

Education Committee

Oral evidence: [The future of post-16 qualifications](#),
HC 55

Tuesday 18 October 2022

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Members present: Robert Halfon (Chair); Apsana Begum; Miriam Cates; Anna Firth; Kim Johnson.

Questions 187 - 219

Witnesses

[I](#): Yiannis Koursis, Principal and CEO, Barnsley College; Andria Singlehurst, Director of Learning, Aspirations Academies Trust; Tina Götschi, Sixth Form Principal, Ada, National College for Digital Skills; and Martin Said, Instructional Lead XP Trust - founding teacher at the first XP School in Doncaster, XP School.



Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Yiannis Koursis, Andria Singlehurst, Tina Götschi and Martin Said.

Q187 **Chair:** Good morning, everybody. Thank you very much for coming today. For the benefit of the tape and those watching on Parliament TV, could I have your names, your titles and what you do, just very briefly? I will start with you, please, Tina.

Tina Götschi: I am Tina Götschi. I am principal at Ada, the National College for Digital Skills.

Chair: Thank you. I should say that as the Minister for Skills, in 2016, I think it was, I opened your college formally.

Tina Götschi: Yes, I do remember.

Chair: Yes, it was a great day and a wonderful moment of my life as Skills Minister, so I am very pleased that you are here.

Yiannis Koursis: Yiannis Koursis, principal and chief executive officer of Barnsley College.

Andria Singlehurst: Andria Singlehurst, director of learning across the Aspirations Academies Trust. As part of my role I look after our curriculum, so the Aspirations employability diploma at post-16 and our applied transdisciplinary learning lower down.

Martin Said: I am Martin Said. I was a founding teacher at XP School in Doncaster and for the last three years I have been working on the bid for XP Gateshead, which was our first school out of the Doncaster area and which opened 14 months ago.

Q188 **Chair:** Thank you. I do not know if it is the speakers, but could I gently ask you all to speak slightly louder so that people can hear?

At the start of our Committee inquiry, the Government published a White Paper with their vision for the school system. They said that too many children leave education without key knowledge and skills, but the focus of the White Paper was about ensuring that we have a knowledge-rich curriculum rather than about creating a skills-rich schools and college system. Andreas Schleicher, who you will know, of the OECD stated that knowledge and skills are two sides of the same coin. The way I always used to describe it is that it is not enough to learn the names of fish; you have to teach people how to fish as well. Do we need a massive reform of the school system to create a curriculum that is both knowledge and skills rich? Can I start with you, Martin, at the XP Academy? At the same time, could you explain in a simple way the approach of your school?

Martin Said: I would answer yes to that; I do think that we need reform. I agree that knowledge and skills are two sides of the same coin. We are careful at XP not to talk about traditional schools versus what we do, or progressive, because we reject that tyranny of the "or" and look to the



genius of the “and”. Simply, in terms of what our model is, I will start by describing what we are not, because there are some misconceptions out there. Often when we are written about it is characterised in ways that are not that helpful. We often see that we do not have lessons or that we do not teach maths, but we do. We have lessons. We have—

Chair: Can I just ask you to speak slightly louder, please? We cannot hear you very well.

Martin Said: Yes, no problem. We have lessons. We do teach maths. We do teach English. Essentially, what we do is we focus on three things. On character growth, one of the key things that we do that I think is different from conventional schools is the investment that we put into pastoral and character development, which go hand in hand with skills development. We have crew, which is a model where students work together in teams of 12 or 13. That is our pastoral system and we invest a lot of time and energy into that.

Secondly, the other thing that I think sets us apart is that we teach through learning expeditions. We take the national curriculum standards and we combine those through case studies, which bring those standards into sharp relief. Then, at the end of the learning expedition, students will create a product, which is where we are closest to schools like High Tech High in the US, where they are doing project-based learning. We are not a project-based learning school, but at the end of any one of those learning expeditions students will produce a product that connects them to their community and makes a difference to their community. For example, in Gateshead last year students were learning about their local mining heritage and they wrote a local history book, which they launched at the National Centre for Children’s Books. That is now on sale and it is something that those students can look back on.

Our learning expeditions tell stories, essentially. We do the breadth of the national curriculum but it is about connectivity between those standards across disciplines. The story of that learning expedition, where students wrote that book about their mining heritage, was that if we do not continue to tell these stories, then who else will? If not us, then who? If not now, then when? That is what we do, essentially. We are not a project-based learning school. We are a school that teaches the national curriculum and the full breadth of the national curriculum, but we do that through learning expeditions. What enables us to do that is crew, that pastoral setting where students work in teams of 12 or 13.

Q189 **Chair:** Is your view that we need more of this across our school system?

Martin Said: I think so, yes, otherwise we would not be setting up more schools. However, I don’t think that all schools could be XP schools because our school appeals to a certain type of parent and to a certain type of child. The key thing for me in terms of the inquiry into post-16 is that we need to be careful about the increased narrowing of the curriculum. As you mentioned, the White Paper looked at a knowledge-



rich curriculum and we need to be careful that we do not do a disservice to skills.

In terms of the post-16 question, I think that we also need to be careful with T-levels, for example—other colleagues here will be able to speak with much better experience than I can—that we do not denigrate the BTECs. When we look at the breadth of the offer, students are choosing more and more narrow groups of disciplines at post-16, and that is not because students are getting any better at making decisions about their career paths. It is because of the national narrative, partly also because of the fewer AS-levels being taken, and also because of funding.

For me, yes, I agree 100% in terms of the skills and the knowledge point that you raise, Chair, but it is also about the breadth of what we offer nationally and the national narrative around that breadth of offer.

Andria Singlehurst: It was interesting listening just then because our applied transdisciplinary curriculum also stitches the development of skills that young people need to enhance their employability right from their primary schooling all the way through. We run a knowledge taxonomy, much like Bloom, but we also run an applied taxonomy so that students can then apply that knowledge in real world unpredictable situations.

Similar to XP, we are very astute in mapping against the national curriculum to make sure that nothing is missed out. Then we stitch that learning together into projects that make more sense to the children and their learning, particularly at key stage 3. Having worked in London schools for 24 years, I have never seen children develop those real world employability skills in such depth. ImpactEd is running a study on the outcomes and, in fact, in all measures we are proving that this is the way to develop those skills with a real longevity. By the time children arrive at post-16 and start to embark on the employability portfolio, they are ready to launch into longer projects with real employers. In the past they have worked on projects with BAM Nuttall, redesigning Tower Bridge so that it could open and close while being resurfaced. They have worked to develop those skills in smaller business as well but also larger indoor farming projects to reduce air miles. They were developing apps a long while ago to help primary schools manage their energy costs, for example—something that is pertinent today.

