

## **Make lifelong learning work**

**To function properly in our knowledge-based economy, individuals need to be well-educated, but they also need to continue to develop their skills. 'Lifelong learning' gives them the best opportunities to achieve this. The Education Council aims to encourage learning in all stages of people's lives.**

*5 November 2003*

Every individual learns throughout their entire lifetime. Lifelong learning should not just serve economic purposes, but also the cultural development of society and the personal development of individuals. It is important for everybody.

### **Invest in education for people in work and for people seeking work.**

Individuals, businesses and the government could invest more in education for people in work and for people seeking work. The Education Council believes, for example, that schools and businesses should form partnerships and provide joint funding of training programmes. Individuals re-entering the labour market after a period of absence could choose to forego part of their benefit payment in exchange for a training or work experience place. Government could fund programmes that cross industry boundaries or are particularly innovative.

### **Cash in on knowledge and skills acquired outside school**

The Education Council believes that skills and knowledge acquired outside formal education should also be put to their best use. People can learn in a variety of situations. In a voluntary job, for example, people can learn things that could be very useful in paid employment. It should be possible for people to receive recognition for these skills.

### **Make higher education more appealing for people in work**

The Education Council would like to make higher education more appealing for people in work. This implies that the proportion of privately offered study programmes will increase and that higher education will be less exclusively part of the state system. Furthermore, the examinations system can be improved and made more accessible. Everyone who wants to should be given the chance to sit exams and obtain an award, regardless of whether they have followed the corresponding course of study.

### **Make internationalisation part of lifelong learning**

People increasingly need to look beyond their own country's borders. Internationalisation is therefore important regardless of whether people work outside the Netherlands or stay in the Netherlands. The Education Council believes that more focus is needed on international competency evaluation and recommends that international agreements are reached within the professional sectors on post-initial education.