



# FOUNDATION DEGREES

Meeting the need for higher level skills





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# Ministerial Foreword



Realising our nations' potential to be a competitive, productive economy requires an ever growing proportion of highly skilled, well qualified people. This Government has set out the pathways for vocational and academic training needed to meet those skill needs at all levels, from basic skills, through to intermediate<sup>(1)</sup> and higher level skills. We know, for example, that eight out of ten jobs to be created over the next ten years will be in occupations most likely to employ those with Higher Education qualifications. Research by the Institute for Employment Research in 2001 estimated that jobs at the associate professional and technician level would increase by around 790,000 between 1999-2010. The Employer Skills Survey 2002 found that associate professional occupations – those highly skilled jobs that support health, education, legal, technical, and other professionals in doing their work – were a “hot-spot” for skills shortage vacancies.

Universities, higher and further education colleges have been responding to the needs of the employment market, and the development of Foundation Degrees presents an opportunity to make sure there is a steady supply of highly skilled people to meet the needs of the economy.

We want employers to see Foundation Degrees as an opportunity to help fill the skills gap. We want young and mature students to see them as a high quality higher education option and we want those in work to recognise that Foundation Degrees present an excellent chance for them to extend their skills. We also want them to contribute to sectoral and regional skills strategies.

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<sup>(1)</sup>Intermediate level skills are those skills regarded as being needed for intermediate level occupations, that is: for associate professional, technician, administrative, and skilled trade occupations. They also include the skills required at junior management level. Examples are; Police Officer, Medical Technician, Aircraft Engineer, Teaching Assistant, Chemical Technician.

With the introduction of any new qualification – there are bound to be questions. Is the quality right? Do they represent value for money? Do they respond to employers concerns?

The early signs are good. Foundation Degrees are gaining in popularity with students across the age range.

Last year about 12,000 people were studying for Foundation Degrees and this year we expect to see further expansion. More and more employers, higher education institutions, and employer bodies are also getting involved.

But, for the demands of the economy to be fully met – we need more. We need more employers to get involved in the design and creation of Foundation Degrees. We need more universities, higher and further education colleges to work closely with employers, Sector Skills Councils and Regional Development Agencies to introduce flexible Foundation Degree courses that meet the needs of employers and students. And we need more students to consider Foundation Degrees as an alternative high quality higher education qualification.

We have already made a good start. Following the early success of Foundation Degrees we have agreed with the Higher Education Funding Council for

England (HEFCE) that an additional 10,000 places should be made available for Foundation Degrees in 2004/05. That means a steady build up in the number of new places available. By 2006 we hope to have 50,000 places available. But, we must generate extra demand to meet this growth in supply.

This progress report is an invitation to all those interested in providing public and private sector employees with the skills needed in tomorrow's workforce. I hope employers, professional bodies, universities, higher and further education colleges and prospective graduates respond by making Foundation Degrees a popular success and I look forward to new and innovative Foundation Degrees in the public and private sector coming on stream from next year.



ALAN JOHNSON

*“Last year about 12,000 people were studying for Foundation Degrees and this year we expect to see further expansion. More and more employers, higher education institutions, and employer bodies are also getting involved.”*

# Section 1: Introduction

This document will be of interest to a number of audiences, but is primarily aimed at universities, colleges, employers, Sector Skills Councils and Regional Development Agencies.



## 1.1 Introduction

**The purpose of this document** is to set out the case for further expansion of Foundation Degrees in England, to report on the progress we have made, and to set out the next steps in establishing the new qualification.

We have set a number of objectives for the development of Foundation Degrees:

- to contribute to the reduction in skill shortages at the associate professional and higher technician level by equipping students with a combination of technical skills, academic knowledge and transferable skills that are valued by employers and students;
- to expand the number and range of Foundation Degrees and contribute to widening participation by providing flexible and accessible progression routes for young people starting careers, those in employment, and those returning to work;
- to promote collaboration between employers, Regional Development Agencies, Sector Skills Councils, universities, higher and further education colleges in developing Foundation Degrees.

## 1.2 Why Foundation Degrees?

It is widely accepted that we need to improve the skill levels of young people and adults if we are to improve our economic performance and narrow the productivity gap with our major international competitors. Surveys of current and future skill shortages identify particular pressures at associate professional and higher technician level jobs. Foundation Degrees are designed with employer input to address these skill shortages, providing individuals with the specialist knowledge, work related skills, and broader understanding needed in the 21st century economy.

## Automotive Engineering Hams Hall, (West Midlands)

As part of a company with an international production network and a claim to be one of the leading premium brand manufacturers in the automotive industry today, investing in training and development programmes for its employees has always been high on the agenda at BMW's engine plant at Hams Hall, near Birmingham.

However, due to the time structure of other education and training courses, it wasn't always easy to offer the right courses to the right employees at the right time. BMW therefore decided to look at the opportunity to have direct input into designing a new type of qualification, the Foundation Degree. Bob Lyall, Training Manager at BMW Hams Hall, says "The level of involvement we were able to have in deciding how the course would be structured and the content within it were important opportunities that we were keen to take advantage of."

The Foundation Degree was set up by BMW in partnership with City College Coventry to build on the high standards the company has already set in developing employees' abilities and skills throughout their time with the company. Bob continues: "The Foundation Degree in Automotive Engineering has provided our employees with the necessary in-depth, underpinning knowledge that enables them to make informed decisions about the technical aspects of the processes here at Hams Hall."

The employees on the course are equally enthusiastic about the Foundation Degree. Simon Worship, an assembly associate, adds, "I was always looking to improve on my current qualifications in a way that wouldn't interfere too much with my work pattern. The course structure meant my managers were extremely supportive in getting me on the course and learning the next level of skills needed to progress at BMW." Simon was one of the first production employees to go on the course and is in no doubt he's benefiting already from the skills he is learning.



Simon Worship, working to improve his qualifications with a Foundation Degree

There are variations in the skill base within different employment sectors and also at regional and local level. Universities, higher and further education colleges can work with the Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) and Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) to develop Foundation Degrees that meet local, regional and national needs. The development of SSCs Sector Agreements announced in the Skills Strategy White Paper, and the work of the RDA led regional skills partnerships will be two ways in which these proposals can become a reality.

Many individuals decide that higher education is not for them. Therefore, they may not develop their full potential. In some cases disengagement from learning and lowered

expectations can lead to disaffection, with consequences felt not only by individuals, but by local communities, wider society and the whole economy. If we want a competitive economy and an inclusive society we need more young people and adults to acquire higher level skills and knowledge. This is the era of lifelong learning with adults returning to learning - full-time or part-time - often on more than one occasion in their lifetime in order to refresh their knowledge, upgrade their skills and sustain their employability. The introduction of Foundation Degrees provides an opportunity for both adults and young people to review their options in terms of what they want to study, when, how and where.

