



# Pearson

## Policy Tracker – Keeping track of what happened in the world of education in June 2019



### Main talking points

It's been a month which has seen the exam season start to draw to a close, the Prime Minister move to strengthen her legacy with announcements on mental health and funding, and the Tory leadership hopefuls spray promises around on education spending. In other news, the DfE has outlined initial funding plans for T levels, completed a first stage consultation on qualifications up to Level 3, published guidance on Relationships Education and issued an updated departmental plan. Elsewhere the Festival and Conference season has been in full swing where issues of funding, school assessment, post-18 education and future learning, have been among the topics discussed.

### Key headlines from the month

- Standards and Testing Agency. Publishes new business plan
- Anti-knife crime resources. PSHE Association and Home Office launch new materials
- Relationship Education. Government issues
- Mental Health Awareness. The Prime Minister promises more training and support
- Free Schools. 22 more applications approved
- 2019 School choice. 80.9% get their first choice secondary, 90.6% get their first choice primary school
- Re-inspections. Chief Inspector calls for outstanding schools to face routine re-inspections
- School funding. Institute for Fiscal Studies calculates the cost of reversing funding cuts
- EdTech. Innovation Fund open for bids
- Level 3 and below qualifications. Consultation closes
- T levels. Government unveils branding package
- T level funding. Government confirms initial funding arrangements
- Traineeships. Government announces a new achievement rate measure
- Tech developments. Government promises money for adult online learning and AI courses
- ESOL. Government reports on access and progression ahead of proposed new strategy
- Augar response. College leaders call on the government to honour investment in FE and skills
- Student survey. HEPI and AdvanceHE report many positives in their latest annual survey
- TEF 2019. Office for Students reports the results of the latest assessments
- Office for Students. Government adds some more priorities to its 2019/20 remit

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

- **Ofqual response to the consultation on Level 3 and below qualifications.** Ofqual highlights the important role that Applied General qualifications such as BTECs play in its consultation response
- **An Inquiry into Regional Inequalities.** The UK 2070 Commission publishes the first of three intended reports setting out an agenda for helping overcome economic and regional disparity
- **Delivering Skills for the New Economy.** The CBI and Tata Consultancy report on digital skills needs in the UK noting that demand outstrips supply and calling for more concerted action from government
- **Improving student mental health.** The Office for Students (OfS) outlines ten funded projects being launched to find innovative ways to tackle the sharp rise in student mental health
- **Sins of admission.** The Policy Exchange think tank calls for the routine use of unconditional offers to be scrapped and for university admissions policies to be made clearer in a new report
- **Oxford admissions.** Oxford University publishes the latest report on its annual student intake indicating a rise in state and school and BME applicants
- **Taking the Next Step.** The National Governance Association (NGA) along with ASCL and education advisers brownejacobsen update their guidance for schools considering joining trusts
- **Artificial Intelligence in the UK.** The McKinsey Global Institute reports on how AI is shaping up in the UK, suggesting the UK is in a leading position globally but that the gap is closing all the time
- **Review of the online learning and artificial intelligence market.** The DfE publishes the results of its commissioned research undertaken last summer showing considerable gaps in provision
- **Delivery Plans 2019.** UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) reports on its first year of activity and sets out plans for the next year based around six themes including places, ideas, and people
- **Teacher recruitment and progression in multi-academy trusts.** The Education Policy Institute reports on good practice in managing talent and supporting upward progression in trusts
- **Better Schools for All?** The NIESR and IoE publish new research funded by Nuffield showing that parental involvement and early years support rather than school choice determine attainment levels
- **Office for Students priorities for 2019/20.** The Education Secretary calls on the Office for Students to monitor grade inflation, essay mills and unconditional offers
- **Evaluation of Safeguarding Students Catalyst Fund Projects.** Advance HE reports on the various funded projects undertaken to improve student protection and calls for continuing cultural change
- **Student Academic Experience Survey 2019.** The HE Policy Institute and AdvanceHE publish the results of their latest student survey pointing to an increasingly positive picture for many
- **Greater Manchester Local Industrial Strategy.** Greater Manchester launches a wide-ranging local industrial strategy with a focus on healthcare, innovation, digitalization and skills development
- **Gone International.** UniversitiesUK reports on the latest group of undergrads to spend time abroad as part of their studies showing numbers growing and benefits in terms of jobs and salaries increasing
- **Part-time and flexible working in secondary schools.** The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) reports on growing demand among teachers for more flexible working practices
- **What have we learned from National Offer Day 2019?** The Education Policy Institute examines data about school choices approved this year arguing that a review of the admissions system is due