There is some real resonance there. We need the knowledge but equally we need to be able to help children to apply that in these unpredictable environments that they are going to be encountering in the working world.

Yiannis Koursis: I will pick up on some of the points that Martin made. First of all, I would like to say that I support the White Paper and I agree with the point around the narrow curriculum. The challenges are such that it is very GCSE focused and I don't admire the job of a headteacher having to deliver high quality, high achievement, the data that speak volumes for our students. The national curriculum is pressurised. There



are local pressures. There are time constraints. I think that the wider curriculum works in niche schools or small schools as it is in the current system. In terms of employability, in Gatsby there has been some change and shift in that in recent years, going away just from the national curriculum, but there is a challenge, as Martin said. The XP model as a very good model works but it is only for a small group of students. There is the inclusivity issue. If we try to bend the current system, we come up against the inclusiveness of what is on offer.

Knowledge, skills and behaviours are very important and the recent inspection framework recognises that and measures that successfully, I feel. As I said, there are time constraints. There are pressures. There are the league tables that schools need to comply with. By virtue of that, we have created this thing that we call employability skills, and it is actually the gap of where we would like to get to but it is not allowed in the national curriculum.

We support the White Paper and the challenge for us as post-16 is that what we see is that unfortunately 55% of our students who come to us at year 11 come without GCSE English and maths. In some cases, one would argue it is teaching and learning and demographics and the cohort as they come, but I would say that this is a by-product of the pressures in the system and schools trying to cram in more, recognising that people need to be broader rather than narrower. I think that we specialise too early, and that is my personal opinion.

Tina Götschi: I am glad that you added behaviour to knowledge and skills because we also firmly believe it is knowledge, skills and behaviours. Ada, the National College for Digital Skills, was founded in 2016. We were the first FE college to be created in 23 years in the UK. We are a very different model from the schools that are represented here. Being an FE, we have a sixth-form arm with 16-to-19 provision, which I head up, and my colleagues on the apprenticeship programme. They run technology apprenticeships, which are increasingly well sought after with great companies.

We are also very keen on the pastoral support and we feel that the education that we offer allows our students to have that bridge into the world of work, into industry. We are a project-based learning school. Three times a year our students take part in industry projects and those are with fantastic industry partners: Deloitte, Salesforce, King Games, Bank of America, to name a few. They get that industry-based experience, work experience, real life experience, in the classroom.

Our curriculum intent is to allow students to have great careers in the digital industries. We know that there is a massive digital skills gap, so we have quite a narrow curriculum in specialism but very broad in English and maths. We feel that those are two key areas that all students need to continue with, whether they have passed those GCSEs or not.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Our mission is to educate and empower the next generation of diverse digital talent. Computer science is at the heart of our curriculum, both in the sixth form and in our apprenticeship provision. In the sixth form, we deliver that via the BTEC diploma in computing, which is a double qualification, or for some students the extended diploma. We are advocates and proponents of the BTEC. We love it, our industry partners love it, and it would be such a disservice to our young people to lose that qualification. As I think Martin said, not all colleges can be Ada. We are specialised. It is perfectly suited for students who want that future in digital, and we do a great job getting them there.

Q190 **Chair:** I am going to ask one final question before I pass to my colleagues, and could I ask you all to be as concise as possible? I know that that was the opening question and answers. Do we need to first of all reform the EBacc and have subjects like design and technology within the EBacc? What do you think of the GCSE model, given that students stay at school now until 18?

Secondly, on the post-16 curriculum as it currently is, should we try to move away from A-levels and have what *The Times* commission and the former Chancellor Rishi Sunak have called for, a British baccalaureate, where you either do a version of the international baccalaureate that is more academic or a version of the international baccalaureate that is more careers based?

Tina Götschi: We do not have the challenge of GCSEs, but I think that students who are coming to us who do not have English and maths or passes in other important GCSEs points to a lack there somewhere. Having a pass grade out of 4 when universities and employers would rather have a 5 in maths and English is also not doing the young people any service in their future.

In terms of a baccalaureate-type model, we run something like that that we can currently do. Besides the BTEC, our students also do an A-level. We do this blended BTEC/A-level vocational and academic, and we believe that that is the perfect combination, as well as English and maths at level 3 in some form or other.

Q191 **Chair:** Yes, the baccalaureate would include that. One would be carrying on with English and maths all the way through rather than stopping it.

Tina Götschi: We offer that through the core maths, the level 3 certificate in math studies, or the extended project qualification, which are not perfectly suited to English and maths. We also top it up with our own internal what we call Ada skills and literacy.

Yiannis Koursis: A succinct answer, I will try my best. In answer to your first question, yes, we should have design and technology. I think that is the right approach.

As to the second question, back to the narrowing of the curriculum, I feel the narrowing is as a result of us trying to create employable, just



employable, people. We need to have a mixed economy. We need to have A-levels. We have a large further education college. We have our own sixth form and we only do A-levels in the sixth form. We do vocational and we do T-levels. There are different routes that lead to different approaches to acquisition of higher skills, which includes higher education. That reflects our communities. It reflects the employment market. It is not just about this conveyor belt approach of into a job because, back to Martin's point, that has created the narrowness; you study something to do a job, nothing around it. So, mixed economy at school, mixed economy at college—T-level, A-level, applied general, apprenticeships, mixed economy. We address the inclusivity, which I know, Chair, is one of your key interests to reflect society and reflect employment.

Q192 Chair: It is not really a mixed economy because what we do is we divide people. Either students do a pure academic version and narrow at 16, or other students do T-levels or some skills. Surely you need to merge the two. I have been to schools where they teach the international baccalaureate and the students do incredibly well and have good outcomes. Why have a system that you narrow in that way?

Yiannis Koursis: The T-level, because we call it the technical vocational, we assume that it does not have the academic rigour or the requirement that an A-level has. Of course it has. I think that the difference is where it leads to. It has rigour. It has assessment, which is akin to an A-level assessment. It is not of a lower standard. It is for a different route into a position of high-level skills, high technical qualifications or going to higher education through that route, more technical rather than more traditional academic solely classroom-based learning without the work experience.

Chair: Yes, which is what millions of students still do, the traditional academic learning without—

Yiannis Koursis: Absolutely, and there is a need for it.