Foundation Degrees enable:

- a wide range of individuals to acquire up-to-date higher level skills;
- employers to have access to a well educated and innovative workforce;
- businesses to compete effectively in world markets;
- providers to offer relevant and innovative programmes which build stronger links between learning, HE qualifications and employability;
- public services to run efficiently and effectively by having a highly skilled and motivated workforce;
- the national, regional and local economies to benefit from developing a more competitive and inclusive society.

### 1.3 Links with other government initiatives

The development of Foundation Degrees is part of a range of initiatives and reforms that have been announced to support individuals, employers and institutions including:

#### • **14-19: Opportunity and Excellence**

The development of Foundation Degrees fits with one of the aims of the 14-19 curriculum reform, which is to transform the learning experience for young people, so that by the age of 16 they are committed to continuing learning, whether in school, college or the workplace. Plans include making high quality vocational options available to all students and, in the longer term, strengthening vocational programmes, and collaboration between providers. A clearer and more appropriate curriculum and qualifications framework for the 14-19 phase will develop and stretch all young people to achieve their full potential, and prepare them for life, higher education, and work in the 21st century.

#### • **The Future of Higher Education**

The Higher Education White Paper, published in January this year, made the commitment that new growth in HE during the current spending review period would be concentrated on Foundation Degrees. Overall, the White Paper set out a challenging agenda for reform in areas

including research; exchanging and developing knowledge and skills between HE and business; teaching and learning; expansion; fair access, and funding. On Foundation Degrees it made clear that their introduction into the HE Curriculum is not focused only on those entering vocational education after they have left school or college. It said they should also appeal to those already in employment and wishing to improve their career prospects, as well as providing a valuable route into employment for labour market returnees by giving recognition to prior achievement and qualifications.

#### • **The Skills Strategy**

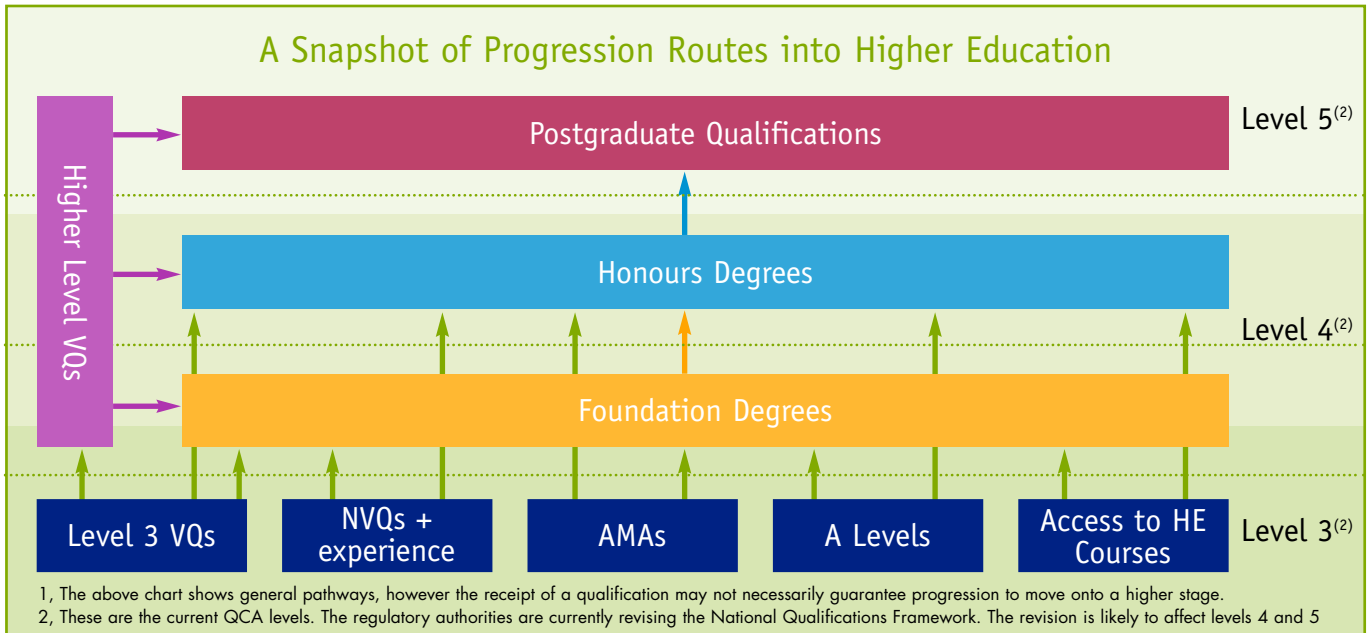
In July 2003, the Government launched the National Skills Strategy "21st Century Skills – Realising our Potential", which sets out a new vision for enabling businesses and individuals to play a leading part in the global economy. One of the key aims of the strategy is to introduce a more flexible and relevant qualifications framework which will allow people to build more precisely the skills they need. This will enable them to focus their learning effort more closely on their career aspirations and help employers to target their own training resources. Foundation Degrees will be a key part of the new qualifications framework by supporting progression to higher education through the vocational route.

### 1.4 What is a Foundation Degree?

Foundation Degrees are new, intermediate level, vocational higher education qualifications. They integrate academic and work-based learning through close collaboration between employers and universities/colleges.

They offer a new route into and through higher education. They can reduce the barriers to learning, offering part time, full time, modular, distance and e-based learning modes, or a combination of all these, across a variety of locations such as employer premises, higher and further education colleges and universities. They can also offer recognition of relevant prior learning and experience. They are distinctive because they require the active involvement of employers and employer bodies, such as the relevant Sector Skills Council (previously National Training Organisations) and professional bodies, in their design, implementation, and review.

## A Snapshot of Progression Routes into Higher Education



Foundation Degrees are a higher education qualification in their own right, but they can also provide the basis for progression to further professional or academic qualifications at higher levels. Many businesses see the value of building Foundation Degrees into their workforce development agendas, as an additional step in an employee's career pathway. Professional bodies also recognise that Foundation Degrees can provide routes to professional recognition and qualifications, especially those currently at work as support staff to full professionals.

Foundation Degrees can offer a clear higher education progression route for employees who may be on training programmes such as Advanced Modern Apprenticeships or other vocational programmes.

However, it is recognised that more work is needed to develop these vocational pathways. The development of a strong vocational progression route is a key strand of Foundation Degree activity. DfES is discussing with key agencies a programme of work to remove barriers to progression. This will include developing with the Learning & Skills Council (LSC), specific progression routes from Advanced Modern Apprenticeships.

