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Policy Tracker – Keeping track of what happened in the world of education in January 2017



Main talking points

20 principles for negotiating Brexit, 10 'pillars' of a new Industrial Strategy, 6 guiding principles for primary assessment, 5 steps for tackling mental health, 18% of schools in deficit. 2017 is beginning to take shape

Key headlines from the month

- Performance tables. Government publishes revised data for 2016 tables
- Sex and Relationships Education. Committee votes not to make it compulsory for schools
- Creative arts. Cultural Learning Alliance pushes for more arts in schools
- Safeguarding. Ofsted confirm what they're looking for in a new blog
- Coasting schools. New regulations come in
- Opportunity Areas. Education Secretary doubles the number
- EBacc. The wait for the government's response may stretch to the summer
- Chartered College. Opens for registrations
- MATs. Two chains consider incorporating grammars in future
- Sixth Form Colleges. Many considering academisation
- National Funding Formula. Unions provide constituency map of likely losers
- Inspections. Ofsted reports a fall in complaints
- Technical routes. Government advertises for industry experts to join panels
- FE centres of excellence. Industry Strategy proposes these for English and maths
- Institutes of Technology. Government pledges capital funding to help set up
- Apprentices. Target of 200,000 more by 2020 set for public sector
- Apprentice numbers. Latest data show numbers on track for 2020 3m target
- Area reviews. Area reports from some of the Wave 5 reviews published
- Work placements. Learning and Work Institute undertakes review of role in technical education
- NUS. Launches a new 8-point campaign manifesto
- Evening classes. MPs support new petition
- HE Bill. The Lords start to make significant amendments
- HE and Brexit. Education Committee hears strong views at its witness sessions

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

- **Draft Strategic Guidance for the Institute for Apprenticeships.** The government invites comments on the priorities and operating arrangements of the soon to be launched IfA
- **APPG Report into integration of immigrants.** The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) of MPs sets out 6 principles for social integration including compulsory ESOL courses where necessary
- **Growing Up Digital.** The Children's Commissioner calls for compulsory digital 'citizenship' classes in schools to help young people become more aware of the darker side of the internet
- **Alternative providers in HE.** The HE Policy Institute (HEPI) issues a report on alternative providers in HE highlighting the importance of quality controls from case studies cited
- **2017 Macquarie Youth Index.** The Prince's Trust publishes its latest annual survey of young people's (16-25) wellbeing, finding them at their lowest ebb since the survey started 8 years ago
- **Governance Handbook.** The government updates its handbook to include a new 6-point competency framework
- **Determinants of international demand for UKHE.** The HE Policy Institute (HEPI) and others offer a detailed analysis of potential trends post Brexit indicating scenarios with both winners and losers
- **HESA Statistical First release.** The HE Statistics Agency (HESA) reports on HE student enrolments and qualifications gained over the last year as part of trends over the last decade
- **Somebody like me.** The Be Real Campaign publishes the results of its survey into body image among secondary age young people finding many lacking confidence and anxious about their looks
- **The Class Ceiling.** The Sutton Trust and All Party Parliamentary Social Mobility Group highlight the challenges faced by disadvantaged young people looking to enter the professions
- **Fiscal sustainability report.** The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) issues its latest report on the state of public finances painting a fairly bleak picture of rising demand and debt
- **Future of assessment.** The NAHT reports on its 9-month inquiry into primary assessment calling for a simpler, more supportive approach with statutory assessment points only at reception and KS2
- **Implementation of the Prevent duty in HE in 2015/16.** HEFCE reports on the first year of implementation of the Prevent duty in HE and finds broad compliance and procedures in place
- **Revised A' level and other 16-18 results in England 2015/16.** The government releases latest performance table data for post-16 provision last year incorporating new accountability measures
- **Revised GCSE and equivalent results in England 2015/16.** The government releases the confirmed performance table data for schools last year incorporating new accountability measures
- **Destination measures.** The government explains how it has put together the 16-18 destination measures now that they appear as a headline accountability feature for the first time
- **Factsheets on validation, degree awarding powers and university title.** The government issues further clarification of its proposals to extend market reforms to include new HE providers
- **Apprenticeship targets for public sector bodies.** The government responds to last year's consultation by committing to a new target of 200,000 more starts from April 2017 to 2020/21

