



# Pearson

## Policy Tracker – Keeping track of what happened in the world of education in October 2016



### Main talking points

The month started with the Conservative government in full flow, setting out policies at its Annual Conference but ended with a retreat on some, including primary assessment and apprenticeship funding

### Key headlines from the month

- Bills. Education for All Bill dropped, new Technical and FE Bill introduced
- Primary assessment. Government reins in the changes and calls for a major review
- Summer-borns. Government calls for more time before deciding on changing admissions
- School exclusions. Up in latest stats particularly in some disadvantaged areas
- Languages. Parliamentary Group launches checklist to protect languages under Brexit
- EBacc. 39.6% of state school pupils enter the EBacc in 2016 with 24.5% achieving
- 48.2 hours. How many hours a week secondary teachers in England work on average
- Teacher vacancies. The government considers a new monitoring system
- Teachers' pay. The government looks to keep within 1% ceiling
- Multi - Academy health checks. Due to be rolled out from January 2017
- Multi-Academy Trusts. The Chief Inspector identifies successful characteristics
- National Citizen Service. David Cameron announced as new Chair
- Apprenticeships. Latest stats show 503,700 starts in current year
- Apprenticeship End Point Assessment. Government launches new support programme
- Maths app. The National Numeracy charity launches a new mobile phone maths game
- Digital skills. Provision for free basic training to be included in Digital Economy Bill
- Sixth Form Colleges. Facing funding pressures
- FE Commissioner. New team appointed
- Collab Group. The 157 Group adopts a new name and vision
- Area reviews. Government publishes latest schedule and batch of information
- Modern employment. The RSA's Matthew Taylor called in to lead a review
- EU students. Funding assured for those whose courses continue beyond EU leave date
- 2017 uni entry. Latest UCAS stats shows UK applicants up 1% but 9% decrease in EU applicants

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## Reports/Publications of the month (in order of publication)

- **Ad-hoc Notice: School preferences.** The DfE analyses applications and offers for secondary school places this year claiming strong parental demand for selective school places
- **Survey of U6 students 2016.** HMC and the Universities Sub-Committee survey upper sixth students about their hopes and fears as they prepare to head to uni in the autumn
- **Parents Panel.** Ofsted reports on how the panel is working and the wide range of issues that have been raised through it
- **Teacher workload and prof development in England's secondary schools.** The Education Policy Institute crunches OECD data on teacher workloads suggesting those in England work longer hours
- **Working in partnership.** University UK's Social Mobility Group issues its final report calling for the creation of an 'Evidence and Impact Exchange' to help the sector tackle issues of social mobility
- **Autumn Statement Submission.** The Association of Colleges submits 20 proposals to the Chancellor ahead of the Autumn statement highlighting in particular an increase in 16-19 funding rates
- **Alternative pathways into the labour market.** The CIPD challenges the current orthodoxy of increasing numbers going on to HE suggesting that there are alternative options
- **Negotiating Brexit.** The MillionPlus group outlines a number of recommendations particularly around HE that the government should take into account as part of the Brexit negotiations
- **HE Bill.** The government spells out the vision and principles of the proposed new UK Research and Innovation body as part of its series of briefings on changes included in the HE Bill
- **Protecting the public interest in Higher Education.** Former Minister and current Bedfordshire VC Bill Rammell calls for greater protection for student and public interest in a pamphlet for HEPI
- **Provisional GCSE and equivalent results for 2016.** The government publishes this year's provisional data showing an increase in EBacc entries and Attainment 8 scores
- **Provisional A' level and 16-18 results for 2016.** The government publishes a batch of provisional L3 data showing stable trends at A' level but no progress on English and maths resits
- **Provisional destination data.** The government publishes provisional destination data for KS4 and 5 students showing most progressing into education or employment but low rates for apprenticeships
- **State pension age.** The Cridland review publishes an interim report proposing that those who start work early or who work in manual jobs should receive their state pensions early
- **Making the apprenticeship levy work.** The Learning and Work Institute calls for fixed delivery prices and the introduction of an apprenticeship premium in a new report on apprenticeships
- **The Farmer Review of the UK Construction Model.** The government commissioned review of Britain's construction industry reaches a fairly blunt conclusion about the need for change
- **Who's to produce and who's to choose.** The Centre for the Study of Market Reform of Education (CMRE) argues against the creation of a monopoly awarding body system in a new report
- **Restructuring facility.** The government re-issues its guidance for colleges seeking funding support to help with re-structuring following an area wide review

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- **Area reviews implementation guidance.** The government publishes its latest guidance for colleges and other players involved in area reviews along with a framework for due diligence
- **The Rochford Review.** The Group which has been looking at assessment for pupils working below national curriculum test level publishes its final report calling for an end to the formal use of P scales
- **Implementing the further education and skills reform programme.** The (new) FE and Skills Minister issues the latest briefing on the FE sector with updates on some priority areas
- **Apprenticeship Funding.** The government confirms the funding arrangements for May 2017 onwards following recent consultation and debate
- **Apprenticeship Evaluation.** The government reports on its latest annual survey of employers and learners finding satisfaction levels remaining high and content and quality strengthening
- **Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers.** The Skills Funding Agency invites initial applications for its Register which will open for applications four times a year
- **Sixth Form Colleges Funding Impact Survey.** The Association's latest annual survey makes fairly bleak reading as it finds 66% of colleges dropping courses and 90% worried about the future
- **Defining disadvantage.** Impetus PEF, who focus on the needs of disadvantaged young people, publish a briefing paper looking at alternative ways of defining disadvantage in education
- **Technical and Further Education Bill.** The government sets out the details behind this latest Education Bill with accompanying impact assessment

## Speeches of the month

- Theresa May's **2 October Brexit speech** at the start of the Conservative Party Conference sets out the start date and initial process for triggering the UK's withdrawal from the EU
- Amber Rudd's **4 October Conference speech** raises alarm bells with its various proposals to clamp down on foreign students and foreign workers
- Justine Greening's **4 October Conference speech** defends the government's current school reforms and announces the first six new Opportunity Areas intended to help mobility and attainment
- Theresa May's **5 October Party Conference speech** outlines her Great Meritocracy vision for a post Brexit country
- Sally Collier's **20 October FAB Conference speech** spells out her she's found the first six months and where Ofqual currently is on various technical and work-based qualifications

## Quotes of the month

- "So let's be clear: this is not about a return to the eleven plus" – the Education Secretary is at pains to be clear about the government's proposals on selective education
- "The pace and scale of these changes has been stretching" – the Education Secretary begins her announcement on reining back in primary assessment by reflecting on the current state of play
- "You should have a general disposition and then see what works" – Michael Gove on his approach to education policy making

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- “No one is being forced into a merger with anyone” – the FE Commissioner reports on the area review process now in Wave 4
- “You can call it what you like. People will know the brightest children, the most academic are not going there” – Sir Michael Wilshaw on the schools left behind in a selective system
- “I have low self-belief even though my friends and family constantly build my confidence up” – PE teacher Candice Brown shows what’s possible as she wins this year’s Bake-Off
- “Independent and state schools cannot make our relationships work with a gun pointing at our heads” – the chair of the HMC warns against shotgun marriages between school types
- “Don’t turn up 5 minutes before the gates shut. It’s like walking into Costa and asking for a smoothie after they’ve closed down all the machines” – Tom Bennett offers advice on Parents’ Evenings

## Word or phrase of the month

- A Great Meritocracy. The theme of the Prime Minister’s speech to her Party Conference this month and part of her vision for the country for the future

## Steve Besley

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