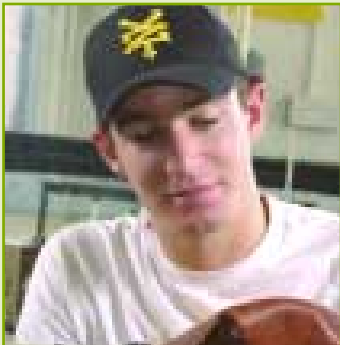
The LSC is already working with nine Sector Bodies to define and create where necessary new progression pathways for Advanced Modern Apprentices entering into Higher Education. The sectors include Early Years

NTO, Motor Industry Training Council (MITC), Hair and Beauty (HABIA/CSIA), Science Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies Alliance (SEMTA), Skills for Health, Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), Council for Administration (CfA), Sport Recreation and Allied Occupations Training Organisation (SPRITO/Skillsactive) and e-skills UK.

### 1.5 What is the appeal for students?

No matter what age and no matter what background, the appeal of a Foundation Degree is that it offers:

- a higher education qualification after two years of full-time study (or the equivalent learning spread over a longer period if undertaken part time);
- flexible delivery methods;
- the opportunity to undertake higher education while in work;
- a close relationship with employers;
- preparation for work in relevant occupations through vocationally specific curricula, development of employability skills and personal and professional development;
- an emphasis on work-based and work-related learning, including work experience;
- opportunities to progress to honours degree level and beyond, where appropriate.



Asher Clarke, 'Footwear Designer of the Year'

## London Institute Shoe Design (London)

London College of Fashion, as part of the London Institute, set up a Foundation Degree in Fashion Design & Technology, just over two years ago. With five different pathways for students to take, the course is proving hugely popular, as over 300 students are currently enrolled on the course. The pathways: Textiles for Fashion Embroidery, Textiles for Fashion Knitwear, Cordwainers Accessories, Cordwainers Footwear and Designer Pattern Cutter are overseen in part by course director Julia Gaimster, who comments "The strength of the course is in its vocational nature. As a college we were looking for a qualification that offered us the flexibility that our subject matter demands. The Foundation Degree did this and it fitted well with our undergraduate credit framework."

Asher Clarke a graduate from the Footwear pathway and recent winner of the 'Footwear Designer of the Year' says "The course will continue to go from strength to strength as the industry and those that teach within it realise the potential and skills that students graduating with this Foundation Degree have to offer." As the college has some of the most up to date equipment within the industry on site, it has meant that it could attract top name design companies in helping to work with the students on the course. They have been able to give real briefs to students to help them gain the necessary skills they will need when they move into the workplace.

Julia Gaimster continues, "This Foundation Degree course has been about widening participation across ages, cultures and educational experiences. It has allowed us to enrol increased numbers of non-traditional entrants into the college. And as the number of graduates armed with their Foundation Degree qualifications increases I believe the industry as a whole will begin to see a huge benefit."

### 1.6 The graduate benefits

Graduates from Foundation Degree courses are likely to have:

- better career prospects;
- increased job satisfaction.

### 1.7 The employer benefits

Foundation Degrees offer employers an opportunity to develop their existing workforce whilst they remain in the job as well as providing an entry route for new recruits.

From a company's perspective, developing existing staff in house may be less expensive than recruiting. There is also the advantage that the company is retaining experience. Equally, if a company were to offer sponsorship to Foundation Degree students they could select those who they believe to have the talent and the aspirations to help the company meet their immediate business needs and the

future challenges that the global economy is generating. High-level skills are increasingly important for competitiveness. For example, highly skilled employees are better able to adopt productivity-enhancing technology and new ways of working than an unskilled workforce.

Businesses can benefit from getting involved with local further and higher education institutions in the development of Foundation Degrees. They can communicate their learning needs to FE and HE and work alongside other partners such as the Sector Skills Councils, Regional Development Agencies, and professional bodies to develop a qualification which is of value to business, the sector and to the economy. By contributing to the design and development of the programme they ensure that what is produced meets both the individual's and the sector's demands, and has a positive effect on business outcomes.



Tayab Ali, working towards the full Honours degree

### Tayab Ali (Foundation Degree Graduate – North West)

Tayab Ali is a mature student from just outside Blackburn. He has just completed the two-year Foundation Degree course in Computing at Blackburn College. Tayab was one of the first round of graduates from the Foundation Degree course, and he says in a way he acted as an unofficial ambassador for the qualification. "When I started the Foundation Degree course it was very new and a lot of my friends asked about what type of qualification it was. I found myself talking about why it was different and why it worked for me and I think it may have even interested a few of them in looking into it further."

Tayab had a young family to look after and the timetable flexibility meant that Foundation Degrees were the right option for him when he first started to look into higher education.

"The job prospects two years ago didn't look that good. So I made the conscious decision to really look into furthering my education. I cannot believe what I have learnt in such a short space of time. The Computing Foundation Degree was excellent for giving me practical skills and experience that I will be able to use from day one in a computing work environment." So pleased with his experience on the Foundation Degree Course Tayab has decided to stay on and work to the full Honours degree.

"I surprised myself how much the course was able to give to me in terms of knowledge and understanding of complex computer applications and programming. I would recommend anyone that was looking to do a two year course in computing to take a long hard look at what the Foundation Degree has to offer. It worked for me and I think if you are coming back into education after an extended period then it is pitched exactly at the right level."

### Martin Walsh Associates (National)

Martin Walsh, a partner at Martin Walsh Associates, believes that staff training is a vital part of running a successful business.

His company actively encourages staff to do further training. When asked why Martin believes in sending his staff to do part-time qualifications, he replied: "I am a great believer in lifelong learning."

"By sending my staff to local colleges to study a course that is relevant to their work we're not only improving their skills levels, but increasing dedication and motivation within the team. In ten years, only four members of staff have left the company; staff loyalty is very high because of our belief in continuous training."




Staff training is a vital part of running a successful business

The new Foundation Degrees enable students to study vocationally within their workplace as well as being taught in local colleges to make them more accessible for employees to fit study into their day-to-day lives. The courses are very employer focused and can be studied full or part-time.

One of Martin Walsh Associates' staff is about to embark on her second year in a Foundation Degree in Business Finance and Law. Philippa Ward has been working for the company since July 1992. The Business Finance and Law Foundation Degree is awarded by Huddersfield University however Philippa is attending lectures at Huddersfield Technical College, Philippa Says "It is often hard to find the time and money to study a qualification around work. But when you have an employer to support you, both financially and in time, then I recommend that everyone should find the commitment and drive to do a Foundation Degree course."

## Section 2: Progress so far



Summer figures from the University and Colleges Admission Service (UCAS) showed there has been an increase of 118% in the number of people applying to study full time Foundation Degree courses this year.

### 2.1 Uptake

Foundation Degrees were launched in 2000, with the first courses offered in September 2001. Since then steady progress has been made with 12,000 students attracted to a wide range of courses. Summer figures from the University and Colleges Admission Service (UCAS) showed there has been an increase of 118% in the number of people applying to study full time Foundation Degree courses this year. UCAS data on take-up of Foundation Degree places for 2003-2004 will be available later this Autumn.

