



Pearson UK: Funding News

2 October 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](#).

News this week includes a consultation from BIS on measuring success in adult further education, the latest on the government response to the consultation on the dual mandate for adult vocational education, the updated Skills Funding Agency catalogue, increased bursaries and scholarships for graduates teaching 'core' subjects, 'large programmes' data reports for 16-19 institutions, the launch of the Regulated Qualifications Framework, and £4 million awarded to 12 projects to pilot measures of learning gain in higher education.

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Government departments

National minimum wage increases

A reminder that from yesterday (1 October) the apprentice rate of the [national minimum wage](#) (NMW) went up by 57 pence to £3.30 and the NMW rate for adult workers rose by 20 pence from £6.50 to £6.70 per hour. BIS has published [guidance](#) on calculating the minimum wage to help employers meet national minimum wage legislation.

Consultation on measuring success in adult further education

BIS have released a [consultation](#) setting out detailed proposals for using new outcome based measures of performance for publicly funded post-19 education and skills. It builds on the findings of their earlier [consultation published in August 2014](#). The new outcome measures focus on three areas: learner destinations, learner progression, and earnings following completion of the course. The consultation makes proposal for using the measures for accountability and intervention as part of the minimum standards framework, how local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) and local authorities can use the new measures as part of local outcome agreements with providers, and how the measures should be presented and published. A [new set of experimental data](#) is published alongside the consultation. The closing date for responses is 2 December.

Consultation on the dual mandate for adult vocational education

BIS aims to publish the response to this [consultation](#), which ran from March to June this year, later this month. The consultation proposed the FE sector should be more clearly focused on a dual mandate of providing high level vocational training, and second chances for those who did not achieve well at school. The response will consider the proposals in the context of the government's Productivity Plan.

Latest list of occupations approved to develop an apprenticeship standard

The latest [list of occupations](#) approved by the Skills Funding Agency to develop an apprenticeship standard is available. This was updated on 1 October.

The Regulated Qualifications Framework and apprenticeship frameworks

BIS have written to issuing authorities about the impact of the launch of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) on apprenticeship frameworks (for more on the RQF see under Ofqual below). The Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE) currently mandates the use of QCF qualifications in frameworks and the introduction of the RQF means BIS has to modify the SASE. In order to do this BIS are suspending changes to apprenticeship frameworks from 30 September to 1 November. The suspension will not impact on provider's ability to continue to deliver current apprenticeship frameworks.

Participation in education and training: local authority figures

The DfE have added June data to the [information](#) showing the proportion of 16- and 17-year-olds in education and training. The figures are shown by type of establishment, age, gender, ethnic group, and disability. Local authorities, schools and colleges can use the information to assess their area's performance against previous years and neighbouring localities.

Increased bursaries and scholarships for graduates teaching 'core' subjects

On 1 October Schools Minister Nick Gibb [announced](#) that top graduates will be offered increased bursaries and scholarships in the 2016 to 2017 academic year to train to teach 'core' subjects.

The aim is to attract more teachers in the core Ebacc subjects. Increased bursaries will be available for graduates training to teach physics, and other EBacc subjects. 700 tax-free scholarships will also be available for physics, maths, chemistry and computing.

Skills Funding Agency

Updated Skills Funding Agency catalogue

The Skills Funding Agency has published the latest 2015/16 [catalogue](#). The catalogue lists all provision which the Skills Funding Agency has approved for public funding in 2015 to 2016 and their funding rates and information regarding availability of qualifications for 24+ advanced learning loans is included in this document. The Skills Funding Agency has now introduced a moratorium on submissions for 19+ funding which means that awarding organisations cannot make any further submissions for qualifications to be approved for 19+ funding. Qualifications will continue to be approved if they fall into the category of qualifications that can be automatically approved for 19+ funding.

