

# PARTNERS FOR CHANGE

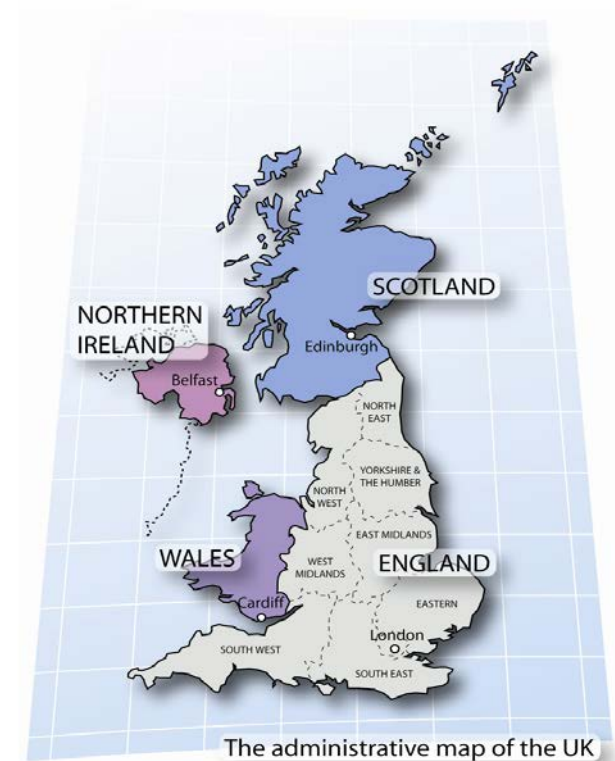
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UK Approach to an  
Employer Led Vocational Education System

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# Political and Strategic Context

- Variations across UK
- Frequent change and constant reviews
- Free-market approach
- Challenging economic climate
- Stronger role for employers



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# UK Economy and Employment

- World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report 2011-12 ranks the UK as the 10th most competitive in the world Labour market for young people is a concern
- Over 20% of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs)
- Will be increased demand for higher level skills in future
- Role of education/business links, work experience and internships



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# Think Global! Act Global!

Industry:           Increased profits  
                          Increase competitiveness  
                          Increased adaptability

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Individuals:       Increased income  
                          Increased job security