### 2.2 Responding to business need

Partnerships have been established between employers, colleges and universities to develop new courses. For example, Teesside University is working with BASF (Badische Anilinan and Soda Fabrik AG) on a chemical technology Foundation Degree which meets skills gaps within their industry. Radisson Edwardian Hotels are working with Thames Valley University on establishing a

Foundation Degree in hospitality, developed in conjunction with the hotel's own internal training programme.

### 2.3 Upskilling in the Public Sector

Foundation Degrees have also been developed in the public sector. The emerging success of the programmes within the health and social care sectors has in part contributed to the early commitment by the NHSU to offer Foundation Degrees Pathways to support a 'skills escalator' approach to improving workforce skills and opportunities.

Foundation Degrees have a vital role in achieving one of the NHSU's key goals; to open up learning opportunities within the NHS and wider health and social care sectors to people who have previously felt excluded.

To deliver this priority, the NHSU intends to work in partnership with FE and HE colleagues to extend Foundation Degree routes within health and social care. Initially the NHSU is working with five institutions that have secured HEFCE funding to develop new courses. It is also

working with other existing local and regional initiatives to develop health and social care Foundation Degree provision. The NHSU also intend to work with partners to develop a common national framework for Foundation Degrees in the health and social care sector, supported by a number of core modules and learning materials which would be common to a range of courses and occupational settings. Foundation Degrees adopting the framework would be co-badged with NHSU. A range of stakeholders will be consulted to ensure that the workforce and skills needs of employers, the learning needs of individuals, and the development needs of the sector are taken into account.

The Home Office has been encouraged by the take up of places on Portsmouth University's Police Studies Foundation Degree programme. They exceeded their first year intake target of 250 places, recruiting 280 students, and have a further 220 places on offer for year two. The success of this programme has encouraged work on the feasibility of another Foundation Degree programme aimed at Police Support Staff, and given momentum to the Metropolitan Police to develop a number of Foundation Degrees in Detective and Forensic Studies, which will be run through their newly established Crime Academy.

## Health & Social Care Foundation Degree (Yorks and The Humber )

The Foundation Degree in Science Health and Social Care was set up as part of the Government pilot initiatives for launching Foundation Degrees, under the auspices of the consortium Foundation for Success. Bradford was one of three pilot sites of HEI's in West Yorkshire, the others being Leeds Metropolitan University and the University of Huddersfield.

Rosemary Reynolds, the Foundation Degree Co-ordinator whose post includes the management of the FD Health and Social Care says "Currently we have 36 students on the register and we have had in excess of 100 enquiries for the September intake. As the Programme Manager the dedication, motivation and enthusiasm of our students has heartened me. The students prior to interview are given the opportunity to discuss their aspirations and expectations through a group discussion session. It has been very inspiring to listen to prospective candidates articulating their readiness for the challenges of change and who wish to make a worthwhile contribution to health and social care provision."

The students on the programme benefit enormously from the flexible nature of the provision. Full-time and part-time routes are available and if student circumstances change these can be accommodated within defined parameters. The University is committed to widening participation and social inclusion. The Foundation Degree in Health and Social Care has been designed to promote access for groups traditionally under-represented in Higher Education, allowing them to identify students with no formal qualifications as well as those with traditional qualifications coming through the UCAS route.

Fazah Gull is a 34 year old student currently working towards the Foundation Degree qualification, "I heard about the Foundation Degree in the local paper and realised it offered the best career development opportunities to me in my particular circumstances. I would really recommend it to all those who wish to work in this area as the course can be moulded to suit individual needs. It's an excellent opportunity for people who cannot afford to give up work to study as the programme is so flexible."



The Foundation Degree is a worthwhile contribution to health and social care

## Police Studies (National)

Warren Stevenson is a Detective Sergeant based at Killingbeck, West Yorkshire. With over 14 years of experience in the force, he is currently two semesters into the Foundation Degree. "The whole process of applying for the Foundation Degree to actually getting on it was painless. The force were very supportive as the structure of the course meant it wouldn't interfere with my Police work." Warren spends 10-15 hours a week studying for his Police Studies Foundation Degree, being run by Portsmouth University. There are a number of different ranked police officers on the course and topical issues are used and discussed to teach it. Warren comments "At a time where there is increased awareness and focus on how we police, the Police Studies Foundation Degree allows us to take a step back from the day to day aspects of the job and question why we do things and how we can improve on them. The Foundation Degree has been a fantastic way of leveraging my experience within the police and using it to develop my own continued development and training using this qualification as the framework."

The importance the police forces in the UK put on continued professional development is paramount to maintaining the high standards key stakeholders' demand from them. Richard Parsley, Management Development officer for the Bedfordshire Police Force, recognises how the Foundation Degree can benefit his force. He says "The introduction of the Foundation Degree is an excellent initiative that allows our officers a guided and funded opportunity for them to take responsibility for their own development. We currently have four officers on the course with more due to start this year. What the Foundation Degree does is give me another option when considering what training will be best suited to individuals in our employment. What we have is individuals working in a way that suits their skills and abilities to maximise the development of their own careers."

Robin Field-Smith HM Inspector of Constabulary (Personnel and Training) added "Foundation Degrees provide an excellent new opportunity for the police service and its people. There is a new opportunity for employers – police forces – to engage with universities in the provision of high quality learning and development programmes which are directly relevant to the roles which police officers and staff discharge. Real value is added with the achievement of a well recognised qualification."



A Foundation Degree is an excellent opportunity to fit learning into the life of the Police Force



Mid-Shipman Jane Vannoey is furthering her education and training with a Foundation Degree

## Royal Navy Case Study Nautical Studies (South West)

The Royal Navy had a number of reasons for setting up the Foundation Degree. Firstly, they were already in the process of searching out a recognised civilian qualification for non-graduate entrants into the Navy at the Britannia Royal Naval College and secondly, the Foundation Degree was seen as a high level, attractive qualification with a viable route through to Honours qualifications. Also it was felt the Navy could benefit from younger recruits, 18 and 19 year old students could now enrol but still further their education and training, allowing them to “earn as they learn”.

Captain John Rees, Director of Naval Training and Education said *“The development of the Foundation Degree, in partnership with the University of Plymouth, has been an exciting venture. We are delighted with the outcome, which puts a true value on the excellent vocational and academic content of Royal Navy officer training. By the very nature of their vocational bias, flexibility and emphasis on key skills, Foundation Degrees are particularly attractive to the Royal Navy. In fact, so attractive we have also decided to move all our skilled technicians (Artificers) onto Foundation Degree programmes by 2004.”*

## Teaching Assistant Foundation Degree (East Midlands)

The University of Leicester is one of a number of academic institutions to offer a Foundation Degree in Educational Studies for Teaching Assistants. The Course Co-ordinator, Min Wilkie comments *“We are both enabling Teaching Assistants to gain a qualification that will help them work more effectively, and helping schools and teachers to develop a ‘resource’ they can rely on more and more and in different classroom situations.”*

Student Sandra Simpkin, a part-time teaching assistant at Northfield House Primary School in Leicester, is in her second year of the Foundation Degree course, *“Working towards this qualification has been great and it has meant that I will be able to move into a higher level teaching assistant post.”* The aim of the Teaching Assistant Foundation Degree is to provide schools in the area with a ready supply of highly qualified teaching assistants.



