

ESRC/CLR seminar

FUTURE OF LABOUR IN  
CONSTRUCTION

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# WHAT IS THE MEANING OF SKILLS?

- ***social divisions of occupations/professional sectors***  
(not individual attributes)
- ***hierarchies of status/ skill differentials***
- ***divisions between mental/manual labour***

# THE CONSTRUCTION OF SKILLS

- *levels of education/training*
- *work-related and theoretical skills*
- *different institutional contexts/means of regulation*

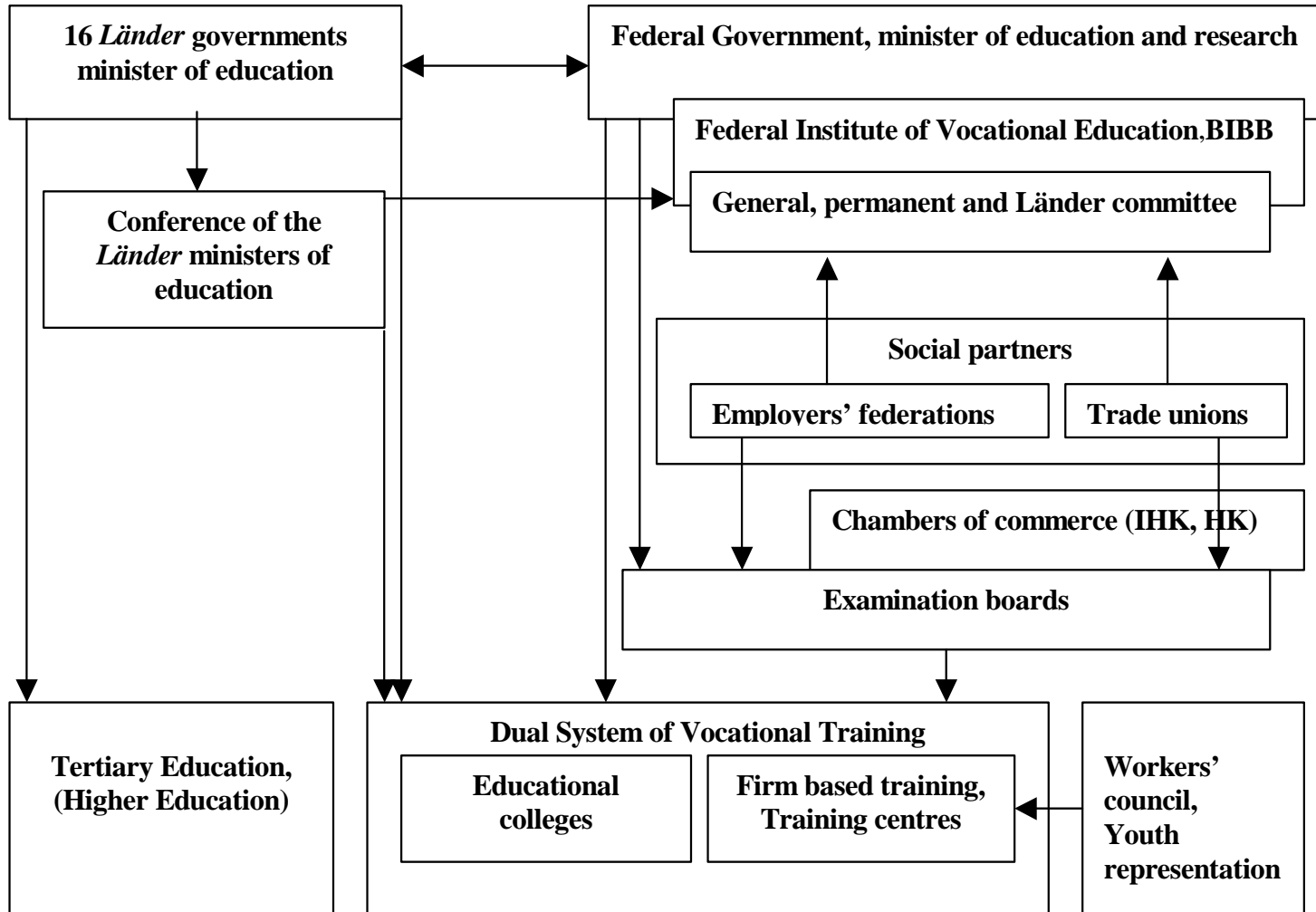
# DIFFERENT MEANINGS OF SKILLS

- ***skills and the labour process***
  - horizontal = trade/profession (defined by society)
  - vertical = level of qualifications (education/training)
- ***skills and the production process***
  - horizontal = occupation
  - vertical = status
- ***skills and the work process***
  - horizontal = job classification
  - vertical = wage differentials