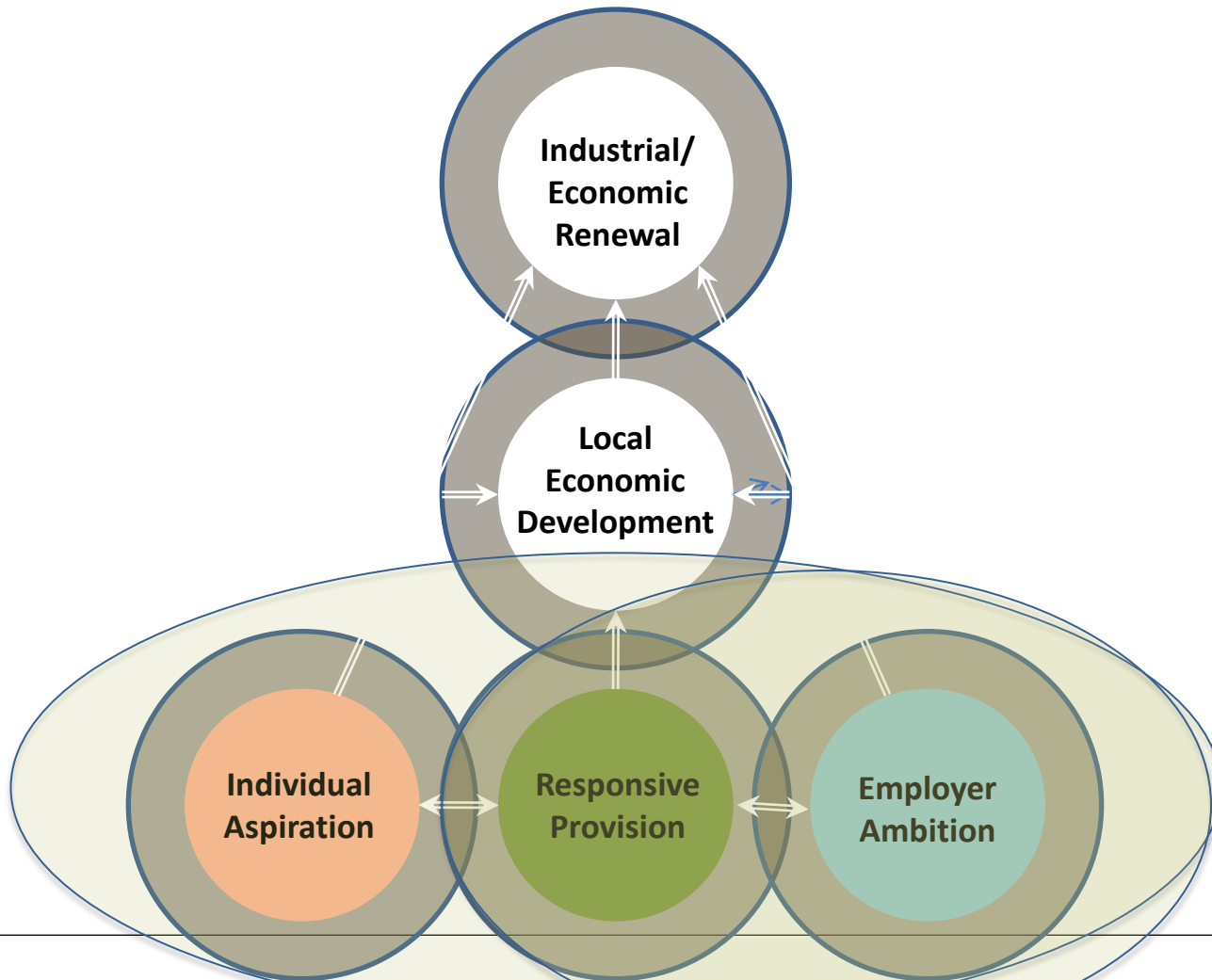
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Government:      Return on investment  
                          Increased Gross Domestic Product

