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**Abstract**

Employer support for employees who are studying part-time for higher education qualifications constitutes a form of indirect employer engagement with higher education institutions that has contributed strongly to the development of work-related skills and knowledge over the years. However, this form of employer engagement with higher education institutions now seems to be in some jeopardy, with reduced employer willingness to subsidise high education course fees: partly because of slow economic growth since the 2008?09 recession and partly because of increases in tuition fees. These cutbacks in employer support for part-time study may have contributed to the sharp decline reported in the numbers studying for part-time undergraduate higher education qualifications in the United Kingdom since 2009. One important implication for policy-makers is that, without new initiatives designed to encourage employer support for part-time study, this form of education is now less likely to contribute to the adult skills upgrading required to bring United Kingdom skills up to the standards of leading industrial nations. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)