and Skills Sector.

1.2 We welcome the opportunity to submit evidence to the Commission on Adult Vocational Teaching and Learning. This submission is taken largely from a survey UCU undertook with its FE members who were teaching vocational subjects and skills in FE colleges, prison education and community learning settings.

1.3 This survey asked our members working in further education and teaching vocational programmes their views on how to raise the quality of adult vocational teaching and learning. We cover a broad range of factors that impact upon quality, such as funding for vocational education, terms and conditions for teachers, links with industry and equipment/curriculum available to teachers and learners.

1.4 These survey results are presented here for the Commission to hear directly from professionals working in vocation education in their own words and to signpost what needs to change and what works in delivering excellent vocational teaching and learning. We have made available to the academic advisers and the Commission's Secretariat the link to the full results of our survey so they can see the full responses.

1.5 This is very much a preliminary analysis. We intend to undertake a fuller analysis in the New Year and we will share this with the Commission. We hope to explore some of the correlations between the responses to different survey questions. For example we asked respondents to tell us their ethnicity and age and which subject areas they taught. We would like to see which subject areas are attracting black, Asian and minority ethnic teachers, to see how representative the sector is, and which may be facing an imminent shortage due to the age profile of the current teachers.

1.6 We will also make some more general comments on vocational teaching and learning alongside our analysis of the results.

Analysis of the UCU survey

Methodology

2.1 UCU used survey monkey for this survey. UCU’s membership records do not contain information as to what subjects the member is teaching, nor does it give information as whether these members are teaching young people and/or adults. However UCU membership records do identify the departments within a provider that the member works in. We have used this information to reach those UCU members delivering vocational programmes. The survey went out in late October and members were given over a month to make their responses. Just over 400 responded to the survey.

Type of provider at which respondents were employed

3.1 The overwhelming majority of the respondents, over 91% were from general FE colleges. Just over 2% were employed in work based learning providers. This accords with our membership profile in the FE and skills sector. Unfortunately the number of respondents from prison education services and from specialist colleges such as land based ones was too small to be able to draw conclusions. These may be areas of research that the Commission might consider examining itself at a later stage

Age profile

4.1 The answers given as to the age of respondents are very much in line with UCU membership age profile and that of the FE and Skills Sector. There are very few below the age of 30 (just over 3%). This is probably because a person would need some years in their industry practicing their vocation and/or craft before becoming a vocational teacher. Almost a majority of respondents were aged in their 50s (44.1%); just over 30% were in their 40s and only 13.4% in their 30s. This clearly has implications for both ‘succession’ planning – that is replacing experienced vocational teachers, and for how long and how up-to-date vocational teachers’ experience of the work place is in the subjects that are teaching. We will examine below how long the respondents spent in industry before taking up FE teaching, their links with local employers and their ‘industry’ and whether they had been offered ‘refresher’ time back in their industry further in this submission.

What is your age?	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61+

All respondents	3.1%	13.4%	31.5%	44.1%	8.0%
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Gender

5.1 There is almost a 50-50 split in terms of gender with 50.4% of respondents being men and 49.4% women. The gender split is slightly different to the figures for the gender split in FE colleges as reported by the last Staff Individualised Record analysis published¹. The figures which are for 2009-10 show that women made up 59% of the FE college teaching workforce. It may well be that the discrepancy between the figure for women in the teaching workforce and the UCU survey results is due to the nature of the subjects taught. We would tentatively put forward the possibility that there is some gender imbalance among vocational teachers that is not seen in the general gender split in FE college teachers. This should be something that the Commission will want to investigate further.

5.2 The age profile in terms of gender is similar to that seen when taking all the respondents together with those aged between 51-60 being the largest age group. However interestingly more of the younger cohort coming through are women. This may be part of the increasing feminisation of the FE workforce, and/or a change in the range of vocational subjects being taught in FE colleges.

What is your age?	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61+
Women	4.3%	15.3%	31.6%	42.1%	6.7%
Men	1.9%	11.2%	31.3%	46.3%	9.3%

5.3 Again reflecting the trends in the national workforce, a greater proportion of women vocational teachers are working part time, and more women are employed as support staff among the respondents, yet a greater proportion are managers. Women are the more experienced teachers with 55.2% having worked in teaching for over 11 years as opposed to 45.8% for men which may explain the larger proportion of female managers.

What type of contract do you have?	Full time salaried	Fractional Salaried	Part time hourly

¹

Women	52.5%	34.5%	13.0%
Men	79.0%	10.5%	10.5%

Are you employed under academic or support staff terms and conditions?	Women	Men
Academic	92.0%	96.2%
Support Staff	8.0%	3.8%

Are you a:	Women	Men
Manager	9.0%	6.7%
Lecturer/teacher	79.6%	83.7%
Assessor	4.5%	4.8%
Instructor/demonstrator	0.5%	1.0%
Other	6.4%	3.8%

How many years have you worked in vocational teaching?	Women	Men
Under 5	15.5%	17.1%
6-10	29.0%	37.1%
11-15	29.5%	21.9%
16-20	13.0%	8.6%
21-25	8.0%	6.7%
26-30	2.5%	4.8%
30+	2.5%	3.8%

5.4 The survey shows the types of subjects that men and women teach are different. The top three subjects taught by women are:
Business/ICT/Administration, arts subjects and hair and beauty therapies.

The top three for men are: engineering/electrical/manufacturing subjects, Business/ICT/Administration and bricklaying/construction.

Subjects with no male teachers among survey respondents include:
animals/veterinary nursing and early years/childcare.

Subjects with no female teachers among survey respondents include:
carpentry/joinery, motor vehicles/automotive, plumbing, heating and gas.

Subjects which are fairly evenly split include: Business/ICT/Administration, Catering, hospitality food and cookery and social sciences.

Subjects which have very large disparities in the balance of men and women but with teachers of both sexes include the engineering/electrical/manufacturing subjects, hair and beauty, early years and childcare and bricklaying.

Subject Taught	Women	Men
Accounting and finance	0.8%	2.7%
Agriculture/horticulture	0%	1.5%
Animals/veterinary nursing	6.2%	0%
Arts inc fine art, film, multimedia, photography, fashion, ceramics	15.0%	7.9%
Bricklaying/Brickwork/construction	0.9%	10.2%
Business/ICT/Admin	17.7%	15.0%
Carpentry/joinery	0%	4.7%
Catering/hospitality/food and cookery	3.5%	3.1%
Early years education/childcare	9.7%	0%
Engineering/electrical/manufacturing	3.5%	27.6%
Functional/life skills	5.3%	2.3%
Hair/Beauty/complementary therapies	14.2%	1.5%
Health/social care	8.0%	3.1%

Languages	1.7%	0%
Music	0.9%	0.8%
Painting and decorating/plastering	0%	1.5%
Plumbing/heating/gas	0%	4.7%
Motor vehicles/automotive	0%	6.3%
Sciences	1.5%	3.5%
Social Sciences	1.7%	1.5%
Sports	1.7%	3.1%
Teaching	3.5%	1.5%
Tourism and aviation	1.7%	0%
Wood	0%	0.8%

5.5 It is clear from the responses that traditional stereotype roles for men and women in vocational education still exist. We have to assume that this is reflected in the workforce too, as many educators are drawn from industry. Thus the gender balance among vocational teachers reflects the balance of employment more generally. This presents a problem for vocational teaching and learning in that there may not be enough role models for young women and men in non-traditional occupations. NATFHE/UCU members over the years have said the factor that does most to break down employment and vocational training stereotyping is having women teachers in non-traditional vocational areas. There is a real issue here of equal opportunities. Excellent teaching and learning requires drawing from the widest possible talent pool will not happen if teachers and learners are confined to stereotypical roles.

Ethnicity of vocational teachers

Ethnicity	
White - British	84.6%
White - Irish	3.6%
White - Other	2.6%

Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	0.2%
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1.4%
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0.5%
Black or Black British - African	0.2%
Black or Black British - Caribbean	0.7%
Mixed – White and Asian	1.2%
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0.2%
Mixed - Other	0.5%
Other	4.3%

6.1 The figures above are different than the ethnic breakdown of FE teaching staff in the last LSIS SIR analysis of 2009-10. The percentage of all categories of white among FE college teachers is given in the SIR as 85%. In the UCU survey the percentage of white respondents is 90%. The numbers of non-white vocational teachers is well below what could perhaps be expected when compared with the SIR figures: this may well reflect employment patterns in the labour market and perhaps employment patterns from the past. Vocational teachers will have been some time in industry before entering FE so our figures could well reflect representation in the general workforce between 10 and 20 years ago. Given that black and minority ethnic FE students are perhaps more likely to be in vocational subjects in FE and the importance of vocational teachers as role models we have noted in relation to gender, the possible under-representation of black and minority ethnic vocational teachers is an issue that the Commission may want to undertake further research and analysis.

Time Spent in FE

How many years have you worked in vocational teaching?	
Under 5	16.5%
6-10	33.2%
11-15	25.4%

16-20	10.7%
21-25	7.3%
26-30	3.9%
30+	3.1%

7.1 Over 50% of respondents to this question have spent between 5 to 15 years in FE. The largest group has have spent between 6 to 10 years in FE. This is important when analysing how up-to-date vocational teachers' experience of their industry is. It would seem relatively up-to-date in that the largest percentage of respondents had been in industry between 6 and 10 years. But equally important is the information that a greater percentage had spent over 15 years in FE. Of course the degree of familiarity with current industry practices and skills requirements will be affected by college-employer links and CPD opportunities for vocational staff. Our analysis will look at these elements below. But combined with the age profile of vocational teachers referred to above, there may well be specific issues around FE vocational teaching and its experiences of current industry practices and requirements.