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- **Progress 8 and Attainment 8.** The DfE explains, with appropriate charts, how coasting, floor standards, Attainment 8 and Progress 8 all work
- **Becoming a 16-19 academy.** The DfE updates its recent guidance with further details on evidence required by the Transactions Unit for Sixth Form Colleges considering academisation
- **School workforce planning.** The DfE offers non-statutory guidance to schools on workforce planning with particular emphasis on regular reviews and sourcing efficiency gains
- **Schools' buying strategy.** As above, further non-statutory guidance but this time on non-staff spend where the government is looking to save £1bn a year by 2019/20
- **Omnibus findings.** The government publishes its latest consumer findings taken from surveys of pupils, parents, teachers and post-16 institutions over last year
- **Packhorse Generation.** The Intergenerational Foundation sizes up the impact of increased fees, charges and inflation and suggests some graduates could face long-term debt
- **Post-16 maths participation 2014/15.** The DfE publishes data collated as part of the research for the Smith review showing that it's mainly those with A/A* grade at GCSE who carry on to A' level maths
- **Breaking Point.** The NAHT highlights a growing crisis in school funding in its latest survey with schools struggling to balance books, manage cuts and pay increased charges at the same time
- **Building our Industrial Strategy.** The government publishes its long awaited Green Paper built around ten 'pillars' intended to boost productivity and spread the spoils for a post Brexit Britain
- **Imagine Nation.** The Cultural Learning Alliance of key arts, dance and music groups highlights the importance of cultural learning to young people in a new report on protecting the arts
- **Key indicators in STEM education.** The Gatsby Foundation publishes its latest data on the uptake in STEM subjects suggesting more needs doing to encourage growth at A' level and in apprenticeships
- **2016 HE entry data.** UCAS publishes further data on 2016 HE entry showing the breakdown by sex, area background and ethnic group for individual institutions highlighting concerns in some cases
- **Annual report from the Schools' Chief Adjudicator.** The new Chief Adjudicator's report for 2015/16 finds the admissions system working well but recommends further guidance for some LAs and MATs
- **Teacher shortages.** The Migration Advisory Committee publishes its report on the labour market and suggests no overall shortage of teachers apart from Mandarin, computer and general science

Speeches of the month

- The Prime Minister's 9 January 'Charity Commission' **speech** calls for government and society generally to help confront issues of mental health and proposes five key steps as a starting point
- The Prime Minister's 17 January Brexit **speech** lays down the 12 principles that are intended to form the basis of Brexit negotiations over the next two years
- The Education Secretary's 18 January social mobility **speech** highlights 3 priorities for improving social mobility through education including better provision of technical education

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Quotes of the month

- “This is the year we start to make it happen” – the Prime Minister uses her New Year message to spell out that it (change for the better) will happen in 2017
- “Later this year we will bring forward a new Green Paper on children and young people’s mental health to transform services in education and for families” – the PM outlines plans to tackle mental health
- “Hamfisted” – Chancellor of Oxford and former Tory Party chairman Lord Patten takes one word to sum up the government’s HE reforms
- “I hadn’t realized how chaotic the current system is” – Lord Sainsbury reflects on the skills system
- “I want everyone to see us as a force for improvement” – the new Chief Inspector sets her sights
- “I was a child growing up in Rotherham in the 1980s, I wanted a level playing field of opportunity” – the Education Secretary on what social mobility means to her
- “In a decade’s time, if we still have got GCSEs in England we will be completely out of kilter with other European countries and not giving young people what they need” - Tristram Hunt leaves some suggestions behind as he resigns from being an MP
- “The confidence young people have about the future is at its lowest ever level” – the Prince’s Trust finds young people at a low ebb in its latest annual survey
- “We know schools need to be accountable but they should not operate in fear and uncertainty” – the NAHT publishes the results of its inquiry into assessment
- “This is a wake-up call” – Lord Puttnam launches a new report on drama, dance and arts in schools
- “Pretty much anything that requires 10 seconds of thinking or less can be done by AI or other algorithms” – a Microsoft executive heralds the march of technology

Word or phrase of the month

- Shared society. ‘One that doesn’t just value our individual rights but focuses more on the responsibilities we have to one another.’ The Prime Minister’s New Year message and current policy riff

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