Foundation Degrees are providing schools with a steady supply of highly qualified teaching assistants

The Foundation Degree in Educational Studies can be studied over three or four years part-time, at the University of Leicester’s School of Education. Min Wilkie adds, *“We hope the course will provide classroom students with the knowledge, confidence and skills base to excel in the classroom work environment.”*

The Department (DfES) is working with a number of organisations to support the development of a Foundation Degree in Youth Support and Guidance, which will develop a significant new pathway for a range of professionals working with young people. The DfES is also supporting a Cabinet Office project to develop a high quality Civil Service Foundation Degree to meet the specific needs of middle management grades for their role in delivering the Government's agenda and supporting Departmental change programmes.

## 2.4 Listening to Sector needs

The Government is committed to developing all Sector Skills Councils by summer 2004. A range of sectors have already been engaged – from fashion to the environment,

retail, manufacturing, chemical technology and civil defence work-which has enabled each to:

- establish demand for Foundation Degrees within their sectors;
- ensure that Foundation Degrees that are developed meet the needs of employers in their sectors; and,
- ensure that employers in these sectors are aware of Foundation Degrees and their benefits.

This work will be developed further by the Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) and the newly created Foundation Degree Forward (FDF) with new Foundation Degree frameworks covering additional sectors emerging during the next year.



The Foundation Degree is considered essential for a career in aircraft engineering

### KLM UK Aircraft Engineering (Eastern Region)

When KLM UK Engineering, with its workshops based in Norwich got involved with the aircraft engineering degree it was actively seeking to enhance its training provision. Requirements of the Joint Aviation Authority (JAA) dictate certain standards for the licensing of engineers – and KLM UK Engineering needed to ensure the training it offered met these standards.

As part of the degree development team KLM UK Engineering were able to ensure the course syllabus met not only industry needs and academic requirements, but also those of the JAA.

Ray Flower KLM UK Engineering's Training Manager says: "The Foundation Degree in aircraft engineering will provide the industry with engineers who possess enhanced levels of academic ability. And in addition they'll be able to apply their knowledge in a more constructive way that can only benefit the aircraft maintenance industry.

As an active partner from the outset we've been fully involved in the course design, allowing us to ensure the course meets the needs of the industry, whilst adhering to the license requirements."

And the company's involvement goes beyond helping to design and present course modules; KLM UK Engineering also ensures that the JAA regulatory standards and requirements are met at all times.

Harry Enfissi, a current student says: "I can honestly say that this Foundation Degree is giving my fellow students and me a solid understanding of theory coupled with the important practical skills that are essential for a career in aircraft engineering. Whilst not an easy course, it is in my opinion by far the most comprehensive anywhere in the industry and provides students with an academic and industry recognised qualification."

The KLM Engineering and Foundation Degree concept had been so successful that the offering of the course has been spread to other institutions for delivery. The Newcastle Aviation Academy, part funded by the Regional Development Agency, is one such institution that opens its doors this September for new students to work towards this qualification.

## BASF Case Study Chemical Engineering (North East)

There was a clear but important reason why BASF decided to develop a Foundation Degree. The chemical engineering industry had for some time recognised that there was a shortage of Chemical Engineers. Together with Teesside University the company took the decision to work alongside other Teesside companies to build a nationally recognised qualification that would provide them with skilled engineers that would graduate from the course and immediately be able to make a positive impact within the workplace. Kevin Wilson, HR Manager at BASF Middlesbrough comments, "We are able to send current employees on the course knowing that the advice and skills they are receiving is not only 1st class but also relevant to driving our business forward and ensuring our workforce are leading the way in this industry."



Employees are making a positive impact within the workplace with a Foundation Degree

The Foundation Degree in Chemical Technology is a great example of how much influence an employee can have on designing a course, giving them the skills they know graduates will need. Two of BASF senior chemists were involved in developing the syllabus for the Chemical Foundation Degree at Teesside University, alongside peers from similar companies. Kevin continues, "We can look at our current employees and see where there may be skills gaps or opportunities for further development. We are then able to make sure our employees can enroll on the course and continue to be educated to the latest standards and practices, whilst obtaining a qualification that is nationally accredited."



Gisele Guerriero, in the second year of the Foundation Degree

## Management Hospitality (South East)

Radisson Edwardian was one of the first big employers to see the benefit Foundation Degrees could provide to its staff and its business. Set up two years ago with Thames Valley University, the qualification in Hospitality Management is proving both successful and popular. Kevin Ennis is the People and Performance Director for the hotel group, "The course has been a hit from day one. It allows our staff to really grasp the theory behind our business. We have had 20 employees go through the course and it encourages them to go on and push for supervisory or management positions."

The group realises the importance of continued training such as the Foundation Degree and has demonstrated this financially. Ennis adds, "Every one of our employees who does this type of qualification is sponsored and if they decide to keep going to Bachelor level we consider sponsoring their tuition fees for that qualification too."

The flexibility of the Foundation Degree means it sits well with the shift patterns that employees in the hotel industry work around. Gisele Guerriero, Conference and Banqueting Operations Manager, has been with Radisson for five years. She is currently in the second year of the Hospitality Management Foundation Degree. "I've been at Radisson Edwardian for 5 years now and when this opportunity came up I knew it would be ideal for me. I have a family and the structure of the Foundation Degree meant that I could study for this qualification knowing that I could still look after them and get my job done."

## 2.5 Working in partnership

The successful development of Foundation Degrees relies on close working between employers, universities and higher and further education colleges and those representing sectoral and regional interests. There are two key bodies that have been established to help guide the development of Foundation Degrees.

A **Task Force** has been set up, Chaired by Professor Leslie Wagner with a wide ranging membership (see annex A). Its terms of reference are to advise Ministers and the Department on the future strategy to implement the Government's plans for Foundation Degrees as set out in *'The future of higher education'*, in particular:

- the policy, funding, promotion to employers and the operational framework necessary to make Foundation Degrees a success;
- how best to ensure that Foundation Degrees secure employer involvement;
- promoting wide access for both full and part-time students;
- arrangements that will ensure Foundation Degrees deliver a high quality, vocational education to students.

The Task Force will be expected to report to Ministers in Summer 2004 on progress in establishing Foundation Degrees and on the next steps necessary in 2005 and beyond.