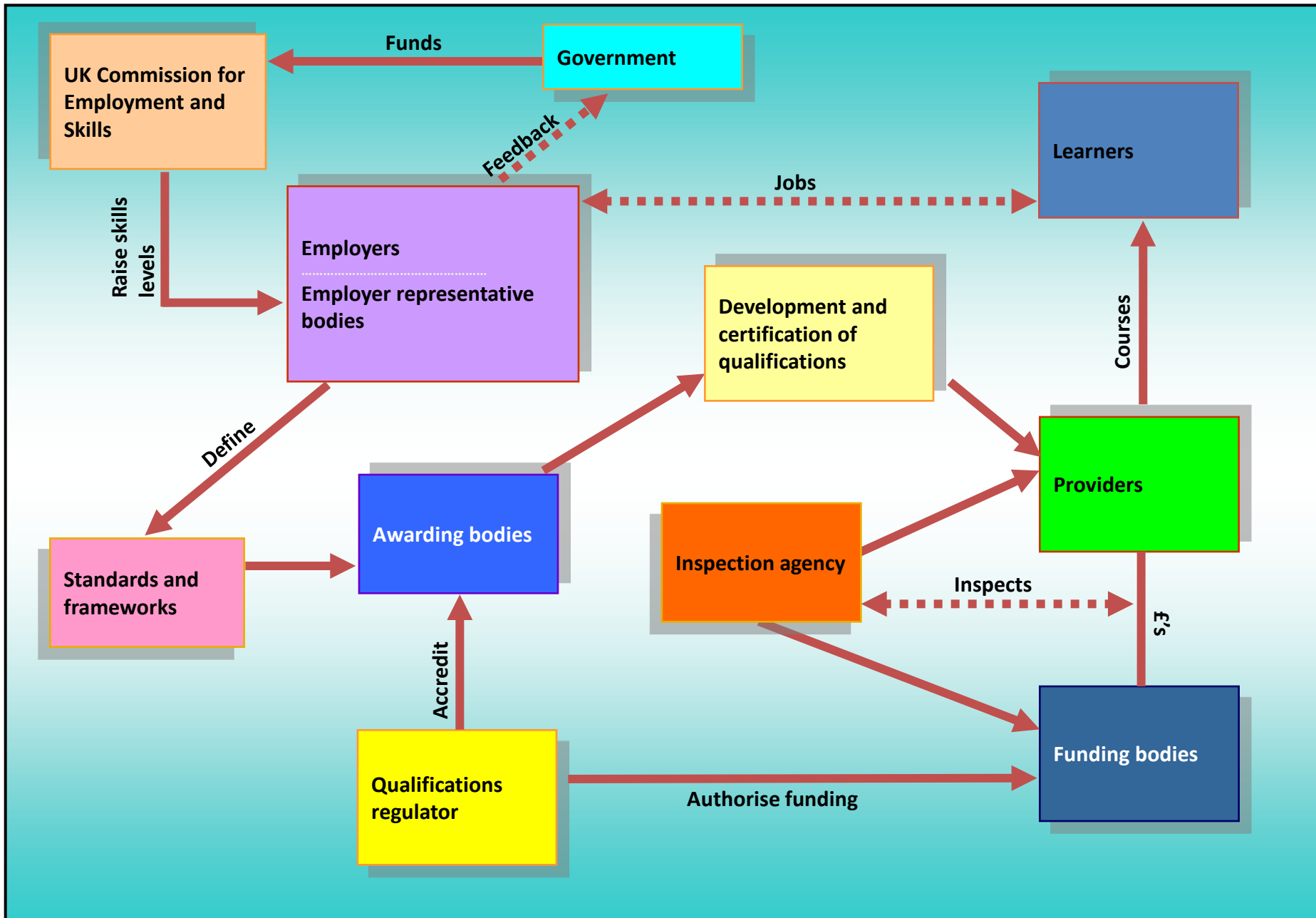


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# Five priorities for world class skills and jobs



# UK Vocational Education and Training: a competency-based system



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# Key features of UK vocational system

- Funding of education and training is linked to quality
- Quality assurance system is based on self-assessment and risk and focuses on continuous improvement
- Skills provision is very flexible and open to all, with various providers
- All vocational qualifications must be supported by industry
- Colleges are autonomous corporate bodies: employer links
- Learning in real or simulated workplace settings
- Vocational qualifications: unitised and credit based



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# Challenges for the UK

- UK not improving fast enough to secure economic growth and an internationally competitive workforce
- Government aims to rebalance economy towards private sector, leading to a rebalancing of investment in skills
- Gaps in skills levels in UK and skills supply
- Maintaining quality in current economic climate
- Status of vocational training and qualifications
- An ageing population





