



Pearson

Policy Watch

Your guide to what's happening in the world of education



The week in a nutshell

In one respect, this week is the calm before the storm as we await the **Chancellor's Spending Review**. We've had a preview of things to come as speculation suggests a public sector pay freeze (NHS exempt) is on the way. **Unions** have shared their displeasure. In a speech, **Gavin Williamson** reiterated his desire to have FE and HE to be seen as two sides of the same coin. How he will look to achieve this will become clearer when the long awaited and much anticipated FE White Paper is published. This is just one part of the broader plan for skills policy and as the dust settles in **Number 10** after the changes in personnel, expect education and skills to feature prominently in announcements (including imminent detail on the Prime Minister's Level 3 guarantee). **Glynis Stacey** gave a speech outlining preparations for vocational and technical qualification assessment ahead of next year. **NAHT** was in the news warning of a potential post-COVID exodus from the profession. And the government trailed its upcoming consultation on Post Qualification Admissions.

In the latest of our **Policy Blog Series**, Sharon Hague discusses **Home Education**, ahead on next week's Education Select Committee session on the same topic.

Top stories

Gavin Williamson made a speech on further education saying that young people must be given a real choice and wants further education & higher education to be thought of as two sides of the same coin.

- He said potential isn't just a human asset, it's a social one, economic one and a business one. Further education, he argued, is not reaching its full potential. He said that the Government was committed to addressing this and pointed to T levels and IoTs as evidence of radical long-term changes.
- The Education Secretary said the Government will look to colleges to play a leading role in developing skills in their areas and reacting to local need. He concluded by promising that further education will no longer have hide its potential "under a bushel."

The Office for Students has opened a new consultation with plans to set new regulatory requirements for student outcomes ensuring that more students progress to the end of their courses and onto to graduate-level work or higher-level study.

- The proposals include new definitions of quality and standards to satisfy the regulator's conditions of registration. These are designed to provide a "minimum level of protection for all students".
- Chief Executive of the OfS, Nicola Dandridge stated that "these proposals strengthen our ability to intervene where we have concerns."

A new LGA report shows that more than a million young people in England could be "missing formal full-time education."

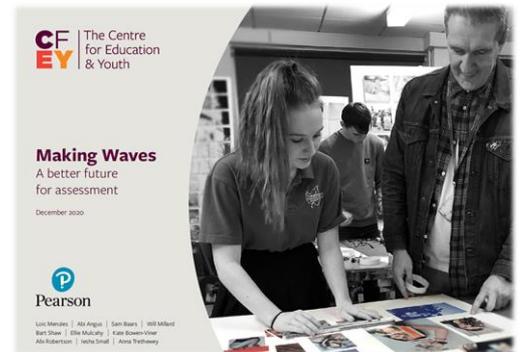
- Some councils have reported increases in home education registration of more than 200% for September and October compared to the same time last year. The LGA are concerned that COVID-19 has "led to increasing numbers of children receiving unsuitable education outside the classroom."

The Government has **outlined its own consultation** on the possibility of introducing a post-qualification admissions system

- The Education Secretary believes it will “remove the unfairness” from the current system with is “letting down the brightest pupils from the most disadvantaged backgrounds” and “breeds low aspiration and unfairness.” The consultation will provide an opportunity to review wider improvements to university admissions such as the use of personal statements. **Gavin Williamson Written Statement**

Pearson news & blogs

Making Waves: A better future for assessment webinar How can we build a better future for assessment? Along with The Centre for Education and Youth, we have spent two years studying the people Making Waves in assessment. Join us on 1 December to learn more about their stories at the launch of ‘*Making Waves: A better future for assessment*’. **Sign up here**



Pearson Teaching Awards We're thrilled to announce that we'll be working with The One Show every weeknight next week to ensure The Pearson National Teaching Awards 2020 Winners receive a surprise to remember! Watch BBC One on Monday at 7pm to learn more about the achievements of our incredible winners.

In the **latest in our series of blogs**, **Sharon Hague** discusses a new era for home education and online schooling. To read more **Pearson Policy Blogs** **click here**.

Pearson tweet of the week



Other news

Parliamentary

- Gavin Williamson's speech at AoC's FE Summit (18 Nov)
- MPs debate higher education tuition fees (Petitions Committee – 16 Nov)
- Letter from Gavin Williamson to Education Select Committee on DfE's COVID response
- Letter from Nick Gibb to Education Select Committee following oral evidence on 20 October
- Education Select Committee: Left behind white pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. Evidence session
- Education Select Committee launches prison education inquiry

Regulators & inspectorates

- Ofqual - Dame Glenys Stacey speech to AoC's FE Summit (18 Nov)
- Ofqual - Letter from Glenys Stacey to Gavin Williamson, 13 November 2020

Schools

- DfE- Blog on "why it is important exams take place next year"
- NAHT - Improving schools; A report of the School Improvement Commission
- NAHT - The government should be concerned about a 'post-covid exodus' of school leaders
- NAHT – Covid-related pay freezes are a kick in the teeth for public sector workers

Further Education & Skills

- DfE – Employer skills survey 2019 - further reports published (apprenticeships; skills pipeline etc)
- ESFA: How employers are making the most of apprenticeship incentives
- DfE: Vocational and other qualifications, quarterly data (July to Sept 2020)

Higher Education

- OfS - Grade inflation 'remains a significant and pressing issue', analysis
- HEPI - Turf wars, new providers and spending reviews
- The Institute for Fiscal Studies has published an analysis examining who would benefit from reimbursing tuition fees after MPs debated five petitions this week
- UUK - Universities in England developing a charter to help ensure consistent and transparent approach to identifying and improving potentially low value or low-quality courses
- Association of Commonwealth Universities - Making digital higher education a reality for all
- Russell Group - analysis based on data from the OfS shows declining funding for undergraduate teaching
- TASO - Evidence on improving disadvantaged student outcomes in HE severely lacking

- University Alliance - Group calls for urgent clarity over UK Shared Prosperity Fund
- University Alliance – Response to Government plans for Post Qualification Admissions

Scotland

- Scottish Government - Coronavirus (COVID-19) in schools: A summary of the latest evidence
- NASUWT - Blended learning must be part of Scotland's COVID suppression strategy
- EIS - Schools in Level 4 Areas must now move to Blended or Remote Learning

Wales

- Welsh Government - First report published by working group on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic education resources

Research, reports & blogs

- Social Mobility Commission - Understanding downward social mobility
- LGA - Children missing education report
- Work Foundation - Learning to level up: The role of skills in tackling job insecurity through Brexit & Covid-19
- HEPI blog - School exams don't have to be fair – that's official

Consultation watch

New consultations

- Office for Students: OfS' approach to regulating quality and standards in higher education. [Closes: 12th January 2021](#)

Closing consultations

- DfE: Regulating independent educational institutions. [Closes: 27th November](#)

What's happening in Parliament next week

House of Commons

- **Monday 23 November:** Education questions
- **Tuesday 24 November:** Education Select Committee evidence session on Home Education
- **Wednesday 25 November:** Spending Review announcement

House of Lords

- **Tuesday 24 November:** Benefits of adult learning delivered through the Union Learning Fund - Lord Shipley