Contracts of vocational teachers

What type of contract do you have?	Full time salaried	Fractional Salaried	Part time hourly
	66.1%	22.3%	11.6%

7.2 The split between different types of contracts for vocational staff is not surprising because it is known that some vocational areas have difficulty in finding suitably qualified full time staff, perhaps because FE pay levels do not match some of those in industry. The LSIS SIR does not give a breakdown of contracts for staff. However the figure usually given for the percentage of part time hourly paid staff is around a maximum of 30%. If this is correct then the percentages of part time hourly paid staff is well below that. This and the numbers of fractional salaried staff may well be a reflection of UCU FE membership. Fractional staff may be more likely to be UCU members as it may well be UCU activity in colleges has resulted in fractional appointments. It is also likely to reflect that a vocational teacher is only undertaking a small number of hours per week or per year, so UCU membership is particularly relevant to them. Some of the part time and fractional appointments may be members of other unions in their main

occupations and workplaces. The incidence of contractual types may be an issue that the Commission may want to undertake further research.

7.3 Over 94% of respondents are on academic contracts. Again this will be reflection of UCU FE membership. UCU does not by and large recruit support staff in colleges. Most respondents (81.4%) were teachers, though some were managers. In this initial analysis it has not been possible to drill down into the data to see if the manager respondents had a different profile in terms of age, ethnicity and other elements of the results. We hope to undertake this further analysis in the New Year. The numbers of part-time work among vocational teachers will have an impact on CPD undertaken by such staff. Even when there was a regulation requiring all FE teachers and trainers to undertake a set annual amount of CPD, there were difficulties for part-time staff having the time or being given the opportunity to undertake CPD. In some if not most FE colleges, this CPD will tend to be undertaken in the part-time staff's own time. This does have implications for vocational teaching and learning as it makes little difference to students if the teacher is full or part-time. The students expect the same quality of teaching and learning whatever the employment status of the teacher.

Time in Industry

How many years did you work in the industry/profession for which you know teach?	
Under 5	18.1%
6-10	15.8%
11-15	14.1%
16-20	14.1%
21-25	14.4%
26-30	6.4%
30+	5.9%
Still working in industry/profession	11.1%

8.1 This is one of the most interesting findings from the survey. The highest percentage of time in industry is the 18% who spent under 5 years in their industry before coming to FE. It is difficult to know exactly what this means. Is this a consequence of the recession and high unemployment, so these vocational teachers came into FE after a relatively short time in industry?

Are these teachers coming from industries with salaries that compare badly with FE so they are moving out of the industry and into FE as soon as they are able? Again this is an area where some further research would be interesting.

8.2 The figure for the relatively short period in industry is offset by the overwhelming majority of respondents who had between 10 and 30 years of industrial experience. We would comment that this indicates that the vocational teaching workforce is extremely experienced in their industries. A correlation between time in FE and time in industry may show whether the experience in industry is recent and that these teachers were relatively familiar with current practices in their industry. Also interesting is the percentage of respondents who were still working in their industry/profession. Again it would be interesting to drill into the survey findings to see if there was a correlation between those still working in their industry/profession and those subject/skills areas where there were difficulties finding enough full-time or fractional staff. The comments from respondents in this section show a whole range of professions and occupations in which the respondent is still working. There is a preponderance of those working in the arts and media, perhaps because of the incidence of part time work in these areas, allowing them to have time to teach in FE.

Subjects Taught

What sector subject area(s) do you teach and at what levels?	Levels 1-3	Above Level 3	HE
Health, Public Services and Care	90.9%	23.4%	20.8%
Science and Mathematics	8.3%	46.9%	40.6%
Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care	100.0%	30.0%	30.0%
Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies	84.5%	36.2%	37.9%
Construction, Planning and the Built Environment	90.5%	15.9%	9.5%
Information and Communication Technology	92.0%	36.0%	22.0%
Retail and Commercial	90.5%	14.3%	19.0%

Enterprise			
Leisure, Travel and Tourism	80.0%	20.0%	25.0%
Arts, Media and Publishing	81.6%	39.5%	34.2%
Social Sciences	100.0%	18.2%	18.2%
Languages, Literature and Culture	90.9%	36.4%	9.1%
Education and Training	50.0%	34.6%	46.2%
Preparation for Life and Work	92.6%	11.1%	3.7%
Business, Administration, Finance and Law	84.1%	36.4%	34.1%

9.1 There was a reasonable spread of responses across the curriculum and vocational areas/subjects. The categories were taken from the OFSTED typology of subjects used in FE inspections. It is difficult to know whether the particular spread of subjects is to do with who makes up the UCU membership, or whether these are the main areas of vocational teaching in FE colleges. The main area is Health, public services and care with 77 respondents, followed by construction, planning and built environment with 63 respondents, engineering and manufacturing technologies (58 responses), information and communication technology (50) and business, administration finance and law (44).

9.2 The findings reflect the traditional vocational curricula of FE colleges (construction, engineering and business administration) as well as some of the more recent developments in sectors where there has been employment growth such as health and social care and IT. Although it perhaps unwise to read too much into the figures but noting some of the areas with few respondents occur in the arts, social sciences and languages, this may reflect both the paucity of employment opportunities in these areas, and that often these opportunities need higher levels of qualifications than are usually delivered in the FE and Skills sector. For example in education and training although 50% of the teaching was at levels 1 to 3, 34.6% was above level 3 and just over 46% at HE level. This probably is showing that FE colleges are delivering programmes at a relatively low level, perhaps to school teaching assistants and delivering FE teaching qualifications at level 5.

9.3 The levels at which vocational teaching is delivered show a huge preponderance at teaching at levels 1 to 3, a mixed picture of teaching programmes above level 3 and some HE teaching. This is likely to change as some colleges undertake more HE work. This is an area that we recommend

the Commission examines further. Where there are only small amounts of programmes being delivered above level 3 and at HE levels, this may be due to the lack of both qualifications at higher levels and of employment opportunities at these levels in particular sectors and industries. So it is not surprising that there is relatively little delivery of programmes above level 3 and in HE for construction, planning and built environment and in retail and commercial enterprise. It is not to say that there aren't qualifications and jobs at higher levels in these sectors, just that FE colleges are currently not delivering such programmes. Again deeper and further analysis around how these subject areas correlate to the personal characteristics of respondents would be very interesting.

Membership of professional bodies

	Yes	No
Are you a member of a subject or craft professional association or chartered institute?	28.1%	71.9%

10.1 The response to this question is interesting as nearly three quarters of respondents were not members of other professional bodies. It would seem from the survey that dual professionalism, that is professionalism as a teacher and in ones subject/skills area, is not particularly prevalent among respondents, at least in terms of being a member of another professional body. The professional bodies that respondents were members of covered a very wide range including some trade unions and some chartered professional bodies. This is an area which really should be explored further, especially with the arrival of the FE Guild and continuing discussions on CPD. There will be overlaps between the CPD and updating requirements of some professional bodies, for example the engineering institutes, and the CPD that colleges may give vocational teachers opportunities to participate in. If the requirements of other professional bodies and of colleges could be co-ordinated then there should be positive benefits for the individual vocational teachers and the employing colleges. Given the number of respondents answering the question it would seem to be membership of professional bodies is an issue for vocational teachers.

Teaching qualifications, route to a teaching qualification and the relevance of teacher training to vocational teachers.

11.1 76.9% of survey respondents do state they have a teaching qualification. This is undoubtedly the result of it being a requirement for all FE lecturers to have or be on the way to obtaining a teaching qualification since 2001. The numbers of those employed before Sept 2001 and thus not

subject to the requirement to have a teaching qualification will tend to be older staff and their numbers will be reducing due to retirement. As may be expected the level of these teaching qualifications are at level 5 and above, usually a DTLLS, PGCE or Certificate of Education. Given the recent revocation of the 2007 workforce Regulations, albeit the regulation for a teaching qualification has been extended into the current academic year, it will be vital for some body, perhaps the FE Guild or perhaps through the new chartered status for FE and Skills sector providers, to continue to monitor whether providers are continuing to expect their teachers and trainers, and in this case vocational teachers and trainers, to have an FE teaching qualification and at what levels.

11.2 Nearly three quarters of respondents with a teaching qualification obtained it through the in-service route with just over 28% obtaining it through a pre-service route. This accords with the known data on FE teacher training. However the situation will need to be monitored. The introduction of higher HE fees and loans, and from Sept 2013 FE loans for courses at level 3 and above for those over 24, will seriously affect how new teachers obtain a teaching qualification, and through which route. It may be that FE colleges are not able or willing to support their new appointees obtaining a teaching qualification. It may also be the case that where colleges are willing to financially support their new staff in teacher qualifications, they will prefer to use the cheaper route through awarding bodies' qualifications. These are usually delivered by FE colleges. Unsurprisingly given the percentage of respondents obtaining their teaching qualification through the in-service route, most studied for their qualifications on a part-time basis. These issues will need to be addressed in the future as financial stringency will continue for the foreseeable future in the Sector.

	In-Service	Pre-Service
Did you study for your teaching qualifications through an in-service or pre-service route?	71.6%	28.4%

	Part-time	Full-time
Did you study for your teaching qualifications full-time or part-time?	78.0%	22.0%

11.3 Looking at individual responses as to when teaching qualifications were obtained, the earliest is 1975 and the majority are post 2001 including up to 2012. A little worrying one respondent tells us that his/her college 'only allows teachers to complete the PGCE when on permanent contracts. All lecturers start on temporary contracts & can be on these for up to 4 years'.

Comparing the survey results to the information in the 2009-10 LSIS SIR, there seems to be very little difference between the survey results and the SIR data on teaching qualifications held.

