



Pearson UK – Funding News

25 June 2015

Funding News provides a regular round-up of 16-18, 19+ and apprenticeship funding, and related news from government departments, funding agencies and other relevant organisations.

Internal and external colleagues can sign up to receive Funding News directly to their inbox by subscribing [here](#).

Funding news this week includes further guidance from the DfE on core aims in 16-19 study programmes; a BIS research paper on measuring the returns to further education; how to record A levels in the ILR from August 2015; apprenticeship standards in the funding Hub; and two key reports on skills and productivity; one from Professor Alison Wolf at the King's College London Policy Institute 'Heading for the precipice: can further and higher education funding policies be sustained?' and one from the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas) on 'Building productivity in the UK'. We also include the usual reminder from Pearson about the 2015 to 2016 simplified funding rates catalogue and the latest Policy Watches from Steve Besley.

Department for Education

- 16 to 19 Funding: core aims in study programmes

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

- BIS research paper – further education: measuring the net present value in England

Education Funding Agency, and Skills Funding Agency

- Recording A levels in the ILR – a reminder

Skills Funding Agency

- The register of training organisations – open for applications
- Achievement rate dataset production specifications 2014 to 2015
- Apprenticeship standards – learning aim search information

King's College London Policy Institute

- Heading for the precipice: can further and higher education funding policies be sustained?

Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas)

- Building productivity in the UK

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- 2015 to 2016 simplified funding rates catalogue – the usual reminder
- Steve Besley's Policy Watches

Department for Education

16 to 19 Funding: core aims in study programmes

The DfE has published updated [guidance](#) on core aims in study programmes to assist institutions in planning study programmes across individual funding years. It includes advice on what they are, their purpose, how to identify them, using the school census and the ILR, why core aims are important for funding, academic and vocational core aims, students with more than one core aim in a year, and changing core aims in the ILR.

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

BIS research paper – further education: measuring the net present value in England

On 22 June BIS published a new [study](#), referred to by the Minister for Skills, Nick Boles MP, during his keynote speech at the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) National Conference on the same day, estimating returns on investment in qualifications and apprenticeships. The report builds on existing work and based on updated estimates concludes that publicly-funded qualifications in the Further Education sector in England continue to show strong economic returns. The total Net Present Value (NPV) of all publicly-funded FE qualifications started in 2013/14 is estimated to be £70bn over the years in which successful learners remain in the workforce and the average return for each qualification started is £34,000. Level 3 Apprenticeships deliver the highest value, in terms of both NPV per qualification started and the return on government investment. After accounting for the relative number of learners on each qualification type, full level 2 qualifications contribute most to the overall NPV.

[Education Funding Agency, and Skills Funding Agency](#)

Recording A levels in the ILR – a reminder

We have received a number of few queries in about this recently so here's a quick reminder about the changes to the way A levels will be recorded in the ILR from August 2015.

- A2 learning aims won't be available for the ILR from 1 August 2015.
- Centres need to record the A level learning aims rather than the A2 learning aims.
- This doesn't mean continuing learners won't go on to study the A2, just that the A2 learning aim won't be recorded in the ILR. The A level learning aim will be recorded in 2015/16 for learners who complete an AS in 2014/15 and go on to study the A2 in 2015/16.
- For learners funded by the Education Funding Agency the AS will be recorded in the first year along with the planned hours for delivery, and in the second year the A level will be recorded along with the planned hours for delivery (i.e. the time it takes to teach the remainder of the A level after the AS is complete).
- For learners funded by the Skills Funding Agency the funding adjustment for prior learning field will be used to reduce the funding for an A level where the learner has already studied the AS qualification.
- See the full [guidance](#) from the Skills Funding Agency on recording the hours for more detail.

[Skills Funding Agency](#)

The register of training organisations – open for applications

The [register](#) is open for applications until 5.00pm on Friday 3 July. The Agency uses this information to invite organisations to tender when opportunities become available.

