



Pearson

Policy Tracker – Keeping track of what happened in the world of education in January 2020



Main talking points

A month heralding a new year, a new term and according to the Prime Minister, a new sovereign era. For education, a number of important reports have been published including the latest Annual Report from Ofsted but also others on such topics as languages, teachers' pay, the apprenticeship levy, social mobility, university access and migration policy. Creative arts, school exclusions, soft skills, and research have all been the subject of social media debate this month while the annual gatherings at BETT and Davos respectively have seen Ministers and delegates alike getting to grips with technology, skills and global challenges.

Key headlines from the month

- Early years. Duchess of Cambridge launches national survey
- Period products. Government confirms funded scheme for schools and colleges
- Exam marking. Ofqual announces project to test out possible role for AI
- Arts premium. Government promises £85m for music and arts
- Stuck schools. Ofsted highlights the issues of schools stuck with low performance
- Inspections. Government consults on removing the exemption for outstanding schools
- Ofsted. Launches its latest Annual Report
- GCSE resits. Latest resit results offer a mixed picture
- Maths resits. MEI proposes an alternative maths GCSE for 16+ resits
- T levels. Government invites bids to teach 3rd wave from 2022
- Apprenticeship levy. EDSK think tank highlights problems with levy funding
- FE research centre. Social Mobility Commission calls for a 'what works' centre
- Student loans. Education Secretary confirms shift to online system
- Sexual misconduct in HE. OfS consults on new set of managed procedures
- Access and participation. The Office for Students highlights plans to close the access gap
- New Shadow Minister. Labour appoints Emma Hardy MP as the new Shadow Minister for F/HE
- Global Talent. Government announces new fast-track visa scheme for top researchers
- Migration criteria. Migration Advisory Committee proposes future criteria
- Budget 2020. Chancellor sets the date for March 11

Policy Tracker on what happened in January 2020. Policy Watches are intended to help colleagues keep up to date with national developments. Information is correct at the time of writing and is offered in good faith. No liability is accepted for decisions made on the basis of information given.



Pearson

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

- **Runaway training.** Tom Richmond tackles the apprenticeship levy in a new report arguing that non-apprenticeship training has been soaking up the funding, calling for a clearer focus in future
- **Never ever.** The Resolution Foundation examines the rise in the number of people who've never had a job pointing to a collapse in the Saturday job market and of earning while learning
- **Workforce wellbeing.** The Education Policy Institute reveals teacher wellbeing has improved but anxiety particularly among senior leaders and those working in FE is high
- **Fight or flight?** Ofsted reports on the challenges facing schools 'stuck' and struggling to improve, highlighting how some schools have done it and calling on the government to fund work in this area
- **Restrictive interventions in schools.** The Centre for Mental Health raises concerns about the use of restrictive interventions, including 'isolation booths,' for dealing with challenging behavior in schools
- **Ensuring the success of future Skills Accounts.** The AELP reflects on past practice and sets out a range of operating principles for any future system of Skills Accounts given current interest
- **A Language Crisis?** The HE Policy Institute publishes a report from an undergraduate highlighting a steady drop in demand for language courses
- **Consultation on harassment and sexual misconduct in HE.** The Office for Students (OfS) launches consultation on a new set of procedures for dealing with such issues
- **Access to child and mental health services 2019.** The Education Policy Institute (EPI) highlights variable approaches and lengthy waiting times for young people in England
- **Removal of the outstanding exemption.** The government launches consultation on ending the exemption from regular inspections for outstanding schools and colleges
- **Apprenticeship Pay Survey 2018/19.** The government publishes its latest monitoring report into apprenticeship pay levels showing those on L 2 and 3 more likely to be paid below minimum levels
- **Why we do research at Ofsted.** Ofsted sets out its research activity for the future which will include maths and languages subject reviews in schools and work-based learning in FE
- **Trends in teacher numbers and salaries.** The Education Policy Institute points to a fall in teacher salaries in the context of a rise in pupil numbers and overall spending
- **Worldwide Educating for the Future Index.** The UK drops down to 15th position (out of 50 nations) in the latest edition of the Index that measures generic skill development for young people
- **Maladministration report.** The Standards and Testing Agency reports on maladministration issues in Key Stage tests in 2018 pointing to a rise particularly in allegations of 'over-aiding'
- **Local Skills Deficits and Spare Capacity.** The Local Government Association examines future local mismatches of skills and jobs in a new commissioned report
- **Second class academic citizens.** The University and College Union (UCU) and Newcastle University points to growing casualization in the workforce in higher education, calling for greater job security
- **The State of Girls' Rights in the UK 2019-2020.** The charity Plan International UK reports on girls' rights in the UK finding continuing claims about constant scrutiny and inequality in the classroom
- **Closing the Gap.** The Careers and Enterprise Company reports on an increase in engagement between business and schools and colleges with more young people undertaking work experience

Policy Tracker on what happened in January 2020. Policy Watches are intended to help colleagues keep up to date with national developments. Information is correct at the time of writing and is offered in good faith. No liability is accepted for decisions made on the basis of information given.