11.4 The survey probed a little deeper into the respondents' experiences and judgements on their initial teacher training. Interestingly in view of the fact that until 2003 and the OFSTED survey into FE initial teacher training and then the subsequent reforms, FE teacher training tended to take as given the trainees/students subject knowledge, and so focused much more on generic teaching skills, over a third of respondents said that their initial teacher training course included specific study of vocational teaching and learning theories and/or methods.

11.5 When asked the question 'Was your initial teacher training effective in helping you teach your vocational subject?' almost 25% said very effective and 39% somewhat effective and only 14.5% saying somewhat or very ineffective.

Was your ITT effective in helping you teach your vocational subject?	
Very effective	24.9%
Somewhat effective	39.0%
Neither effective or ineffective	21.7%
Somewhat ineffective	6.6%
Very ineffective	7.8%

Did your teacher training include any specific study of vocational teaching and learning theories and/or methods?	Yes	No
	66.0%	34.0%

The comments from respondents ranged from the critical:

- *it taught us the theory of teaching and learning but not how to teach*
- *The PG in PCET was much focused on Teenagers instead of ADULT Learning*

- *The ITT was effective for classroom based teaching but NOT with working with specific groups in vocational education e.g. unemployed people with such a wide diversity and wide differentiation of levels*
- *My PGCE was a very mixed experience - some teaching was very good but there was little real support with placement issues i.e. how to deal with behaviour!*
- *I felt the training did not prepare you for actual teaching it focused more on the philosophy and methodologies of teaching.*
- *Teacher training was almost entirely unrelated to my teaching and the theory seemed to have no practical value*

To more positive:

- *Gave me confidence*
- *The course I took was outstanding: It was run at the College where I teach, under franchise from a University. [BUT] The senior management have since cut the course and wound up the entire teacher training department completely.*
- *The training was focused on me being a self motivated learner and enabled me to adapt my workplace knowledge and previous teaching experience easily*
- *The learning from the course was relevant to practices I was already carrying out in my teaching at the time of the training.*
- *we had very good lecturers*
- *It was good, and experience and CPD to follow helped*

Teaching

Groups taught

12.1 Although the subject of the Commission is adult vocational teaching and learning, because UCU membership records do not have the age groups taught, we decided to ask this question. The results show that the vast majority of respondents taught both young people (81.8%) and young adults (19-25)[84.4%]. Three quarters of respondents taught adults over 25 (77.1%). From this we can state that the results from the survey can be applied to the range of adult vocational teaching and learning in FE colleges.

Hours teaching per week

12.2 We asked the question 'What are the number of hours taught in your vocational subject?' to see how many hours were being allocated to vocational teaching. A majority were being allocated between 18 and 24

hours a week with a quarter stating that more than 24 hours a week were being allocated.

What are the number of hours taught in your vocational subject?	
Less than 6 hours	6.2%
6-12 hours	17.5%
13-18 hours	19.4%
18-24 hours	31.3%
More than 24 hours	25.6%

12.3 We also wanted to see if teaching hours had been reduced over the last 2 years during which the sector has taken something like a 12% reduction in SFA income. Pleasingly it would seem that so far allocated hours had not been cut in over 70% of responses. It will be important to monitor this over the remaining period of the 2010-2013/14 Comprehensive Spending Review and beyond into the next one which promises to be even more severe than the current one.

12.4 The survey went on to ask if weekly class contact time is sufficient for effective vocational teaching and learning. Here there was almost a 50-50 split with a very, very slight majority answering in the affirmative.

Again the comments posted for this question throw an interesting light on the realities of being a FE vocational teacher. A selection is printed below:

- *When I started in teaching the GLH for Level 2 and Level 3 for my subject were higher than they are now. For example the Level 3 has dropped to 12 hours per week from approx 19*
- *course contact times have been reduced over the last 5 years so that lecturers can teach more classes. lecturers have too much contact time to deliver high quality teaching & marking*
- *We have extra theory classes and less time in practical workshop*
- *Overloaded with meaningless paperwork. Too many "add ons" that do not benefit students or teachers.*
- *Too many teaching hours, GLH halved in some cases, far too much administration*
- *I teach 7 sessions with 7 different groups. It is inconsistent and extremely hard work trying to build a good rapport with students*

Again even this short selection of comments shows what a rich stream of data and observations on the very real pressures on vocational teachers.

12.5 Many comments also highlight the reductions in guided learning hours taking them under the recommended time set by the awarding body. If qualifications are being delivered in less than what is recommended by those who have designed them then there is not much doubt that these students are not participating in an excellent teaching and learning experience. Furthermore the whole area of workloads and the division of tasks into teaching and other duties requires more examination by the Commission if it is serious about addressing some of the problems that there seem to be in vocational teaching and learning.

To what extent is the range of your duties appropriate to your role?

12.6 We asked this question to discover whether the respondents felt that they are being used properly and appropriately. Over 70% felt they are.

Where teaching takes place

12.7 We wanted to find how much vocational teaching and learning took place on employer premises. The responses we received probably did not show where the work is assessment only. So we asked the question 'approximately how much of your teaching time is spent in employer premises?' The responses to this question show an interesting division: virtually the same percentage, just over 30% spent either all their time on employer premises or on college sites. When those spending some of their time either in employer premises or on college sites, again the results showed almost a 50-50 split. This may show that there are two distinct grouping of vocational teachers: those working largely on employer premises and those largely working on college sites. We would argue that this must present issues for college management. Among these issues would be management from a distance, the respective quality of the two main settings, communications and the take-up of CPD opportunities.

12.8 The survey asked two questions around work place simulations. This has been a perennial issue for at least 20 years if not longer in FE. So we asked 'do your students have the opportunity to learn in simulated work environments?' and 'in your experience are simulated work environments a good proxy for workplace learning?'

12.9 On the first question the majority of respondents 61.5% use work simulations and 38.5% did not. In answer to the second question, three quarters thought they were a good proxy for the workplace and a quarter thought not. The comments posted for the second question show the range of opinions:

- *Simulation is not allowed in the programmes I teach*
- *Also have weekly access to real workplace environments*
- *There would never be enough workplace learning for my subjects*
- *The employer ensures that the simulations are realistic and relevant*

- *We aren't allowed simulation on NVQs*
- *Better to make a mistake in a simulated area than out in the real world.*
- *Adequate but not like working on real life*
- *Some are very good some bear no relationship to the real working environment*
- *Give good indication of skills build up but do not give experiences of real world problems that they come across*
- *A real work environment is so much better.*
- *We work in as close to a Realistic Working Environment as we can*
- *Sometimes students don't take the task seriously enough as it isn't actually work and they see through that*
- *There would not be sufficient work placements available in our area if this was made a compulsory requirement of a vocational course*

12.10 Colleges clearly have a role in delivering the theoretical elements of a vocational programme, especially where it is an apprenticeship programme. We wanted to get perceptions from our respondents as to whether the balance between theory and practice is correct. The responses split evenly between those who said yes it is, those who said it isn't and those who said that it is 'about right'. The comments made are very illuminating and show the range of views.

- *Depends on the numbers of hours they have for the work experience*
- *We only teach theory and students (we have to call them learners) have to find their own placements or work.*
- *More emphasis on theory and less on practical experience*
- *Could do with more practical work on the science areas and more time in the day.*
- *Is very little practice. only if required for compulsory assessment*
- *Varies in different units*
- *Could do with more practical work experience*
- *Not enough theory*
- *More practice would be better.*
- *Theoretical knowledge is weak, student have little knowledge of why and cannot relate theory to practical situations*
- *Insufficient time to fully develop the underlying theories and concepts*
- *I would prefer more practical time, at present 8 hours practical and 3 hours theory, would like up to 16 practical and 5 theory*

12.11 The recent Richard Report on apprenticeships recommends that pre-apprenticeship programmes for those not able to find an apprenticeship with employment should be restored, and that there be one apprenticeship qualification per sector/industry. So these issues about the balance between theory and practice will undoubtedly re-emerge if the report's recommendations are accepted.

Functional skills

12.12 These are part of apprenticeship programmes and the Wolf Report on vocational education for young people recommends that all young people should continue with English and Maths until they achieve Level 2.

Employers have often resented the fact that functional skills are part of apprenticeships and vocational programmes as they do not see it as their role to make good inadequacies they perceive many entering employment as having. In November 2012 the FE minister Mathew Hancock announced that funding for adult functional skills would be doubled. We used the survey to discover what the views of vocational teachers were on functional skills. We asked four questions:

- Do students typically begin the course you teach with appropriate levels of functional skills? Over 66% of respondents said that their students did **not** begin their course with the appropriate level of functional skills. So there clearly is a problem here.
- Does your vocational course offer functional skills? Just over 73% said their course did contain functional skills within the programme. Just over 78% said functional skills are offered as separately from the vocational content.
- Does the functional skills component (whether integral or separate to the qualification) provide appropriate learning for vocational students? Two thirds of respondents said it did provide appropriate learning and a third said it did not.
- Do students typically leave your course with appropriate levels of functional skills? Just over three quarter believed that their students did leave with appropriate levels of functional skills; a quarter did not think so.

12.13 Comments made to the third question show a range of views and demonstrate some of the difficulties with functional skills in vocational programmes. This is clearly an issue that the Commission must seek to resolve.