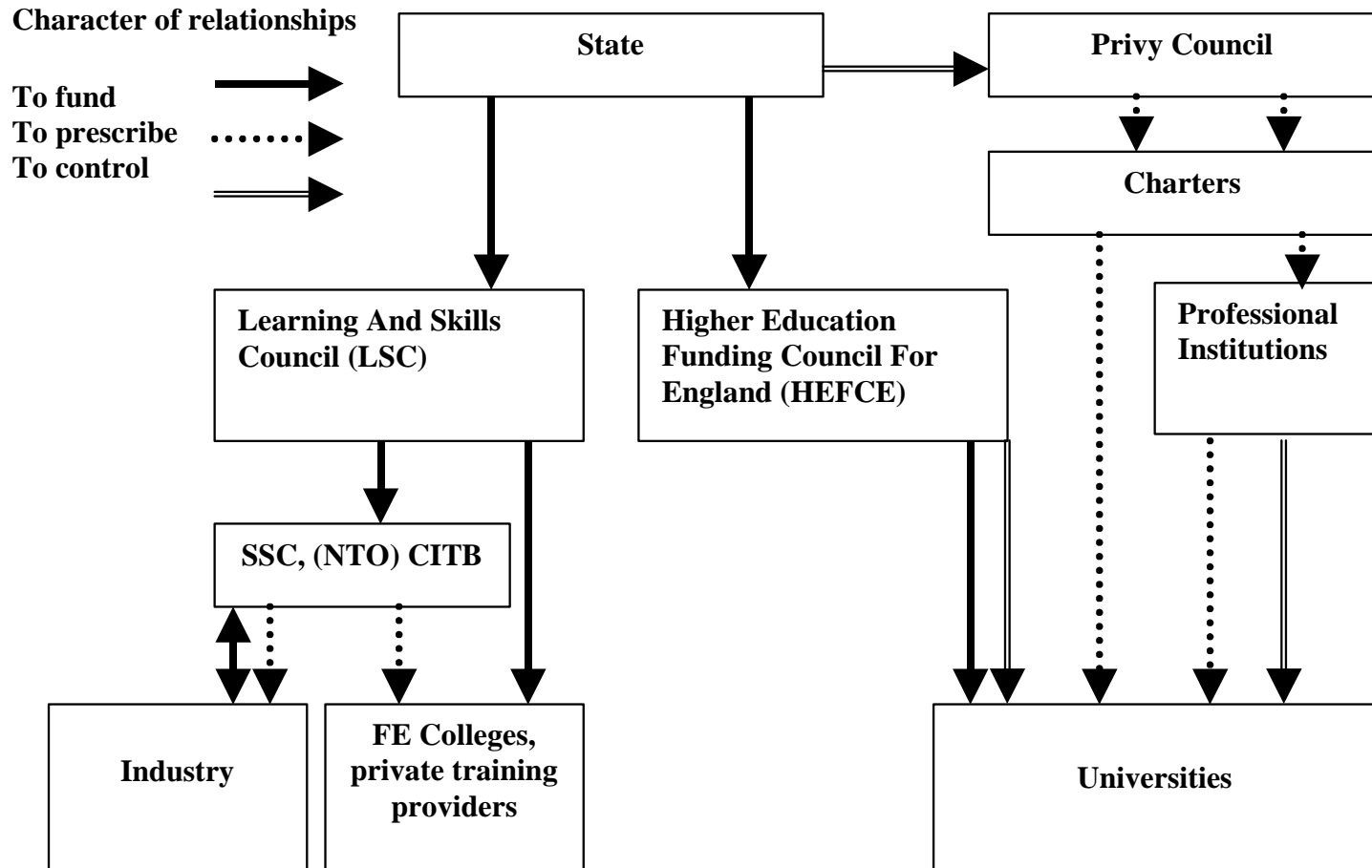
# CRAFT v INDUSTRY SKILLS

- *trade specific skills* v. *industry - wide*
- *selling output/  
product of labour* v. *labour potential/  
quality*
- *task/demand-  
related training* v. *training to learn*

