



Pearson UK: Funding News

20 November 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](#).

Key news this week includes research commissioned by BIS evaluating the apprenticeship trailblazers, the EFA's review of 16 to 19 study programmes data for 2013 to 2014, some news from the Association of Colleges conference, and two reports: one from the Centre for Employment Research, University of Westminster on further education: social mobility, skills and second chances, and one from Bright Blue on understanding and reversing the decline in part-time higher education.

Government departments

- BIS research paper: evaluation of the apprenticeship trailblazers: final report
- BIS consultations

Skills Funding Agency

- Qualifications: simplified funding rates, 2015 to 2016
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Government departments

BIS research paper: evaluation of the apprenticeship trailblazers: final report

On 18 November, the Institute for Employment Studies published this [research report](#) commissioned by BIS. It looks at all aspects of the development of apprenticeship standards and makes a number of conclusions on the success of the programme. It finds that, overall, the opportunity for employers and stakeholders to form trailblazer networks has received broad support and employers believe they now have new or adapted training and assessment models that better meet their needs. Some of the challenges encountered were believed to have weakened employers' ownership; assessment plans were of particular concern and their rejection caused frustration. Trailblazer networks are also still looking for clarity on future governance and the policy focus on getting the right guidance in place as well as thinking through governance is welcomed.

BIS consultations

A reminder that two consultations are still open: [adult further education: measuring success - detailed proposals](#), which closes on 2 December, and [higher education: teaching excellence, social mobility and student choice](#), which closes on 15 January.

Skills Funding Agency

Qualifications: simplified funding rates, 2015 to 2016

A quick reminder that the Agency's [simplified funding rates catalogue](#) lists all provision which the Agency has approved for public funding in 2015 to 2016 and their funding rates. Information regarding availability of qualifications for 24+ advanced learning loans is included in this document. A reminder too that awarding organisations had to apply to the Agency for 19+ funding for qualifications that are not automatically approved (see [paragraph 51 of the technical guide](#)) and that there is now a [moratorium](#) in place which means we can no longer make applications for qualification funding. The Agency will allow submissions for qualifications to be made eligible for 24+ loan funding and we expect guidance on this, and on the future of qualification eligibility for 19+ funding, to be out by the end of the year/beginning of next year. The list of qualifications eligible for 2016/17 funding will be published in January 2016.

Register of training organisations

The Agency has published the [latest list](#) of organisations eligible to be invited to tender for education and training services. To be eligible organisations must complete the Agency's market entry pre-qualification process which includes competing due diligence questions and capacity and capability questions. Entry on the register does not automatically entitle an organisation to funding, but it means that they will be eligible to be invited to compete for future funding opportunities.

Early termination of funding agreement - list of organisations

On 16 November the Agency published the [list](#) of lead providers whose funding agreement for education and training delivery has been terminated early by the Agency. The Agency's funding agreements include clauses providing for early termination. These are normally only exercised where there are issues including those relating to quality such as an Ofsted Grade 4 or where they have other evidence of poor quality delivery. The 3-month notice period allows the Agency to ensure learners are protected through a managed transfer to providers with good quality provision with employer agreement. The list covers from the 2014 to 2015 academic year to date and will be updated on a regular basis.

Education Funding Agency

Review of 16 to 19 study programmes data for 2013 to 2014

The EFA has [reviewed](#) end-year 16 to 19 study programmes data for the 2013 to 2014 academic year, against the core principles of study programmes and found that the funding formula has had the planned impact on study programme delivery in most institutions. The data shows there has been an increase in the proportion of students in the full time (540 hours +) band, and a decrease in the proportion of students in the smallest part time band. There has been a decrease in the number of aims studied by students, and an increase in the average number of hours for each aim. The data also shows there has been an increase in the number of both English and maths GCSEs and stepping stone qualifications. The EFA is following up on the areas of the funding formula where the delivery appears to be non-standard and list these areas in the summary (link above).

Association of Colleges

Conference news

At the AoC conference this week Nick Boles MP talked of the need for colleges to increase the number of apprenticeships they offer. AoC Deputy Chief Executive, Gill Clipson, has written a [blog](#) about the Minister's speech and the wider issues.

Martin Doel opinion piece: 'It appears that politics overrules the genuine educational needs of the nation'

On 16 November the TES published this [opinion piece](#) from Martin Doel in which he warns of the dangers of further funding cuts being imposed on the FE sector in the government's spending review and asks how do those of us who campaign for the interests of young people and adults in education and training make our voices heard above the 'cacophony'.

College governors' board chairs

Letter to Prime Minister David Cameron

On 31 October more than 100 college governors' board chairs [wrote](#) to Prime Minister David Cameron urging him to reconsider the impact of changes in the funding of FE in the run-up to the spending review. The sector, it argues, is vital to the Government's economic strategy but unless certain issues are understood and addressed, opportunities for many young people, adults and the nation's productivity will be significantly damaged, perhaps permanently. They ask for five things: no further reduction in the quantum of adult funding, recognition that many young people do not achieve good GCSE grades at 16 years of age and some need longer to reach their potential, more certainty and predictability of funding over a reasonable period of time, re-examination of the current thinking relating to post 16 provision and for the recently announced Area Reviews to include all current and proposed post 16 providers, and recognition that effective delivery of the maths and English agenda requires new and adequate resources, sufficient funding and long-term support.

Centre for Employment Research, University of Westminster

Further education: social mobility, skills and second chances

This [report](#) looks at data analysis which has uncovered good returns to learning at all levels of FE and challenges previous findings from survey-based studies that estimated insignificant, or even negative, returns to learning at level 2 and below. In the accompanying [policy comment](#) Professor Peter Unwin from the Centre welcomes the recent move away from the almost exclusive focus on more academic learning within HE over recent decades to a focus on

apprenticeship learning. He argues that some of the greatest opportunities for boosting UK productivity will only be achieved if we can unlock the potential of those who have innate ability, but are not able to make the most of this, as they are born to levels of disadvantage that mean they are more likely to give up on education at an early age. FE, he argues, takes the most disadvantaged on the longest educational journeys.

Bright Blue

Going part-time: understanding and reversing the decline in part-time higher education

This [report](#) by right-leaning think tank [Bright Blue](#), [Going Part-Time](#), argues that part-time HE is critical for individual and national prosperity and its decline is alarming and urgently needs addressing. It looks at the trends and reasons for the decline in participation in part-time HE study in England, the motivations for and barriers to study, and the policies needed to support more people to participate. It finds that financial barriers are the biggest obstacle and proposes the introduction of a lifetime HE tuition fee loan account, and a new 'graduate levy' on large employers with large graduate workforces. Wonkhe summarises the report [here](#).

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BTEC Nationals (2010) extended to 31 December 2017: your options from 2016

A reminder that we have extended the last registrations date for the current BTEC Nationals (2010) to 31 December 2017. This means that, in September 2016, you can choose to start teaching your brand new BTEC Nationals (2016) where there is a qualification available, or continue with your current qualifications (2010). Find out more about registrations, funding, and performance measures in [England](#), [Northern Ireland](#), and [Wales](#).

Funding News, and Funding Focus

We will now be posting Pearson's Funding News on the Pearson website [here](#) in case anyone needs access to previous versions. Funding Focus documents will also be added which provide quick summaries of recent funding developments, or particular aspects of the funding system. The site is being improved and documents will be ordered by date.

Steve Besley's Policy Watches

The latest from Steve Besley can be found on the [Pearson UK](#) website or [sign up](#) to receive the latest direct to your inbox.

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