Pearson

- **Social Mobility Barometer.** The Social Mobility Commission publishes its latest annual Barometer highlighting sharp regional differences about life prospects with education a key factor
- **What works centre for FE.** The Social Mobility Commission calls on the government to set up a new research centre to test out and share best practice in supporting disadvantaged learners
- **Annual Report.** Ofsted launches its latest Annual Report showing continued improved performance by schools and colleges across England but with wider concerns about issues like off rolling
- **Disconnected career aspirations.** The Education and Employers charity examines young people's career aspirations in a new survey finding many either traditional or unrealistic
- **Elites in the UK.** The Sutton Trust publishes new research on social mobility suggesting that becoming socially mobile doesn't mean you have to move away from your background
- **Age appropriate design code.** The Information Commissioner launches a new code of practice of 15 standards designed to ensure children are protected in their use of digital services
- **The impact of interventions for widening access to higher education.** The Education Policy Institute reflects on interventions that work and those that need reforming
- **Higher education: are grammar schools the answer?** The HE Policy Institute (HEPI) publishes a collection of essays challenging earlier work suggesting grammar schools would help improve equality
- **A new maths GCSE curriculum for post-16 resit students.** The Maths Education Innovation charity in a project funded by Nuffield works up an alternative GCSE maths qualification for resit students
- **Arts-rich schools.** The RSA highlights the work of schools implementing an arts-rich curriculum as part of its Learning About Culture project
- **Boys studying MFL at GCSE.** The Education Policy Institute examines why boys tend to perform so poorly in GCSE languages in a report commissioned by the British Council
- **Consultation on inspecting the quality of teacher education.** Ofsted launches consultation on a new approach to inspecting initial teacher education focusing on the quality of education and training
- **Teacher health and wellbeing.** Researchers from UCL Institute of Education suggest that despite a rise in mental health conditions among teachers, it is no worse than for other professions
- **Supporting international graduate employability.** Universities UK and partners report on how universities support the employability of their international students calling for more co-ordination
- **National assessments regulation annual report 2019.** Ofqual reports on its regulation of SATs this year confirming standards are being maintained in both test development and external marking
- **A points-based system and salary thresholds for immigration.** The Migration Advisory Committee proposes a points-based system for those without a job offer and changes to the salary threshold
- **Teacher autonomy.** The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) examines the importance of teacher autonomy in generating job satisfaction
- **Transforming opportunity in higher education.** The Office for Students highlights plans to halve the access gap at the most selective universities in England over the next five years

Policy Tracker on what happened in January 2020. Policy Watches are intended to help colleagues keep up to date with national developments. Information is correct at the time of writing and is offered in good faith. No liability is accepted for decisions made on the basis of information given.



Pearson

Speeches of the month

- Nicky Morgan's **15 January Tech Talent Charter speech** lists five principles being applied by the government to ensure technology can work for the benefit of all
- Boris Johnson's **20 January UK-Africa Investment Summit speech** pitches UK strengths in higher education, technology and tackling pollution to a Conference of African leaders
- Gavin Williamson's **20 January Education World Forum speech** runs through the government's education reforms and promises continued international collaboration post-Brexit
- Amanda Spielman's **21 January Annual Report speech** points to continuing improvements in education and care provision in England but also highlights a number of concerns
- Chris Skidmore's **22 January BETT speech** outlines what progress has been in the government's Edtech Strategy and what it's looking to achieve in the future for edtech
- Amanda Spielman's **27 January Creativity and Education Symposium speech** highlights the importance of a balanced curriculum and potential inspection changes for ITT

Quotes of the month

- "I want to make this country the best place on earth when it comes to quality education and cutting-edge science" – the Prime Minister talks up education and science in his New Year message
- "I want you to know that I care passionately about what the Dept for Education does" – Education Secretary Gavin Williamson outlines his credentials in a new year message to teachers
- "We have a total global monopoly on the higher education of emperors" – the Prime Minister highlights the importance of UK global education at the UK-Africa Investment Summit
- "It will be exhausting but interesting and if you cut it you will be involved in things at the age of 21 that most people never see" – the PM's adviser Dominic Cummings blogs about the new breed of person he's looking for to join a 'revolution' in the way government operates
- "The levy has contributed to a significant drop in the number of people starting an apprenticeship in England" – the think tank EDSK reports on the apprenticeship levy
- "These mark the biggest reform to teacher pay in a generation" – the Education Secretary talks up the latest pay reform proposals for teachers
- "In some pockets of the country, two whole cohorts of children have gone through all their primary or secondary school life without ever attending a good school" – Ofsted reports on 'stuck' schools
- "Any future use of AI is likely to take some time and a lot of testing" – Ofqual launches a project to test out the role of AI in exam marking
- "Traditional 20thc and even 19thc occupations such as doctors, teachers, vets, business managers, engineers and police officers continue to capture the imaginations of young people as they did nearly 20 years ago" – the OECD reports on young people's career aspirations
- "Just as you wouldn't leave out bowls of sweets and expect children to eat sensible, we need to help our students to control technology rather than allowing technology control them" – the head of Gordonstoun school on banning mobile phones in school

Policy Tracker on what happened in January 2020. Policy Watches are intended to help colleagues keep up to date with national developments. Information is correct at the time of writing and is offered in good faith. No liability is accepted for decisions made on the basis of information given.



Pearson

Word or phrase of the month

- 'Warm strict.' The new line in behavioural policy

Steve Besley

Head of Policy [@SteveBesley](#)

Policy Tracker on what happened in January 2020. Policy Watches are intended to help colleagues keep up to date with national developments. Information is correct at the time of writing and is offered in good faith. No liability is accepted for decisions made on the basis of information given.