



Pearson

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



Main talking points

Quite a month. The Prime Minister declared her intention to step down, the exams season got under way, the long-awaited Timpson and Augar reports finally emerged, Ofsted confirmed its new inspection arrangements for this autumn on, the government outlined arrangements about baseline assessment and T level industry placements and big Papers on 16-19 and post-18 funding were published.

Key headlines from the month

- Baseline assessment. Government confirms arrangements for this September's pilot
- School exclusions. Government finally publishes outcomes of its major (Timpson) review
- Off-rolling. Ofqual publishes results of teacher's survey suggesting many concerns
- Bad behaviour. Government announces new 3-year support scheme
- High needs. The Education Secretary issues a call for evidence on high needs funding
- Character building. Advisory group calls for evidence on what works
- Computing. Roehampton report highlights squeeze in some schools
- Final instructions. Ofqual issues annual pre-exam season letter to schools
- Inspections. Ofsted reports on its consultation and sets out future arrangements
- Careers Hubs. Government announces 2nd wave
- Digital Functional Skills. Government launches consultation on subject content
- T level transition framework. AoC to lead support programme
- T level Industry placements. Government confirms some new flexibilities and support
- Mental health and wellbeing. Association of Colleges launches an 11-point charter
- Post-18 funding. Education Policy Institute lays out the issues
- Augar. Review Group publishes its long-awaited report
- Uni admissions. The Office for Students calls for a more ambitious approach
- Informed choices. Russell Group scrap facilitating subjects for a broader choice website
- Race attainment gap. UUK and NUS report on the issues
- Uni admissions. Oxford announces new schemes to help disadvantaged students
- Research funding. Lords Committee launches short review

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

- **Contextual admissions.** The Office for Students (OfS) publishes a briefing Paper on admissions and the use of contextual data, calling for institutions to be more ambitious in how they assess https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/804504/Full-review-of-the-shortage-occupation-list.pdf merit
- **Post – 18 funding.** The Education Policy Institute (EPI) outlines the issues around post-18 funding ahead of the Augar report suggesting that targeting funding rather than cutting fees would be better
- **Closing the BAME gap.** Universities UK and the NUS put forward five principles to help universities close the attainment gap for black, Asian and ethnic minority (BAME) students
- **More Than a Job's Worth.** LKMco and Workfinder report on how to improve work experience with an emphasis on strengthening quality and increased opportunities post-16
- **CITB Business Plan 2019-21.** The Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) publishes a new Business Plan intended to help tackle its 'Big Six' current skill challenges
- **FE Workforce Data.** The Education and Training Foundation (ETF) publishes the latest annual figures showing a slight increase in reported headcount but decrease in median pay
- **Reimagining Education Together.** The Innovation Unit and the charity Big Change argue that schools should be able to do more than prepare children for exams and offer case study evidence
- **Exclusions.** The Children's Commissioner for England hears what it's like to be excluded from mainstream school from children and young people who have been
- **Timpson Review of School Exclusion.** The government publishes its review into school exclusions proposing schools are held accountable for the educational outcomes of those they exclude
- **The Roehampton Annual Computing Education Report.** The University of Roehampton issues an early annual report showing a significant drop in the number of students taking a computing GCSE
- **International migration and education.** The Office for National Statistics (ONS) reports on the numbers of pupils and teachers born outside the UK in state schools in England last year
- **Measuring well-being in higher education.** The Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) reports on the importance of understanding and collating data on well-being for both staff and students
- **OECD Skills Outlook 2019.** The OECD publishes its latest report on future skills, focusing on how to thrive in a digital world, with both lifelong learning and appropriate skillsets prioritised
- **Recurrent funding for 2019-20.** The Office for Students announces details of the grant funding available for teaching and learning as well as for other priority activities such as outreach for 2019/20
- **Exploring the issue of off-rolling.** Ofqual publishes commissioned survey data from YouGov showing that many teachers have experienced off-rolling and have concerns about its use
- **Growing Pains.** The Resolution Foundation reports on those who entered the labour market during the 2008/11 recession showing that many entered low-paying jobs and have seen no wage rise
- **16-19 Funding.** The Education Policy Institute highlights the extent of the squeeze on 16-19 funding and the impact on provision and institutions, in a new report commissioned by Pearson
- **Ofsted inspections.** Ofsted reports on its recent consultation confirming that it'll go ahead with some changes to the new inspection framework from this September

