

## NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS – PRESS RELEASE

**EMBARGO: 10 am**  
**Tuesday 17 February 2004**

### **14-19: new qualification must retain the best of the old says NUT**

Commenting on the report into 14-19 education by Professor Mike Tomlinson, published today (17 February) Doug McAvoy, NUT General Secretary, said:

“Professor Tomlinson’s proposals have much to commend them. But there is much that is good in the existing examination system that must not be lost.

“The changes in coursework and assessment will be welcomed by teachers provided they encourage personal investigative skills and initiative and end the repetition and excessive work load from assessment.

“I hope Government will tackle the invidious distinction between academic and vocational pathways as a result of the Tomlinson report. It must be recognized that young people develop new interests and skills after they leave formal education.

“Inevitably, the changes proposed by Tomlinson will have a downward impact on the National Curriculum which cannot be ignored by the Government. That impact must be handled carefully and not result in yet another massive swathe of changes which disrupt teaching.

“A new qualification must be acceptable to further and higher education and employers, and must not trigger demands for yet another layer of exams.

“The NUT believes that changes must be properly funded, agreed with the profession and glitches identified through piloting. The proposed diploma must not be rushed but brought in over a period to avoid the disruption that wholesale change could cause and which occurred when the GCSE was introduced.”

E N D

PR.9/04

**For further information contact:** Olive Forsythe tel: 020 7380 4706 (office) 01502 478521 (evenings) or 07879 480061.