Achievement rate dataset production specifications 2014 to 2015

The Agency has published the [dataset production specifications](#) for 2014 to 2015 qualification achievement rate reports. The reports will be released in December. The specifications describe how the Agency will apply the achievement rate business rules to Individualised Learner Records data to calculate achievement, pass and retention rates. In March the Agency [published](#) the 2014 to 2015 achievement rate business rules and minimum standards rules.

Apprenticeship standards – learning aim search information

The learning aim search facility on the funding [Hub](#) has been updated with the ability to search for [apprenticeship standards](#). The word 'standards' appears in the 'type of learning' options list and will display the details of apprenticeship standards. The Agency has added this option in advance of uploading the apprenticeship standards data.

King's College London Policy Institute

Heading for the precipice: can further and higher education funding policies be sustained?

Yesterday a [report](#) published by the Policy Institute at King's College London, supported by Gatsby, and authored by Professor Baroness Alison Wolf, set out the scale of the squeeze on post-19 education funding. Professor Wolf argues that as the gap expands between further and higher education funding, student demand will move into the university sector, driving technical education out of the FE colleges which are best placed and most suited to delivering it. She also argues that the government's commitment to creating three million apprenticeships is 'largely unfunded' and urges the government to prioritise high-quality apprenticeships and not numerical targets. The report concludes that 'The current situation is financially unsustainable. It is deeply inegalitarian in its allocation of resources. It is also inefficient and bad for the 'human capital development', which increasingly drives and justifies education policy. In post-19 education, we are producing vanishingly small numbers of higher technician level qualifications, while massively increasing the output of generalist bachelors degrees and low-level vocational qualifications. We are doing so because of the financial incentives and administrative structures that governments themselves have created, not because of labour market demand, and the imbalance looks set to worsen yet further. We therefore need, as a matter of urgency, to start thinking about post-19 funding and provision in a far more integrated way.'

Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas)

Building productivity in the UK

In June Acas published a [report](#) on building productivity in the UK. It argues that whilst a range of macro solutions to UK productivity levels have been offered by Government and others, including capital and financial investment in infrastructure, it is now understood that these can only yield lasting improvements if workplaces are operating at their best. Acas has identified seven levers for workplace productivity and a practical framework to explain how workplaces can unlock their potential to be more productive. The seven levers identified are: well designed work; skilled managers; managing conflict effectively; clarity about rights and responsibilities; fairness; a strong employee voice; and high trust.

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2015 to 2016 simplified funding rates catalogue – the usual reminder

The latest list of qualifications approved for 19+ funding (and loan funding) can be found on the Skills Funding Agency's [simplified funding rates catalogue](#). The funding [Hub](#) is the key source of confirmation of funding eligibility but the Agency also publishes the catalogue to ensure providers know as soon as possible when a qualification is confirmed for 19+ funding. Awarding bodies now have to make a submission for every qualification to be approved for 19+ funding on a quarterly basis and the next update of the catalogue will be on 1 July.

On 1 May 2015 we published an [update](#) confirming the final situation on funding for 19+ learners in England studying BTEC First qualifications. There are BTEC First qualifications available in each sector, which are funded for pre- and post-19 learners. This means that you can co-teach 16-18 and 19+ students on the same qualification, which will be funded for the

academic years 2014-15 and 2015-16. The only exception is in the Vehicle Technology sector where our qualifications do not meet the minimum learner threshold required to be eligible for 19+ funding. A sector-by-sector list of funded qualifications is provided.

Steve Besley's Policy Watches

The latest from Steve Besley includes [Policy Eye - week ending June 19 2015](#), [Policy Eye - week ending June 12 2015](#), [Policy Eye - week ending June 5 2015](#), and [Pocket Watch – Unravelling the Education Bill](#). Find these and more on the [Pearson UK](#) website.

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Information is correct at the time of writing and is offered in good faith. No liability is accepted for decisions made on the basis of information given.