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Responding to local
business needs:
universities, colleges and
higher skills

The FE context

- 3.1m students p.a.
- 834,000 16-18 year olds
- 70,000 16-18 year old apprentices
- 30% under 19 applicants via UCAS

“HE in FE”

- 254 colleges offer HE
- 144,000 students
- 83% HNCs, 75% HNDs, 55% FDs
- 70% of students live within 20 miles of the college
- Key role in widening participation in HE
- 46% decline in PTHE; 92% PTHE students mature

What do businesses want?

- Knowledge transfer
- Higher level skills
- Meaningful engagement with all aspects of HVET including curriculum design delivery and assessment

“The hidden world of post-secondary VET” OECD November 2014

- “Relative both to other countries and to potential demand (England has) limited provision of post secondary VET, potentially leading to a shortage of mid-level skills”
- “Short cycle professional training requires non-university institutions”


“Growth through people”

UKCES November 2014

- 90% of the current workforce will still be in work in the next decade
- Higher technical education has fallen through the gap
- FECs are well placed to fill the gap

What needs to be done?

- National policies locally applied
- Co-ordinate education and business links at local level including LEPs
- Encourage and support employer leadership including SMEs
- Speak the same language; skills as well as knowledge
- Identify and remove “system barriers” e.g. progression pathways for skills based HAs



An HVET system which is fit for
purpose relevant to the needs
of students and employers
locally, linked regionally and
integrated nationally