Q193 Chair: That is where I would disagree. I do agree, of course, that education is about intellect, but I think that the primary purpose of education must be about employability so you can get on that ladder. I will come to you, Andria, please.

Andria Singlehurst: I think that enhancing the provision at key stage 4 is something that we want to be looking at. Talking about the EBacc and what the subjects are that are contained in it is an important conversation to have. Equally, we are looking to open doors to those children that that level of qualification may have otherwise closed. For example, we are running three-year post-16 courses with a foundation year for those students who, for whatever reason, may have faced extreme adversity in the run-up to their GCSEs, who might then be able to progress through and then carry on, and then from that offering, for example, a degree with pathways that would lead them to employment



after that. It is about looking for ways to broaden that for every child so that there is a pathway through.

Martin Said: On the EBacc and GCSE, it has definitely led to a narrowing of the curriculum. I would say that DT has its place in there, of course, but also the arts. We must not forget that. That is part of our offer at GCSE for all students. By nature of our scale, our offer at GCSE is fairly narrow but there is an option within that for students to specialise. I agree with Yiannis that A-levels have a place, but I would welcome a baccalaureate at post-16. If we look at the A-levels, I know that the number of students studying A-levels in most subjects went up last year, which is welcome, but at the same time English language, while it is still a popular subject, is in decline. We are going to have a big issue in terms of English teachers down the road if we do not address that.

I would welcome the study of maths and English to a later level. We looked at a baccalaureate-type model for our post-16 provision and we looked at the international baccalaureate as well. I do think that we need to look at the nature of the offer, but I do agree with Yiannis. I think that A-levels have their place but I don't think that we can continue as we have where, if students are doing three A-levels, typically they are choosing them in groups that are fairly narrow. I know that if you are studying a set of science A-levels you are far less likely now to be taking a humanities A-level alongside that as part of that suite. I think that is important, too. From an education perspective and in a trust that is primarily dealing with primary and secondary and not post-16 at the moment, we are going to have issues in terms of teachers down the road as well.

Yes, I think that a baccalaureate at post-16 would be most welcome, but we also need to look at that narrative around the EBacc and the arts at key stage 4.

Chair: I am going to pass to my colleague Kim Johnson. Can I just ask the witnesses again to be as concise as possible because we have a fair bit to get through? I will have to cut you off if we are going on too long.

Q194 **Kim Johnson:** Good morning, panel. Ada's written evidence states that "there are not enough black students studying computer science at GCSE", and that this subject "tends to be the preserve of white middle-class areas." Tina, do you agree with that statement and, if so, what do you think needs to happen to address that trend?

Tina Götschi: Yes. We are doing well with our cohorts because we do not limit our entry to students who have not done GCSE computer science. If we did that, we would just not have the numbers that we need. We do a lot of work with our industry partners to bring in role models. That is always an ask that we have—the diversity of the people who are speaking to our students—and that makes a huge difference. It helps them to understand the great careers that they can go into and how that can be life transforming. It gives them, through our industry



HOUSE OF COMMONS

projects and the work we do in the classroom, the great experience with technology and being very focused on the problems that technology has in terms of not being inclusive, not being diverse and how it can solve those problems.

Q195 Kim Johnson: Do you think that there is a role in schools for looking at and addressing some of those issues?

Tina Götschi: Absolutely, yes, because that is where these young people are spending half of their time. This is where we can make a difference for them. Often that cannot be done within their communities and within their homes because they do not have the access to those other worlds. That is what we provide for our students.

Q196 Kim Johnson: I think that you and Yiannis have both mentioned the high percentage of students who come to the college without maths and English. I think that you mentioned 55%. That is quite a high number of students who do not have basic maths and English. Would you agree that that is a bit of a sad indictment of our education system that so many children are ending their education careers without basic maths and English?

Tina Götschi: Absolutely. I don't think that I need to say any more. It is terrible.

Yiannis Koursis: Very much so, and it goes against, again, the desire to widen the curriculum when the first two years that you spend with us you are trying to achieve the GCSEs that you never achieved. If anything, it is more of a punishment and a further narrowing rather than the opportunity to widen and explore the intellect that we would like our post-16 students to develop.

The problem is not just secondary; it starts earlier. I think that it starts way earlier. There is something to be said about the fact that we are very content with saying that we are not very good in maths as a nation, and that conditions. It is very hard to suspend belief and take people on a journey of the creative nature that comes with mathematics.

Q197 Kim Johnson: In terms of the additional support that you have to put in place to bring those students up, does that incur an extra financial burden to your organisation?

Tina Götschi: Absolutely. Although there is funding for it, that never is enough to cover it. I suppose for us the students need to have a pass in either English or maths. We can't support them with both, because then they are not ready for the education we are providing. We often have quite small classes, which is not very cost effective in a college. At the same time, I often have very heart-breaking conversations with students where I have to say, "I'm sorry, I cannot enrol you because I would be doing you a disservice. You would just have a problem further down the line. You need to get those building blocks in place, so come back to us when you have those GCSE passes". As Yiannis said, that is a punishment



for the young person. Like I said before, even if they have a 4, which is deemed a pass, it does not really help if a university is expecting a 5.

Yiannis Koursis: It isn't a funding issue for us. I would rather we spend that amount of funding in doing what we need to do at post-16 rather than doing catch-up. The funding is there. It is not enough, but even if it was enough, I would rather we used it differently. It is the time element on one's life at the age of 16, when they have to do one or two years if they come without both. By the time they get to 18, which is ideally when you want them to be completing a level 3—an IB, A-level, T-level or BTEC—at that point they have not because they started late. Then we all know the post-18 funding landscape does not allow for that to continue, so it becomes a further narrowing and the purpose changes. The purpose of education changes for the wrong reasons, unfortunately.

Kim Johnson: Do Martin or Andria want to comment on that point?

Martin Said: To come back to the Chair's point at the beginning, ultimately in education we are in a battle for hearts and minds of children and their families, aren't we? What we are trying to do at XP is to show kids that they are important because their work is important, whether they are in one of our primary schools or in our secondary schools. The Gatsby benchmarks are a welcome addition in terms of our statutory requirements, but there are two ways that you can do the Gatsby benchmarks. You can do them dutifully and tick things off or you can make careers and skills education an integrated part at the heart of what you do.

