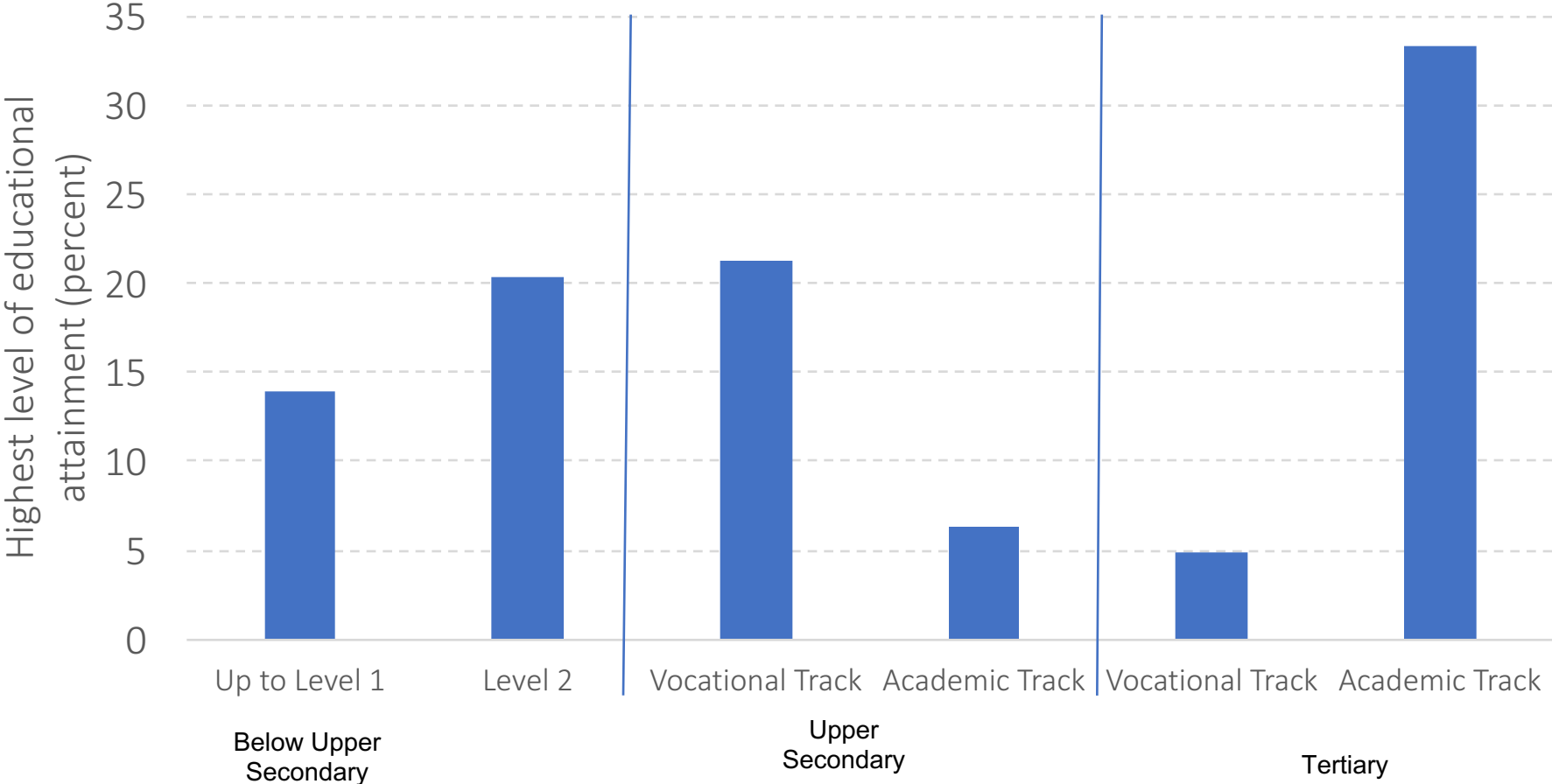


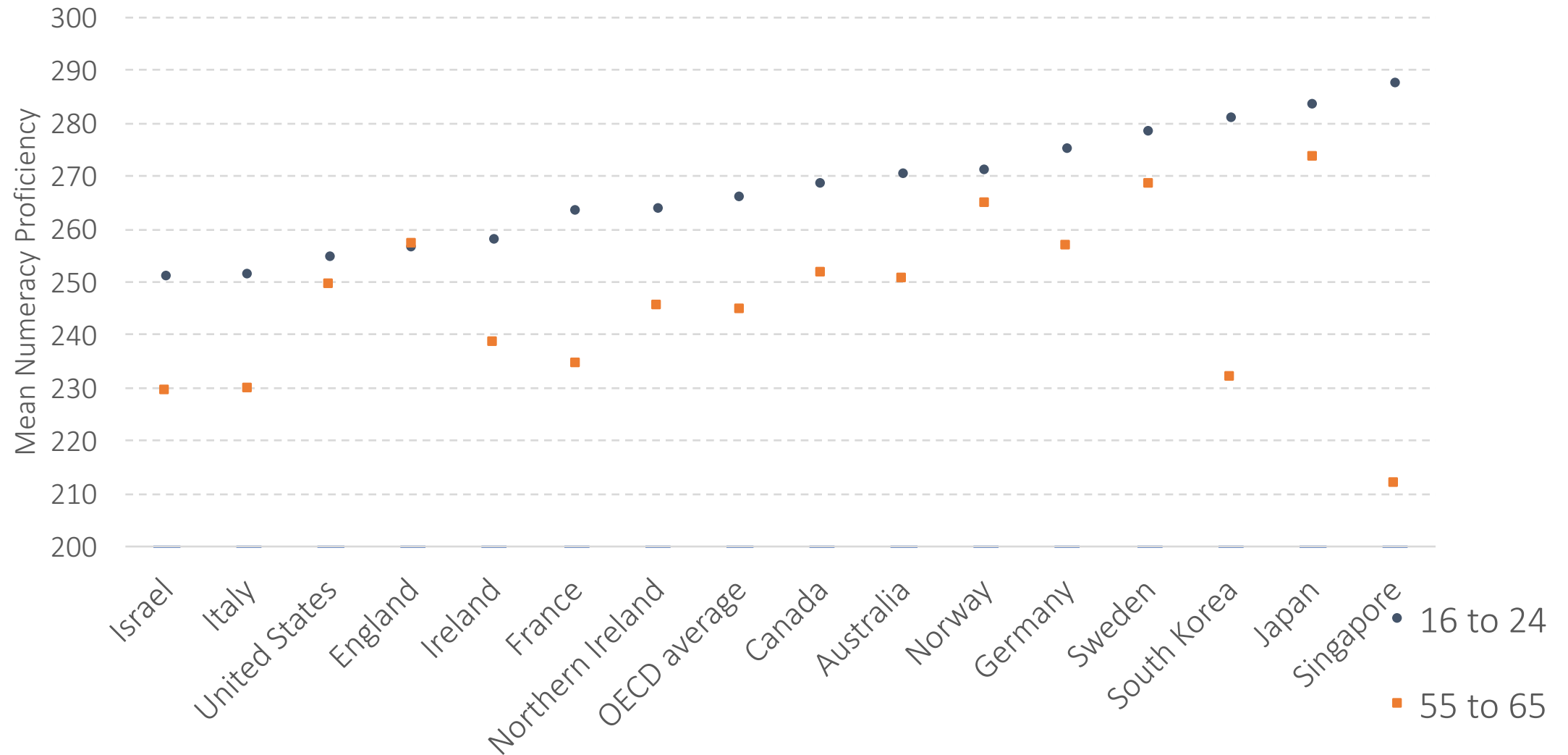
British Academy roundtable: policies to address  
career progression and the welfare safety net  
after Covid-19 – Skills and Training

Sandra McNally, University of Surrey; Centre for Economic Performance and  
Centre for Vocational Education Research, London School of Economics

# Highest educational achievement by age 26



# Mean numeracy proficiency score in selected countries (OECD, 2019)



# Resource issues

- Total spending on adult skills fell by 45% in real terms between 2009/10 and 2017/18 (Belfield et al. 2018).
- The conditions under which adults can get financial support for study have become more limited at all levels (including HE) and this has been linked to a decline in part-time and mature students.
- ‘Funding rules are complex and inflexible. They impose short-term time horizons and do not allow FE colleges to respond to local labour markets needs’ (Augar review, p.125)

# Expansion of tertiary education

- There are very high earnings differentials from sub-degree qualifications (e.g. HNCs, HNDs). Yet many people (with good GCSEs and upper secondary education) do not pursue them
- There are many different qualifications but (mostly) no clear pathway from one thing to the next.
- Access to opportunity is unevenly spread across regions.

# Apprenticeships

- Good national and international evidence that apprenticeships lead to good labour market outcomes in the short-medium term (at least).
- Apprenticeships are vastly different between occupations (in England) and between countries in dimensions such as breadth, duration, level, cost and earnings returns. Big (pre-Covid) reforms still ongoing in England.
- Challenges (beyond Covid): how to allocate a limited public subsidy between apprenticeships types, levels, age groups and employers (levy/non-levy payers); too many short and narrowly-defined apprenticeships.