

White Paper on 14-19 education - NUT reaction

Commenting on the White Paper on 14-19 education published today by Education Secretary Ruth Kelly, Steve Sinnott, General Secretary of the UK's biggest teachers' union, the NUT, said:

“This looks like a failure of nerve by Government. The Tomlinson Report attracted a remarkable degree of consensus ranging from the Chief Inspector of Schools to all organisations representing teachers.

“His report made it clear that if there are two separate routes for students divided on academic and vocational lines, then a two tier system will continue to be embedded.

“I cannot see the Russell Group of Universities according a vocational diploma the same status it gives to A levels.

“The NUT supported the Government's commissioning of Tomlinson and the support it appeared to be giving to his proposal for an Open Diploma. Now it looks as if short-sighted electoral considerations have over-ridden sensible policy making.

“There are opportunities in the White Paper which should be grasped. For this reason I call on the Government to establish a review and implementation body including the main political parties, trade unions and employers to monitor and advise governments on 14-19 reform.”

E N D S

pr.10/05

For further information contact: Olive Forsythe tel: 020 7380 4706 (office) 020 8313 1692 (weekday evenings) or if all else fails, 07879 480061.