- *At least they leave the course with a better level of functional skills*
- *Students rarely appreciate this*
- *Functional skills do not compare to GCSE qualifications*
- *Should come from school with the appropriate levels*
- *There is a severe shortage of time to teach these skills adequately*

- *Functional skills component is often mandatory for students who already have a perfectly good qualification in the subject - but that qualification is considered to be too old. This results in students having to undergo training and testing in the basics of a subject they may have an A level or degree in.*
- *Employers look only for GCSE*
- *More hours for functional would support them more.*
- *Being taught by non vocational staff*
- *I feel functional skills are good if delivered as an embedded subject. Possibly this is still not good enough. It might be a rethink needs to start at primary level and be compulsory secondary education. Maths and English teachers should be exceptional and really well paid.*
- *I think chasing FS for a great many learners who are not academic is a waste of their energy if they still will not achieve well it them. I would rather my students spent that extra time in a week sewing or pattern cutting (pattern cutting requires quite a high level of numeracy)*
- *Functional skills need to be taught separately for better understanding to the learners. Most learners get confused and mostly drop out of the course when overwhelmed with different components.*
- *None of the functional skills are tailored to the industry*

12.14 Citizenship elements are a common feature of some European vocational education and training programmes and systems. We wondered both whether such elements were a feature of English vocational programmes. 58.5% of respondents said that there were such elements in their programmes.

- *Some is covered as part of the course content and tutorial sessions*
- *The Tutorial system has been cancelled this year so a great deal of citizenship learning has been lost. We deliver learning for working rights related to future employment at Level 3*
- *Just apprentices via a booklet*
- *As a course tutor I like to think that I help my students in this direction*
- *They do explore ethics and legislation relating to their chosen work placement*
- *time with the syllabus, time to deliver content decreased so other college services to deliver these components*
Core part of our programme
- *We teach a unit within the programme called - Personal and Professional Development*
- *This is an integral part of the apprenticeship*

Plant and equipment

13.1 Despite additional resources for FE plant and equipment in recent years, another perennial question is whether the technology, equipment and setting/environment that colleges are using in vocational teaching and learning are of a comparable standard to that generally used in the industry the students are being trained for.

13.2 The responses to the question about equivalence and comparison with the plant and equipment are very interesting. On technology the respondents seem to be showing that a slight majority of respondents consider their plant and equipment to exceed or be comparable to industry standards, although 33% believe that their plant and equipment is a little or falls very short of industry standards. On setting/environment the responses show less than a majority saying their equipment and plant exceed or is comparable with their industry standards.

Is the technology, equipment and setting/environment you use in your teaching of a comparable standard to that generally used in the industry you are training your students for?	Exceeds industry standards	Comparable to industry standards	Neither	A little behind	Falls very short
Technology	5.4%	43.8%	17.3%	20.8%	12.8%
Equipment	2.8%	40.4%	12.8%	26.9%	17.1%
Setting/environment	4.3%	35.6%	19.5%	22.9%	17.6%

13.3 Again the comments posted are very illuminating:

- *No Internet use allowed and software used out of date with constant promises to update for last 4 years*
- *We are constantly told that our students should be employable by the industry when they leave but the teaching environment and resources do not match those of industry*
- *Delivery is on the employers premises using employer's equipment.*
- *We are centre of excellence in manufacturing and our resources are higher than many industry companies*

- *We are not too far short of industry standards in our college I have worked at another college where they were a long way short.*
- *Some equipment is dated*
- *It would cost a lot of money to get resources up to date with Industry standards. However it would be money well spent and would enable us to attract more learners.*
- *No investment in engineering at this institution for over 20 years, and basic technology such as computers and IT equipment is out of date.*
- *Learners using machines made in the 1960s, no modernisation plans in place to improve the technology, insufficient tools and tooling.*
- *Very difficult in our mainly livestock area to expose students to most up to date arable techniques and machinery first hand. Either entails long residential visits or use of DVD and other I.T methods*
- *Our college is newly built so our equipment is up to modern standards*

The overall tenor of the comments seems to point to deficiencies with plant and equipment for vocational areas. Most of these seem to be as a result of budget cuts. With another tranche of capital monies announced in the December 2012 BIS Skills Investment Statement, the comparability of equipment and plant to industry standards may be an issue that the Commission will want to investigate further and comment on in its final report.

13.4 We posed two questions around plant and equipment. The first was about whether there is enough technical support. The responses were pretty much a 50-50 split with 49.7% saying there is sufficient technical support and 51.3% saying there is not enough. The comments posted demonstrate some of the very practical difficulties around technical support:

- *More technical support would be needed, since the only person who offers this service is often busy and he doesn't work during some of our contact hours, therefore sometimes there isn't any technical support during lessons, causing. This affects the lessons some times*
- *Necessary technical support has been removed for financial reasons*
- *There is only one member of support staff to support 10 members of staff*
- *Teaching in the workshop is across 5 days. A technician is employed just 3 days. 2 days are technically unsupported*
- *IT support has to be requested, usually visited by a technician within a day. Photocopier has been unable to print for 2 days in a row this week. Vocational technician has just replaced the previous technician and is not trained in a relevant vocation*
- *No technical support*

- *We have one technician who is now expected to teach and a print technician who is also expected to teach. All technicians across the college are now teaching but not on a teaching rate of pay*
- *Shortage of dedicated IT support technician has meant software upgrades are facing severe setbacks; shortage of studio technical support staff makes it impossible to run the media area to any plausible industry standard.*
- *Technician is under qualified for the tasks he is being asked to complete*

13.5 IT may be used to make up for some of the inadequacies and deficiencies of equipment and technical support, so we asked whether the respondents use ICT in your teaching. Over 95% of respondents did. Respondents' comments show some of the difficulties around ICT:

- *Not enough resources to facilitate this on a regular basis*
- *It often lets you down*
- *Many times are problems with dated software and hardware not functioning properly*
- *Very limited access to IT, it is only available at one venue*
- *It is fit for purpose*
- *Would like to use more but it takes time to develop online activities and I have to do it in my own time, on top of the planning / marking which I also do OUTSIDE of my contracted hours.*

Pay and conditions

Do the pay and conditions at your institution attract sufficient vocational staff to create a good vocational teaching and learning experience for students?

14.1 Although this survey did ask questions about levels of pay of the respondents, we have decided not to use them in this first initial analysis. Partly this was because of the way Survey monkey has laid out the responses. We had thought to try to undertake a comparison between FE pay rates and those in the various industries and sectors from which FE served and employed staff to teach on programmes relevant to these industries. However lack of time but also advice from FE members of the UCU Education Committee who pointed out that industry pay rates varied between industries and also sometimes because of local or regional variations in the labour markets. Sometimes they told us FE pay rates may be far in excess of industry pay; the example given was hair and beauty. In other industries and at certain times industry pay rates were well above those in FE, with the result there could be shortages of qualified vocational teachers in some sectors. Recently plumbers were said to be earning over £70,000 per year, well above the best lecturer salary scales. We would urge that the Commission undertake or commissions research into comparative pay rates between FE and various industry pay.

14.2 What we did ask was whether UCU vocational teachers perceived as to whether their college's pay rates attracted sufficient vocational staff for good quality teaching and learning. The responses to this question showed that just over half the respondents thought that their colleges' pay scales did not attract high quality vocational teachers. However a substantial minority thought their colleges did pay enough to attract good teachers.

14.3 Below is a selection of comments posted for this question. We were hard pressed to find remarks which did indicate pay rates were sufficient to attract good quality staff despite over 45% believing that their college did pay well enough to attract vocational teachers. Unsurprisingly in a UCU survey virtually all the comments posted felt that pay rates were too low to attract well qualified and sufficiently experienced vocational teachers. What the comments do also reveal is that it is not just pay that is perceived as not being attractive but also conditions of service and workload pressures. Given the remarks in the final report of the Lingfield Review Panel that FE pay rates had fallen behind both school teaching and HE, and whilst this may not always reflect the position of vocational teachers, we do consider this to be a crucial issue for the Commission. What colleges may have to recognise that it is the total perception of FE in terms of a good place to work that may make FE an unattractive sector to work in. This is perhaps reinforced by the responses to the question 'Are there vocational areas that find it difficult to attract suitably qualified staff?' to which the percentage of those answering yes and no are very close to the percentages saying their colleges did or did not pay enough to attract quality vocational staff.

- *I could earn more in my trade as an electrician locally/nationally*
- *Industry experience does not appear to be recognised*
- *Many lecturers are leaving to go back into their trades as the salary is not sufficient to retain them*
- *Not enough lecturers in electrical/electronic engineering*
- *Grossly underpaid for the qualification and expertise we hold.*
- *The pay and conditions offered to attract staff with relevant vocational experience has declined steadily over the past 5-6 years.*
- *To get good people who have the potential to make great teachers the pay and qualifications need to be improved.*
- *Those from other professions that do join don't stay long because of poor pay and conditions*
- *Persons in trade generally earn a higher wage. they say that there is not financial incentive to retrain & move into lecturing plus too many targets expectations etc*
- *Generally yes but we struggle in some subjects such as IT which I teach. I retired from full time last Sep but have carried on part time to cover staff shortage. We*

have struggled to get suitable staff in IT for the last 4 years

- *It is the conditions and management pressures rather than the pay*

Teacher subjects shortages

14.4 From the comments posted the subjects where there are shortages of qualified staff seem to be the ones where there has been a shortage for some time: STEM subjects, especially engineering, and all construction subjects. Creative arts and the media also seem to have difficulty in attracting sufficient teachers, as does IT. These are all subjects where pay is higher in the industry than in FE. Given the centrality of FE and skills to economic growth, this is clearly an area which the Commission will need to give some attention.

Assessment

15.1 There are a range of assessment methods used in vocational teaching and learning reported by survey respondents.

What methods do you use to assess vocational learning? (Please tick all that apply)	
Written exam	46.6%
Coursework/portfolio	93.4%
Oral exam	21.7%
Assessment of group work	42.4%
Continuous assessment of practical work	76.2%
Feedback from employers	26.6%
Practical work completed in exam conditions	38.3%
Other	10.7%

15.2 As might be expected of vocational teaching and learning, the most common form of assessment is through coursework/portfolio. The next most common form of assessment is continuous assessment of practical work; again this is to be expected. Both written examinations and assessment of group work, although used less than course work and continuous assessment, were also fairly extensively used. One assumes the former is used for assessing theoretical parts of the learning programme. It

is interesting that assessment of group work is used as this can be away of assessing one of what is known as 'soft skills', demonstrating the ability to work with others and teamwork. Both are said to be held in high regard by employers. It is also clear that in a quarter of the responses employers' views and feedback were used for assessment purposes.