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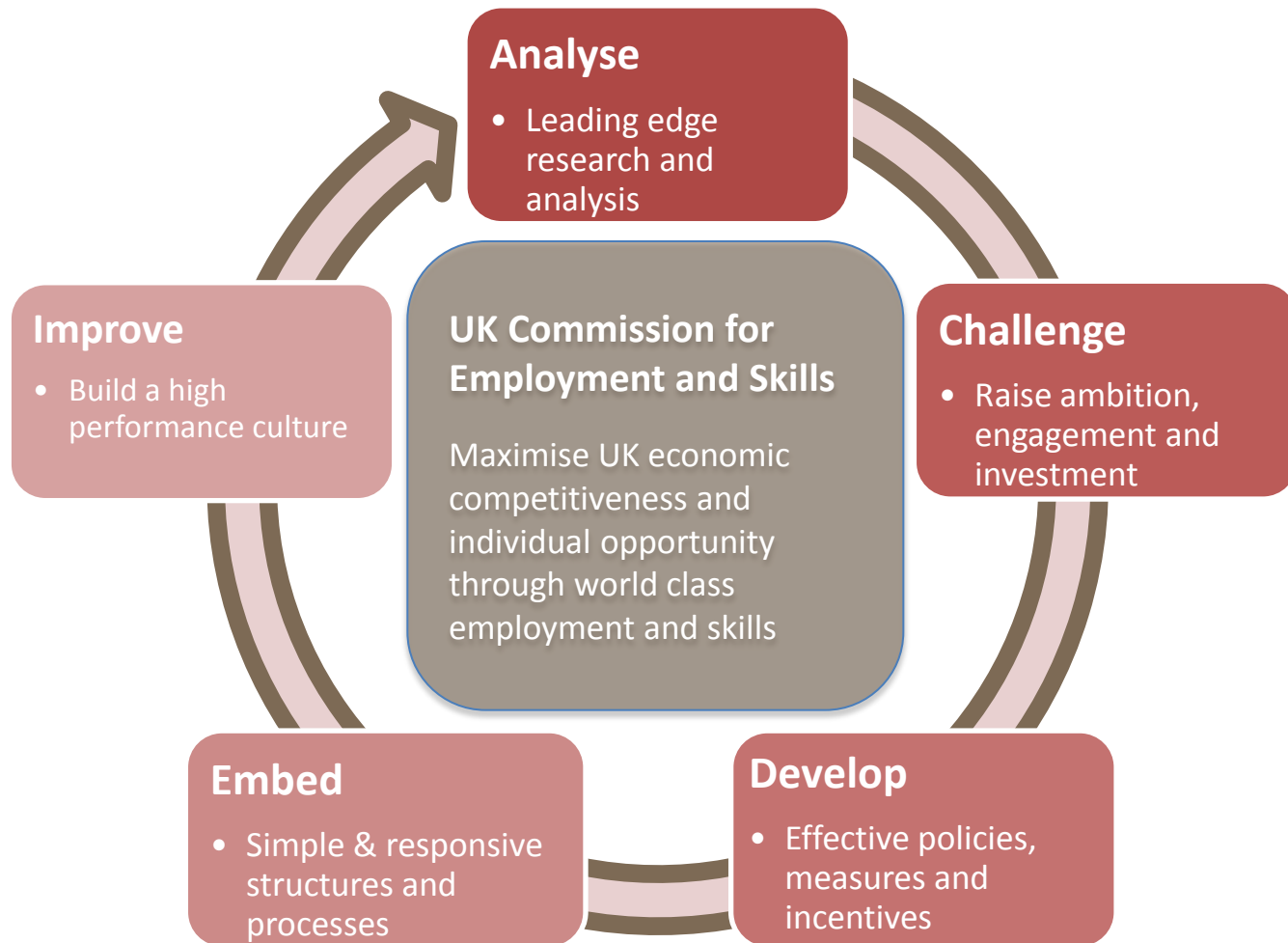
# UK Commission for Employment and Skills

- Employer-led body
- Advises on how to increase employment, skills and productivity
- Undertakes policy development, research and analysis
- Three strategic objectives:
  - To provide world-class labour market intelligence
  - To generate greater employer investment in skills
  - To maximise impact of changed employment/skills policies



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# UKCES Strategic Approach



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# Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) (1)

- Independent, employer-led, UK-wide organisations designed to build a skills system that is driven by employer demand
- SSCs work on behalf of employers to ensure UK has skills it needs
- Currently 19 SSCs covering 90% of the UK workforce. Examples:
  - **Cogent**: chemicals and pharmaceuticals, nuclear, oil and gas, petroleum and polymers
  - **e-skills UK**: Business and Information Technology: software, internet & web, IT services, telecommunications and business change
  - **SEMTA**: science, engineering and manufacturing technologies



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# Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) (2)

SSCs have four key goals:

1. Reduced skills gaps and shortages
2. Improved productivity, business and public service performance
3. Increased opportunities to boost the skills and productivity of everyone in the sector's workforce
4. Improved learning supply through National Occupational Standards, Apprenticeships, and further and higher education



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# The Sector Skills Council Offer

## Development

Research
National Occupational Standards
Career pathways
Qualifications directory
Courses directory
Training directory
Funding advice
Quality marking
Skills audits