## 2.6 Foundation Degree Forward (FDF)

The Government's White Paper *'The future of higher education'* published in January 2003 set out a commitment to establish a new national body, **Foundation Degree Forward (FDF)**, to support and promote the development and validation of high quality Foundation Degrees. In undertaking its role FDF will work closely with the Task Force and will seek to articulate its policy objectives in practice. FDF will provide:

- A Centre of Expertise that will support FECs, HEIs and other organisations in the development of high quality Foundation Degrees; in disseminating good practice FDF will create linkages with the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and with The Higher Education Academy.
- A collaborative partnership with the SSDA and SSCs in supporting the development of sector skills frameworks and the Skills for Business network to inform future Foundation Degree curricula and delivery.
- A high quality validation and quality assurance support service for Foundation Degrees for those institutions and organisations without degree-awarding powers. It is intended that this validation and quality enhancement service will not be disruptive to existing partnerships but will offer supplementary opportunities for Foundation Degree development in contexts where this is otherwise proving to be difficult. As indicated in the White Paper, this validation service will be implemented through a network of participating universities to be established by April 2004.

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has invited the Council for Validating Universities (CVU) to host Foundation Degree Forward and progress has been made towards its establishment since September 2003. An administrative centre has been created at the Lichfield Centre campus that provides a shared FE, HE and enterprise environment for FDF; Professor Derek Longhurst from the Staffordshire University Regional Federation has been appointed as Director of FDF. A Management Board for FDF that is constituted from representatives of all stakeholder agencies and organisations will meet for the first time in October to consider a draft Strategic Plan for FDF and its future structure and development.

## 2.7 Review and Evaluation of Foundation Degrees

To ensure public confidence in the quality of the new Foundation Degree qualification a number of mechanisms have been put in place over and above the routine quality assurance arrangements in HE and FE.

### 2.7.1 The QAA Review

Throughout 2002-03, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) carried out a special review of a sample of the Foundation Degrees launched in 2001-02 in England. As set out in HEFCE Circular Letter 19/2002, the review aimed to:

- assess the emerging quality and standards of the new qualification, to ensure public confidence
- investigate the nature and distinctive features of Foundation Degrees
- investigate and disseminate good practice and areas for further development.

Further information on the review process is set out in the handbook for the Foundation Degree review, published by the QAA. The QAA will publish an overview report in Autumn 2003.

### 2.7.2 QAA benchmarks

The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Benchmark Group published a draft Foundation Degree qualification benchmark in 2002, developed with widespread stakeholder consultation.

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/public/foundation/contents.htm>

This draft will be finalised when the results of the QAA's review of Foundation Degrees in Autumn 2003 have been incorporated. The benchmark promotes features of Foundation Degrees such as employer involvement, collaboration and partnership, flexibility in delivery and the development and application of skills and knowledge in the workplace. Foundation Degree providers should refer to the benchmark in designing courses.

### 2.7.3 Formative Evaluation

In November 2002, HEFCE commissioned Professors Mantz Yorke and David Robertson to conduct a formative evaluation of the Foundation Degree initiative. The project aims to examine:

- how far the Foundation Degree initiative has met the multiple objectives set for it, especially in respect of student demographics, employability, and market need,
- how far the Foundation Degree initiative has established any novel or additional benefits for the providers involved, for stakeholders, and for students,
- the extent to which the Foundation Degree initiative has gained and retained the confidence of key stakeholders, and
- the distinctiveness and viability of the Foundation Degree as a higher-level qualification.

HEFCE will publish the final report in May 2004.

## Section 3: Next Steps



### 3.1 Funding

In The Government's White Paper *'The future of higher education'* it was announced that £32million would be made available to support the development of Foundation Degrees up until 2006. This funding will be available to employers, Sector Skills Councils, higher and further education colleges and universities in the following way:

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>TOTALS 03-06</b>
DfES led Advertising and Promotion	6.10
FDF including SSDA led work on sectoral frameworks	8.00
Development money for HEFCE to allocate to HEIs & FECs	8.50
Development of Public sector frameworks	2.25
Development money for work with employers (individual company and groups of companies)	2.00
Other Support Costs	5.15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>32.00</b>

### 3.2 Additional Foundation Degree places

A significant step forward in increasing the number of Foundation Degrees is the Additional Foundation Degree places (AFD) exercise. HEFCE will issue a bidding document in early October which invites higher education institutions and further education colleges, in collaboration with employers and bodies such as Sector Skills Councils and Regional Development Agencies, to bid for AFDs to run from 2004. These additional numbers coupled with ongoing developments and inbuilt growth will see the overall number of places available grow to about 50,000 by 2006. Bids will need to be submitted to HEFCE in December 2003, and outcomes will be announced in March 2004.

### 3.3 Widening Access

Foundation Degrees provide an additional opportunity for universities, higher and further education colleges to respond to the needs of a wider range of students. Some students will be entering straight from school or college. Some may choose Foundation Degrees instead of traditional three year degree courses because of the

attraction of following a vocational route; some may come from households where higher education was not in the past considered seriously as an option. Foundation Degrees will also be attractive to older students in work or returning to work.

Providers of Foundation Degrees will need to be able to offer courses at times, in places and modes to suit the particular needs of students. We expect that further education colleges will play a key role in delivering Foundation Degrees alongside universities and higher education colleges. College-based courses will still require university validation and to ensure this operates smoothly, Foundation Degree Forward (FDF) will be working with a network of validating institutions to provide this service for colleges.

For some institutions offering HE qualifications such as Foundation Degrees alongside FE programmes, there has been an increased administrative demand in relation to managing the different systems for the different funding councils. In order to tackle this the HEFCE and the LSC have been asked to look at areas where systems might be brought more closely together. The two funding councils intend to issue a joint consultation paper later in the year. This will set out some initial changes to more closely align planning and funding systems, which can be implemented during the 2003/04 academic year. It will also set out longer term proposals to ensure alignment of systems where possible.

### 3.4 Higher National Diplomas

Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) have served employers well in the past and whilst there is still strong loyalty from employers in some sectors, the numbers applying for these courses has been gradually declining in recent years. In developing Foundation Degrees there is a real opportunity to learn from the experience of delivering HNDs and to ensure that employers, students and institutions are clear about transitional arrangements.

The DfES, HEFCE, Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and FDF have been working together with Edexcel to identify how this can be achieved and Edexcel expects that 20,000 HND places will be replaced with Foundation Degrees by 2006. Edexcel will be announcing their plans for offering BTEC Foundation Degrees validated by regional partner universities. Colleges and universities currently offering HNDs will make decisions about whether they retain their current HND provision, develop their own Foundation Degrees, or move to the new BTEC Foundation Degrees. In doing so they will need to take account of student and employer demand and the development of the new Foundation Degree frameworks, as they come on stream from the Sector Skills Councils. The speed of change will be linked to acceptance of the new qualification in the market place. It is recognised that Foundation Degrees will take time to embed, but as they become more widely understood and accepted it will be important that employers and students are not confused by competing brands.