15.3 The recent Richard Report² on apprenticeships had a number of recommendations on assessment: that 'continuous and time consuming assessment, driven by paper-based tests, accumulated 'evidence' and assessors' should cease and be replaced by a test that demonstrates both knowledge and expertise in the real world along with problem solving, with a final test being holistic assessing the full breadth of the relevant competencies which could take the form of a project or an assessment in front of an examiner. It should be performance and real world based, rather than just theoretical.' It remains to be seen how many of the recommendations might be accepted by the Government. If those on assessment are supported, then the changes to apprenticeship assessments may spill over into other vocational programmes.

Students

16.1 Having asked a series of questions on teaching and assessment, it was logical to ask questions about the outcomes of teaching and learning for the students. Two questions were asked: whether the vocational qualifications taught by the respondents adequately prepared the students for employment. The second question was on the most common destinations for their students.

16.2 Just over two thirds of respondents considered that the qualifications did prepare their students for employment. However a third did not which must be an area of concern to the Commission. The comments posted are very revealing:

- *Too much emphasis on achieving the 'qual' and not enough on development of skills*
- *Too quick. This year the Level 2 course is being carried out for inexperienced students in 25 weeks. Why?? Don't know other than funding reasons? Risk of gaps in learning*
- *Not enough vocational experience. Settings do not have time to support students*
- *A big no we help them pass exams, not prepare for work*
- *Not always recognised by some employers who still want A levels*
- *Yes many of our students have left our college with level 3 vocational qualifications and have found employment*
- *SSC only seem to listen to large companies at national level so qualification developed only suit these types of business not SME's*

² Richard Report' Apprenticeships' Doug Richard BIS November 2012

- *We have had a rewrite of the syllabus, that incorporates both the NVQ & Theory elements in one package. It seems a good idea in theory and should & could be if the sector skills council hadn't made such a mess of things. That is the sad thing for the students, they are getting a raw deal*
- *There are insufficient course hours to prepare students practically for employment.*
- *There are always going to be elements that have to be learned on the job.*

16.3 The second question on students asked what the destinations of their students are. The responses can be seen in this table:

What is the most common destination of your vocational students upon completion of their course?	
Employment	42.9%
Further general learning	12.2%
Further vocational learning	26.5%
Unemployment	7.8%
Other	10.5%

Just under half do find employment and over a third go onto further learning. It would be interesting to compare the results from this relatively small survey with the colleges' destination data, something the Commission might want to investigate.

16.4 The comments posted are very interesting and show a range of reasons for student destinations which will vary with the geographical location of the college and local labour market, together with the individual circumstances of the students.

- *Many continue on e.g. further voc. courses, are employed, undertake voluntary work.*
- *good ones stay on , weak ones go onto other training schemes with little hope of vocational employment*
- *We do our best to equip students for the world of work but it is not always possible to get them into our trade because of the downturn. We do find that quite a few of our learners leave to go to less well paid jobs.*
- *Most learners return on the part time route as part of their apprenticeship*

- *They normally have obtained the confidence through the training to move to the next level 'qual' for the industry they work in*
- *Employment is the desired outcome however in reality many students cannot gain employment as apprenticeships are few. Whereas mature students will often select self employment as their route to full employment.*
- *Progression to relevant employment is low*

Skills competitions

17.1 Before designing this survey, we had a very productive conversation with Professor Unwin about the survey and what we should include in it. She asked us, and we were happy to comply, to ask a question about skills competitions which appear to be on the increase at national and international levels. So we asked whether the respondents felt there was value in such competitions and if they and their students had taken part in any. 68.5% considered that such competitions were of value. However only 44.5% had students who actually had taken part in them. Their comments were very interesting:

- *I feel participation depends on the area of learning as very valuable in engineering/construction areas but in more generalised areas it is not seen as valuable*
- *Students have to find their own way to the competitions and fund themselves to do it, tutors have to use teaching time or own time to support them*
- *The course is difficult to complete within the time allowed. this would take up too much time.*
- *Not enough members of staff available. Students for skills competitions have to be specially groomed to take part and this takes up extra time*
- *Very time consuming with the risk assessments etc but a good experience.*
- *Giving learners the opportunity to participate outside of their normal area and to show their skills is a great boost to learning.*
- *Time constraints and staffing levels mean it needs to be done off timetable*
- *Skills allow the students to compare their knowledgebase and efforts against others. This is available only because I have set this up in my own time*
- *Our college places competitions as a high priority and your department is judged on how many competitions won*
- *We run them annually and they are quite popular with learners.*

These and other comments illustrate some of the practical difficulties that some respondents have in participating in competitions. There

were a number of respondents who had not heard of skills competitions. The Commission may wish to recommend how the profile and knowledge of skills competitions might be raised among vocational practitioners as well as providers.

Design of qualifications

18.1 We went on to ask questions about vocational qualification design to ascertain whether practitioners are involved in their design, and who they think should be should be involved. Unsurprisingly almost 100% thought that teachers should be involved, followed by professional associations, individual employers and awarding bodies

Who do you think should be involved in the design of vocational qualifications? (Please tick all that apply)	
Teachers	96.9%
Students	46.9%
Awarding Bodies	69.2%
Sector Skills Councils	52.1%
Professional Associations	71.0%
Individual Employers	71.0%
Other	6.3%

Some of the comments posted were:

- *Large Individual employers who can help publicise Engineering as a clean and worthwhile career*
- *Where individual employers are concerned small (micro) businesses should be well represented*
- *Experienced practitioners in the field (non employers)*
- *Liaison with all stakeholders is essential*
- *Qualified trades people who have a knowledge of the education criteria*

18.2 Despite the response to the above question, only a third of respondents actually had any active involvement in the design of vocational

qualifications, although 61.9% had some form of interaction with awarding bodies. Among the comments posted were these:

- *Employers should have a greater voice in the design and end requirements of vocational qualifications together with vocational teachers who are skilled assessors and who also have a knowledge of what can be achieved in a classroom.*
- *I have independence on organizing the lessons/lectures so I in practice take part in the final design, but I would appreciate the possibility of me/others taking part on the initial design of the qualifications*
- *Employers need to focus on what their industry needs and not allow Sector Skills councils to dictate what can easily be achieved*
- *Sector skills councils did mess our qualifications up recently but it appears that we are now back on track.*
- *Not up to date with current employers needs*
- *Doesn't really reflect the local needs, often of a low/inappropriate standard.*
- *A great idea for teachers to participate in but need to be allowed*
- *The language used within the qualification standards is difficult for everyone to understand. Also the vocational nature of the qualifications - which has always been practical based skills is becoming more academic. This then excludes people who are good at practical work but not so good or interested in the academic side - they just want to work with children/ young people/ adults*
- *Try to make them more practical to assess, Give guidance on how assessment can be made more practical and easier for students*
- *The mix of available units is often inappropriate to employer needs*
- *They use terms that are very out of date / out of touch. They require too much information in useless information / subjects that students would not use in the work place*
- *More tutor input would be a valuable addition*
- *Need to reflect the industry more and the changes which happen - plus any amendments to units needs to be quicker and communicated clearly - rather than still waiting in November for units to be updated, with teaching having already started.*
- *KEEP THEM VOCATIONAL - a lot of practical people have hidden disabilities - possibly undiagnosed as they are so minor. These individuals thrive in an environment whereby they are not required to write reams of paperwork or even read too much. Too much emphasis is put onto functional skills and in my experience as a teacher who has seen this change come in can be detrimental to a learners confidence.*

IF functional skills must included they need to be more embedded into the practical activities (eg pattern cutting) so that these learners almost don't notice they are doing them

Funding

19.1 Funding is clearly a determinant in various aspects of vocational teaching and learning. Its impact is felt in a wide range of issues including how many guided learning hours are allocated to vocational programmes, the standard of plant and equipment and the amount of CPD vocational teachers are allowed. Many of the comments already in this submission have referred to funding as a key element in what they do and how well they do it. Government has for some years attempted to rebalance who funds FE and vocational teaching and learning between government, the employer and the individual. The latest initiatives in this have been to restrict the statutory entitlements to first full level 2 and 3 qualifications to those under 24. These will be implemented in September 2013. This will also be the start of the introduction of FE loans for those over 24 undertaking level 3 and above courses. We felt with so much change taking place in funding the sector, it would be appropriate to ask some questions about this.

19.2 We asked who respondents thought should fund vocational learning and teaching, what should be the balance of funders, and which directions the balance of funders should move and finally we asked for any other comments on funding.

19.3 On the first question, it was clear that respondents felt the government should be the primary funder of vocational teaching and learning. This was followed by 57.3% who considered that employers should fund this teaching and learning. Almost 40% felt local government should fund and only a quarter felt that individual students should pay.

Who do you think should fund vocational qualifications? (Please tick all that apply)	
Central Government	89.9%
Local Government	39.9%
Individual students	24.7%
Employers	57.3%
Other	3.5%

19.4 When asked whether the balance of funding between the state, the employer and the individual should change, most respondents (87.8%) felt that the balance should shift towards central government. 60.4% felt that it should shift towards local government providing more funding and 59.1% believed that employers should pay more. Only 17.9% felt that individuals should pay more and 56.8% felt that individuals should pay less. These figures are not surprising from a survey of UCU members. The results do fly in the face of what is happening with funding and what is likely to happen over the next few years.

