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Pearson UK – Funding News

29 April 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.

Funding News this week includes a reminder of the publication by the DfE of the lists of the technical and vocational qualifications included in 2018 performance tables; crucial of course as technical certificates, tech levels, and applied generals are automatically approved for 19-23 entitlement funding in 2016/17. A Pearson [Funding Focus](#) shows which BTEC Firsts and Nationals are approved for 19-23 entitlement funding in 2016/17.

Other news includes the SFA's launch of a £20 million procurement opportunity for additional FE and HE institutions, and other training organisations, to deliver higher and degree apprenticeships in 2016/17, updated lists from the SFA of qualifications eligible for advanced learner loans in 2015/16 and 2016/17, and of apprenticeship standards approved for delivery, and a call from the CBI for a 'radical rethink' of the apprenticeship levy.

Funding agencies

- SFA: Higher and degree apprenticeship, opportunity to tender
- SFA: Updated, advanced learner loans qualifications catalogue
- SFA: Updated, apprenticeship standards approved for delivery
- EFA: Annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2015

CBI

- 'Radical rethink' required for apprenticeship levy

Pearson

- The latest on qualifications approved for 19+ funding
- Steve Besley's Policy Watch



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Funding agencies

SFA: Higher and degree apprenticeship, opportunity to tender

The SFA has announced they will launch a £20 million procurement opportunity in May for additional FE and HE institutions, and other training organisations, to deliver higher and degree apprenticeships in 2016/17. Organisations that already hold a funding agreement for this provision need not apply through this procurement and should request growth through the usual process. The SFA welcome applications for delivery of all higher apprenticeships but will give priority to apprenticeship standards and degree apprenticeship standards. Apprenticeship standards included within this procurement must be ready for delivery before 1 September 2016 (see [here](#) for the latest list of standards ready for delivery). Register on the SFA's [BRAVO e-tendering system](#) for the procurement alert.

SFA: Updated, advanced learner loans qualifications catalogue

The SFA published the latest [advanced learner loans qualifications catalogue](#) this week which lists the qualifications available for an advanced learner loan in 2015/16 and 2016/17. Given the changes to the loan rules in 2016/17 (19-23 year-olds, and level 5 and 6 qualifications, are now eligible for loan funding) there are some qualifications which do not start until after 1 August 2016 and these are identified in the catalogue. Eligible learners can apply for loans for 2016/17 from May 2016.

The process of approving qualifications for advanced learner loan funding has been separated from the process for approving qualifications for 19-23 entitlement funding since December 2015. It means awarding organisations can now make submissions for qualifications to be made eligible for advanced learners loans even where they do not now meet the 19-23 entitlement funding criteria. Awarding organisations can make submissions at the beginning of each month and, if successful, the funding [Hub](#) is updated in the third week of the month, and the [Student Loan Company portal](#) and the [advanced learner loans qualifications catalogue](#) are updated in the fourth week of the month.

We are currently reviewing all our qualifications now eligible for loan funding and have already made a number of successful submissions so do check the catalogue for qualifications now eligible for loan funding in 2016/17. If you are looking to offer a qualification through loan funding which is not on the catalogue do get in touch (funding@pearson.com). We will review any requests and make a submission if the qualification is eligible. Qualifications need to be 150 glh or 15 credits to be eligible. Qualifications approved for the 19-23 funding entitlement are automatically approved for loan funding.

More on how the SFA are approving qualifications for 24+ loan funding for levels 3 and 4 in 2015/16, and 19+ loan funding for levels 3-6 in 2016/17 can be found [here](#).

SFA: Updated, apprenticeship standards approved for delivery

This week the SFA updated the [list](#) of approved apprenticeship standards ready for delivery. The information includes, for each standard approved, an approved assessment plan, the allocated funding cap, and the apprenticeship level.

EFA: Annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2015

Last week the EFA published their [annual report and accounts](#) for the year ended 31 March 2015. The report includes information about governance, assurance systems, policy development and delivery. It also reports on how EFA manages its programmes, projects, finances, people and information. The 195 page document includes, from page 99, a 4 page review of programme spend which includes figures on spending from 2013-14 to 2014-15, and anticipated future expenditure.



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CBI

'Radical rethink' required for apprenticeship levy

At their latest [employment and skills network](#) event held yesterday in London, Carolyn Fairbairn, CBI Director-General, called for a 'radical rethink' of the apprenticeship levy. In the speech Carolyn invited government to collaborate with business to rethink the design of the apprenticeship levy to ensure it delivers the quality skills training needed to support a more prosperous society. She highlighted businesses' commitment to raising skill levels and CBI members' support of government's ambition to boost apprentice numbers, but outlined three key areas needing a 'rethink' to ensure the levy can work for everyone: 1) the new Institute for Apprenticeships should be strengthened and given the role of measuring and managing the levy system, including setting future levy rates, 2) firms need to be given more flexibility in how they spend the levy, including on existing training and high-quality support for apprentices, and 3) the digital system which manages levy spend must be ready and able to support the delivery of apprenticeship training which businesses need, in full and from the start. The pressure of the government's deadline, it was argued, means firms lack crucial information about the levy and a realistic lead-in time to prepare for it.

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The latest on qualifications approved for 19+ funding

Last week the DfE published the long-awaited [lists](#) of the technical and vocational qualifications for teaching from September 2016 and reporting in 2018 performance tables. The lists are of qualifications for reporting in the 2018 performance tables in the following categories: technical awards, technical certificates, tech levels, and applied general qualifications. The lists are crucial for funding of course as all qualifications approved as technical certificates, tech levels, and applied generals are automatically approved for 19-23 entitlement funding in 2016/17.

This Pearson [Funding Focus](#) shows which BTEC Firsts and Nationals are approved for 19-23 entitlement funding in 2016/17. (See under April, 160426 Funding Focus - BTEC Firsts and Nationals - Adult funding in 2016 17).

The list of all the qualifications approved for the 2016/17 funding year for the 19-23 level 2 and 3 entitlement can be found on the Skills Funding Agency's website [here](#) (third document down). At the time of writing the list hasn't yet been updated following the DfE's announcements. The latest list was published on the 23 March. More on how the SFA are approving qualifications for the 19-23 level 2 and 3 entitlement in 2016/17 can be found [here](#).

Steve Besley's Policy Watch

The latest from Steve Besley includes [Policy Tracker – Keeping track of what happened in the world of education in April 2016](#), and [Policy Eye - Highlights of week ending Friday 22 April 2016](#). See the latest from [Policy Watch](#) for these and more.

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