

cc/BG



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VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING WHITE PAPER

Thank you for your letter of 3 April recording your reservations about publishing a White Paper on Vocational Education and Training in June if it contains any announcements about the extension of TVEI. *WILL REQUEST IF REQUIRED*

As you recognise, I have offered to fund the proposed extension from within existing resources. I cannot accept that an early announcement would be materially prejudicial to the PES process. The logic of that argument would seem to point to a doctrine that no decision with medium term expenditure implications, even if financed within the existing planned resources, could be announced except in, or immediately after, an Autumn or Budget statement - and that seems to me to go too far. Timing of major policy announcements must have some regard to operational considerations such as when an announcement has to be made to allow proper time for implementation by a given date, and to the need to announce important decisions in a context where we can maximise favourable reactions and make the most impact.

Thus, when our officials have completed their examination of the options for extension at the end of this month I will be coming back to you to press for announcements in a June White Paper.

I am copying this letter to the Prime Minister, Cabinet colleagues and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