For me, the biggest change that we need is the integrations of students and integrations of schools with their communities and the local labour market, and the integration of secondary with post-secondary. I know that it is not addressing the point directly about people from different backgrounds in specific types of courses, but I think that is the thing that is missing nationally in our education system, especially when we look at that White Paper about knowledge. Subjects have value in and of themselves and we need to teach kids that knowledge is important. At the same time, what is going to enthuse students is seeing that they can do something with that knowledge. You can do that whether students are four or 14.

Q198 **Chair:** Very quickly on the GCSE issue about not passing maths and English when they are at school, the burden is put on the colleges or the next school to do it. Would one option be that they stay at school an extra term to try to do that before they go to college, or is that unfeasible?

Yiannis Koursis: I will try to answer your question, Chair, with a statistic. Of the 55% who come to us without a GCSE in English and maths, two thirds leave us with both, which was part of the vision of the White Paper for 2030, if I remember rightly—correct me if I am wrong. We are doing it now. I would say that we are very well placed. It is



something to do with the relevance. If I pick from Martin's point on hearts and minds, it is the extent to which there is relevance for what they do. When they come to us, we say, "You haven't got it but it is fine. You want to be an engineer? Well, listen, you have to have this and this to do this". Suddenly, the pain eases off a bit because there is purpose. There is connectivity. There is relevance. The hearts and minds discussion happens quite early when they come to us.

Q199 Anna Firth: I hear what you say about BTECs and not getting rid of BTECs, and I wholeheartedly agree with that, but I do think that there is room for T-levels as well. I would like to ask you if you plan to offer T-levels. If not, is that a permanent position? If you do plan to offer T-levels or if you are already offering them, what is working well, what could we improve on and what is not working?

Andria Singlehurst: We are linking up at the moment with, for example, Bournemouth University to devise a T-level for a midway point. They have a lot of joiners to some of their digital courses who would then drop out because they are not prepared. We are looking to design a T-level that would work lower down and then almost wrap that around the curriculum before key stage 5 to prepare the students to succeed at the university level, looking then to see who the employers are, for example, who pick up the dropouts at university and then working to stitch those into the workplace providers lower down because they will have jobs that then would equate to the T-level. We are designing the system around the children and the local community there.

Yiannis Koursis: We were a pilot of T-levels. We run T-levels. We were a pilot of the transitional programme and we are currently piloting T-levels for adults. Other than the results issue and the health T-level issue that you are very well aware of, they have been a success. The results are outstanding. The engagement with businesses is strong, but I have to caveat it with saying small numbers. Currently, we have 270 students. We will have more than 2,000 students in two years' time, and even if the BTEC already has not been defunded, wherever we believe there is an overlap we have stopped doing the BTEC ourselves and we have moved on to T-levels. With the health and the childcare old qualification we value the work experience element, the industrial placement. It is powerful.

So, a new qualification, specs were out late, some challenge around the inclusivity and the social mobility, which is a different issue but that could be said about a lot of qualifications, but overall we believe it is a success. I go back to my belief around the mixed economy. I think that there has to be a variety. Where there is an overlap, clearly that overlap needs to be addressed, but we have seen T-levels as a success.

Tina Götschi: We are planning to offer the digital design and production only next year, not the transition programme, and we are recruiting a small cohort for that. The challenge for us and the reason we have put it off so long is the student and parent perception. We offer the triple BTEC, which is in their minds possibly a similar type of qualification. It is very



successful; those students go on to great universities or apprenticeships. We have a good model; why do we add another one? If universities are not accepting it, and I know there are some issues around that, I would not feel comfortable saying to a student, "This closes doors in the future to you".

The work experience element, while it is very powerful, we agree it has a high overhead in terms of the organisation, making sure that that is high-quality work experience. Our issues are always capacity. It is hard enough recruiting computer science teachers who have experience in the BTEC or the A-level but we would need the next type of teacher who would be willing to take on building a new qualification. I know that there is quite a lot of support around it, but even with that it needs time and capacity and that is always a huge challenge.

Q200 Anna Firth: You have raised two issues I would like to explore a little bit more. On work experience, I have a college, South Essex College in Southend, a superb institution, that would agree with you about T-levels. The limiting factor appears to be getting the 45 days of work experience and getting that committed for the two-year period. I would like to know, first, if that has been your experience and, secondly, if you have any advice for us as a Committee on how to ensure that work experience lasts the full two years and is not withdrawn at the end of the first year, leaving T-level students and the college high and dry.

Q201 Chair: Can I add to that? Over the past year there was a £1,000 incentive to companies to do the work placements for the T-levels. That is now dropped. Is that going to make a big difference and do companies need a financial incentive to do this?

Tina Götschi: It really depends on the company. My gut feel would be that the financial incentive is not—everyone is struggling to recruit good people and it is about what money can't buy. You need these champions in the companies that are going to do these placements. Again, you might have a good agreement with the organisation in principle but someone needs to drive it internally. We found that with our industry partners as well. We have strong relationships with certain companies in industry, but it rests on that person and that relationship. You need relationship managers for that and that is not something that necessarily schools or colleges know how to do or know about. The £1,000 is a drop in the ocean. We would ideally like to have a position, that relationship manager, who would do that work, but the going market rate for something like that—

Chair: With a big company, that will work, but with a small business, you are not going to have a relationship manager.

Tina Götschi: It would be then one to many. You might have someone who is working with all the small companies, then a one to one with a bigger company. Again, it has to do with that champion that you have in that organisation. It is a lot easier in London. I cannot imagine in



Southend. Down in Exeter, I know that they also struggle with that sort of thing because there is just not enough industry around and you cannot be sending a 16 or 17-year-old on a two-hour train journey.

Q202 Anna Firth: Absolutely not, but could that T-level champion, which I think is a very good idea, not be based within the colleges? It is unrealistic to expect particularly SMEs, even reasonably sized companies, to have a T-level champion on site, but the college could have the T-level champion.

Yiannis Koursis: There are two things. I do not know of a further education college that does not have a business development team, that does not deal with businesses and employers. We attach the activity, not the work necessarily, the full body of work, to that body alongside our work experience team. We have approached it holistically with businesses. It is not just about selling apprentices, it is about engaging and addressing your broad plans as a business and your recruitment issues. It is about investing in people who will be your future workforce.

I think that the £1,000 will drive perverse behaviours and I do not think that these are the behaviours we would want to associate with any new qualification or the support of a young person. I think that the relationship is the important thing. Businesses would buy something that they see the benefit from beyond a CSR drive. They benefit because they will recruit. We see in our graduates, the first cohort of T-levels, they have jobs with those businesses.

