



# Pearson

## Policy Tracker – Keeping track of what happened in the world of education in February 2018



### Main talking points

A month which has seen a landmark funding review launched, a new regulatory system for higher education outlined, times table checks for Year 9s confirmed, worries about a slowdown in apprenticeship starts and teacher recruitment rumble on, and a torrent of reports unleashed. And it's been a short month.

### Key headlines from the month

- Free school meals. Government sets new annual threshold
- SATs. Government confirms English writing frameworks remain unchanged
- Times table checks. Government announces trials and implementation schedule for Yr 9s
- PSHE. Consultation closes with calls for it to be made statutory
- Virtual A' level. Pearson prepares to launch online Spanish A' level this September
- Advanced Extension Awards. Ofqual consults on some changes
- Advanced maths premium. Government spells out funding arrangements
- Qualifications. Ofqual publishes its latest annual market report
- School efficiency. DfE launches new support service to help schools get value for money
- Teacher recruitment. DfE eases restrictions on re-taking skills tests for aspiring teachers
- Mental health. The Local Government Association calls for compulsory counselling in all secondaries
- Social media. Science and Technology Committee announces new inquiry
- Functional Skills. Government publishes subject content guidance
- Apprenticeships. The Institute for Apprenticeships plans faster and better standards delivery
- Levy funds. Government provides for levy-paying employers to transfer some training funds
- Apprenticeship funding bands. Government said to be looking at them again
- College governors. Economic and Social Research Council announces 3-year research project
- National Colleges. National College for Nuclear Industry gets under way
- HE bodies. The HE Minister confirms the designation of QAA and HESA in the new HE firmament
- Part-time students. Universities UK and the CBI launch a new review to report back this summer
- TEF subject panel members. HEFCE announces names
- Post-18 funding review. Government announces year-long review

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

- **Educating the North.** The Northern Powerhouse Partnership calls on the government, employers and others to help close the gap in education and skills in the North
- **Government evidence to the STRB.** The government provides the Teachers' Pay Review Body with further details on teacher recruitment and affordability as it considers this year's pay award
- **Schools' costs.** The government outlines some of the cost factors likely to affect schools over the next couple of years as a way of helping governors, leaders and others with their planning
- **Get Children Learning.** The Dept for International Development (DfID) launches its new global education policy and confirms UK contribution will rise to £75m a year for each of the next 3 years
- **Annual Report of the Schools Adjudicator.** The Adjudicator's latest report concludes that the school admissions system is working well for most but that those at the margins often miss out
- **Characteristics of young people who are long-term NEET.** The DfE publishes commissioned research showing that the looked after, excluded and with poor basic skills feature most prominently
- **Educational Outcomes of Children with English as an Additional Language.** The Education Policy Institute finds performance variable and calls for better training, data and support overall
- **Employability in London.** The Collab Group (in this case of London colleges) and CIPD report on discussions around the core issues facing London skill providers and the power of collaboration
- **Teaching, leadership and governance in FE.** A commissioned report by the DfE finds the sector coping but raises concerns about teaching quality, lack of CPD and growing demands on leadership
- **A School's Guide to Implementation.** The Education Endowment Foundation sets out a four stage model to help schools implement best evidence-based practice
- **Higher education research in facts and figures.** Universities UK lists the latest facts and figures showing UKHE still punching well above its funded weight in global research terms
- **Social Mobility and the Office for Students.** The Open University sets out five principles (with recommendations) to help the Office for Students embed social mobility in its future work
- **Meeting the Public Sector Apprenticeship Target.** The government updates its guidance for bodies such as schools and councils in meeting their apprenticeship targets
- **Higher ed student finance 2018/19: equality analysis.** The government outlines changes to student finance for the coming year and the likely impact on particular groups
- **A National Learning Entitlement: Moving Beyond Tuition Fees.** Three leading educationalists sketch out a new funding and support national entitlement for all post-secondary students
- **Proposals for an All-Age Graduate Tax in England.** Two 'experts' make the case for an all-age graduate tax, applicable to all existing generations of graduates in England to reduce the debt burden
- **The right people around the table.** The National Governance Association updates its guidance on recruiting, training and supporting school governors and trustees
- **Student Loans.** The Treasury Committee takes the system to task over the cost of student loans, interest rates and accounting rules and calls for a simpler, fairer system overall