Do you think the balance of funding needs to change?	More	Less	About the same
Central Government	87.8%	5.5%	6.7%
Local Government	60.4%	16.8%	22.8%
Individual students	17.9%	56.8%	25.3%
Employers	59.1%	14.9%	26.0%

19.5 The comments posted demonstrate why respondents expressed the views they did:

- *All vocational courses should be free for the student to enable them to progress to employment or a better career*
- *If central government want skills to improve, they should fund it for all who wish to participate*
- *Local Government t should invest in local needs and shortages. Central Government should focus on long term employment planning. Employers are earning money from learners so should also see this as an investment.*
- *More emphasis should be made on the funding of completed qualifications*
- *It causes large problems because people make the results fit to the funding. It puts people in situations where they are forced to pass students whom do not meet the required level.*
- *If you consider how much the government pays in unemployment benefit this would surely be reduced if they offered more to train apprentices and provide vocational courses. Currently in order to get government funding full time vocational courses the learners spend about 25% of*

their taught hours working towards additional qualifications which means that less time is spent learning the vocational subject

- *Funding should be given to adult learners who are trying to retrain due to redundancy or trying to improve their prospects because they failed when younger*
- *Central government needs to fund the UK plc workforce to make us competitive and use our resources most efficiently.*
- *Bring back industry specific training boards*
- *Lack of funding in vocational learning leads to poor allocation of GLH. The knock on effect of this is to cause rushed learning. Also, lack of funding means a shortage of resources. Learners are not able to practice skills to gain appropriate levels of competence. The overall result of this is less skilled crafts people and poor overall workmanship. More funding is required.*

19.6 We believe that the Commission will need to look at funding of vocational teaching and learning. However we may regret it, funding is one of the main drivers of the curriculum, and it impacts as much on vocational teaching and learning as it does on academic and general teaching and learning.

19.7 For some years it has been the intention of government of whatever political persuasion to change the balance of funding between the government, the employer and the individual. So Labour administrations decreased the amount of government subsidy on adult learning programmes from 75% to 50% over a period of years. The Banks Review of funding for the LSC just before the 2010 Election proposed that employer contributions to vocational training should not be in kind but in cash

19.8 The current recession has meant even more financial stringency. The 2010 Comprehensive Review set out a 25% cut in funding for FE and Skills over 3 years. The actual cuts have been both to funding rates and to student numbers. The statutory entitlements for both first full level 2 and 3s have been restricted to those under 24. Those over 24 undertaking level 3 above courses will have to take out a loan to cover their course fees as all government funding will be withdrawn from Sept 2013. Train to Gain, a flagship programme for the later Labour administrations was scrapped immediately when the Coalition government came in, with funding cut for all workplace training, except for SMEs and apprenticeships. UCU along with many others had a lot of criticisms of Train to Gain, including the amount of deadweight as well some employers using it to accredit skills that their workforces already had rather than training that added value. We acknowledge that the Government has increased resources for apprenticeships. But we believe that the government's funding changes may cut dramatically the numbers of adults taking vocational programmes, especially at level 3 and above, the very area that the UK has lagged behind its international competitors in. We also are concerned that there may

irreparable damage done to the vocational training for adults infrastructure. We are extremely concerned that apprentices over 24 will have to take out FE loans. We believe that the government needs to intervene more vigorously in adult vocational education and training by giving it a statutory basis rather than relying on exhortation and voluntarism. We were pleased to note that the Richard Report recommended that fiscal measures could be used to encourage employers to take up apprenticeships, a policy that UCU has advocated for some years in relation to the funding of adult vocational teaching and learning.

Industry Links

20.1 A common criticism of FE in relation to vocational teaching and learning is the lack of contact between colleges and industries. Whilst it is true that some colleges have excellent links with local, regional and national employers, others seem to have few. We therefore decided include in our survey questions as to how respondents perceived their college's links, and to ask about their own personal and professional links to employers. We also wanted to explore whether there was encouragement for communities of practice to be built with other teachers of their vocational subject both within and beyond their college. 72% of respondents replied that they were able to have contact with fellow practitioners. The comments that were posted for this question reveal the dimensions of such links and some of the practical difficulties:

- *Have had meetings in the past, but very sporadic in past 4 years.*
- *Only on my own time, apart for the occasional staff meetings*
- *Once a year outside our own staff*
- *Only when I attend industry related exhibitions*
- *No, only in our campus but not across the sector*
- *Only my immediate colleagues. Not any teachers from other colleges. This would be favourable*
- *Limited contact with other part time staff in the same team, we are expected to organise this ourselves rather than having a departmental system*
- *At college yes, but not in formal meetings.*
- *Yes only when on external courses, but we all have differing issues*
- *Through the awarding body*
- *Snatched time during teaching sessions or has to be in own time*

20.2 The comments illustrate that many practitioner would value some contacts. With the current focus on FE workforce professionalism and that communities of practice should be one of the defining characteristics of professionalism, we would recommend that the Commission investigate how such professional contacts could be fostered and facilitated. The new FE Guild might have role in this once it has been established.

20.3 When asked if the college had links with local employers, 92% replied in the affirmative. We followed this up by asking how these links could be described:

How would you describe these links?	
Very weak	5.1%
Somewhat weak	18.9%
Neither weak nor strong	32.7%
Somewhat strong	31.6%
Very strong	11.6%

20.4 There were around 43% who were able to describe links with employers as somewhat strong or very strong and only 24% who described the links as very weak or somewhat weak. We went on to explore the nature of these links:

Are these links through: (Please tick all that apply)	
Regular formal industry liaison meetings	24.7%
Irregular occasional meetings	37.3%
Formal one-to-one links	26.6%
Informal one-to-one links	37.3%
Mentoring schemes for students	18.6%
Offering work experience to students	58.2%
Providing careers information	27.4%
Employers being involved in the design or delivery of student projects	19.8%
Other	1.5%

20.5 The most common links were around placements and around both formal and informal one-to-one relationships. Employers were used in over

a quarter of responses to provide careers advice. We asked if respondents found these links useful. 83.2% said they were for various reasons:

- *Students gain industry experience*
- *Yes, so everybody can update on what is going on in the industry and industry know the can of support a learner need*
- *Very useful to provide students with practical experience and an understanding of the sector and expectations of their chosen career*
- *Some students get regular work*
- *As the programme is developing the employer is taking ownership. This results in the best interests of the learner being taken into account*
- *Builds up reputation of college. Employers share good practice with college*
- *Yes, most of our students are employed after completing our programs; enhanced learning experience easily achieved*
- *We do get a sense of what is happening in the industry and we have been able to place some learners with jobs*
- *Yes, helps financially, keeps courses full and provides opportunities for students*
- *Allows students to view the employment sector*
- *Yes but these are built on my own experience and reputation*
- *Get to know the employers is good practice and can see the learners at work and how best to support them.*
- *Essential in preparing students for work, building up their network, adding to their CV and putting into practice skills taught in the classroom*

There were far fewer negative comments made about employer links. Most of the comments seemed to focus on poor communications within the college. This is an area which would benefit from more research.

Continuous professional development (CPD)

21.1 All professionals need to undertake CPD to keep abreast of developments in their professions. With the pace of change and technological development so rapid in industries, vocational teachers need CPD to ensure they are familiar with developments in their industry and to keep their teaching relevant and meeting employers and employment requirements. It was therefore imperative that we included survey questions on CPD, the opportunities, the mode in which it was delivered and its impact on teaching and learning.

21.2 UCU undertook an extensive survey of its FE members in the autumn of 2010 into CPD. It has not yet been possible to compare the results of that survey with those of this one. It may be that when we can undertake a more in-depth analysis of this survey's results, we can compare the findings of the two surveys.

21.3 The first question we asked on CPD was what kind of CPD had respondents undertaken: generic, subject specific, pedagogical or industrial/professional updating. From the table most had undertaken generic CPD, followed by subject specific and industrial/professional updating.

What types of CPD do you participate in? (choose all that apply)	
Generic CPD	90%
Subject Specific	65.7%
Pedagogical	30.0%
Industrial/professional updating	45.0%

21.4 We then asked how many hours had the respondents had undertaken. The 2007 Workforce Regulation set 30 hours per year as the required amount. This Regulation was revoked in September 2012. The responses will have been based on the hours undertaken when the Regulation was still in force. The average at 43.9 hours is in excess of the required amount. This confirms the findings of the UCU CPD survey in 2010 and various annual surveys by the IfL. The highest total was 200 hours; there were several examples of 100 hours. The most common amount was the required amount of 30 hours. Where the figures given are much smaller, this is part time teachers who were required to take pro rata amount of hours with a minimum of 6 hours per year. The greatest amount of time is spent on generic CPD, with subject specific the next amount of hours undertaken.

21.5 Generic CPD tends to be on college wide issues and in many colleges there is staff development time at the end of an academic year. The figure just over 10% industrial industrial/professional updating is perhaps key when looking at the CPD of vocational teachers. Given the emphasis in all the rhetoric on colleges' skills development curricula keeping abreast of current industry developments and changing needs, if this figure is reflected across many vocational teachers, this is an issue that the Commission may wish to interrogate further. In the comments on the amount of time spent in each category of CPD, the figures are too diverse to be able to analysis at this time. They would provide interesting data and time should be taken to analysis the amount of time spent on different CPD.

CPD Hours	Response Average
How many hours per year of CPD do you	43.9

participate in?	
How much of this is generic?	17.65
Subject specific?	15.52
Pedagogical?	12.74
Industrial/professional updating?	10.31

21.6 Confirming the results of the 2010 UCU Survey, respondents rated the most effective is subject specific followed very closely by industrial/professional updating.