My colleagues to my left and my right mentioned universities. I do not think a university three-year undergraduate is the right route for a T-level student. The challenge is that the development of HTQs has lagged behind the development of T-levels so the route is not fully defined as yet. I genuinely believe that a T-level should lead you to higher technical qualifications, not two years of T-level, go and do a geography degree or a three-year undergrad. Because the HTQ development is lagging a bit behind, it is very hard for us as the sector to describe the narrative to the business, to say, "Take that learner and then we can follow them with a higher apprenticeship at 4 and 5 and be very productive".

In terms of work experience and the industrial placement, I think that the challenge is more about the sectors represented in your locale, not necessarily the volume of business that exists. There would be T-levels coming down the line for which there is not an employment sector representative in Barnsley that I could deliver.

Anna Firth: That is really interesting. I want to give everyone a chance to come in on it.

Andria Singlehurst: There is definitely something in relationship building. The children that we serve are from areas where talent needs to be nurtured to lift those areas further. Working with employers that are more local, and I appreciate that our London schools may find it simpler



to find larger organisations than our schools based elsewhere in the country, nurturing that local community—and I think that XP has a very similar philosophy—to help keep the talent in the area to drive the workforce forward is important for us. It is definitely about relationships with the businesses and having real projects that students would be working on as part of it. It has gone beyond work experience where you would go and do work experience. This is real. They are working on the most exciting projects. They are taking industry forward at the age of 18 rather than simply going to do work experience.

Anna Firth: Fantastic, thank you. Martin, did you want to answer any of these questions?

Martin Said: Again, my colleagues can speak with much more authority about T-levels, but just to build on that point, yes, absolutely, we talk to our students in terms of their local community in Doncaster and in Gateshead. We want them to go off and to do other educational qualifications or to go into apprenticeships but then to come back to Doncaster or Gateshead and make it a better place.

We find, even at a secondary level where we are trying to give the students these authentic projects to do at the end of their learning expeditions, what we suggest is so far beyond the experience of what companies normally do. We work carefully with those partners to develop these authentic projects, but typically we come up against, “We have a workshop model, we could come in and do some sessions with the students for an hour”. What we really want to do is just what has been described, which is, “Can you design an authentic problem for our students to solve?” That is when you get that buy-in from the students and that is when, hopefully, at the age of 12 or 13 students start to realise, “I want to be a geologist”, or, “I want to be a historian”, or, “I want to be an English teacher”, because they have had that experience at secondary level. In terms of T-levels, I have nothing more to add.

Anna Firth: That is a way of embedding skills training naturally into the curriculum.

Martin Said: Absolutely.

Anna Firth: I am going to hand over to my colleague now.

Q203 **Miriam Cates:** It is a fascinating discussion. Thank you all so much. I am going to start with Yiannis because Barnsley College is just outside my constituency and I have had the pleasure of visiting a few times. It is an absolutely incredible institution.

I want to pick up on something you were saying, Yiannis, about this mixed economy. I completely agree with you. Our economy is a mixed economy and we need to train people for all different kinds of skills. Perhaps one of the things that we have got wrong in the past is swinging from a pendulum of everyone should do A-levels, everyone should go to



higher education, and now everybody should go technical or everybody should go vocational. We have huge skill shortages in particular sectors in our economy now as a result of that pendulum swinging too far one way or the other. Could you talk through the kind of mixed economy that is available at Barnsley College—you almost have a monopoly on intake in Barnsley because you take such a high percentage of students—and how you think smaller colleges or colleges in areas where they do not have so many students, or in rural areas potentially, could do to replicate that mixed economy without the resources that you have?

Yiannis Koursis: Yes, we have in a way. We have a tertiary system in Barnsley that I would always argue works because it saves on things like competition and duplication. I would always advocate the system. If you do not have the benefit that we have, it is about collaboration with other providers to create the ecosystem. The ecosystem for us exists in our college. We have that economy of scale. If you zoom out at 15,000 feet, you could create that through collaboration with other partners. I mean collaboration in the true spirit of collaboration, to recognise who are the specialists in what, who can offer what, who offers very good pre-16, post-16. There are FE colleges that do not have a sixth form because the schools have them. There are FE colleges that have a small sixth form and then there are 10 schools around them that have 20 students each. There has to be a discussion about whether that is the best way and whether it adds value.

It is very easy for me to say that, isn't it, but it is about having that discussion about collaboration and creating a system, a local system. Hopefully, the LSIP will drive some of that, albeit that that again is linked to employment and it is not linked necessarily to education. Skills and employment, we tend to think that they are one and the same and sometimes they are not. I think that it is creating a local system of partnership, collaboration and recognition of who is best placed in terms of intake in schools and feeder schools.

Q204 **Miriam Cates:** Fascinating. I want to pick up again on the issue with GCSE English and maths. You have all talked about how important a broad curriculum is, but it seems to me that the pre-16 curriculum could do with being less broad. What is the point of trying to learn to run before you can walk? If they are not sufficient in maths and English, why are we expecting children to do French, history and geography? Would it not be better for those 11 to 16 years to be much more foundational in the core skills and the core subjects so that then when they arrive at your institutions they have the foundations upon which to explore?

Andria Singlehurst: I think that it is about pathways for children and having flexibility in the system to best serve each child. For some children, exactly what you have described is appropriate, I believe; for other children they are ready to fly, particularly at the moment after the last three years. It is about having the flexibility to have those individualised pathways.



Q205 **Miriam Cates:** But while the league tables expect a particular number of GCSEs and that is what schools are being judged on, it is very difficult for schools to move into that flexibility.

Andria Singlehurst: Our job is to do what is right for children, and for some children, a small number of children, that narrowed curriculum, if it enables them to secure the basic skills that they need to succeed in life, would be appropriate.

Q206 **Miriam Cates:** But if 55% of students are not arriving—and that is just Yiannis's arm, so it would be interesting to find out what the case is in other colleges—that is not a small number of students. That is the majority of students who, aged 16, after 12 years of fully funded education, have not gained the basic skills that they need to access a level 3 qualification. That is not a minority of students. That is an astounding number of students. That might be less in different areas, but that is quite a stark number and it suggests that it is the pre-16 curriculum and model that is the problem and not necessarily the post-16.

