

## QF'S WISE RESEARCH EXPLORES APPRENTICESHIPS

### *Global Apprenticeship Schemes are 'Fragile'*

**Doha, Qatar, October 15, 2017** – The World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE) has released new research comparing apprenticeship systems in several countries. The report explores the important role apprenticeships play in supporting young people to transition from school to working life, and helping adults in advancing their skills or acquiring new professions. However, according to the report, a collaboration between WISE and the University of Oxford, despite growing political interest in apprenticeships internationally, it remains a relatively fragile mode of vocational education.

In the study, *'People and Policy: A comparative study of apprenticeship across eight national contexts'*, researchers from the Department of Education at the University of Oxford have, for the first time, reviewed apprenticeship participation on a global scale. The research assesses apprenticeship frameworks in eight countries: Australia, Denmark, Egypt, England, Finland, Germany, India, and South Africa.

The findings suggest that reliance on the active participation of employers makes the apprenticeship model more vulnerable than classroom-based forms of learning, which can be delivered by state-sponsored colleges acting without direct employer support. For the model to work and produce successful, qualified apprentices, employer engagement is crucial, the authors suggest. Therefore, having strong incentives for employers to participate in program provision is vital.

Apprenticeship schemes vary widely across countries from how they are organized and financed, to the day-to-day running and learning style of the programs offered. In some countries, apprenticeships have come to be used as a route for giving less academically-minded young people a second chance in life, which the authors find to be increasingly unrealistic.

The varying degrees of international participation suggest that there are still gray areas in some countries around how to make the most of the apprenticeship model. Apprenticeship incentives are more appreciated in regions where employer associations are historically stronger, such as Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland.

For employers in some regions, such as Egypt, apprenticeships are known to have as many disincentives as they have incentives. A big concern is around employee retention: why invest in someone when they might leave and go elsewhere?

In other countries, including England and Australia, a policy discourse has developed where the apprenticeship has come to be perceived as a form of 'magic dust', which can be sprinkled on almost any vocational education and training problem, and offered to any young person who wants one.

In order to improve apprenticeship engagement in countries where the model has been less successful, the authors suggest that it is in the government's interest to work with industry to better incentivize this investment and make the benefits of the approach more explicit.

Dr. Asmaa Alfadala, Director of Research and Content Development, at WISE, an initiative of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, remarked: "WISE is very pleased to

collaborate with our Oxford colleagues on this important topic, as part of an ongoing series of WISE Reports on key global education challenges. This research report provides useful portraits of diverse approaches to apprenticeships, intended to guide policy-makers and suggest what could be achieved with more integration and co-operation among stakeholders around this unique and practical education tool.”

## ENDS

### **About the World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE):**

The World Innovation Summit for Education was established by Qatar Foundation in 2009 under the leadership of its Chairperson, Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser. WISE is an international, multi-sectoral platform for creative, evidence-based thinking, debate, and purposeful action in education. Through the biennial summit, collaborative research and a range of on-going programs, WISE is a global reference in new approaches to education. WISE 2017 will take place in Doha November 14-16 under the theme: “Co-Exist, Co-Create: Learning to Live and Work Together”.

For further information about WISE, visit [www.wise-qatar.org](http://www.wise-qatar.org)

### **About the WISE Research series:**

The WISE Research reports, produced in collaboration with recognized experts from around the world, address pressing global education issues and reflect the priorities of the Qatar National Research Strategy. The reports feature action-oriented recommendations and policy guidance for all education stakeholders, offering concrete, improved practices in specific contexts. The 2017 WISE research series addresses topics including school leadership and collaborative professionalism, design thinking, apprenticeship, disability, early childhood education, and migration, among others.

As a resource for the latest thinking, the WISE reports encourage discussion at the 2017 global WISE summit and spark further research. The reports are available on the WISE website and through the mobile app. A limited number of printed editions in English will be available at [WISE 2017](#), 14-16 November. Selected reports will also be available in Arabic editions.

Discover the 2017 reports: <http://www.wise-qatar.org/2017-wise-research>