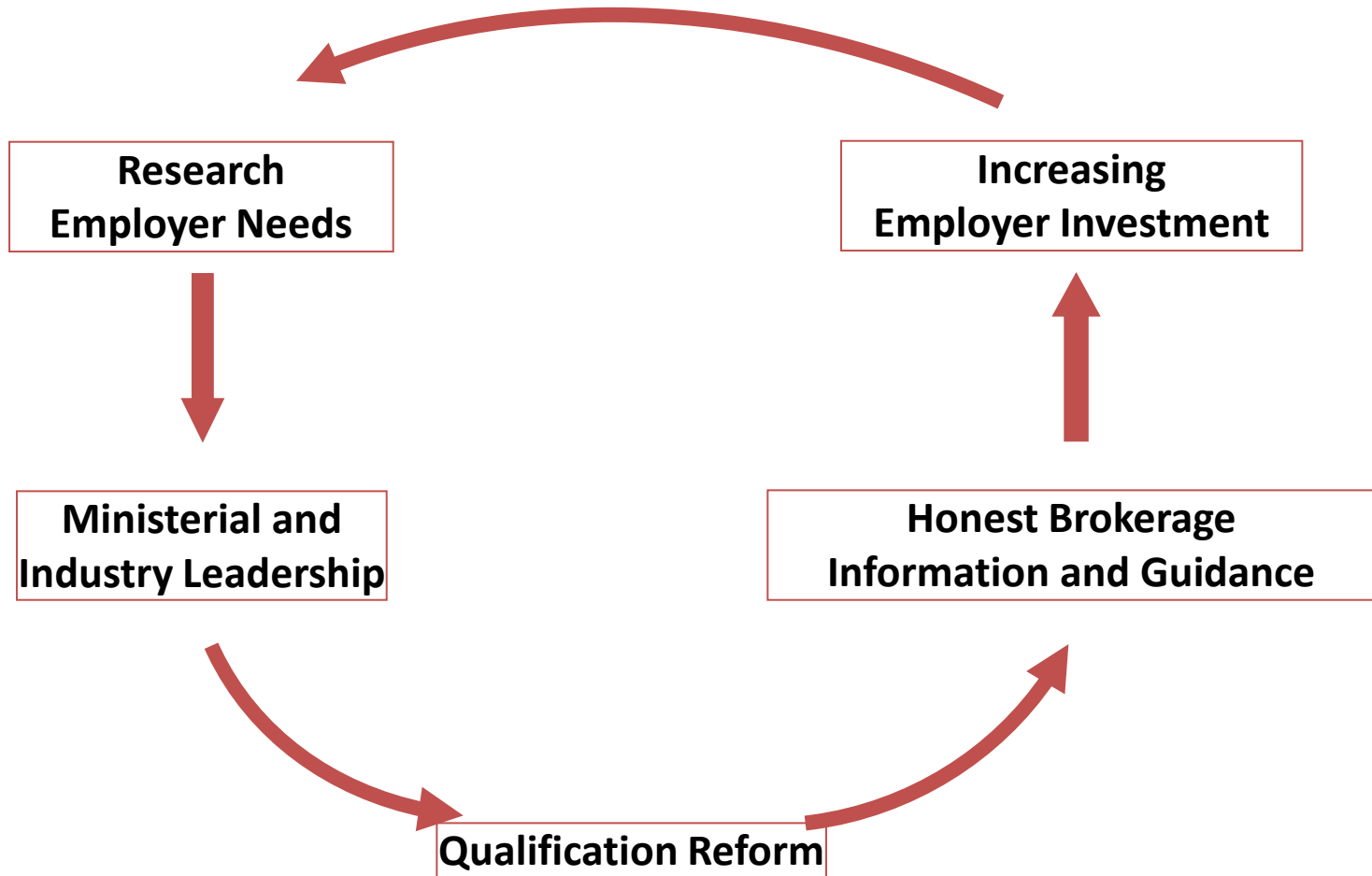
## Promotion

Benchmarking
Skills satisfaction surveys
Message boards Telephone help line
Case studies
Newsletters



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# National Skills Strategy



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# Qualifications and certification (1)