How useful to your teaching has been the:	Very useful	Somewhat useful	Neither	Somewhat useless	Very useless
Generic CPD?	8.3%	45.5%	24.2%	17.4%	4.5%
Subject Specific?	55.5%	27.7%	8.4%	5.0%	3.4%
Pedagogical?	19.3%	45.5%	19.3%	10.2%	5.7%
Industrial/profession al updating?	51.5%	22.2%	10.1%	6.1%	10.1%

21.7 We went on to ask when the CPD had been undertaken. The responses again are very similar to the 2010 Survey. Most is undertaken outside the normal workload but not seen as being in the respondents own time. The responses for within normal workloads seems to indicate that many if not most respondents had some CPD time within their normal workload. Almost certainly this will be in the non-teaching/contact time. Undertaking during this time within the timetable will probably be at the expense of other tasks. The figure for CPD in one's own time says much about the pressure on whatever CPD opportunities there are, and the commitment to their subject/craft and to their students.

When do you undertake CPD? (tick all that apply)	
Within your normal workload	49.7%
Outside you normal workload	58.7%

In your own time	49.0%
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21.8 The next question examined whether the CPD was delivered externally or within the college. Unsurprisingly an overwhelming majority of CPD was internal. However at over 58% externally delivered is an interesting figure. It would need to be compared to balance of external-internal CPD across the college and for academic and general education teachers. If it is higher for vocational teachers, then it would indicate college managements had realised that vocational teachers may require more external CPD than other teachers.

21.9 In the comments posted for 'other' there is very wide and diverse methods and modes of what respondents considered to be CPD. We would acknowledge that respondents feel confident and able to identify activities as CPD from the dual professionalism and liberal but correct definitions used by IfL. Most vocational teachers (over 58%) had been offered some CPD around the effective use of technology in their vocational area. More worryingly is that 41% had not been offered it. It would be interesting to probe this further to see the reasons for this.

What kind of CPD have you undertaken?

What kind of CPD have you undertaken? (tick all that apply)	
External Course	58.4%
Internal Course	85.5%
Working in industry	23.2%
Other	16.8%

21.10 The figures showing college support for CPD are interesting in that the figure for external fees is high at 49% given the financial pressures on colleges. It would indicate that college management had realised rightly the need for external CPD for vocational teachers and allocated resources to this. The figures for time off for learning and cover for teaching demonstrate the overriding importance of actual teaching and pressures on resources. The figure for cover may be about the difficulty of possibly finding cover for a number of vocational teachers and subjects because of its specialist nature and a possible shortage of qualified staff. The comments given for 'other' reveal a range of opportunities although there are some that indicate the CPD is fairly minimal or none existent for too many respondents. This must be an area that the Commission investigate and make recommendations to support necessary CPD for vocational teachers.

What support does your institution give to allow you to complete CPD

What support does your institution give you to allow you to complete CPD? (tick all that apply)	
Time off for learning	23.6%
Cover for teaching	26.9%
Fees of external courses paid	49.1%
Providing materials and/or equipment	23.2%

If you are a part time teacher are you offered sufficient opportunities for CPD?	
Yes	43.0%
No	57.0%

Are you able to take up these opportunities?	
Yes	53.9%
No	46.1%

21.11 The difficulties that part-time teachers have in accessing and receiving support for CPD is well known and acknowledged. The figure of 57% of the part time teacher respondents is gratifying in that clearly there are colleges that recognise and try to meet these CPD needs as is the percentage that are able to take these opportunities up. Comments such show both the commitment and the practical difficulties that such teachers face around CPD.

- *I have to put extra time. Then I may take time in lieu but not money*
- *Sometimes, these are almost always to be done in own time with no time back*
- *Mostly but not always due to teaching commitments.*
- *Yes, sometimes, other times I'm frustrated that cover can't be arranged or courses are not provided during compulsory*

CPD and industry links

22.1 We have seen above that colleges do have relationships and links with industry, although some of these may be somewhat perfunctory in some colleges, and often these links do not always cascade sufficiently to include some practitioners. We also acknowledge and have seen colleges' commitment to the centrality of employer requirements and relationships to successful high quality vocational teaching, learning and achievement; we thought it interesting to see what was happening in terms of industry exchanges and secondments. LLUK had run a relatively short run and small but highly successful exchange and secondment programme as part of its larger Catalyst programme.

22.2 It was therefore disappointing if unsurprising that a very high percentage of respondents (82%) had not had an opportunity to participate in industry exchange, secondments or spend time with employers, although most of those that had, had done so within the last two years. The comments posted give a rather desperate and at times wistful picture:

- *I have done this once but ended up teaching their staff not learning myself*
- *Never enough time or staff available for industry exchange - have never known of secondments and the only time I see employers is when they come in for treatments*
- *Would be really useful to maintain my competence*
- *An email opportunity came up last year but it wasn't taken as we are all so loaded with extra workloads.*
- *I feel that industry contact is vital but we have no time set aside to do this due to heavy teaching commitment*
- *Secondments, what's that? A distant memory stirs, for another member of staff in this context*
- *Impossible to get cover*
- *It is currently being planned.*
- *Industry exchange, secondments is a fantastic idea but it does not happen!!*

Mentoring

23.1 Mentoring is seen as a way of supporting vocational teachers. We wanted to see the extent and effectiveness of mentoring schemes for vocational teachers from the perspective of the practitioners.

23.2 We were pleased to see that just over 61% of respondents were in a college with a mentoring scheme, and where it was in existence, it applied to 90.5% of vocational teachers. However the figure of over 38% of respondents that did not have access to a scheme is disappointing and possibly worrying, especially as over 82% of respondents not in a scheme would have found it helpful. Just over half the schemes were organized centrally by the college staff development staff. A substantial minority, over 32% were organized at departmental level.

23.3 Once again the comments posted are revealing, interesting and insightful:

- *We have consistently tried to implement a mentoring system but there are never any resources devoted to the process so it has never been effective (Time/Responsibility allowance)*
- *Coaching will be very useful as you can see examples of how things can be done instead of guessing what you are doing are fine.*
- *I acted as mentor for trainee teachers but this is not formally recognised.*
- *The lack of monitory of time allocation to undertake the role of the mentor is an issue. Mentors are expected to attend group meetings. See their mentee on a regular basis and undertake an online qualification all without any sort of recognition. The role of the mentor appears to be undervalued.*
- *There is a clear need for ongoing coaching and mentoring; teachers may be delivering in their own FE organisation, meanwhile they to keep up with industrial developments.*
- *There is no substitute for empathy and experience when mentoring, the mentor also has to be a good listener and give the mentee time, they also have to know their subject well*
- *Most people entering vocational education have a desire to pass on their skills but find it very daunting. I walked in at 9.00 and had a class at 9.30 on my first day. A coach or mentor for a few days weeks would help takeaway some of the stress on a new teacher and ease the initial transition from trades*

person to teacher with ongoing support for as long as it takes to settle in to the FE structure

- *New teachers are just thrown in at the deep end. Although we have "peer practitioners" who can offer some support, proper mentoring and support would help guide new staff and take the load off already overworked lecturers spending time to help them out*

Equality issues

24.1 We felt it is essential that we explored some of the equality issues involved with vocational teaching and learning. In as much as vocational programmes work to industry requirements, and most vocational if not all vocational teachers have had experience of the workplace, it would be surprising that vocational teaching and learning did not reproduce some of the discrimination that exists in the work place and employment. We know for example that although the number of women apprentices has risen, these are mostly in stereotypical skills and for stereotypical employment roles. We also know that only 9% of apprenticeships go to black and minority ethnic communities. So we asked the question whether the respondents delivery had been successful in attracting any under-represented groups. This was probably not a very helpful question as the comments show that whilst some respondents felt they had little say in who they taught and tried to teach all their students. The individual percentages for different categories of student show that respondents felt reasonably confident they had successfully taught most of the categories given. Clearly the group that seemed to be least successfully reached were ex-offenders.

Has your delivery been successful in attracting any under-represented groups?	
Male	30.8%
Female	47.1%
Black and Minority Ethnic	41.4%
Learners with learning difficulties and or disabilities	52.0%
Ex-offenders	14.1%
Younger Learners	26.0%
Older Learners	57.3%
Other	8.4%

24.2 On the comments that were posted respondents demonstrated very well that they understood equality issues and the influence that the workplace and employment had.

- *The attendance of minority ethnic groups is particularly low. People in low incomes have difficulties to access the lessons due to high fees.*
- *Struggle to attract girls to the subject*
- *We try various strategies to little avail*
- *The nature of the profession is mainly woman centred and ethnic minorities are reflected within this group. Men do not seem to be interested although a recent trend within the apprenticeship route has seen young males coming into the sector*
- *It is representative of the gender balance in industry*
- *Employers are reluctant to take on male employees*
- *I am pleased to see more females entering the engineering programmes*
- *College positively encourages female and all learners*
- *We have real difficulties in attracting Asian learners and women. I think construction is seen as having a low status among both groups*
- *We could do with more female students but not sure how to go about this*
- *It would help with some national advertising - in particular women into engineering and construction and men into such as health and childcare*

24.3 UCU strongly believes that the Commission must address issues of equality in vocational teaching and learning, in terms of students and their diversity and in terms of staffing and in terms of pedagogical practice. There are examples of vocational teaching and learning that takes in and tries to address equality issues. We know for example that are interesting approaches to attracting apprentices from non-traditional backgrounds that have been piloted, funded and evaluated on behalf of the English Group Training Association. The Commission should encourage colleges to learn about such initiatives and promote lessons learned to providers

Good Practice in delivering Excellent Teaching and Learning

25.1 We asked our members to put forward any examples of excellent teaching and learning in their own institution that they would like to bring to the attention of the Commission. If the Commission would like to examine the examples in greater depth we can provide contact details to arrange a discussion or visit.

