

VQ Day
Celebrating
vocational success
23 July 2008



There are many paths to success



Evaluation report

In just six months, the VQ Day steering group — led by Edge — has succeeded in laying a marker in the sand for future years to build on.

Introduction

Andy Powell,
Chief Executive, Edge

Every year we are used to seeing the TV pictures of A-level and GCSE students celebrating (or commiserating) their results, but there has never before been one national day of celebration for the millions of people who gain vocational qualifications each year.

In February 2008, the VQ Day steering group met for the first time with the aim of creating such a celebration. In just six months, the group – led by Edge – has succeeded in laying a marker in the sand for future years to build on.

Without the support of our partners VQ Day would not have been possible – so it is appropriate to thank not just the co-funders of the VQ Day adverts; City & Guilds, Edexcel, EDI and the Learning and Skills Council, but the other members of the steering group.

The FE Reputation Strategy Group, the Association of Colleges, Association of Learning Providers, the Department for Innovation, Universities & Skills (DIUS), Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College, the Federation of Awarding Bodies, fforwm, Institute of Leadership & Management (ILM), OCR, Qualifications & Curriculum Authority (QCA), along with colleges and learning providers around the country, have all played a part in making 2008 a fantastic first VQ Day.

This review sets out what was achieved in 2008 and also looks forward to what can be achieved in 2009.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Powell', written over a light blue grid background.

Andy Powell
Chief Executive, Edge



Over 250 dignitaries, including more than 60 MPs, joined Edge to launch the first VQ Day at the House of Commons on 23 April 2008. Research published to mark this day revealed that 17 million Brits hold a VQ. Following the day, MPs were encouraged to sign an Early Day Motion and issue press releases supporting VQ Day. To date, over 115 MPs have been involved with VQ Day to some extent.

Main picture — Garry Hawkes, CBE, Chairman, Edge. Clockwise from left — Bill Rammell, Minister for Further Education; Will Torrent, World Skills Competitor; Ken Boston, Chairman, QCA; Martin Doel, Chief Executive, Association of Colleges.



Press coverage



Collateral

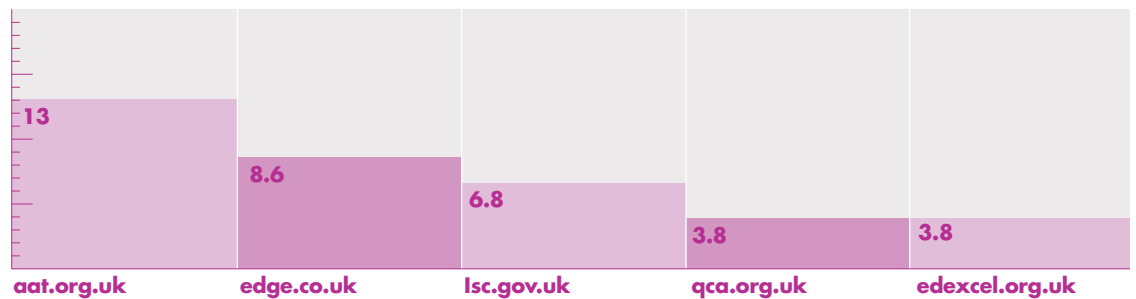

VQ Day website homepage
www.vqday.org and leaflets.

Collateral

The VQ Day website, www.vqday.org, was at the heart of the campaign and attracted more than 650 unique users per week – reaching a peak of 1,964 visitors in the week of VQ Day itself.

Posters and leaflets were produced and made available to publicise the Day, which were requested by 124 organisations, while 471 people downloaded the PR action toolkit. A roll of honour was established on the website, which has attracted over 1,000 signatories.

Figure 01
 Sites as percentage of all referrals



Anderson's Associates were commissioned by Edge to write an independent review of vocational qualification achievements in the UK. It revealed that over 3.25m vocational qualifications were awarded in the last year and the findings were used to publicise VQ Day on the 23 July 2008.

Figure 02
 Website traffic sources

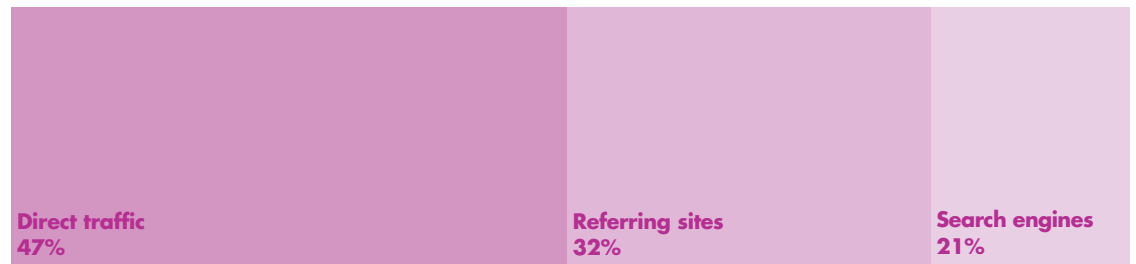


Figure 03
 www.vqday.org key statistics

Activity	Units
Visits	15,086
Unique visitors	10,692
Page views	57,122
Average page view	3.79 mins
Average time on site	2.39 mins



Neo Films Ltd and Radio Lynx created broadcast-ready coverage, including stock shots of vocational learning in action and footage from the launch event. A digital version of the film was made available for partner and media websites.