- SSCs have important role to play in development of qualifications for adults and 14-19 year olds
- Sector Qualifications Strategies (SQSs) are the mechanisms for ensuring that employers' and learners' needs are met
- SQSs are developed by Sector Skills Councils (SSCs), following Sector Skills Assessments
- SSCs work with awarding bodies and regulatory authorities to ensure that vocational/occupational qualifications meet the needs of employers and individuals



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## Qualifications and certification (2)

- Awarding bodies have expertise to design vocational qualifications which best meet employers' and learners' needs
- Awarding bodies are licensed by the qualifications regulators
- For a qualification to be recognised as part of a National Qualifications Framework, it must be accredited through a regulated awarding body
- Currently more than 100 licensed awarding bodies (under review)
- Awarding bodies provide an approval process for independent training providers to be able to award qualifications





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# Regulation and Accreditation

- Regulatory bodies (Ofqual, SQA etc) maintain standards and distribute information about qualifications
- Regulate general and vocational qualifications
- Give formal recognition to bodies and organisations that deliver qualifications and assessments
- Accredit their awards and monitor their activities
- Approve and distribute the criteria that qualifications must meet to be part of National Qualifications Frameworks
- Check that qualifications and the bodies that award them meet the criteria



# Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)



Level of difficulty

Comparisons

Content

Learning time

Credit value

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# Quality and Inspection (1)

- Regulation of the delivery of learning is shared throughout the UK between funding agencies and specialist quality assessors
- Quality assurance is built on a 150 year-old tradition of inspection and accountability
- Each provider is held responsible for the quality of its own work
- Quality assurance system is based on self-assessment and risk
- Self-assessment includes observation and evaluation of teachers at work
- Awarding bodies also validate each learning centre before qualifications can be offered: they audit the quality of assessments



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## Quality and Inspection (2)

- The largest of the 4 national inspectorates is the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED) in England

