



Pearson UK: Funding News

11 December 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 the release of the government's plan for how they will increase the quality and quantity of apprenticeships, a useful letter and briefing from Skills Minister Nick Boles with an update on the further education reform programme, and the SFA's publication of the advanced learner loans prospectus for 2015 to 2016 which introduces a far simpler process for AOs submitting qualifications for loan funding.

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Government departments

Prime Minister's Office: This is a government that delivers

In wide-ranging speech, [This is a government that delivers](#), at De Ferrers Academy on 7 December Prime Minister David Cameron confirmed government's view that young people should have the choice of an apprenticeship or a university place when they leave school, confirmed the commitment to apprenticeships (and referenced the apprenticeships 2020 vision publication below), and highlighted the uncapping of university places so 'we can have well-funded universities, and increased participation', which has led to, he stated, more 18-year-olds heading off to freshers' week than at any time in our history: '200,000 of them. And more from disadvantaged backgrounds than ever before, opening up opportunity for all.'

BIS: Apprenticeships (in England), vision for 2020

On 7 December BIS launched their 50-odd page [plan](#) (with a 22-page executive summary) for how they will increase the quality and quantity of apprenticeships. It sets out what is expected of all the main stakeholders in order to achieve the 3m target by 2020. It is split into five key areas (quality, employers in the driving seat, routes into apprenticeships and work, building the long term apprenticeships system, and funding) and in the main brings together information already made available. Two interesting points to note from a funding perspective:

- The Apprenticeship Grant for Employers will be extended until the end of the 2016/17 providing transitional support until the levy funding system for apprenticeships is in place (section 3.18).
- News that the previously stated aim for all new apprenticeship starts to be on standards from 2017/18 has been relaxed somewhat (the rationale being that the announcement of the levy warrants giving employers longer to consider which occupations they will require apprenticeships, and develop high quality standards, for) and BIS now envisage a migration from frameworks to standards over the course of the Parliament, with as much of this to take place by 2017/18 as possible. The withdrawal of public funding for new starts on framework apprenticeships will be staggered and training providers will be given reasonable prior notice to of this so that they can review their training offer (section 5.9).

BIS: Further education reform, update for colleges, and traineeships and Ofsted

Skills Minister Nick Boles [wrote](#) to all colleges on 7 December with an update on the further education reform programme. The accompanying document, Implementing the further education and skills reform programme, is a useful briefing on the state of play of the various strands of the programme and includes news on the removal, from August 2016, of the requirement that providers are graded 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted in order to deliver traineeships.

BIS: FE data library, apprenticeships

New [files](#) uploaded on 8 December 2015 include Apprenticeships by framework, level and age: starts 2002/03 to 2014/15, Apprenticeships by geography and sector subject area: starts 2005/06 to 2014/15, and Apprenticeships geography age and level: starts 2005/06 to 2014/15.

Skills Funding Agency

Approving qualifications for loan funding

The SFA has published the [Advanced learner loans \(loans\) prospectus 2015 to 2016: designating qualifications](#). As part of the move towards a simplified funding system the SFA has introduced a more regular process to designate technical and professional qualifications that are eligible for Loans. They have simplified the rules for which qualifications are in scope for funding and awarding bodies can now make monthly submissions for qualifications to be designated as eligible for loan funding in 2015/16.

There is still a moratorium in place on the approval of qualifications for funding outside of the loan offer.

Updated learning aims search facility

The SFA has updated the learning aim search facility on the [Hub](#) with a new 'category' search in the 'additional filters' section. This allows searches to be made for learning aims that have been grouped under a specific category, such as class codes. The definitions of the categories are also available on the Hub.

Education Funding Agency

Supporting exceptional growth in traineeships in 2015 to 2016

The EFA will continue to ensure that funding for institutions supports growing traineeship numbers, and in March 2016 will review the position based on R06 data received in February. The EFA are asking any providers that have exceptional growth in traineeships in the 2015 to 2016 academic year to contact them via the [EFA enquiry form](#).

Local authority actual expenditure for 2014 to 2015

The EFA has published the [local authority actual expenditure tables](#) (known as Section 251) for the 2014 to 2015 financial year. The tables include details of local authority revenue expenditure on education and children's and young people's services and include information showing expenditure against specific spending lines and a workbook showing the expenditure detail for each local authority. The tables are published in conjunction with the [official statistics](#) on schools, education and children's services spending for 2014 to 2015.

Hefce

Comment on the introduction of loans for masters students from 2016

Hefce have [welcomed](#) the confirmation in the Spending Review of the availability of £10,000 loans for students under 60 wanting to take masters degrees from 2016, and say they look forward to 'working closely with government to review how the loans affect the development of courses at masters level and to positioning the postgraduate education agenda during the coming years'.

Ofsted

Ofsted Annual Report 2014/15: education and skills

The [2014/15 Annual Report](#) from Her Majesty's Chief Inspector Sir Michael Wilshaw was published on 1 December. The report covers schools and the further education and skills sectors and is underpinned by the findings of over 5,000 inspections of schools, colleges and providers of further education and skills. In a [speech](#) to launch the report Sir Michael Wilshaw highlighted

that whilst there was much to celebrate about England's schools the division between primary and secondary education was a 'worrying discrepancy' and within this, underperforming secondary schools are concentrated in the North and Midlands. He also highlighted ongoing weaknesses in the achievement of pupils from low-income backgrounds, recruitment issues, concerns surrounding the quality of apprenticeships, and the lack of promotion of apprenticeships by schools.

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A further reminder: BTEC Nationals (2010) extended to 31 December 2017

A quick 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 brand new BTEC Nationals (2016) where there is a qualification available, or continue with the current qualifications (2010). Find out more about registrations, funding, and performance measures in the November [Funding Focus](#).

Funding News and Funding Focus

Pearson's Funding News documents are now available on the [Pearson website](#). Funding Focus documents are also available which provide quick summaries of recent funding developments or particular aspects of the funding system. The latest include [BTEC Nationals extended - your options](#), and [FE and skills funding bits of the Spending Review and Autumn Statement](#).

Steve Besley's Policy Watches

The latest from Steve Besley includes [Policy Eye – week ending December 4 2015](#), [Pocket Watch – Spending Review 2015: The Education Bits](#), [Policy Tracker – Keeping track of what happened in the world of education in November 2015](#), [Policy Eye – week ending November 27 2015](#), and [Policy Eye – week ending November 20 2015](#). Find these and more on the [Pearson UK website](#) or [sign up](#) to receive the latest direct to your inbox.

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