Hosted by Strictly Come Dancing star Alesha Dixon, over 250 people attended the national event. Nine learning providers, from catering to engineering, showcased their achievements with opportunities for guests to participate and try their hand at some of the demonstrations on display. There were also performances from Cambridge College of Performing Arts and the Academy of Contemporary Music — representing the range of vocational success and vocational learning opportunities available in the UK.



Left —
Alesha speaks to umi Hotels



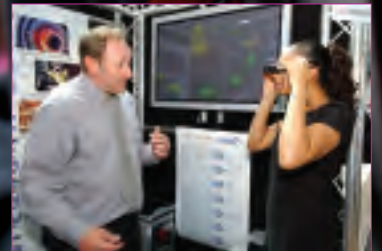
Above —
Alesha also awarded
VQ Hero awards to two
outstanding learners – Sophie
Kelly was named Young Learner
of the Year and Paul Buzzard
was named Learner of the Year.



Below —
Alesha meets Ealing,
Hammersmith and West
London College

Main picture — Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills, John Denham and Alesha Dixon try their hand at stonemasonry.

Clockwise from left — Alesha tries her hand at stonemasonry with York College learners; Alesha meets West Nottinghamshire College; Alesha meets VT Training.



The Academy of Contemporary Music perform at the Royal Opera House, Paul Hamlyn Hall, to end the VQ Day celebrations on the 23 July 2008.



Above — Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills, John Denham was joined by his political shadows David Willetts MP and Stephen Williams MP in congratulating vocational learners.



Left — Cambridge Performing Arts College.
Below — David Willetts with Jaguar.



The Royal Opera House Event



Above —
The crowd at The Royal
Opera House event.
Left —
Lewisham College and
John Denham.

Events across the UK



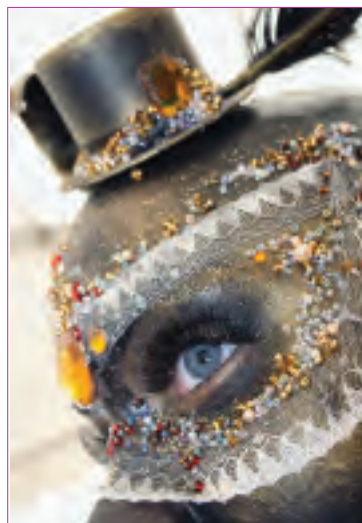
Events across the UK

More than 50 schools, colleges and workplaces across the UK held their own VQ Day events, including awards ceremonies and skills showcases. Fforwm and the National Training Federation Wales played host to a major VQ Day event at the Royal Welsh Show, addressed by Deputy Skills Minister John Griffiths.



Welsh Deputy Minister for Skills, John Griffiths, meets learners from the Welsh College of Horticulture.

Above — Former Gloucester RFC Captain Peter Buxton joined JHP Group's learners; VQ Heroes at Laisterdyke College celebrated the Day; Merseyside colleges celebrated VQ Day at the Liverpool Echo Arena.



Clockwise from left — Preston College presented VQ Day certificates to learners; Leanne Wright from Coleg Gwent and the Royal Welsh National Opera showcases theatrical makeup at the Royal Welsh Show; Leanne Wright at the launch; Cambrian Training Company demonstrate butchery skills at the Welsh Show; Forensic Science learners at Bridgend College show the skills they learn; Plumbing experts from Coleg Sir Gar showed off their skills.



Tracking Research

Tracking Research

Tracking research was carried out by independent market research company YouGov prior to the 23 April and was re-run over the weekend after VQ Day. The main findings show:

- Over half of people (51 per cent) now agree that vocational qualifications are as valuable as GCSEs and A-levels – up from 44 per cent before VQ Day.
- One in five adults in the UK (18 per cent) heard one of the VQ Day national news stories
- Almost one in ten people (7 per cent) have heard of VQ Day.

Figure 04
Key message delivery

April 2008
July 2008

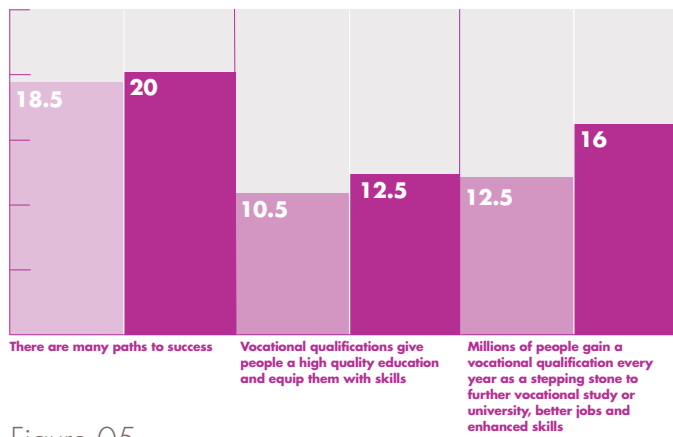


Figure 05
Which of these statements do you agree with?

