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## Pearson UK - Funding News

### 15 February 2016

*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 can also be found on the [Pearson UK website](#) along with Funding Focus documents which provide quick summaries of recent funding developments, or particular aspects of the funding system.*

A little later than usual (apologies this wasn't sent out on Friday) key news last week includes the release by the SFA of the initial list of qualifications eligible for the 19-23 level 2 and 3 entitlement and the 19+ English and maths entitlement, and the guidance document which explains the legal entitlements and how qualifications are made eligible for them. The SFA will publish a final list of qualifications included as part of the 19-23 level 2 and 3 legal entitlement at the end of March. Between now and 29 February they are running a consultation for awarding organisations to notify the SFA of any 'non-core' qualifications that could be delivered within the 19-23 level 2 and 3 entitlement criteria. The SFA will consider adding these to the list. Please do check the list (see links below) and contact us (on [funding@pearson.com](mailto:funding@pearson.com)) if you have 19-23 year-olds wishing to undertake a qualification not on the list as part of their entitlement and expect these learners to enrol and be funded on these qualifications in 2016/17. We will need you to help us by supplying a letter to show you have learner demand.

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## Labour party

### FE colleges need to be protected

In his speech to the University and College Union 'Cradle to Grave' conference on 5 February, Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn said the skills gap is 'the biggest challenge facing the economy in Britain'. He described the FE sector as crucial in tackling the problem and called for a greater focus on lifelong learning, stressing the importance of ensuring that people have the ability to go in and out of education during their working lives. He also highlighted the ability of FE colleges to act as a pathway to higher education for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. FE Week [interviewed](#) Jeremy Corbyn after the speech about his views on some of the sector's key issues.

## Funding agencies

### SFA: Qualifications and eligibility for public funding

The SFA [published](#) last week an **initial** list of qualifications eligible for the 19-23 level 2 and 3 entitlement and the 19+ English and maths entitlement, and the guidance document which explains the legal entitlements and how qualifications are made eligible for them. Qualifications approved on 16-18 performance tables are automatically eligible (and called 'core') and qualifications not approved on 16-18 performance tables ('non-core') can also be approved on the list.

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### SFA: Publicly funded digital skills qualifications review

The SFA has published their [review](#) of publicly funded digital skills qualifications. The review is in response to concerns raised by the government's Digital Task Force about the relevance and quality of digital skills courses in further education. It contains an overview of digital skills the SFA currently fund as part of the Adult Skills Budget (outside apprenticeships). It lists six recommendations for how the SFA can improve digital skills to ensure they remain relevant to learners and to the digital economy.

### SFA: £25m in 16-18 apprenticeship growth, and 16-18 traineeship growth update

The long awaited [confirmation](#) of the additional budget for apprenticeships was announced by the SFA in response to growth requests submitted by providers to help fund apprenticeships and traineeships in 2015/16. However, they are unable to award any additional funding for 16 to 18 traineeships but will review this again at performance management point 2. FE Week [reports](#) on how this has left many providers with a funding shortfall.

### SFA: The register of training organisations

The Register of Training Organisations (the Register) will open for applications on Wednesday 10 February and will close at 5.00pm on Wednesday 2 March. This opening is for new applications and for those organisations that are required to enter the Register, as detailed in the SFA [Funding Rules 2015 to](#)



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2016 (paragraphs 4 and 24). See the information on the [Register](#) for further information or email [register.help@sfa.bis.gov.uk](mailto:register.help@sfa.bis.gov.uk)

## **SFA: ILR specification, validation rules and appendices 2016/17**

The SFA has published the [technical documents](#) that define the ILR data that publicly funded providers must collect and return including ILR data returns calendar for 2016. The document may be revised and re-issued through the year and all changes from previous versions are highlighted within the document. Notifications of new documents and new versions of documents will be issued in the SFA's [Twitter stream](#).

## **SFA: Peter Lauener talks to the TES**

In an interesting article in the [TES](#) Peter Lauener talked about the possibility of the SFA waiving their right to revenue from property sales to encourage 'creative thinking'. Colleges could be allowed to keep the proceeds from selling off campuses to invest in learning technology. He also comments on area reviews, subcontracting, funding pressures, and the possibility of an EFA/SFA merger.

## **EFA: Post-16 funding video 2016/17**

The EFA has produced a [new video](#) to update post-16 institutions about the timeline and process for post-16 allocations in 2016 to 2017.

## **EFA: Reminder re students with GCSE maths and/or English at grade D**

The EFA are reminding colleges and providers that full-time students who have a grade D GCSE in either maths or English must be enrolled on GCSE or an approved IGCSE qualification. This came into effect from [1 August 2015](#). Full-time students with a grade D will not qualify for funding if they are enrolled on stepping stone qualifications. Full-time students are those on a study programme of: at least 540 planned hours if aged 16 and 17, or at least 450 hours if aged 18. Part-time students can continue to enrol on stepping stone qualifications. Individualised Learner Record (ILR) users can run Funding Information System (FIS) reports to check that their students are compliant with this requirement. School census users can use the [interactive tool](#) to help understand how their school census data is used.

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## **Reminder: Funding focus on the funding rules, rates and formula, and the adult education budget**

A quick reminder that a Pearson [Funding Focus](#) is available (see 2016; January) which signposts the funding rules and funding rates and formula 2016/17, and summarises the 'AEB changing context and arrangements' document, all recently released by the SFA.

## **Steve Besley's Policy Watch**

The latest from Steve Besley includes [Policy Eye – week ending February 12](#), and [Policy Eye – week ending February 5](#). Find these and more on the [Pearson UK website](#) or [sign up](#) to receive updates.

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