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The Rt Hon Lord Young of Graffham  
Secretary of State for Employment  
Caxton House  
Tothill Street  
LONDON  
SW1H 9NF

12 March 1986

*Dear David,*

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION INITIATIVE

I refer to your letter of 21 February to Keith Joseph about your proposals for moving TVEI from a pilot to a national scheme with effect from September 1987.

I warmly welcome your proposals in principle. Although it is as you say too early to give any definitive evaluation of TVEI, it is already clear that it is making an important impact on curriculum design and on attitudes to technical and vocational education in schools and authorities. In Scotland we have also found so far that it has complemented well the changes in certification we are instituting, especially the introduction of SCOTVEC 16+ modules which have exceptionally been made available for 14-16 year olds involved in TVEI schemes. As Standard grade begins to come on stream we would hope that many of the new courses would also be relevant to TVEI.

The final proposals for an extended scheme will of course need to be very carefully considered and presented. Moving beyond the pilot stage to schemes involving all schools will have very substantial implications for the management of the curriculum; and we will want to be sure that the proposals continue to cohere with our particular developments in Scotland. I agree therefore that a working group of officials should prepare more detailed proposals with the aim of announcing decisions in June.

A wider point is the link between the funding for your new proposals and other MSC programmes. Your expectation is that reduced pressures on YTS will release the necessary resources. But many critics currently say that YTS is underfinanced and I know of the significant pressures which the MSC budget generally faces. I have therefore asked my officials to get in touch with yours to clarify the possible implications for other MSC programmes before we commit ourselves to going ahead with these proposals.

In general however I believe your proposals are on the right lines and I would want Scotland to be fully involved in them.

Copies go to the Prime Minister, Nigel Lawson, Keith Joseph,  
Norman Tebbit, Paul Channon and Nicholas Edwards.

*Yours ever,  
Malcolm*

MALCOLM RIFKIND

EDUCATION : TVEI : PE2

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*[Faint, illegible handwriting]*

12.11.88