Tina Götschi: We are post-16, but my feeling is that it is not about the fact that the GCSE curriculum is too wide. There are some real failings and I think that Yiannis mentioned that it is much earlier on in literacy and numeracy. It is not necessarily English and maths GCSE because the foundation of that is the literacy and numeracy. We have students who need to redo an English GCSE but they have passing grades in history. How does that work? Maybe it is about the way English is examined and assessed in that GCSE. I am sure that lots of people know a lot more about this than I do, but I get the feeling that there are other problems at play. It is not a broad curriculum. It is something about the assessment of maths and English at GCSE level. That does not mean we need to change that, but let's look into what the issue is. If you manage to get 6s and 5s in science and in history and you do not have a pass in English or maths, that is quite odd.

Q207 **Miriam Cates:** It is a bit odd, yes. That brings me on to Martin because I am fascinated by these learning expeditions, which sounds like they give purpose to the learning. Rather than learn the first 20 elements of the periodic table, you are giving a reason for the learning that is taking place. I would be interested if you could flesh that out. I would also love to hear more about the character development around these crews. A lot of employers say to me that it is not academic skill or technical knowledge that students lack, but the resilience, the communication skills, the ability to work in a team, and the ability to try again. Those are the skills that they wish people had and not necessarily the academic ones.

Martin Said: In terms of the GCSE and the English and maths conundrum, I would agree that we need to go right back to the root cause, and many of these causes are socioeconomic. That is a nettle we need to grapple with and grasp nationally. As Yiannis said, it starts very



HOUSE OF COMMONS

early. I know that we need to be careful with results from key stage 2 this year in comparison with other years, but typically we are talking about at primary level two thirds of kids meeting the standard and then that drops off at secondary. There is something that happens to children in secondary education when they go through adolescence and their relationship with their education, and that is part of the problem that we are trying to solve at XP.

The crews are a fundamental part of students being able to show resilience and it is one of the reasons why we are careful not to talk about traditional schools because our values are as traditional as they get. We talk to students about courage, respect, craftsmanship, equality, integrity, and our strapline is "Above All, Compassion", but crew is the vehicle through which, for us, those are not just words on a wall. Students in crews of 12 or 13 meet for 45 minutes every day, but fundamental to that is the idea that they hold each other to account. They hold each other to account because they agree that their work is important. They know that there is a purpose, as you say, through the products that they create at the end of each learning expedition and through the questions that they answer. Each learning expedition is organised around a guiding question and sometimes those are practical and technical in nature: how can we create a sustainable energy future? Sometimes those are philosophical in nature. Our year 8s at the moment are grappling with what it means to be human.

To paint a picture of what that looks like in practice, you have a learning expedition like we did with year 7 last year called "What a wonderful world", where students were answering the question: what is our relationship with the natural world? They were reading an anchor text, which was "A Life on Our Planet" by David Attenborough, because essentially the story of that expedition was the story of that documentary and that text. When we talk about saving the planet, the climate emergency and the greatest crisis of our times, what we are actually talking about is saving ourselves.

In history, they are looking at the different types of evidence that you can look at as a historian and archaeological evidence in Maya civilisations and the extent to which we can judge that their fragile relationship with their ecosystem was imbalanced and whether we can make judgments that that was the reason that the lowland civilisations were abandoned. At the same time, we learned from "The Green Planet" how local governance can contribute to green spaces.

There is a connectivity and a richness in the curriculum where we are taking those national curriculum standards and bringing them to life for the students. At the end, for that expedition the students' community product was that they created a geocaching route for families where they could go out and explore and enjoy some of these green spaces with an associated website where students have written poems about species that are under protection in the Durham biodiversity action plan.



To come back to crew, what that enables us to do is students will use crew as a means to reflect on each other's progress. Crew for 45 minutes one week might be about, "Martin is really struggling in maths, so let's work out how we can help Martin in maths". It might also be that some of the PSHE curriculum goes in there as well. It is about students understanding that their mission is the success of everybody in their crew, so on the first day at school for our students we take them on an Outward Bound adventure. It is another misconception about the school that we are an outdoor adventure school, and we are not. On the bonds that they form in crew, students will talk to you about it being a family and that they have a shared sense of purpose, which is the success of everybody. That requires an investment in time. It requires an investment in training of staff to be crew leaders when you are talking about that ratio of students to adults, but we could not do all the things that we do in terms of the logistical aspects of the way that we put the curriculum together without crew. It just would not be possible.

Q208 Miriam Cates: Is there any external verification or academic research that has gone into measuring the impact of that on a 16-year-old's skills in terms of self-awareness, resilience—those soft skills? Has there been any external research into that?

Martin Said: We work with the Edge Foundation because our aims in terms of what an education ought to be are aligned. We opened our first school in 2014, so of our first set of students, a lot of those students now are in third year of higher education. The only hard data that we have is if you look at those pupil destinations, we had 2% NEET and 98% of students staying in education or employment for at least two terms. When you look at the national average, 96% staying in education for at least two terms after key stage 4, that was 81% in Doncaster versus 87% nationally.

Post-16 was originally part of our plan and after our school was granted permission to open, an out-of-town large sixth form college was granted to open. Ultimately, we lost a lot of our students to that. For a lot of our students we were a victim of our own success and they went there. Anecdotally—and it is not anecdotal because every one of these is a child—we know that our students who went to that college stood out from other students because of their capacity to form study groups.

There is no empirical research but there is provenance in America if you look at the EL Education model, particularly around disadvantaged students and students from different socioeconomic backgrounds and the nature of their destinations after that. That is the model that we are most closely akin to, EL Education in the US.

Chair: Kim Johnson had a question.

Q209 Kim Johnson: It was a question about something Yiannis said earlier. You spoke about T-levels being a success. I just wanted to know what work you did in tracking destination, particularly around education and



HOUSE OF COMMONS

childcare. We know that sector at the moment is struggling and a lot of nurseries are closing down. I just wanted to know how you monitor success.

Yiannis Koursis: Our first cohort of students who have completed the T-levels have largely progressed into higher-level skills, which includes university. We have only one student who did not go into a high-skilled occupation, which was the original intent of T-levels, high-skilled occupations. Everybody else, 70-odd per cent—and I am happy to write back to the Committee with the exact figures if required at a later date—went to further study, higher-level study, either higher apprenticeships or higher education, and the rest other than one student went into employment.

Predominantly, the ones that went to employment went to employment with the businesses that they had the industrial placement with. After 45 days, you develop a sense of belonging in the team because it is meaningful. It is not photocopying. It is different. They want to work. In some cases, we had students changing T-level because they did not think that was what the industry they chose was like. One way or another, whichever way you look at it, it was beneficial.