Applied General qualifications now automatically eligible for 19+ funding

A quick reminder that the Skills Funding Agency informed us last week that they will now automatically approve Level 3 Applied General qualifications for 19+ funding eligibility. They already automatically approve Level 3 Tech Level qualifications. All Applied General qualifications have been added to the 2015/16 [catalogue](#) in October, and the funding hub will be updated shortly. We had already made successful submissions for 19+ funding for many of the Level 3 Applied General qualifications but this change means that they will now all be eligible for 19+ funding in 2015/16.

Higher apprenticeships: guide for employers

The Skills Funding Agency has updated this [guide](#) which provides information for employers showing the benefits of higher apprenticeships to their business. A list of higher apprenticeships frameworks available can be found on the [apprenticeship frameworks online website](#).

Course directory, and National Careers Service stakeholders and prime contractors, traineeship and 24+ advanced learning loan provider lists

The Skills Funding Agency has updated four key directories/lists. The [September course directory](#) contains information on courses offered by contracted learning providers. It contains information from over 900 organisations including colleges, training providers and local education authorities and is updated monthly. An updated prime contractors list has been added to the information about the [National Careers Service](#) for stakeholders and prime contractors, and the Education Funding Agency and Skills Funding Agency have updated the list of providers eligible to deliver the [traineeship programme](#) in 2015 to 2016, and the updated [24+ advanced learning loan](#) provider list provides information on providers that currently have a 24+ advanced learning loan facility.

FE data library: average length of apprenticeships

A new file has been added to the [FE data library](#) showing estimates of the average length of apprenticeships (2010/11 to 2013/14). The library holds statistics published alongside the Statistical First Release.

European Social Fund: aims catalogue 2015 to 2016

The ESF aims [catalogue](#) identifies provision available for delivery as part of the ESF programme in 2015 to 2016. The information will be added to a new ESF learning aims search facility within the funding hub after which the catalogue will no longer be published.

Education Funding Agency

Large programmes data reports for institutions

Institutions who have students on large programmes that will qualify for the [large programme uplift](#) in 2016 to 2017 can now download reports (based on 2013 to 2014 academic year attainment) explaining how the EFA are applying their uplift. The reports are available from the document exchange in the EFA Information Exchange - [Other Submissions>AY 2015-16 folder]. The EFA have explained that if institutions think their report is inaccurate for at least 5 students, they should submit a business case by 23 October 2015. The report includes information about how to do this.

Higher Education Funding Council for England

Higher education and local growth maps

Hefce have produced a series of [interactive maps](#) which can be used to explore a wide selection of higher education and economic data. The maps can be focused on local areas and topics of such as local HE profiles, student mobility, local enterprise and universities, research capacity and quality, young participation, and employment and economic maps.

£4 million awarded to 12 projects to pilot measures of learning gain

12 [collaborative projects](#), including over 70 universities and colleges, will receive £4 million over three years to run pilot projects that will test and evaluate measures of learning gain in English higher education. 'Learning gain' is defined as the improvement in knowledge, skills, work-readiness and personal development made by students during their time spent in higher education; a definition taken from [research](#) commissioned by Hefce, BIS and the HEA. On the basis of the research, five broad approaches have been identified, which will now be tested and analysed through these pilot projects.

Ofqual

Launch of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF)

As part of their regulatory reform Ofqual removed the regulatory rules of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) and from 1 October the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) will replace the QCF and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). This means that all qualifications will be part of a single regulatory framework – the RQF. Ofqual has published [postcards](#) and a [blog](#) explaining the RQF. We will bring you updates on any impact this may have on funding.

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Steve Besley's Policy Watches

The latest from Steve Besley includes [Policy Eye – week ending September 18 2015](#), [Policy Tracker - Keeping track of what happened in the world of education in September 2015](#), and [Policy Eye – week ending September 25 2015](#). These and more can be found on the [Pearson UK website](#) or [sign up](#) for policy watch email updates.

Siân Owen

Head of Stakeholder Engagement (Funding)

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