25.2 Overcoming barriers to participation:

- We are the only college in Yorkshire that offers an open learning environment where learners can attend on a day/time to suit them. It is very flexible and allows people to arrange their studies around what they do outside of college.

25.3 Robust apprenticeships:

- Airbus apprenticeship programme. A good mix of academic and practical skills in a three year programme. The first year is full time, the remainder is part time. The programme also includes regular visits to the workplace and to other manufacturing sites. There is also a global citizenship element where the learners raise money for local community projects.

25.4 Innovative teaching and assessment:

- For one unit on a Games Design course I teach on I get my students to work in development teams working on designing a game for one of my former colleagues from the games industry who acts as their boss. The assessment then takes into account each learners individual contribution and their contribution to the overall project and they are given credit for it. Each of the groups compete, and the winner is the one the industry external indicates they would green light for development. Feedback is provided by both the external (industry) and from me as an academic.

25.5 Motivating hard to reach learners:

- Many of the learners have had a bad experience of education thus far in their lives. There are approx 2500 learners annually on a programme that is 100% workplace related which is a key motivator. The learning is delivered in a positive and structured learning environment on the employer premises where the employer also sets strict learning targets. The programme and the employer does a huge favour for UK PLC by tackling and developing functional skills where up 45% of the learners have problems in this area

25.6 Blending theory and practice:

- When our health and social care students go on placements as part of their course, it really helps them to link the theory they have learned in college to practice in a real environment. They do lots of "reflections" in their placement books, which demonstrate that they are learning a great deal. Placements also help students to learn about the discipline of paid employment and the responsibilities it entails. The more they are encouraged to be involved, the more they learn and enjoy the experience. Some students are offered jobs on the basis of their performance at placement. Having vocational teachers gives students a much richer learning experience, learning about the reality of caring for people. They enjoy hearing anecdotes about various incidents and issues. It brings the subjects to life for the students. Vocational teachers are likely to have more credibility with students.

25.7 Enabling progression:

- We offer level one courses in sport and tourism which are known for taking on learners who would not normally have had the chance - accessing support which develops their literacy, study and emotional skills, preparing them for progression or work. The teams are dedicated and more often than not are the first people who have shown real interest in the learners and their future. Progression and success rates are high.

25.8 Recognising all learning:

- I think that some of the panels built by the brickwork department are little works of art and much undervalued.

25.9 Delivering to different groups of learners:

- My organisation offer vocational qualifications to both school leavers and unemployed adults. My area is ICT and a good percentage of the learners have no experience in this area. The learners gain qualifications and experience which allow them to change career directions in an unstable job market. Many are motivated to continue from a level 2 qualification to level 3. They gain confidence and have the ability to develop their skills through evidence based course work as well as set exams.

25.10 Innovative projects:

- Currently developing the delivery of an HND by enterprise projects. The students will study the subjects required to work on design, marketing, manufacture etc of a real business project. This is

underway in a small group and is extremely popular. During this work they will have to learn work applicable to certain units. The evidence they present for each learning outcome will be decided by them and relevant to the project and not to artificial examples provided by teaching staff.

25.11 Meeting employer needs:

- Large numbers of local authority employees gaining level 2 and 3 qualifications as we go to the workplace to deliver the course and try very hard to deliver what and when the employer wants. For instance currently 48 candidates from Stoke Council Grounds and Cleansing taking WBD in the workplace. There is no other way that this number of candidates would have been able to take this qualification.

Supplementary Consideration - Vocational education for young people

26.1 UCU members engaged in vocational teaching and learning also make a significant contribution to the education and training of young people. We realise that adults are the focus of the Commission, but we do not think that adult vocational teaching and learning can be considered in isolation, particularly with more students from 14 plus coming into FE colleges or vocational focussed schools such as Studio Schools and UTCs.

26.2 UCU is concerned that direction of travel of the Government on 14-19 education, training and qualifications may have negative impacts on vocational teaching and learning of adults. We believe that the Commission will need to take what is happening to vocational teaching and learning for young people into account in its deliberations on adult vocational teaching and learning.

26.3 We have in mind some of the recommendations from the Wolf Report on vocational education of young people, all of which have been accepted by the Government and also the proposals from the DfE and OFQUAL on both changes to A levels and key stage 4 reforms.

26.4 We believe that the net effect of these changes will sharpen the divide between vocational/occupational/applied learning and general/academic learning to the possible detriment of young people who may be attracted to the vocational route. Whilst we can understand some of the criticisms in the Wolf Report on the value of low level 'vocational' qualifications, we believe that Professor Wolf failed to understand that some of these qualifications are valuable in that they did motivate and re-engage some young people who were in danger of becoming NEETs, an extremely pertinent issue given the current economic picture.

26.5 Whilst we agree with Wolf that all young people need a firm and sound basis of English and Maths whatever they intend to do post-18, there will need to be some creativity around designing alternative curricula for English and Maths other than GCSE or subsequently Ebaccs. The thought that young

people will have to continue with English and Maths using the current curricula will lead to many becoming more alienated, de-motivated and disengaged from learning, even if the need for English and Maths to continue into adult vocational programmes may diminish.

26.6 Similarly we find Michael's Gove's ideas for changes in GCSE and A levels in the direction of them becoming more academic will only serve to increase the difference between academic and vocational teaching and learning. This may deter some young people from progressing to high quality vocational education and training and increase the divide between academic and vocational. It is all the more unfortunate that this is happening just at a time when the changes in HE with high fees and loans may be persuading many young people and their parents that continuing their learning through employment and vocational teaching and learning is a better route rather than progressing on to HE. We believe that the Commission needs to look at vocational education and training in the round. It needs to take into consideration the impact of vocational teaching and learning for young people in addition to that for adults.

Recommendations to the Commission

Emerging themes from the Commission

27.1 When we started this analysis from the UCU Survey, the Commission published a document of the themes that were being to emerge from its work. Clearly this was some time after our survey had been designed, disseminated and responses returned.

27.2 However we feel that it would be useful to group our recommendations according to these emerging issues and where the Commission has indicated there is more to do, and point out where we believe the survey data speaks to some of these issues identified by the Commission. We have only included those themes where we believe our data will help.

That our vocational education and training system should be characterised by learning programmes with a 'clear line of sight to work'.

27.3 We believe that the sections on links with industry and industry exchanges and secondment would be usefully looked at in relation to this theme. The recommendations we make on this theme are:

1. Why has there been an increase of vocational teachers with 5 years or less experience in their industry
2. The Commission should investigate the extent to which college vocational programmes equip students with the skills employers require, and identify the reasons why this is not the case in some vocational areas and with some qualifications
3. The Commission should look further at the use of industry exchanges and secondments in the Sector, and discuss further with stakeholders, SSCs and employers how such initiatives could be

expanded and their profile raised, especially with vocational teachers

Specialist vocational teachers and trainers should be at the heart of the system, trusted to develop partnerships and curricula with employers; supported as dual professionals.

Industry-standard facilities and equipment are critical – particularly given the ways in which technology is transforming work

4. The Commission should ascertain the current standards of vocational plant and equipment. It may want to make recommendations as to what might be the priorities for using the additional funding being introduced for FE capital spend.

Culture and context are key, with significant implications for leaders of learning.

Although we do not have specific recommendations, nor can we point to specific questions and the responses around this theme, we believe that the totality of survey responses shows the culture and context in colleges from the perspective of the vocational teachers, a bottom view that seems to have been seen too little.

Supporting teachers and trainers to be effective

5. There seems to great variability with technical support for vocational teaching and learning. The Commission may want to investigate further and make recommendations to the sector
6. The Commission should undertake research to compare FE pay rates with those pertaining in the various industries from which vocational teachers are drawn
7. The Commission should investigate whether the comment in the final report of the Lingfield Review Panel that FE pay rates had fallen behind both school teaching and HE, applies to vocational teachers
8. The Commission should investigate whether the comment in the final report of the Lingfield Review Panel that FE pay rates had fallen behind both school teaching and HE, applies to vocational teachers.
9. The Commission may wish to probe further why many vocational teachers seemed to have been not offered any CPD.
10. Given the use of part time teachers in some vocational areas, the Commission should investigate and make recommendations as to how more such teachers can have access to and opportunities for CPD.

We would urge the Commission to study the sections of this report on initial teacher training, CPD and mentoring as well as that on pay.

The relationship between vocational qualifications and excellent teaching and learning

11. The Commission should look further into which subjects have a shortage of qualified vocational teachers

The Commission may find the section of this analysis on Design of Qualifications and practitioner links with awarding bodies useful for this emerging theme.

International

27.4 Although the UCU survey and this analysis had no questions that related to the international dimensions and links between English vocational teaching and learning, UCU does have extensive international links with the European Confederation of Education Trade Unions and the global Confederation of Education Unions, Education International. UCU officials have participated in European Working Group and the EI Vocational Education and Training Task Group. We have also been able to participate in an EU Thematic Working Group on the professional development of vocational trainers. We are happy to share the results and on-going work as well as our links to examples of other countries vocational teaching and learning.

27.5 Other Recommendations to the Commission

12. The Commission should investigate vocational teaching and learning in prison/offender education and in specialist subject colleges such as land based and art colleges
13. The Commission should investigate further the gender and ethnicity balance among vocational teachers. This is important because many UCU members have said that one of the crucial factors in attracting students from under-represented groups and communities into non-traditional subjects is having women and black and minority ethnic vocational teachers
14. The Commission should look at how the profile of skills competitions can be raised in the sector, and ways that information of such competitors can be cascaded down to reach vocational teachers.
15. The Commission needs to firmly address equality issues in vocational teaching and learning. This should include increasing the representation of certain groups of teachers such as women and those from black and minority ethnic communities, especially in teaching non-traditional subjects. The Commission should also investigate how pedagogical practice can be used to encourage and assist certain groups to learn and achieve.