



# Pearson

## Policy Watch

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



### The week in a nutshell

**Ofqual** has confirmed that students who receive a teacher assessed grade this summer in GCSE, AS or A-Level will be able to sit exams in the same subject in the autumn with no adaptations to exam papers to account for learning loss. The qualifications offered to any pupil that sits exams in the autumn will be determined by performance in an exam with no teacher assessment involved in the calculation.

According to the latest **Department for Education** survey data, the number of pupils who were absent because of potential contact with COVID in schools has almost doubled in a week. **Education unions, scientists and public health experts** have written to the Education Secretary claiming that current rates of vaccination are not yet high enough to fully mitigate the impact of transmission of COVID-19 among children on community infection rates.

A consultation by the **OfS** and the **DfE** which suggested halving the amount of money spent on “high cost” HE education arts subjects including music, dance, drama and performing arts has received backlash. Artists and musicians say that the proposals would neglect the “cultural national health” if the “catastrophic” 50% cuts to funding materialise.

This week Pearson published **teacher survey data around online learning** and launched new **HE Innovation Awards** (further details on both below). As well as including all previous editions of Policy Watch, our **Policy Hub** includes our latest **policy blogs** and recordings of **events**.

### Top stories

**The exams regulator has confirmed that students who receive a teacher assessed grade this summer in GCSE, AS or A-Level will be able to sit exams in the same subject in the autumn with no adaptations to exam papers to account for learning loss.**

- Following a consultation on arrangements for autumn this year, Ofqual said it has decided exam boards must offer exams in all GCSE and A level subjects, as well as AS exams in chemistry, further maths, maths and physics. Boards can offer other AS Level exams if they wish to.
- The qualifications offered to any pupil that sits exams in the autumn will be determined by performance in an exam with no teacher assessment involved in the calculation. AS and A level exams will be held in October, while GCSE exams will take place in November and December.
- A consultation outcome on the awarding of vocational and technical qualifications has also been published today which requires awarding bodies to make arrangements for assessments to all learners who are eligible to receive a result through a teacher assessed grade, should they wish to improve on it.

The number of pupils who were absent from because of potential contact with COVID in school has almost **doubled in a week** according to the **latest attendance survey data**.

- The data shows that nearly 47,000 pupils were off last Thursday compared with 25,200 on Thursday 22 April. The number of isolating pupils because of suspected cases has also increased over the same period. There was only a slight increase in the number of confirmed cases.

Education unions, scientists and public health experts **have written to the Education Secretary** claiming that **current rates of vaccination and not yet high enough to fully mitigate the impact of transmission of COVID-19 among children on community infection rates**.

- Concerns over the prevalence of 'Long COVID' were also highlighted in [the letter](#). It warned that an estimated 43,000 children and 114,000 school staff are thought to be suffering from the condition.

A **consultation** by the OfS and the DfE which suggested halving the amount of money spent on “high cost” HE education arts subjects including music, dance, drama and performing arts has received **backlash**.

- Artists and musicians [say that the proposals](#) would neglect the “cultural national health” if the “catastrophic” 50% cuts to funding materialise.
- Under the plans, non-prioritised subject funding would be cut from £36m to £19m with savings being redirected to sectors deemed to be of higher priority such as nursing and computer science.

## Pearson news



### Pearson HE Innovate Awards

This week Pearson launched the Pearson HE Innovate Awards, recognising innovation in teaching, learning & student support across UK Higher Education. Nominations close on 4th July, with the virtual Awards ceremony taking place on Thursday 16th September. The awards are supported by HEPI, LinkedIn learning, JISC, NEON, and Prospects.

[Find out more about the awards & how to enter](#)

### Online learning teacher research

Covid-19 has driven a step change in digital innovation in education, but where does its future now lie? Our [#digitalclassroomsurvey](#) with Teacher Tapp reveals educators' thoughts on the benefits of online learning during the pandemic, the challenges to overcome and what the future could look like. [Explore the results here](#)



## Pearson tweet of the week



## Other news

### Regulators

- Ofqual - Ofqual confirms autumn assessment arrangements
- Ofqual - Consultation Outcome: Consultation on autumn assessment opportunities for VTQ and other general qualifications
- Ofqual - Consultation Outcome: Consultation on arrangements for an autumn 2021 exam series

### Schools

- FFT education data lab: Have disadvantaged pupils fallen further behind during the pandemic?
- Education Policy Institute (EPI) - Choosing schools during a pandemic
- Department for Education - Reception Baseline Assessment Equality Impact Assessment
- Department for Education - Attendance in education and early years settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak: 23 March 2020 to 29 April 2021
- Labour Party - Kate Green responds to statements by Paul Whiteman NAHT General Secretary that funding cuts are forcing schools to make redundancies
- BAE - Coding Success programme launches to help teachers boost coding and robotics skills

### Further Education & Skills

- Department for Education - Apprenticeships and traineeships: April 2021
- Education and Skills Funding Agency - ESFA Update: 5 May 2021
- Damian Hinds MP - T Levels – the Next Level Qualification
- British Chambers of Commerce - Landmark Skills Training Report Calls For Major Reboot Of The System

### Higher Education

- Russell Group - Realising Our Potential: Strengthening UK Research Culture & Environment
- ONS - Coronavirus and higher education students: England, England, 15 April to 22 April 2021

## **What's happening in Parliament next week**

### **House of Commons**

#### **Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

- The State Opening of Parliament will take place. The House will meet at 11.25am for the Queen's Speech.
- Debate on the Queen's Speech (Day 1)

#### **Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

- Debate on the Queen's Speech (Day 2)

#### **Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

- Debate on the Queen's Speech (Day 3)

### **House of Lords**

#### **Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

- State Opening of Parliament (11.30am)
- Motion for Humble Address (4.00pm)

#### **Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

- Debate on the Address - Economy, business, health and education - Baroness Berridge and Lord Callanan