



PRESS RELEASE

No: 15/2019

Date: 10th January 2019

Elliott Phillips should stop embarrassing himself and do more to earn his £40,000

The Chief Minister, the Hon Fabian Picardo QC MP, has reacted again to the further erroneous statement from the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Elliott Phillips on the issue of apprenticeships.

"It's remarkable that Mr Phillip's statements are so factually wrong. He fails to understand even the basics. Mr Phillips is paid over £40,000 a year by the taxpayer and the least he could do it get the facts right before adding his comments.

Technical Levels are new courses which are being developed in the UK as an alternative to A Levels and will be available as from 2020. They will be phased in from the 2020 to 2021 academic year with a small number of providers. The first T Levels will be piloted during September 2020 at selected providers in the UK. The initial subject areas will be construction, digital, and education and childcare.

But because T Levels are still being collaboratively developed in the UK, it is not possible for us - and it would not be possible for the GSD - to have introduced them any earlier. T Level content has not been finalised to date. The awarding organisations have yet to be appointed.

A procurement exercise was launched in the UK in September 2018 to identify awarding organisations to develop the full content and assessments for the core and occupational specialisms of the first three T Levels.

In Gibraltar we have already, however, been proactive and we have developed a progressive age 14-19 vocational curriculum framework. The framework will support the implementation of the T Levels immediately they are ready. This prepares us for a new, vocational, technical standard in education, providing modern, fit for purpose technical education preparing students better for the courses we have been offering and which are delivering fuller employment than in any developed economy in the world.

Mr Phillip's criticism is therefore entirely misplaced and suggesting action outside the realms of what it is in fact possible. He should accept that and not embarrass himself with a further erroneous press release. As the parliamentary leader of the party that had hundreds on half the minimum wage on a putative 'Youth Training Scheme' and at least 400 unemployed, Mr Phillips has a lot to keep quiet about and nothing to pontificate about."