### 3.5 Promoting Foundation Degrees

Establishing the Foundation Degree as a high quality, highly regarded, qualification is the main vision behind the communications strategy that is being developed for Foundation Degrees. The value of Foundation Degrees lies in their distinctiveness compared to other higher education programmes. Promotional campaigns will be designed to help all parties recognise their distinctiveness. To begin with work will be targeted at two key audiences:

- **business and the public sector**
- **potential students**

A major burst of advertising will run for four weeks starting mid October. It will be followed by two, one week follow on bursts in November and December and a further two, week long bursts in January aimed at people thinking about their careers and planning their training. It will use national business and sector press as well as on-line advertising.

This will be supplemented by PR activity which builds on graduate and employer experiences. Radio editorial will also feature strongly alongside other work. The objective will be to significantly increase awareness of what Foundation Degrees offer and where they are available.

### 3.6 Student Support

The majority of Foundation Degree courses are automatically designated for support under the Student Support Regulations. Different student support arrangements apply for full-time and part-time courses. For student support purposes the definition of a full-time course is that students are normally required to undertake a course on most of the days of the week (excluding weekends and the usual vacations) and for a minimum period of 24 weeks in each academic year.

Foundation Degree courses may be full-time or part-time. In the recent White Paper *"The future of higher education"* the Government announced changes to the package of support currently available for part-time students. These changes will come into effect in September 2004 and will apply to both new and existing students. Eligible students will be able to get a grant of up to £575 to help with their fees and a further grant of up to £250 to assist with course costs such as books and equipment.

Full details of student support, including the publication "Financial Support for higher education students – guide for 2003-04" can be accessed at <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/studentssupport/>

We have reviewed the intention to offer specific incentives for some Foundation Degree students in the period running up to the introduction of variable fees in 06/07, subject to passage of the necessary legislation, and concluded that it is more appropriate to direct the funding through the normal student support channels to allow for additional growth in the number of places offered.



## Section 4: How stakeholders can respond



If you are an **employer** you can respond in a number of different ways:

- you can contribute to the design and development of a Foundation Degree either by working with a university, higher or further education college or by working with your Sector Skills Council, Regional Development Agency or relevant professional body;
- you can get involved in the delivery of a Foundation Degree by providing work experience for students, project work, or even staff to contribute to lectures on business-related topics;
- you can recruit graduates from Foundation Degree courses or put forward existing employees for courses as part of your workforce development programmes.

If you are an **employer led body** you can make your members aware about Foundation Degrees and the opportunity they present for helping businesses to prosper.

If you are a **Regional Development Agency** you can encourage employers in your region to work with universities, higher and further education colleges to develop Foundation Degrees. There will be opportunities to see how they can support your Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action (FRESA).

If you are a **Sector Skills Council (SSC)** or part of a group that is hoping to establish one, you may be eligible to receive financial support from the **Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA)** to develop Foundation Degrees relevant to the needs of your sector.

If you are a **university, a higher or further education college** there will be an opportunity to bid for Additional Foundation Degree places (AFDs) and development funds for Foundation Degrees this Autumn.

If you are **someone who wishes to become a Foundation Degree student**, then you will find that there will be more opportunities available from September 2004. Foundation Degrees will be offered at a large number of universities and further and higher education colleges both full-time and part-time. Further information on what is currently available can be obtained from the UCAS website – [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)

Details of helpful contacts are included in Section 5. In certain circumstances there may be financial support available to you to develop Foundation Degree courses.

## Section 5: How to contact people that can help



### Useful websites

#### **[www.aoc.co.uk](http://www.aoc.co.uk)**

The Association of Colleges website is read by staff in general further education colleges, 6th form colleges, agricultural colleges, art and design colleges and is available on an open access basis to anyone else.

In particular there are specialist zones for different issues and curriculum areas, including Foundation Degrees, where information is regularly updated on latest developments.

#### **[www.businesslink.org](http://www.businesslink.org)**

A useful website for businesses especially small businesses. Useful information on all aspects is covered, including financial assistance for training and developing staff.

#### **[www.cihe-uk.com](http://www.cihe-uk.com)**

The Council for Industry in Higher Education comprises members from industry and academia. Their mission is to advance all kinds of learning through the fostering of mutual understanding, co-operation and support between higher education and business.

#### **[www.cvu.ac.uk](http://www.cvu.ac.uk)**

The Council for Validating Universities is the only body in the UK specialising in good practice and standards for that aspect of higher education which concerns the validation of programmes of study by universities and colleges ('awarding institutions') or delivery by other colleges or organisations ('partner institutions').

#### **[www.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.dfes.gov.uk)**

The Department for Education and Skills website contains details on policy for education and skills development. It also provides useful links to a number of other sites and sources of information.

#### **[www.dfes.gov.uk/studentssupport](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/studentssupport)**

A website for students in England and Wales who want to find out about what financial support is available and how to access it.

### **www.dti.gov.uk**

A website which includes a lot of useful data and links specifically linked to the economy and to useful information for employers, including links and information on the regional development agencies.

### **www.edexcel.org.uk**

The Edexcel website contains information about a wide range of qualifications and services for providers, centres and students.

### **www.foundationdegree.org.uk**

The official Foundation Degree website containing information about Foundation Degrees and the courses currently on offer in England.

### **www.fdf.ac.uk (due to go live in the Autumn)**

The FDF website will provide a primary source of information about Foundation Degree development, both nationally and regionally.

It will be directed towards all of those educational institutions and organisations that wish to develop Foundation Degrees that integrate work-based learning and academic study programmes.

The FDF website is the first point of contact for people wanting information on Foundation Degrees and will provide guidance and links to other sites.

### **http://ntweb1/gold/**

The Website address for access to all **Government Offices**. Government Offices were set up in 1994. They carry out significant functions on behalf of 10 Government departments. They bring coherence to the delivery of government policy in the regions and add value to the process by exploiting synergies, working constructively with regional and local partners, promoting value for money and removing obstacles to effective local implementation. They also play a major role in the delivery of major government initiatives

### **www.hefce.ac.uk**

This is the site for the Higher Education Funding Council for England. This site provides all the latest information on funding for teaching and research in universities and colleges in England. It also includes information and the latest announcements on funding available for Foundation Degree development.

### **www.hero.ac.uk**

The official gateway to UK universities, colleges and research organisations, including contact details of all universities, HE and FE colleges.

### **www.lifelong.learning.co.uk**

A website with information about learning for adults and detailed information on how to finance learning. It also includes the Skills White Paper.

### **www.lsc.gov.uk**

The Learning and Skills Council operates through 47 local offices and is responsible for funding and planning education and training for over 16 year olds in England. The website includes information on workforce development, work-based training, and much more.