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- **Review of Post-18 Education and Funding.** The government sets out the terms of reference and identifies four core issues and four guiding principles
- **What Kids are Reading.** The latest annual report has ‘Diary of a Wimpy Kid’ author Jeff Kinney and David Walliams as the top two authors but expresses concern about a drop in reading from Yr 7 on
- **Developing DfE Statistics in 2018.** The DfE outlines how it will improve the coherence and format of the data and statistics that it regularly publishes
- **Differential tuition fees.** The HE Policy Institute (HEPI) finds few students keen about differential fees and suggests that there are not many benefits from such an approach
- **Converting maintained schools to academies.** The National Audit Office (NAO) reports on the costs and challenges involved and calls on the DfE to be clear about its future approach
- **Annual Qualifications Market Report.** Ofqual publishes its 2016/17 annual report on the qualifications market showing latest trends and developments
- **Apprenticeship and levy statistics.** The DfE provides a summary of service registrations and apprenticeship starts for the first quarter of the academic year showing there’s still some way to go
- **Analysis of teacher supply, retention and mobility.** The DfE adds further detail on local employment rates and mobility as part of its series analyzing the teacher workforce
- **Data-driven risk-based quality regulation.** The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) reports on how regulatory bodies in other sectors use data and what lessons they may offer HE
- **Safety Net.** The Children’s Society and Young Minds highlight concerns about cyberbullying among young people in a new MP-led report and call on social media companies to respond quicker
- **Regulating End Point Assessments.** Ofqual launches a consultation on the conditions and requirements for the apprenticeship end point assessments it will use if called on to assure
- **Home and Away.** The Sutton Trust publishes a commissioned report on HE ‘commuter’ students suggesting it can limit social mobility and opportunity in many cases
- **Baseline Assessment: Why it doesn’t add up.** The ‘More than a Score’ group of educationalists and parents condemn plans for baseline assessment calling for more formative assessment instead
- **Improving engagement in maths and English courses.** The Behavioural Research Team reports on its work in helping English and maths learners, noting that support and nudges often work best
- **Functional Skills subject content consultation.** The DfE responds to last autumn’s consultation which raised issues about spelling lists, calculators, levels and learning hours
- **Functional Skills English and maths.** The DfE publish the outline subject content to be used in developing the respective qualifications following consultation
- **Statement of priorities.** The government outlines what it’s expecting from the Office for Students as it embarks on its first year of operation
- **Regulatory Framework for HE in England.** The Office for Students (OfS) sets out the full 160 + page manual outlining how the new regulatory framework for HE in England will operate
- **FE providers requiring improvement.** Ofsted confirms, that following consultation, providers requiring improvement will be subject to a single monitoring visit and public report

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## Speeches of the month

- Amanda Spielman's **1 Feb Church of England Foundation speech** highlights the importance of ethical leadership in helping ensure agreed values and tolerance are openly respected and inspected
- Robert Halfon's **6 February Centre for Social Justice speech** calls for an end to the obsession with academic degrees and a greater focus instead on technical and basic skill provision
- Theresa May's **19 February speech** launching the review of post-18 funding calls for the creation of better balanced tertiary education system accessible to all
- Nick Gibb's **22 February Commonwealth Education Ministers' speech** provides a new audience with a run through of the government's education reform programme
- Sam Gyimah's **28 February Office for Students conference speech** helps launch the new regulatory framework for HE in England that the incoming Office for Students will apply

## Quotes of the month

- "In the twenty years since we introduced tuition fees, public debate on tertiary education has been dominated by discussion about how we fund and support those who go to university, and there has been nothing like the same attention paid to how we support the training and develop the skills of the young people who do not" – the Prime Minister launches the long-awaited post-18 funding review
- "To be perfectly honest, as a politician a bit of heckling can make your speech. It can actually be very good for the speaker rather than damaging" – Jacob Rees-Mogg MP reflects on his experience trying to address an audience at the University of the West of England
- "Good education is the high-speed train that propels social justice" – Education Committee Chair Robert Halfon gets off his ladder of opportunity and on to a high-speed train instead
- "It should be thought of as an eco-system, an eco-system that is constantly changing" – former AoC Chief, Martin Doel sets out to explain FE
- "We are watching with interest the development and take-up of the T levels and base our judgement on them once we have more evidence on how the qualifications are used in schools" – Oxford University reserves judgement on T levels at this stage
- "I would not expect the pay of a CEO or other non-teaching staff to increase faster than the pay award for teachers" – the Academies Minister calls for academy trusts to exercise restraint over salaries
- "Rather than adopting a passive liberalism that says 'anything goes' for fear of causing offence, school leaders should be promoting a muscular liberalism" – Ofsted Chief Inspector calls for efforts all round to ensure British values are not undermined

## Word or phrase of the month

- 'VUCA.' Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous: the world today as many see it

## Steve Besley

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