Q210 **Apsana Begum:** Good morning, panel. I want to start with a question for Tina first. Ada's curriculum model has the BTEC national in computing at its core, and Ada submitted written evidence that criticised the withdrawal of funding for BTECs. Can you expand on the concerns that you have had in this area?

Tina Götschi: In terms of the withdrawal of funding, we have been incredibly successful with the BTEC. It is a great qualification. It has that combination of knowledge, skills and behaviour. At its core the students write two exams, which are equivalent to the A-level in computer science. They also learn many skills that will be useful for them in the world of work, including things like project management, which they would never do within an A-level. Through the coursework element, because now with the BTEC there is coursework and exams, they learn the behaviours of being organised, time management, study and that sort of thing. It is a qualification that suits higher education. I have had students who go on to university and say, "I am so glad I did the BTEC because it got me ready for the kind of study that I need to do, report writing and that sort of thing", or straight into the world of work or an apprenticeship.

I agree that there is probably a place for T-levels as well, but that T-level/A-level split is much too binary. All our students alongside the BTEC do one A-level. That is the other power of the BTEC: it allows us to mix between these two qualifications rather than having students make this hard choice of going A-level route or T-level route, academic or technical. It just seems to me that if it ain't broke don't fix it. Why are we throwing out something that employers, students and universities like and that really works, when there is no need to do that?



Q211 Apsana Begum: Do you think that the DfE is not listening to the sector feedback? I am looking at one statistic here: 86% of respondents to the DfE's level 3 consultation disagreed with the proposal to remove funding for qualifications that were deemed to overlap with A-levels and T-levels, taking the opposite course to what has been suggested by the majority of respondents.

Tina Götschi: Yes, I am afraid we do feel that way. I know that there was a publication yesterday or the day before about the BTECs that will no longer be funded because of overlap. Because we offer the BTEC in computing, we have a bit of a stay of execution, but we are now waiting for when the overlap with the A-levels comes along. Then maybe our qualification will no longer be funded, so we feel like we have this sword hanging over our heads. We don't know if what we developed as our core curriculum is going to survive. It seems to be rationalising this narrowing, "Okay, this is the way that we think things need to go".

Give us some time to work with and develop those T-levels, see what students it is suited for, what kind of progression there is. As Yiannis said, if the progression is not there, if you are building this step, it is like we are building the runway as the plane is taking off. How can I say to a student, "Yes, you should do a T-level" when for a lot of students when they join us, as much as they would like to say, "I definitely want to do an apprenticeship", in a year's time they change their mind, "I want to do a university course" and then in a year's time they change their mind again? It is quite hard as a young person to say, "Absolutely, in two years' time I am not going to want to go to university". For example, in the year 2020 most of our students ended up going to university because apprenticeships did not exist. Companies pulled them. I just cannot in good conscience say to a student, "Let's take those keys to your future doors away now before the world has changed in two years' time", which we see; it can change on a dime. Why defund something that is successful? Sure, if it is not successful, I get it.

Q212 Apsana Begum: Other panel members might want to come in. The DfE is probably listening to what you are saying. If you had a message for it, what are you worried about in terms of the impact of that withdrawal of funding? Is it mainly pupils dropping out? Is it mainly the access to academically demanding T-levels and A-levels?

Tina Götschi: It is students' futures. It is their future dreams. As Andria said, we are doing this for those students and what their futures could be. We can see how great the BTEC is. We have the evidence of the fantastic progression routes that they go on. Why would we take that away from them?

Yiannis Koursis: Very briefly, I think that there is an issue with the definition of overlap. The overlap that I referred to earlier has to be the content overlap, not the title. I totally agree in terms of the overlap argument.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

I think there is the assumption that closing what exists will promote the new, and I am not necessarily fully in support of that. What would promote the new is a different strategy than just closing what exists. We tend to forget that BTECs have been reformed and they are really tough. If we had this discussion 10 years ago I might have said kill them, but they are actually really tough.

I think we agree but we arrive at the same point from different angles. The two issues for me if we remove all the BTECs is the social mobility, the fact that, as I mentioned, you are probably not going to have industrial placements for all the T-levels in every locale, and then the access around the SEND students. In the current cohort 10% of our T-level students are SEND students. We have greater than that in BTECs because that is how it happens. I am in favour of keeping BTECs that add the value, not devaluing T-levels by keeping BTECs and not overestimating the value of T-levels because we have closed BTECs.

Q213 Apsana Begum: That brings me to my next question and I am keen to hear from other panel members as well. What do you think the Government should do to mitigate the impact of changes to level 3 qualifications, particularly for those from disadvantaged backgrounds and with special educational needs—which you mentioned, Yiannis—but those from ethnic minority backgrounds and working class backgrounds, for example?

Tina Götschi: The easiest answer to that is don't axe the BTECs because already they do a lot of that work for us. It is very difficult to be able to do that, as Yiannis says, with T-levels if those work placements are not high quality and they are not there. Whoever is disadvantaged will now be doubly disadvantaged because they may not want to access A-levels and then they are doing a T-level where the work experience element is not of high value or there is no next step for them.

You would also not have this binary model of all one or all the other anymore. You do not have a model where you can do some BTECs and some A-levels. That has been so powerful for our students because they still have an understanding of both. They still have many options in the future, which is what you need to give people: options. Options are power and if you take that away and you funnel them down to too small a route too early on, then disadvantages just become compounded in greater disadvantages.

Martin Said: It is an important point you raise in terms of socioeconomic groups and people from disadvantaged backgrounds because making the right decision at the right time becomes even more important. If you start off on a university course or you start off on a T-level and find that you are in the wrong place, that comes with an expense to that person and it comes with an expense to the Government and to universities as well.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

I would agree with everything that has been said about the breadth of the offer. We need to be going in the opposite direction in terms of the breadth of what students can study and the stage at which they can make a decision about what career paths they are going to go into. I know that it is a concern at the moment the number of students who are looking at potentially dropping out because of the cost of living and being a student. It is an important point, that breadth of offer and the ability to specialise at an appropriate age, which is why I come back to the point right at the beginning that a baccalaureate and a broader offer at key stage 5 is really important.

Apsana Begum: It occurs to me that with the BTEC qualification the flexibility, the size, the structure and the approach seems to be something that may appeal or be more supportive to SEND children in particular, which may be missing from T-levels, and that is something that needs to be thought about. Thank you, panel.