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- **The Changing Nature of R/D.** The CBI calls on the government to outline in more detail how it'll achieve its target of increasing investment in R/D to 2.4% of GDP by 2027
- **Reception baseline assessment.** The government confirms arrangements for this year's pilots of the reception baseline assessment due to be undertaken in primary schools in England this September
- **Moving towards a Graduate Contribution Statement.** The Russell Group and MoneySavingExpert report on their proposals to make the student loan statement more helpful for students
- **How numerate is the UK?** National Numeracy/King's College find low levels of adult numeracy and limited enthusiasm for improving things in an Ipsos MORI poll conducted for National Numeracy Day
- **GCSEs, AS and A' levels.** Ofqual issues a little guide to students about how the exam system operates and who to speak to if need be
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing Charter.** The Association of Colleges (AoC) launches an 11-point charter for staff and students in colleges pledging targeted support and regular monitoring and review
- **Skills shortages and funding gaps.** The Association of Colleges (AoC) reports on the amount of extra funding needed to be able to deliver the skills training required in T levels and STEM subjects
- **Far less than they deserve.** The Children's Commissioner for England reports on the growing numbers of vulnerable children being detained in mental health units
- **Degree classification.** UK universities commit to a set of principles designed to protect the value and fairness of UK degrees and avoid charges of grade inflation
- **Sense and Instability 2019.** City and Guilds publishes its latest report into skills policy, noting little improvement since its last report and calling for a new, independent body to oversee developments
- **T level Industry Placements.** The government confirms some flexing up of the placement model and offers further guidance, support and project funding for employers involved
- **AI Sector Deal.** The government reports on progress in the AI Sector Deal one year on, highlighting increased investment and activity particularly in the development of skills and talent
- **The apprenticeships programme.** The Public Accounts Committee issues a progress review on apprenticeships highlighting continuing concerns around take-up, levy use and future funding
- **Pressure Vessels.** The HE Policy Institute (HEPI) reports on the growing incidence of mental health among staff in HE citing increased workloads and short-term contracts as among the causes
- **Informed Choices.** The Russell Group of universities shifts from listing facilitating subjects at A' level for uni entry to providing a broader website of information and guidance for students
- **Investigation into the response to cheating in English Language test.** The National Audit Office (NAO) raises concerns about how claims of cheating in a test series have been dealt with
- **Character and Resilience.** The government's advisory group looking into character building among young people launches a call for evidence on what should be included
- **Free to choose.** The Education and Skills think tank (EDSK) proposes a new model of funding for tertiary education based on a system of individual budgets supported by a single loan system
- **Adopting global skills innovation for the UK.** The RSA with WorldSkillsUK and the Further Education Trust for Leadership (FETL) report on how four other nations tackle skills issues

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- **English council funding: what's happened and what's next?** The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) reports on the funding challenges facing local councils in England
- **Shortage occupations.** The Migration Advisory Committee includes medics, vets and web designers in the latest list of shortage occupations qualifying for exemptions but makes no change for teachers
- **The post-18 Augar review.** The Augar review into post-18 education and training is finally published with a wide range of proposals covering tuition fees, learning entitlements and FE provision

Speeches of the month

- Liam Fox's **1 May International Education Strategy speech** sets out the importance of international education to the UK economy both now and for the future
- Damian Hinds' **3 May NAHT conference speech** covers some changes to accountability, a call for evidence on funding for high needs and the continued need to work together
- Amanda Spielman's **4 May NAHT conference speech** addresses some of the concerns head teachers had about the new inspection framework and highlights other issues of mutual concern
- Chris Skidmore's **7 May LSE speech** sets out the UK's ambitions on R/D over the coming decade in the first of what will be a series of speeches on the matter
- Chris Skidmore's **13 May Going Global conference speech** reminds people that Brexit or no, the UK will remain open when it comes to higher ed and sets out four principles to reinforce this
- Anne Milton's **24 May AoC Spring Conference speech** praises the work that colleges around the country do and highlights how much the profile of the sector is beginning to be realized in Westminster

Quotes of the month

- "But, and I want to be perfectly clear on this, I back you to do your jobs" – the Education Secretary tells head teachers he's behind them
- "Sure we had great marches but I'm not sure we were as thoughtful and nuanced as the current cohort of students" – Prof Hugh Brady, VC of Bristol, on positive engagement by today's students
- "It is our job to banish the ugly sisters of snobbery and intolerance and fight for the resources our colleges deserve" – Education Committee MPs join hands to rid FE of the Cinderella reputation
- "Our work revealed that post-18 education in England is a story of both care and neglect, depending on whether students are amongst the 50 per cent of young people who participate in higher education or the rest" – Philip Augar introduces his long-awaited report into post-18 funding and education
- "We cannot assume that employers are going to simultaneously spring into action to provide high-quality industry placements" – Federation of Awarding Bodies CEO Tom Bewick on T levels
- "Testing happens in every system throughout the world. It only becomes a big deal for young people if people make it so for them" – the Chief Inspector offers her thoughts on testing pressures
- "I hated exams and I absolutely understand why they stress so many young people out" – Esther Rantzen, president of Childline understands why so many young people call Childline to express stress about exams

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- “There is no need for parents or teachers to prepare children ahead of the assessment” – the government tries to soothe concerns over the new assessment for reception children
- “For the first time in memory, behaviour is being addressed directly in a structural, national way” – behaviour ‘expert’ Tom Bennett who will head up the government’s new pupil behaviour project
- “There is no place for them in schools” – the Parent and Teachers for Excellence Group calls for a ban on mobile phones in school

Word or phrase of the month

- S.H.A.R.E. It stands for Source, Headline, Analyse, Retouched, and Error and is government advice for what you should check and do if you want to like, comment or share an online story but don’t want to get caught up in fake or malicious news spreading

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