



Pearson

Policy Watch

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



The week in a nutshell

The pre-recess buzz continued this week, with a variety of announcements and publications. Schools Minister Nick Gibb has been busy, telling MPs about the awarding of qualifications this year, and the plans for next summer. He also gave a speech to the SMF on raising school standards.

The Lords continued to debate the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill, with a perceived lack of government focus on qualifications being called into question by members of all parties.

The OfS put out three significant pieces: confirmed funding for 2021/22; a consultation on new regulation to protect quality and standards in higher education in England; and a competition around short courses in HE, which will support the government's Lifelong Loan Policy.

There was also the announcement of the freezing of teachers' pay. Unions warned of the impact on recruitment into the profession. IFS research also published suggests that teacher pay has dropped 8% in real terms since 2007.

Policy Watch is taking a break and will return on 20 August.

Top stories

Gibb updated the House on awarding qualifications in 2021 and 2022

- More than 99.9% of all teacher-assessed grades (TAGs) have been submitted so this year and more than 99.5% of centres so far have submitted evidence samples to exam boards.
- For next years GCSEs, AS and A Levels, they are proposing a package of measures including greater topic optionality for some subjects, advance information in others, reducing the burden of non-exam assessment in some subjects, and allowing support materials in the exam room for some GCSEs.
- For vocational and technical qualifications, the consultation sets out a range of proposed measures for those that are included in performance tables, including adaptations such as streamlining assessment, early banking of assessments, and providing revision guidance.

Office for Students confirmed funding reforms for 2021/22

- In total the OfS will distribute £1.4bn to universities and colleges, to support high-cost subjects, student access and success, increased support for students transitioning into HE, and mental health.
- New terms and conditions received from the Education Secretary confirm that:
 - The OfS may not vary the level of grants awarded universities and colleges based on their geographic location, meaning the removal of subsidies for universities and colleges operating in London.
 - High-cost subjects not related to medicine or healthcare, STEM, or those supporting specific labour market needs, will be subject to reductions in funding from next year.

HESA [published findings](#) from the graduate outcomes survey

- 80% of respondents were in employment or unpaid work, including 11% who were engaged in both employment and further study.
- There was a 3 ppt decrease in the proportion of 2018/19 graduates in full-time employment compared with 2017/18 graduates, which coincided with the onset of the pandemic.
- Unemployment among 2018/19 graduates accounted for 7% of responses, up 2 ppt on the 2017/18 dataset.

Office for Students [launched competition](#) to trial HE short courses

- As part of the Government's approach to delivering the lifelong Learning Entitlement, DfE have asked the OfS to launch this Challenge Competition.
- They have [published a note](#) providing initial information for registered providers and other stakeholders, on the aims, available funding, an indication of likely competition criteria, and next steps and timelines.

Policy Connect's cross-party Skills Commission [published its report](#) on the CIAG system

- The Commission calls for a long-term careers strategy, the inclusion of careers information, advice and guidance (CIAG) in all Plan for Jobs schemes, the zero-rating of all education and careers resources on mobile data, and the inclusion of the Baker Clause as part of Ofsted inspection.
- They also call for Government to create and fund a national scheme to help small businesses hire a graduate for 6 to 12 months, for the ESFA to widen the National Careers Service priority groups, and for better communication on the existence and services of the NCS.

Social Mobility Commission [published its annual State of the Nation](#) report for 2021

- They find that disadvantaged young people and children living in poverty have been hardest hit by the pandemic, estimating that around 4.3m children were living in poverty as of March 2020.
- The report also provides a series of recommendations across education, skills, welfare, early years, housing, local government and digital access.

Pearson news

Pearson Schools Blog As this extraordinary academic year draws to a close, our latest schools blog explores the five uplifting things we learned from schools this year. The challenges that have faced schools have been significant, but we've also been inspired by the tenacity and resilience of teachers and pupils alike as they've responded to whatever fell before them and seized new opportunities. [Find out more about what we've learned.](#)

Pearson tweets of the week



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Other news

Parliamentary

- Awarding Qualifications in 2021 and 2022
- Skills and Post-16 Education Bill [HL] (3rd day)
- Skills and Post-16 Education Bill [HL] (4th day)
- Register of Home-educated Children
- Written Statement: SEND Update (DfE)
- Written Statement: The national strategy for autistic children, young people & adults: 2021 to 2026 (DHSC)
- Written Statement: School Rebuilding Programme
- Written Statement: Three-year School Funding Settlement
- Early Years Education Funding
- Written Statement: Teachers

Regulatory and funding bodies

- Ofsted EIF inspections and the EYFS
- Ofqual: Consultation outcome: Terms of Reference for EPRS in summer 2021
- Ofqual board minutes for 2021

Schools

- Speech by Schools Minister, Nick Gibb, at a Social Market Foundation on raising school standards (21 July)
- IFS: The long, long squeeze on teacher pay
- Attendance in education and early years settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak
- Department for Education: Second round of Prime Minister's school rebuilding programme
- Department for Education: Consultation outcome: Review of the National Autism Strategy 'Think Autism'
- Home Office: Tackling violence against women and girls strategy launched
- Department for Education: Consultation outcome: Schools National Funding Formula: changes to sparsity factor
- DfE/MHCLG: £1 million education programme for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children announced

Further Education & Skills

- Engineering Construction Industry Training Board: Apprenticeship grant changes to boost recruitment
- London: Mayor invests in positive activities for young people this summer
- Apprenticeships and traineeships latest statistics
- Further education and skills latest statistics

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Higher Education

- HEPI/UPP: Views on decolonising the curriculum depend on how changes are presented
- HEPI: Student Relationships, Sex and Sexual Health Survey
- Universities UK: Universities offering support through results season

Wales

- Welsh Government: Children don't stop needing help just because it's summer

Consultation Watch

New Consultations

- Prioritising schools for the School Rebuilding Programme. Closes: 8 October 2021

Ongoing Consultations

- Proposed changes to the assessment of GCSEs, AS and A levels in 2022. Closes: 1 August 2021
- The National Skills Fund. Closes: 17 September 2021
- Reforms to Further Education funding and accountability. Closes: 7 October 2021
- Ofsted inspection frequencies for children's social care providers: 2021 to 2022. Closes: 20 August 2021
- Fair school funding for all: completing our reforms to the National Funding Formula. Closes: 30 Sept. 2021
- Initial teacher training (ITT) market review: recommendations. Closes: 22 August 2021
- Behaviour management strategies, in-school units and managed moves: call for evidence. Closes: 10 August 2021

Closing Consultations

- Arrangements for the assessment and awarding of vocational, technical and other general qualifications: 2021 to 2022. Closes: 26 July 2021

What's happening in Parliament next week

- Parliament has now risen for recess and will return on Monday 6 September 2021.

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