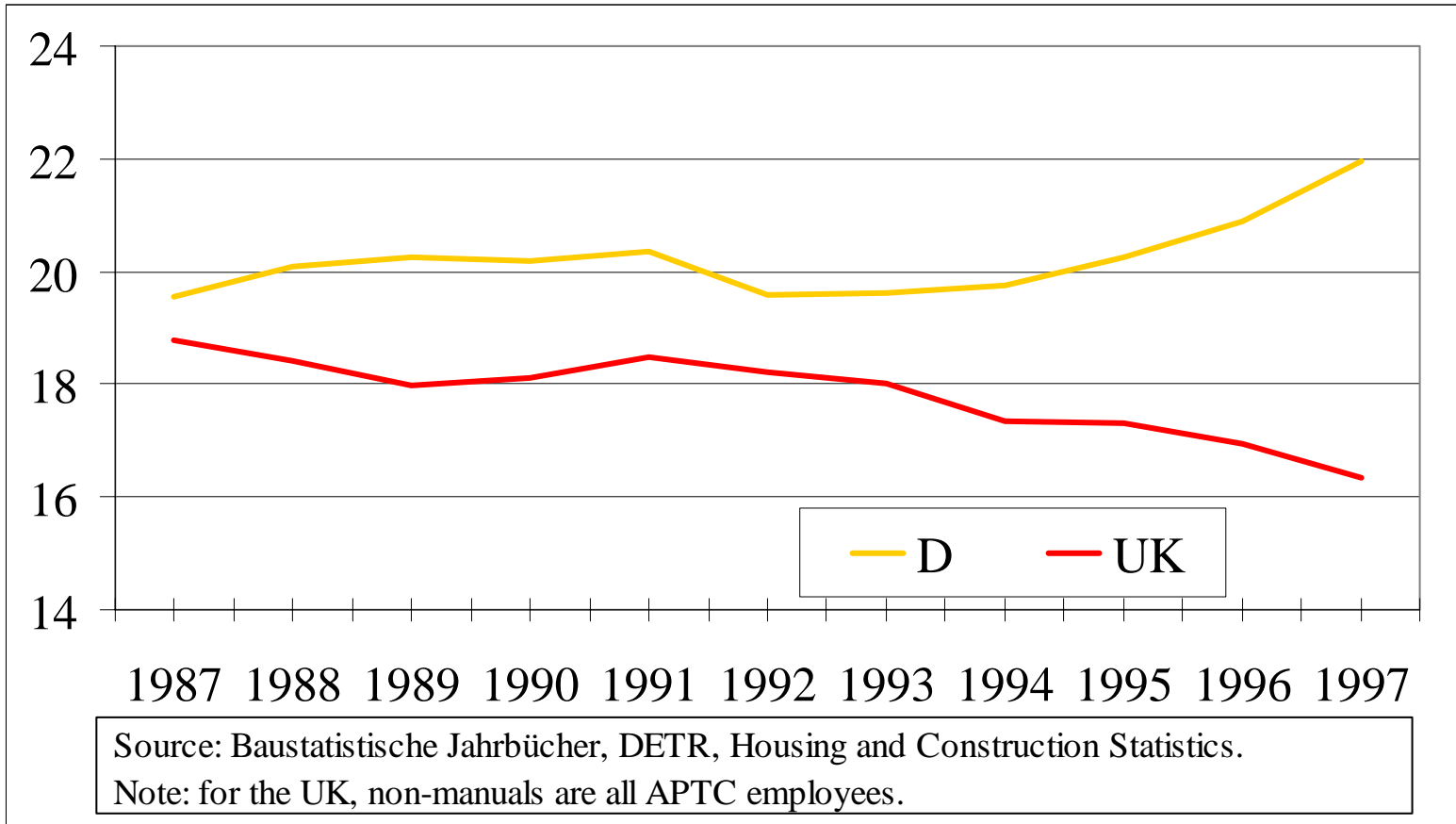
# The structure of learning in Germany



# The structure of learning in the UK

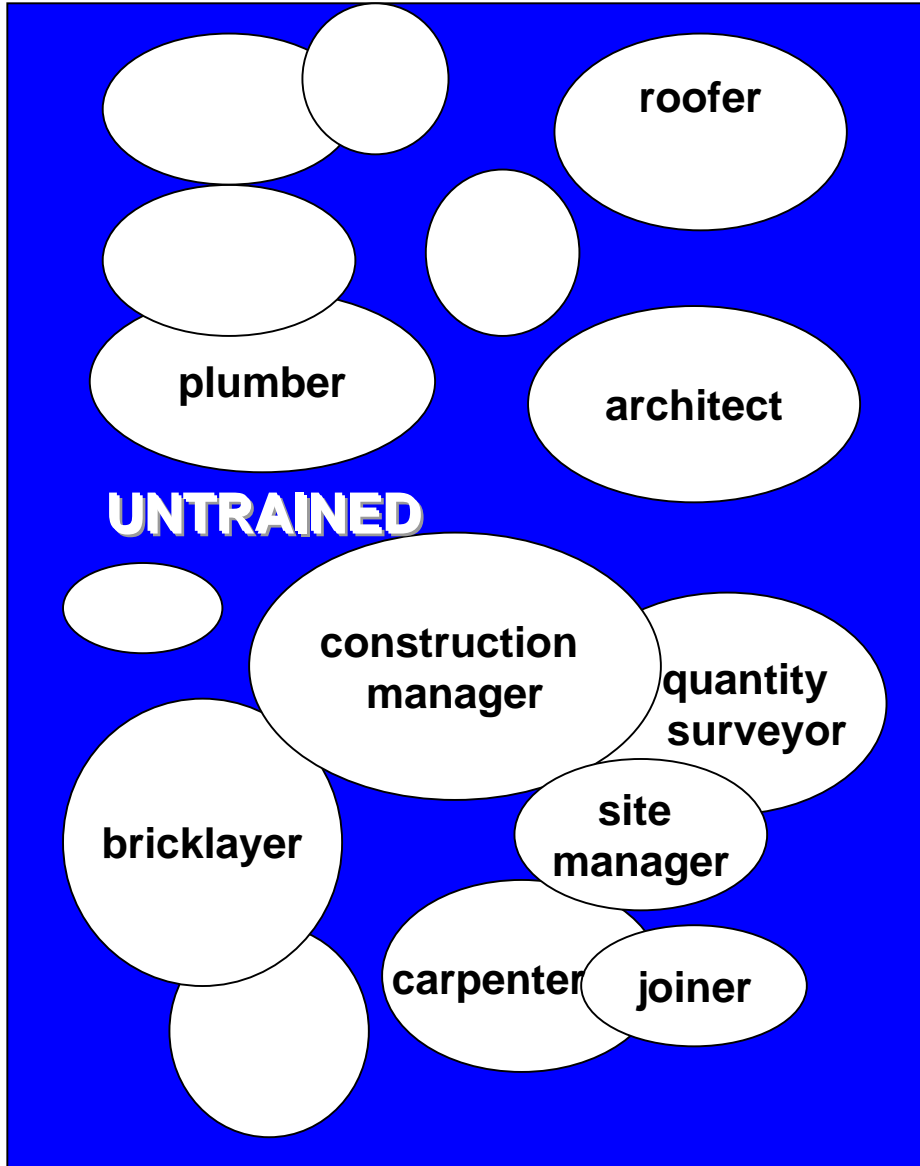


# % OF NON-MANUAL





# SKILLS



# QUALIFICATIONS

Carpenter	Joiner			
Bricklayer	Concrete worker		Plumber	
Site Manager		Roofer		
Building engineer	Architect			