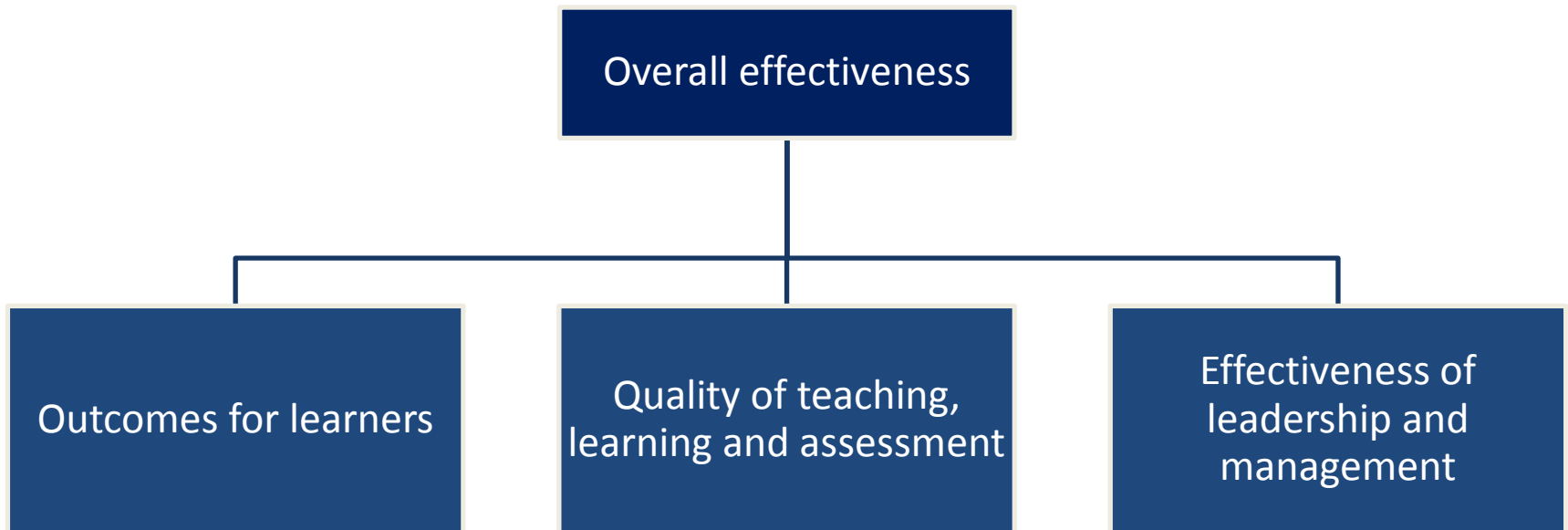


- inspects and regulates in order to support providers to meet their own priorities and targets for improvement
- Continuous improvement for the benefit of learners is the central purpose of the regulatory system
- Improvement and support services for providers
- Approach has been successful in raising standards: this is leading to greater self-regulation and local accountability



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# Common Inspection Framework



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# Funding and planning

- Funding of education and training is linked to quality: Government funding is accounted for
- In England there is currently a legal entitlement for people to receive free tuition for certain qualifications e.g. a first full level 2, numeracy etc
- In each of the four nations there is an organisation responsible for funding further education colleges and other skills providers
- Funding is prioritised
- Funding, planning and performance management in England is in transition



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# Colleges and learning providers: overview

- Over 400 Colleges and many more learning providers
- Often operate in partnership with employers and communities
- TVET provision is very flexible and open to all
- Colleges are autonomous corporate bodies educating and training around 3.4 million people annually
- 262 Colleges provide higher education, half of all Foundation degrees are taught in Colleges
- Of the 75 best public sector employers listed by *The Sunday Times*, 20 are Colleges and
- Total College income in England is £7.5 billion
- Scope for innovation
- International activity



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# Colleges and learning providers: role

- Develop teaching and learning strategies and materials
- Curriculum planning
- Implementation of new qualifications
- Delivery of government funded and other courses
- Contextualisation of qualifications
- Assessment
- Identify progression opportunities and provide support





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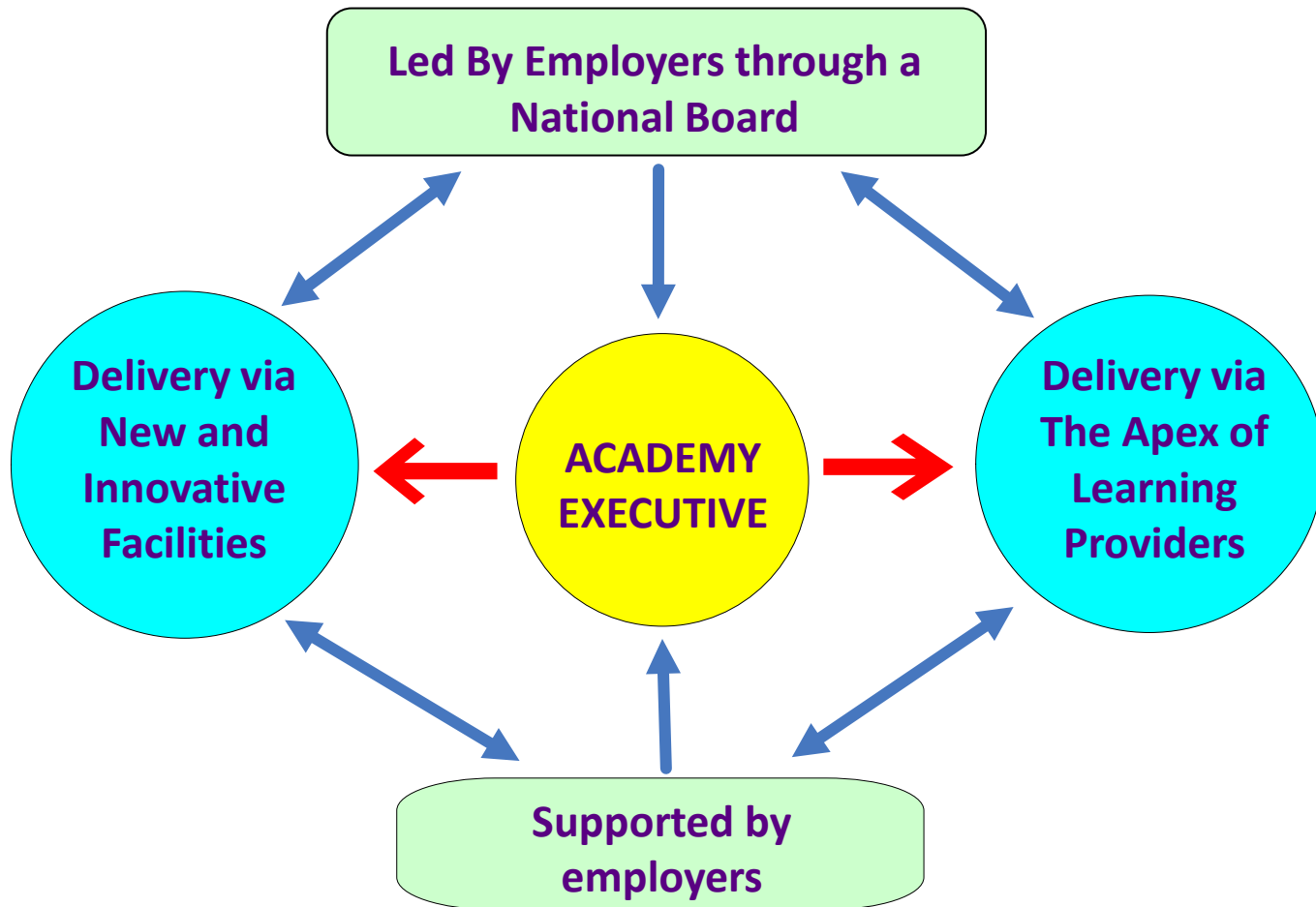
# National Skills Academies

