



# Pearson

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



### Main talking points

A month of significant developments. The unexpected general election result left education, like many areas of public policy, facing a more uncertain policy environment. This was confirmed in the subsequent Queen's Speech which saw high-profile policies such as more grammar schools dropped. Elsewhere the Brexit negotiations began, the exam season drew to a close and issues of pay and funding continued to dominate

### Key headlines from the month

- Children's Laureate. Lauren Child takes up the reins for the next two years
- Primary assessment. The government's latest consultation closes
- School places. 90% gain first choice primary place, 83.5% gain first choice secondary place
- Grammar schools. Education Secretary confirms current plans abandoned
- School funding. Government confirms it will issue a statement 'shortly'
- Exam entries. Concerns expressed about curriculum balance in light of latest data from Ofqual
- Summer exams. Ofqual tees up outcomes in a letter to schools
- GCSEs. The DfE publishes new factsheets to highlight grading changes
- Exam appeals. Ofqual announces new system of second chance appeals
- Mental health. Government announces a new training programme for teachers
- Teacher numbers. Increased slightly to 457.300 FTE
- Short inspections. Ofsted consults on proposed operational changes
- English and maths. The Education and Skills Funding agency consults on the funding condition
- Advanced Teacher status. The Education and Training Foundation launches a mastery qual for FE
- FE teachers. UCU highlights concerns about casualization of the workforce
- FE. Ofsted publishes inspection outcome data for winter 2016/17
- Institutes of Technology. Government confirms support via Queen's Speech
- Skills Minister. Anne Milton takes over and sets out her stall at the AELP Conference
- TEF. First set of ratings from HE's Teaching Excellence Framework published
- Job and wage outcomes for graduates. The government publishes the latest set of data
- OU. Announces a major re-structure

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

- **Annual Literacy Survey.** The National Literacy Trust publishes its latest survey of children's reading habits finding the number of teenagers who enjoy reading now at an all-time high
- **2017 Student Academic Experience.** The HE Policy Institute and HE Academy publish the results of their latest survey showing students happier about teaching quality but less so about value for money
- **What school did you go to?** The Sutton Trust researches the education backgrounds of the new Commons and reports a slight (2%) increase compared to 2015, in the no of MPs from a comp
- **College financial planning handbook 2017.** The Education and Skills Funding agency updates its guidance to include among other things, special arrangements for colleges planning to merge
- **Provisional exam entry data.** Ofqual publishes the latest set of figures on entries for this summer's GCSE, AS and A' level exams showing an increase in entries for EBacc subjects
- **Social Mobility Barometer.** The Social Mobility Commission gauges the views via its new barometer highlighting concerns about a continuing mobility gap which some fear is getting worse
- **Optimising autonomy.** The re-named Centre for Education Economics launches its blueprint for education reform incorporating open tendering for schools as required and stronger market metrics
- **Employment and earnings outcomes.** The government publishes the latest data on graduate job and wage outcomes by subject and institution using the new Longitudinal Education Outcomes data
- **FE workforce data.** The Education and Training Foundations publishes the latest set of data on the FE workforce in England noting a large number are part-time and many miss out on CPD
- **Progression Pathways 2017.** UCAS reports on alternative routes through HE focusing on four in particular such as HNs and concludes that they serve many people well but they need better guidance
- **Queen's Speech Briefing.** The government publishes the full list of Bills, non-legislative measures and accompanying background notes for the latest legislative programme
- **UTCs: Beneath the Headlines.** The NFER lists six recommendations to help UTCs gain a stronger foothold including tailored qualifications and specialist accountability measures
- **What students want from their university?** Universities UK explores the changing relationship between students and their university as partners in learning or consumers with rights
- **Misunderstanding technical and professional education.** Mary Curnock Cook spells out six problem areas facing the new T-Levels in a new briefing paper for the HE Policy Institute
- **Apprenticeship off-the-job training.** The DfE issues guidance and best practice case studies on how best to apply the 20% minimum off-the-job training rule for apprenticeships
- **The Funding of School Education.** The OECD offers a new thematic study looking at what lessons can be learnt from how school funding operates elsewhere arguing that how it's used that matters
- **Teacher retention and turnover.** The NFER publishes the latest in its series of reports on teacher retention this time looking at the high movement in MATs suggesting careful workforce management

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- **Time for a Change.** The Social Mobility Commission reports on efforts to improve social mobility over the last two decades, calling for more to be done and listing 14 recommendations for education
- **Access agreement monitoring 2015/16.** The Office for Fair Access (OFFA) publishes its latest annual report showing more money going in up but drop-out rates for some groups not improving

## Speeches of the month

- Amanda Spielman's **14 June Sixth Form Colleges Association speech** reflects on the challenges faced by such colleges and stresses Ofsted's interest in monitoring how well the curriculum is delivering
- Philip Hammond's **20 June Mansion House speech** confirms the government is looking to balance the books by 2025 but that a lot depends on the prioritizing of business needs in Brexit
- The **Queen's Speech on 21 June** sets out the legislative programme for what is intended to be the next the next two years with Brexit legislation dominating the list of 27 Bills
- Justine Greening's **21 June social mobility speech** praises the companies that have made the top 50 in the new social mobility index and confirms that widening opportunity remains a key driver for the DfE
- Amanda Spielman's **23 June Wellington speech** returns to the theme of Ofsted as a force for improvement in education developing research, thematic reviews and supporting school management
- Sir Michael Barber's **23 June Office for Students speech** lists five priorities including regulation, access, teaching, employability and implementation for the new Office for Students

## Quotes of the month

- "Now let's get to work" – Theresa May ends her Statement about forming a new government the day after the country delivered its election verdict
- "Who in God's name would really want Nick Gibb's job?" – the Times Ed reflects on some of the challenges in a job that covers exams, assessments, standards and teachers
- "A job of delivery" – how the new Skills Minister sees her job
- "We would like to suggest a meeting between all of us and you and your officials to discuss the future of education funding" – the unions waste no time in calling for a meeting with the PM
- "This must have been a stonker of a year for you, so thank you" – Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman empathizes with Sixth Form Colleges
- "The term T-Level conflates a purpose (technical) and the scale of the challenge (Level) which is troubling" – Mary Curnock Cook identifies a number of challenges around T-Levels
- "My father had one job in his lifetime, I will have six jobs in my lifetime and my children will have six jobs at the same time" – business entrepreneur Robin Chase on how jobs are changing

## Word or phrase of the month

- 'Potential over polish.' What social mobility supporters advocate

## Steve Besley

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