**Fig. 7. Hierarchical structuring of GB site labour with example of one firm**

<b>Form of pay</b>	<b>Education/ training</b>	<b>Gen job category</b>	<b>Trade category</b>	<b>Basic gross pay pa and weekly</b>	<b>Bonus averages</b>	<b>Total gross pay pa</b>	<b>In proportion (%)<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>Individual pay</b>	Intermediate training/ education	Site manager		£28,000	£4,200	£32,200	122
		Fore- person		£22,000	£3,300	£25,300	95
	Vocational training	Skilled craft	Carpenter	£284.70	£300	£30,404	115
			Bricklayer	£284.70	£200	£25,204	95
			plumber/ electrician	£284.70	£175	£23,904	90
	Learning on the job	Skill level 4		£271.05	£150	£21,894	83
			Ground- worker	£214.11	£200	£21,534	81
		Unskilled / general operative		£214.11	£100	£16,334	62

1. 100 = £26,504 which is the average of the three skilled trades.

**Fig. 8: Hierarchical structuring of labour in the German construction industry**

<b>Form of pay</b>	<b>Educ. Train.</b>	<b>Office labour</b>			<b>Site labour</b>			
		<i>General Category</i>	<i>Wage Category</i>	<i>Position in firm</i>	<i>General Category</i>	<i>Wage Category</i>	<i>Trade Category</i>	
Individ. Agreement	Wissenschaftl. Hochsch	MD Geschäftsführer		Generaldirektor				
				Regional Director				
		Depart. Head Abteilungsleiter	TH	Techn./ commercial directors				
			T/K 7	Contracts manager				
Collective agreement	Fachhochschule	Project leader Projektleiter	T/K 6	z.B. Bauleiter, Kalkulator	Meister (master)	Polier	Oberpolier	
			T/K 5	z. B. Bauführer, Einkäufer			Polier (foreperson)	
			T/K 4					
	Trade training	Technical and commercial experts	T/K 3	e.g. land surveyor (Vermessungstechniker)	Facharbeiter (Skilled worker)	I	Werkpolier	
						II	Vorarbeiter	
						III	Spezialbaufacharbeiter	
	No training	Technical and clerical staff:	TK 2	e.g. CAD technician	semi-skilled	IV	Gehobener Baufacharb.	
						V	Baufacharbeiter	
		Ungelernte Angestellte	T/K1			labourer	VI	Werker
							VII	Hilfswerker
Admin/Hilfskraft			z.B. Bote	Hilfskraft	VIII	z.B. Bote, Wächter		

# Anglo-Saxon Skills vs German Qualifications

Apprentice	Trainee
Individual trade	Industrial <i>Beruf</i>
Employer-led	Social partner-negotiated
Task/output based	<i>Fähigkeit</i> and <i>Fertigkeit</i>
Limited theoretical knowledge	Applied theoretical knowledge
Skill separate from qualification, qualification from training	Qualification goes with particular standard of training
No necessary formal training	Industrial training scheme
Wage related to output/performance	Negotiated wage grade related to (potential) quality of labour
No implied status	Social status
'Property in skill'	Value of labour power

**Fig. 20. Productivity comparisons of English (UK1), Scottish (UK8), German (D1) and Danish (DK1) projects**

	<b>Operative hours per sq. m.</b>	<b>Index of labour input (DK=100)</b>	<b>Operative hours per dwelling</b>	<b>Sq.m. completed per day</b>
UK1	19.3	149.6%	1,355	28.4
UK8	15.5	120.2%	1,225	15.5
D1	13.9	107.8%	1,170	20.8
DK1	12.9	100%	1,114	20.8