- Led and supported by employers
- Excellent training, quality assured to the highest levels
- Hot house for new programmes and qualifications
- Unrivalled innovation - cutting edge solutions
- Focus on current and future



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# National Skills Academies



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# A competency-based system?



In  
partnership  
with  
employers



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# Labour Market Research

Need to identify and understand:

- size, shape and key features of occupation/sector
- the skills needs in the occupation/sector
- extent and quality of current skills provision
- gaps and weaknesses in current workforce development activity
- priorities for action

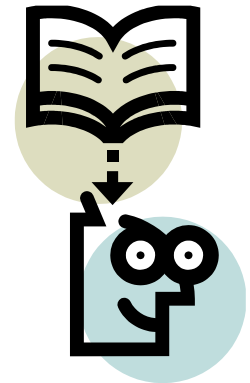


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# UK National Occupational Standards

What are National Occupational Standards?

- Set out measurable performance outcomes to which an individual is expected to work in a given occupation
- Developed by employers across the UK
- Set out the skills, knowledge and understanding required to perform competently in the workplace
- Occupational Standards inform qualifications



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# Qualifications: Development and Accreditation

- Qualifications strategy for each sector
- Qualifications are developed by Awarding Bodies
- All vocational qualifications supported by industry
- All qualifications go through a rigorous development and accreditation phase
- Everything related to accredited qualifications is monitored by the Qualifications Regulator (Ofqual in England)
- Awarding bodies do not provide training for candidates



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# TVET Qualifications Delivery

Learning through practical experience

- learning in real or simulated workplace settings
- learning through real or role play activities
- carrying out case study work
- planning and carrying out practical tasks and assignments
- employability skills embedded

Learning through reflecting at all stages of the experience

- taking stock throughout - reviewing and adapting as necessary
- reflecting - evaluating, self-assessing
- identifying learning points



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# VET Qualifications Assessment

- On the job/practical assessment
  - observation
  - portfolio of evidence
- Formative assessment
- Summative assessment
- Competency based
- Group and individual activities





# Employer roles in UK Skills Development

Role		UK Agency
Policy and system design	➡	UK Commission for Employment and Skills
Labour Market Information	➡	Sector Skills Councils
Occupational standards and qualification accreditation	➡	Sector Skills Councils
Employer investment in workforce development	➡	Sector Skills Councils
Regional economic development	➡	Regional Employment and Skills Boards
Delivery of training for local labour markets	➡	Governing Boards of Colleges and Universities



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# Thank You

Questions?

