



PRESS RELEASE

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Beware the 'brain drain': City & Guilds Centre for Skills Development responds to Liberal Democrats' conference motion on globalisation

Responding to Sunday's motion on globalisation at the Liberal Democrat Conference, the City & Guilds Centre for Skills Development's Policy and Strategy Adviser, Chris Sims, welcomed the party's support for apprenticeships. He added that a dedicated vocational route had to be provided in schools and colleges. He also warned of a potential 'brain drain' in the developing world if politicians did not put developing nations' needs at the heart of their migration policies.

Apprenticeships. Sims welcomed the Liberal Democrats' recognition that it is essential for the UK's skills base to be improved if the country is to compete in a globalised world. "The Lib Dems' support for an apprenticeship application service is a welcome step in recognising the equal value of academic and vocational education," he said. He emphasised, however, that national initiatives must not be created at the expense of developing local relationships between employers and training providers.

Sims also called for clearer vocational routes to employment or further or higher education. "We urge the Liberal Democrats – and, indeed, all politicians – to bear in mind that apprenticeships are not the right option for everyone. A good quality college- or school-based vocational option should be a core part of creating the skilled workforce this country will need in the future."



Skilled migration. Sims welcomed the Liberal Democrats' approach to dealing with migration on a regional basis. In addition, however, he called for all parties to put developing nations' needs at the heart of their migration policies, warning of a potential 'brain drain' in developing countries.

"It is, of course, important for the UK to build up its skills base, and skilled migration clearly plays a vital role in that," he said. "However, the UK's needs must not come at the cost of a devastating brain drain in the developing world. We call on all parties to link their migration, economic, skills and international development policies to make sure the UK adopts a responsible position on skilled migration."

ENDS

To follow up or to arrange an interview with Chris Sims, please contact Andy Wasley, PR & Communications Manager, on andy.wasley@skillsdevelopment.org, +44 207 294 3576 or +44 7813 886189.

Notes to editors.

1. **About CSD.** The [City & Guilds Centre for Skills Development](http://www.cityandguilds.org) is a not-for-profit research and development body which is committed to improving the policy and practice of work related education and training internationally. It aims to achieve its vision of a world in which all people have access to the skills they need for economic and individual prosperity. To do this, it works worldwide with policy makers, employers, training providers and learners to share knowledge and help to lead the debate on policy and practice. It is a part of the City & Guilds Group

2. **Background.** The Liberal Democrat conference passed its policy motion on globalisation on Sunday 20 September, based on the party's policy paper 92, *Thriving in a Globalised World – a Strategy for Britain*. The full text of the motion and of the paper can be found on the [conference website](http://www.cityandguilds.org); however, the two sections of particular consequence for skills development are proposals one and five, the text of which are shown below.

Conference therefore endorses policy paper 92 ... in particular, conference welcomes its proposals to:

1. *Create a better skilled and more flexible workforce by:*
 - a. *Fully funding the off-the-job training costs of apprenticeships*



- b. Developing a national application system for apprenticeships, similar to UCAS*
 - c. Covering the full fee costs for first level 3 qualifications (e.g. A-levels, advanced apprenticeships and NVQ level 3) for those aged over 25*
 - d. Abolishing tuition fees for all part-time and full-time HE courses.*
- 2. ...*
- 3. ...*
- 4. ...*
- 5. Ensure that migration benefits all geographical areas and sections of the community by:*
 - a. Introducing a regional points-based work permits system which awards more points to immigrants willing to move to areas where there are the will and the resources to welcome them, as well as for possessing the skills which the UK economy as a whole needs*
 - b. Launching an urgent review into how population is measured at the local level so that sudden changes in local population can be more swiftly reflected in the allocation of central resources to local authorities*
 - c. Requiring government departments to collect data on the regional and sector-specific effects of migration on employment and wage levels*
 - d. Strengthening employment law in relation to agency and temporary workers*