### **www.ltsn.ac.uk**

The Learning and Teaching Support Network is a major network of 24 subject centres based in higher education institutions throughout the UK and a single Generic Centre. It aims to promote high quality learning and teaching through the development and transfer of good practices in all subject disciplines, and to provide a 'one-stop shop' of learning and teaching resources and information for the HE community. It is to become an integral part of The Higher Education Academy.

### **www.nhsu.nhs.uk**

The NHSU is the new 'corporate university' for the NHS, due to begin operations in Autumn 2003. It is designed to make a key contribution to the development and modernisation of health and social care, by unlocking the talents and skills of staff at every level in order to deliver excellent patient care.

### **[www.qaa.ac.uk](http://www.qaa.ac.uk)**

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) promotes the quality of provision in UK higher education. The site contains good up to date information on the national qualifications framework and the Foundation Degree benchmark statement.

### **[www.qca.org.uk](http://www.qca.org.uk)**

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority website provides general information about the qualifications system and the Design Principles applicable to other Higher Level Qualifications.

**Regional Development Agencies (RDAs)** have been established to improve economic development and regeneration; promote business efficiency, investment, and competitiveness; promote employment; advance development of application of skills relevant to employment; and contribute to sustainable development. The RDAs mirror the GO regions.

Website addresses for RDAs in England are:

**[www.onenortheast.co.uk](http://www.onenortheast.co.uk)**  
**[www.nwda.co.uk](http://www.nwda.co.uk)**  
**[www.yorkshire-forward.com](http://www.yorkshire-forward.com)**  
**[www.emda.org.uk](http://www.emda.org.uk)**  
**[www.advantagewm.co.uk](http://www.advantagewm.co.uk)**  
**[www.eeda.org.uk](http://www.eeda.org.uk)**  
**[www.seeda.co.uk](http://www.seeda.co.uk)**  
**[www.southwestrda.org.uk](http://www.southwestrda.org.uk)**  
**[www.lda.gov.uk](http://www.lda.gov.uk)**

### **[www.skillsbase.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.skillsbase.dfes.gov.uk)**

This is the DfES skills and labour market information website. It contains a comprehensive source of labour market information, education, and skills data aimed in particular at those users who analyse statistics and interpret data regularly. It also contains a narrative section, designed for non-specialists, to provide a succinct insight into skills trends without the need for further analysis.

### **[www.ssda.org.uk](http://www.ssda.org.uk)**

The Sector Skills Development Agency website provides information and contact details for the new Sector Skills Councils.

### **[www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)**

University and Colleges Admissions Service is the UK central organisation through which applications are processed for entry to full-time undergraduate courses, HNDs, university diplomas and Foundation Degrees.

### **[www.uvac.ac.uk](http://www.uvac.ac.uk)**

Universities Vocational Awards Council was established to enable Higher Education Institutions to influence the development of vocational education and training. The Council acts as a forum to promote a coherent voice, and to represent the interests of Higher Education Institutions and Further Education colleges.

## **Other sources of useful information**

We recently published a Foundation Degree guide in two parts:

**Part 1** An introduction to the Foundation Degree which provides background information and is of interest to anyone who wants to know more about the characteristics of Foundation Degrees, how they are being supported and promoted, and how long it takes to obtain the qualification.

**Part 2** A detailed guide to developing and implementing a Foundation Degree. This is of interest to those employers and employer organisations who want to see Foundation Degrees designed to develop their current and future workforce, and to those in colleges and universities who want to work with employers to get a Foundation Degree programme up and running.

This guide is available on  
**[www.foundationdegree.co.uk](http://www.foundationdegree.co.uk)**



# Annex A: Foundation Degree Task Force Membership

Professor Leslie Wagner (Chair)	Chancellor, University of Derby, Chair, The Higher Education Academy
Joe Eason	Manager, Training & Education Development, Corus
Jackie Fisher	Principal, Newcastle College
Ray Flower	Chief Instructor, KLM College
Derek Grover or Helen Fields	Director of Development, NHS University  Head of Access to Initial Qualifications and Pre Registration Education, Department of Health
Sheila Hoile	Director of Training Standards, Construction Industry Training Board
Jim Lewis	Head of External Relations, Universities, Colleges, Learning and Skills, One NorthEast
Professor David Melville	Vice-Chancellor, University of Kent
Caroline Neville	National Director, Policy and Development, LSC
Professor David Robertson	Head of Policy Development, Liverpool John Moores University, HEFCE appointed Foundation Degree evaluator and adviser to the Task Force
Dr Alan Stanhope	Chief Executive/Principal Cornwall College
Peter Swindlehurst	Secretary, UK Inter Professional Group
Ralph Tabberer	Chief Executive, Teacher Training Agency
Beverly Webster	Director, Prosperis (and Chairperson of Y Radio)
Bryony Whiteley	Director, England Shell Livewire
Prof Dianne Willcocks	Principal, York St Johns College. Chair Elect, Standing Council of Principals

## Officials

Peter Lauener	Director, Learning, Delivery and Standards Group, DfES
Steve Geary	Divisional Manager, Foundation Degree, Employability and Progression Division, DfES
Jane Mardell	Team Leader, Foundation Degree, Employment and Progression Division, DfES
Alice Frost	Head of Learning and Teaching, HEFCE

## Annex B: Glossary

The section offers a guide to the many acronyms commonly used within this document and or in the fields of education, training, and business support

AB	Awarding Body	ILT	Institute of Learning and Teaching
AMA	Advanced Modern Apprenticeship	LSC	Learning and Skills Council
AoC	Association of Colleges	LTSN	Learning and Teaching Support Network
AFD	Additional Foundation Degree places (funding awarded to HEIs through HEFCE)	NOS	National Occupational Standards
CIHE	Council for Industry in Higher Education	NHSU	The corporate university for health and social care
CPD	Continuing Professional Development	NTOs	National Training Organisations – succeeded in April 2002 by Sector Skills Councils
CVU	Council for Validating Universities	NVQs	National Vocational Qualifications
DfES	Department for Education and Skills	PB	Professional Bodies
FD	Foundation Degree	PTE	Part Time Equivalent
FDF	Foundation Degree Forward	QAA	Quality Assurance Agency – for HE
FE	Further Education	QCA	Qualification and Curriculum Authority
FECs	Further Education Colleges	RDA	Regional Development Agency
FRESA	Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action	SSC's	Sector Skills Councils (the successor bodies to NTOs)
FTE	Full Time Equivalent	SSDA	Sector Skills Development Agency
GO	Government Office	TF	Task Force
HE	Higher Education	UCAS	University and Colleges Admission Service
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England	UVAC	Universities Vocational Awards Council
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions (universities and higher education institutions)	VRQs	Vocationally Related Qualifications
HNC	Higher National Certificate	VQs	Vocational Qualifications
HND	Higher National Diploma	WBL	Work-based Learning
		WE	Work Experience
		WRL	Work Related Learning

[www.foundationdegree.org.uk](http://www.foundationdegree.org.uk)

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