

EXAM SKILLS

09 Read the text on work-based learning and answer the questions that follow.

EDUCATION AND THE WORKPLACE IN THE UK

A There has been a trend towards creating a closer connection between education/training and the workplace. This is because many employers felt that school leavers were not prepared well enough and didn't have the skills they would need to do well at work. Having a close relationship between training and work is not new: apprenticeships were a common way of learning in the past. Young people learnt by working with an expert, but this was most common in trades such as builders or electricians. The trend now is for a closer connection between education and the workplace at all levels and in many different types of job.

B In 1944, the UK government created a new system of education. Education was divided into three parts. Children who passed an exam at 11 went to grammar schools. Pupils who didn't do well in the exam went to 'secondary modern' schools or technical schools. At technical schools they studied work-based subjects. In practice, however, only 0.5% of pupils went to technical schools, and this system divided students at a very young age into academic and non-academic. The system did not produce good results, and changed to a more equal system in the 1970s.

C In the 1980s the British government introduced NVQs or National Vocational Qualifications so that young people could get certificates to show their practical skills. It helps employers understand what workers can do. In 1994, the government started a programme which aimed to provide 'quality training on a work-based (educational) route'. These 'modern apprenticeships' are available at three different levels.



- Read (skim) the text very quickly so you understand what it is about.
- Read the main part of the questions and find the key words (the words that will help you find the answer in the passage).
- Find the key words or words that mean the same in the passage.
- Try to answer the question without looking at the options A–D.
- Find the option, A, B, C or D, that matches your answer.
- Check that the other options are incorrect.



D At the higher levels of education, too, there has been more emphasis on work-based learning, which links academic study closely to practical experience. At degree level, companies have linked with universities to create specialised qualifications, such as the BA in Distribution run between Middlesex University and Asda Supermarket. Such partnerships also exist at Masters and even doctorate level.

E The development of technology has helped work-based learning to develop. Blended learning means part of the course can be delivered online, so people don't have to miss work to go to classes. Older or recently retired employees have been given the opportunity to develop new skills as tutors, mentors and coaches for the work-based part of these courses. This kind of work-based training was common in fields such as nursing and teaching, but has now spread to careers which were traditionally not closely linked to education.

F There are some challenges involved in work-based learning. Some lecturers might find it difficult to teach students with a lot of work experience. It may also be difficult to find teachers who can teach in different places and at different times. However, it is a positive trend as there are more ways to learn and people can study at different stages of their lives.

1 Apprenticeships

- A are a new way of learning.
- B were common in the past.
- C only existed in the past.
- D did not help people do well at work.

2 The education system introduced in 1944

- A only affected 0.5% of students.
- B taught only technical subjects.
- C was not a great success.
- D was for academically gifted students.

3 Blended learning

- A mainly benefits older or retired people.
- B involves mainly face to face classes.
- C is mainly for teaching and nursing.
- D is convenient for working people.

4 The challenges of work-based learning include

- A practical issues like when classes are held.
- B students who are not very experienced.
- C more types of learning are acceptable.
- D older people can't use computers well.