Q214 **Chair:** On the BTECs issue, first of all you said, Yiannis, that you have to look at the BTECs that offer value and you might get rid of the ones that did not offer value. Is that correct?

Yiannis Koursis: No. If we define what the overlap is, and it is beyond just the title of it, then we need to look at the BTECs and where they fit in the ecosystem of an A-level, a BTEC and a T-level and keep the ones that will aid the social mobility, aid the SEND—

Q215 **Chair:** How do you do that? How do you define the ones that give value?

Yiannis Koursis: There isn't a T-level for sport, so I would say keep the BTEC for sport. That is a very simple example. Or art. I would keep those. If there isn't a T-level forthcoming, I would keep that—

Q216 **Chair:** If there is a T-level you would say you are okay about getting rid of the BTECs?

Yiannis Koursis: Provided that the overlap goes beyond just the definition.

Q217 **Chair:** The other thing I wanted to say is that a lot of the argument for BTECs is that it helps disadvantaged students. That is important, but I think that is the wrong argument. What I think that we should be saying is that BTECs offer value because they get people jobs and employment, whether they are disadvantaged or advantaged. Otherwise you have a two-tier education system. I do not like this argument that because disadvantaged people do them we should do them. Everything we do in our Committee is to try to address those injustices in education and I am very pro BTEC, I want them to stay. Could you explain first whether you understand what I am saying, and can you also demonstrate that those who do BTECs get higher wages and get into employment, good jobs, or go on to additional higher or further education?



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tina Götschi: We have good evidence that our students do progress to good jobs in the digital sector. That is why we are the college for digital skills—because we feel that tech is a real engine for social mobility. It is also a great career with very good salaries and wages. That is because our students do both the BTEC but then high-value A-level alongside that, like maths or psychology. That for me is important as well. If you have a student who can access an A-level in maths or psychology or business studies, why limit them from doing that? The BTEC allows them to do both, whereas if they went the T-level route, they would not have access to any A-levels whether they are able to or not.

We know that the combination of qualifications our students leave Ada with allows them to access great apprenticeships, degree apprenticeships or level 4 or 5 apprenticeships, but mainly level 6 apprenticeships, so they are getting a degree as well, or great university courses that then lead on to very good graduate jobs. That is across the board, all our students, not just those who come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Yiannis Kouris: I am going to try to weave three things in my answer. We talked about the narrow curriculum. Martin introduced the notion of a cost. Changing your mind comes at a cost. Then we are talking about the BTECs. We have an education system that uses proxies. We use GCSEs as a proxy of intellect, ability and aptitude. We use A-levels as a proxy of one's ability to complete a university degree even if the A-levels were not in the subject for which they have applied. What happens by virtue of that is that changing your mind only becomes a cost if you have had a narrow curriculum. If you have had the breadth, then changing your mind is not a problem because you are going to land somewhere that you can further pursue as an option.

T-levels are for people who have probably made their mind up. A-levels are for people who have made their mind up and even if they do not, they will get a place at university. BTEC adds that cost saving—I know that I am on public record here—that Martin introduced of somebody changing their mind and not knowing what they can do now. For me, that is a platform where students get fantastic experience, I totally agree. They get fantastic development with an academic rigour to go with it, given the reforms. They can proceed and progress and go into destinations.

Our destinations with BTECs are fantastic. They are a very good qualification. The way I could describe T-levels is it raised the bar. I recognise my argument contains the two-tier argument that you introduced, Chair, which is a very valid point, but it is not that they are better. It raised the bar, but that does not mean that everybody should and could. Because then, if they change their mind or if they do not have the GCSEs, that comes at a cost.

Andria Singlehurst: We also run a provision at post-16 that enables children to do BTECs and A-levels. It does not make sense in my mind's



eye to be narrowing that to a choice between T-levels or the traditional A-level route simply to give leverage to getting T-levels off the ground. That provision of BTEC absolutely does what Tina describes. It allows a student to choose later on and it feels like offering a broader choice to students is where we should be heading.

Martin Said: To echo all those points, I would ask a similar question to Tina, which is: why would we prevent a student from doing a physics A-level, an applied engineering qualification at level 3, and art and design, say, if they are not certain what they want to do? That leaves pathways open to them. I know it has been part of the discussion, too, the wider discussion in terms of feedback we have had about a credit system, which especially as you get into higher education would prevent those financial penalties for students who want to change and make a decision based on experience and based on a level of maturity. That is the only thing that I would add to that discussion.

Q218 **Chair:** Finally, obviously this inquiry is into widening the curriculum and predominantly post-16 education, but we are looking at GCSEs as well. If you all had one thing, literally one thing, in a short sentence, that we need in our recommendations, what would you have?

Martin Said: To clarify the point, about reform of GCSE?

Chair: The inquiry that we are doing is on widening the curriculum in post-16 education, but we are looking at GCSEs as well. In a nutshell, what is the one recommendation you would put in our report?

Martin Said: In a nutshell, I would say that we need to bring the integration of school and community and industry further down the education system, not just in post-16 but in key stage 4 and key stage 3 right the way down to key stage 2 and key stage 1.

Chair: Thank you. I am completely with you on that.

Andria Singlehurst: This goes back to Miriam's question about narrowing the curriculum for those children who do not have English and maths, and it echoes what Martin just said. It is more about broadening the curriculum lower down so that children have real world opportunities to develop their skills as part of the curriculum.

Yiannis Kouris: I think if we waited another year or two, with the Covid generation of children who come through pre-16 education, we will be astounded by the evidence as to the efficacy of GCSEs and the way they are configured now. I believe that they need to be reformed. I think that they are very narrow, and because we are conditioned on the proxy system, people are trying to teach to the test as if achieving the grade is the be-all and end-all for a young person, not the skills development.

Tina Götschi: Because knowledge, skills and behaviours are the things that we are trying to instil, do not drop the BTECs because they do that so well.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Q219 **Chair:** That was brilliant, four very good recommendations summarised superbly. Thank you very much, all of you. It was invaluable and we really appreciate it. Thank you for what you do for skills and further education. I have watched the XP video, by the way, and it is incredible. I urge all Committee members to watch it. There is a short version and a longer version, but it really is incredible. I would love loads of people in education to see that video, so you need to spread it widely. It is brilliant.

Martin Said: Thank you, and thanks for accommodating me online.

Chair: I hope to visit the big academy one day because I would love to see it in practice.

Martin Said: Please do.

Chair: Thank you very much, all of you, and good luck.