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- **Standards and Testing Agency business plan.** The STA sets out its business plan for up to March 2024 covering not just Key Stage 1/2 tests but also the new baseline assessment and maths checks
- **Guide to the pupil premium.** The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) offers a brief guide to how best to apply Pupil Premium
- **Impact assessment of the Augar review.** Universities UK publishes research from London Economics listing likely winners and losers from the Augar proposals
- **Children in Need review.** The government publishes the concluding report from its Children in Need review pledging to ensure such children remain visible, supported and with high aspirations
- **The value of tackling skills underutilization.** The IPPR think tank calls for better recognition of migrant skills and the lifting of restrictions on ESOL courses to help with labour market integration
- **Extra spending on education England.** The Institute for Fiscal studies (IFS) examines how much it would cost to reverse cuts to school and college funding and to maintain real term spending levels
- **Provider funding for the delivery of T levels.** The government issues its consultation response confirming most of the original proposals for funding T levels for the first few waves
- **Estimating the impact of Traineeships.** The government publishes a report showing high volumes of progression on early Traineeship programmes while confirming a new achievement measure
- **Teaching and Learning International Survey.** The OECD publishes its latest (2018) TALIS survey covering teachers across 48 countries showing those in England working longer hours than most
- **How are providers preparing for delivery?** The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) reports on how ready many of the first wave of T level providers are for a Sept 2020 launch
- **Exploring flexible working practice in schools.** The DfE publishes commissioned research on flexible work practices in schools showing growing demand but mixed opportunities
- **Research for the new inspection framework.** Ofsted outlines the range of research evidence used to help develop the new education inspection framework
- **Leading Skills.** The Social Market Foundation publishes the second in its series on FE leadership calling for a package of support for middle leaders in FE
- **Spending Review 2019.** The Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) publishes a 10-point funding plan for skills ahead of any possible Spending Review this year
- **Elitist Britain 2019.** The Sutton Trust and Social Mobility Commission publish a new report on the educational backgrounds of leading people in Britain showing many having had a private education
- **Relationships Education.** The government publishes its final guidance on Relationship Education and confirms the creation of a new working group to support the formal introduction from 2020
- **Future of the Labour Market.** The Learning and Work's Youth Commission reports on some of the trends and challenges likely to face the youth labour market in the future
- **Teaching online safety in school.** The government publishes new non-statutory guidance to help schools teach pupils about the dangers of online activity through classroom activities
- **External Quality Assurance Framework.** The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) outlines a new eight point framework for assuring quality across the apprenticeship system

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- **Inspecting education quality.** Ofsted outlines the evidence base it has been building and the work it has been doing to ensure inspectors are fully equipped to make judgements in the new system
- **Free Speech and Censorship on Campus.** The HE Policy Institute publishes a new briefing Paper defending the right of free speech in universities
- **Post-16 Aspirations and Outcomes.** The Centre for Vocational Education Research publishes its research submitted to the Augar review, examining routes and qualifications taken by post-16 cohorts
- **Annual report from the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee.** The Chair of the PAC reports on areas causing concern highlighting in particular school funding and academy oversight
- **Student loan forecasts.** The government publishes its latest set of forecast data pointing to gradual growth in eligible undergraduate numbers notably from 2021/2022
- **Schools, pupils and their characteristics.** The government publishes the latest (as of Jan 2019) data on school in England including pupil numbers, class sizes and free meal eligibility
- **ESOL provision.** The government publishes its commissioned report into ESOL access and progression finding demand high especially among job seekers but provision variable
- **Single departmental plan.** The DfE publishes its latest departmental plan showing progress made and key priorities under its five main delivery areas
- **Reducing the need for restraint.** The government outlines guidance and strategies for those who with children and young people in difficult circumstances
- **Teacher mobility in challenging areas.** The government publishes commissioned research into teachers working in challenging schools finding many concerned about potential impact on their lives
- **Getting young people work ready.** The CBI recommends some rethinks to GCSEs and the EBaccs to ensure young people are better prepared for the world of work

## Speeches of the month

- Amanda Spielman's **8 June National Governance Association speech** outlines the thinking and approach behind the new inspection framework and how it's expected to operate
- Theresa May's **10 June London Tech Week speech** sets out to position the UK as a leading tech nation and promises among other things increased investment and new AI courses and scholarships
- Jeremy Wright's **12 June AI Summit speech** outlines the leading work that the UK is doing in this area as part of the Industrial Strategy and highlights future skills and diversity as challenges
- Damian Hinds' **17 June Reform event speech** takes a wide-ranging look at disadvantage and reflects on five factors in particular: ethnicity, language, place, home and adversity
- Lord Agnew's **20 June Festival of Education speech** made on behalf of Damian Hinds ploughs through the familiar list of government policies and confirms a forthcoming academy trust fund
- Amanda Spielman's **20 June Festival of Education speech** reflects on progress made half way through her tenure pointing to the efforts being made to ensure Ofsted is a force for improvement

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## Quotes of the month

- “And for me too, there is now just a hint of uncertainty as to what the future may hold” – the Chancellor tells employers he faces uncertainty too
- “Augar addresses major issues affecting our entire population with large price tags attached. These will be waiting for the next Prime Minister” – Panel member Professor Alison Wolf reminds the next Prime Minister that the Augar review will be waiting on top of the intray
- “Class sizes are smaller this year while students report that they are being challenged in their assignments” – HEPI and AdvanceHE highlight some of the positives in their latest student survey
- “We will shortly be announcing a fund that will boost the growth of our strongest academy trusts allowing them to support a greater number of schools across the country” - Lord Agnew includes one new announcement in his speech to the Festival of Education
- “I literally spend my life seeing people realise their dreams” – the FE and Skills Minister on the joys of the job
- “The result is a system that too often feels to those inside it as relentlessly joyless” – the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) calls on Tory leadership candidates to tackle school accountability
- “Reversing cuts of 8% would cost £3.8bn” – the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IfS) calculates how much it would cost to reverse total school, sixth form and local authority funding
- “Just because a number is written on a spreadsheet doesn’t make it gospel” – Ofsted Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman urges caution over spreadsheet worship

## Word or phrase of the month

- MARS (Machine learning, automation, robotics and space,) the acronym Jeff Bezos of Amazon uses to describe a vision of the future

## Steve Besley

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