April 2008
July 2008

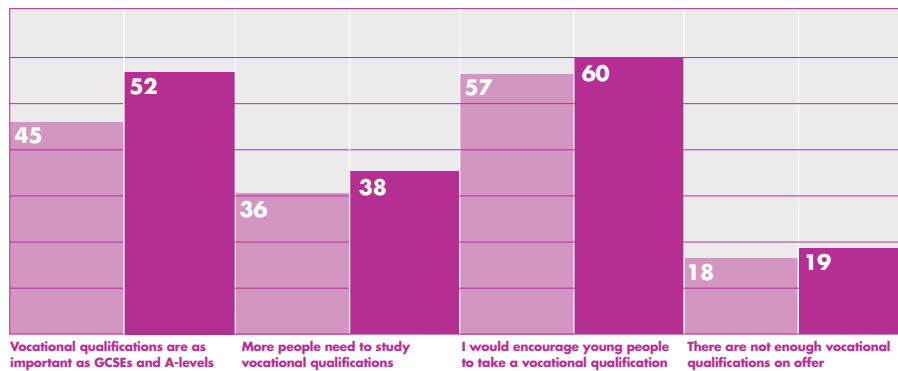
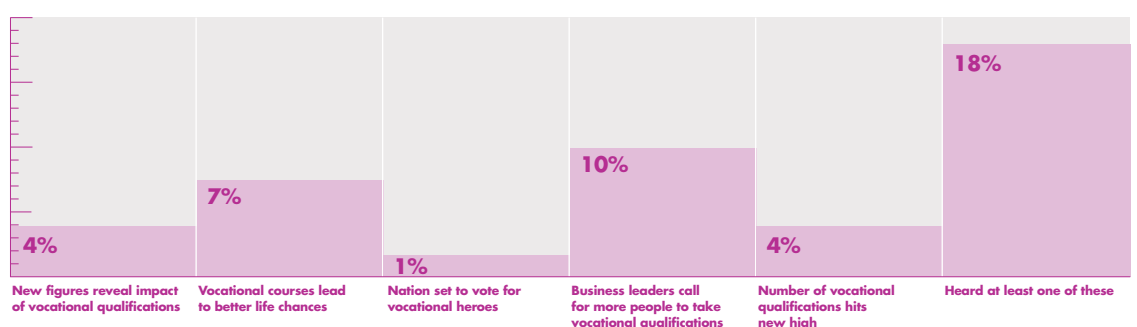


Figure 06
Percentage hearing a VQ Day news story

Heard of the news story



VQ Day in numbers
VQ Day in numbers

580 pieces of print, broadcast and online coverage appeared:

- Six TV including BBC Breakfast, BBC Midlands, ITV Central and HTV
- 143 online including BBC online, Guardian Unlimited and Times online
- 173 national and regional print including Daily Mail, the Sun, The Mirror, The Financial Times, London Paper, Nottingham Evening Post and Lancashire Evening Post
- 15 national magazines including That's Life, Bliss and People Management
- 28 radio stories secured including Radio 5 Live, BBC Radio London and Sky News Radio.

This coverage generated:

- 98,812,890 opportunities to see coverage of VQ Day
- An advertising equivalent value of £2,263,410
- 98 per cent of coverage delivered at least one key message

Over 50 events nationwide:

- 258 attendees at Royal Opera House Event
 - Including Skills spokespeople from all 3 parties
- National event for Wales held at Royal Welsh Show
 - Including speech from Deputy Skills Minister
- Tabled House of Commons Early Day Motion with 66 MP signatories
- Support secured from a range of stakeholders including the CBI, British Chambers of Commerce, TUC, Association of Teachers and Lecturers and UVAC.

Figure 07

Delivery of news stories by channel

Location	Percentage
In a newspaper or magazine article	40
On TV	31
On radio	22
On website	9
In an advert	2
Word of mouth	22
Don't know/can't remember	14
Other	2

Respondents could select more than one answer

VQ Day 2009 needs to be bigger and better and consultation is underway to extend its reach and impact.

The date for VQ Day is being explored so that it does not fall outside the school year and the campaign will be widened so that there is greater impact in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

It is also hoped that more colleges, learning providers and employers will get involved in 2009 to celebrate vocational success and demonstrate that there are many paths to success.

Edge is an independent education foundation. It is dedicated to raising the status of practical and vocational learning, so that all young people have the opportunity to achieve their potential, and the UK's future workforce is equipped with the skills to be successful in the modern economy. Edge believes that 'learning by doing' is as important as academic learning, and that there are many paths to success.

For more information and to become involved in VQ Day 2009, visit www.vqday.org or email vqday@bbpr.com



There are many paths to success

band&brown

www.bbpr.com