



Pearson

Policy Watch

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



The week in a nutshell

Policy Watch returns after a summer break, and against a continuing backdrop of political upheaval. Despite the rapid unravelling of Liz Truss' premiership, it was a busy week in the education policy world with various data releases, funding announcements, and the Government's response to the review of post-16 level 2 qualifications (which included an implementation delay of a year). With a new Prime Minister announced next week, we expect further changes in the DfE ministerial team – and so next Monday's Education questions in Parliament could be the first and last for the current set of ministers.

On Monday, the Public Accounts Committee heard evidence from Government officials on developing workforce skills for a strong economy. The session covered the replacement of BTECs with T Levels, with witnesses pointing to the success of T Levels and need to avoid qualification overlap; adult skills; local skills improvement plans; employer engagement with T Levels and the apprenticeship levy. The full transcript is [available here](#).

Top stories

DfE publishes list of level 3 qualifications facing funding withdrawal

- DfE [published the final full list](#) of qualifications that will have 16 to 19 funding withdrawn for new starts from 1 August 2024, due to overlap with T Levels.
- The final list shows 106 qualifications from a variety of awarding bodies will be de-funded. The list does not currently include qualifications that overlap with the Health and Science T Levels, as the outline content of these is being reviewed by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education.
- The Government also [published a revised equalities impact assessment](#) for the post-16 level 3 review, which showed changes to the initial analysis.

DfE publishes KS4 and KS5 destination data

- DfE has published the latest figures on KS4 and KS5 students going into apprenticeship, education, and employment destinations.
- For [KS4](#), 93.8% of pupils were in a sustained education, apprenticeship, or employment destination, broadly unchanged from the previous year
- For [KS5](#), overall sustained destination rate declined to 79.1% in sustained education, employment, or apprenticeship in 2020/21, with lower numbers going into apprenticeships and employment.
- Students who took lower level qualifications were less likely to have a sustained activity, and Level 3 students mostly continued in education, with students studying at lower levels tending to go into employment and apprenticeships.
- The proportion of students that progressed to a [sustained level 4 or higher destination](#) was 66.0%, very similar to the previous year's cohort's rate. The vast majority of these students progressed to a degree.

Government publishes response to the review of post-16 qualifications at level 2 and below

- DfE [published its response](#) to the review of post-16 qualifications at level 2 and below in England, as well as its [impact assessment](#).
- It confirmed it would proceed with funding all the qualification groups set out in the consultation at levels 2, 1 and entry; keeping the guideline size ranges as proposed; continuing to fund high quality English and maths qualifications at level 1 and below for those who cannot directly access FSQs or GCSEs, as well as high quality ESOL qualifications at level 2 and below; and continuing with the proposal to develop national standards for PSE qualifications.
- Some changes were made following the consultation, including offering more flexibility by allowing the group 2 qualifications to be taken by 16-19 year olds in under two years if that better meets their needs; allowing 16 - 19 year old students the flexibility to take two smaller occupational-focus qualifications (from group 3); giving further consideration to the feedback on the importance of smaller courses at level 2 and below; funding vocational taster qualifications; and pushing back timelines for first teaching of reformed qualifications.

OfS to take over QAA assessment activities on interim basis

- The Office for Students has set out [how it will undertake a number of assessment activities](#) that are currently delivered by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), on an interim basis from April 2023. This follows the announcement by the QAA that it would no longer wish to be the designated body after the current designation year ends on 31 March 2023.
- From 1 April 2023, the OfS will undertake the following assessment activities:
 - Quality and standards reviews for providers seeking registration (available for providers that applied for registration before 1 May 2022)
 - Standards assessments for the purpose of assessing initial condition B8 for providers that applied for registration after 1 May 2022
 - Assessments for degree awarding powers
 - External quality assurance of end-point assessments for integrated higher and degree apprenticeships.

DfE announces £180m investment in early years programmes

- The DfE announced a [£180m investment for programmes](#) to improve teaching of children's early speech, language and numeracy, along with professional development of teachers' skills. The package includes:
 - Early maths, language, and social development training for 10,000 professionals
 - The national rollout of the Expert and Mentors programme
 - Graduate-level specialist training leading to early years teacher status
 - Support for nearly 6,000 early years professionals to achieve the National Professional Qualification in Early Years Leadership (NPQEYL).
 - Training for up to 5,000 Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) to help identify children's needs earlier.

Pearson news

Building belonging in Higher Education - New research from Pearson and Wonkhe shows four foundations to student belonging. While the factors that promote belonging vary by person and personality, there are recurring themes within our data, which come together to form four foundational areas: connection, inclusion, support, and autonomy. [Read the full report here](#)



T level Employer Validation Panel Pearson is seeking employers and industry experts to join their Employer Validation Panel (EVP) for the Finance, Accounting, and Legal Services T Levels. The EVP represents the industry sector for which the T Level serves and supports Pearson in the development and throughout the life of the qualification:

- Reviewing content to ensure it is current and up to date
- Ensuring the technical terms and language is correct
- Providing expertise on industry standards and protocols.

If you would like to find out more about how to get involved, contact andrew.hambelton@pearson.com

Pearson tweets of the week



Other news

Parliamentary

- Prime Minister Liz Truss's statement in Downing Street: 20 October 2022
- Westminster Hall: Cost of Living: Support for Young People
- Westminster Hall: Apprenticeships and Teacher Training
- WMS: Education Update
- WMS: Post-16 Level 2 and below qualifications update
- WMS: T Level Overlap List Update

Policy Watch

Week ending Friday 21 October 2022

- Education Committee: Exam results 2022 (Non-inquiry session) – oral evidence transcript
- Education Committee: Are young people getting quality careers advice? Committee to quiz experts
- Science and Technology Committee (Lords): People and skills in UK science, technology, engineering and mathematics – oral evidence transcript
- Science and Technology Committee (Commons): R&D Policy One-off – oral evidence transcript
- Levelling Up Committee: Funding for Levelling-Up inquiry launched by Levelling Up Committee

Regulatory and funding bodies

- ESFA Update: 19 October 2022
- SLC: Update on pre-2012 income contingent (ICR) student loans interest rate
- Office for Students: Blended learning and OfS regulation

Schools

- £180 million to improve children’s development in the early years
- Early years education recovery programme
- Key stage 4 performance 2022 – statistics
- Secondary school performance data in England: 2021 to 2022
- Trust Capacity Fund (TCaF) award recipients 2022 to 2023
- The Report of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse
- NAHT: School leaders in England and Wales move to formal industrial action ballot over pay and funding

Further Education & Skills

- Review of post-16 qualifications at level 2 and below (Consultation outcome)
- Destinations of key stage 4 and 5 students: 2021 – statistics
- Industry placements capacity and delivery fund 2023 to 2024
- Campaign for Learning: Learning in the Cold - new policy pamphlet on the cost-of-living crisis and post-16 education and skills

Higher Education

- OfS: Students should expect high quality teaching, however courses delivered – OfS responds to blended learning review
- Universities UK: Any policy change on international students would be a hammer blow to economy

Scotland

- Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment
- Professor Hayward's Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment – consultation paper

Wales

- Written Statement: ‘Unions and the World of Work Pilot’ Project
- Oral Statement: Taith—Delivering Wales's innovative international learning exchange programme
- £3m skills boost to the digital and green sector

Consultation Watch

New consultations

- [Scottish Government: Professor Hayward's Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment](#)
Closes: 16 December 2022

Closing consultations

- [Scottish Government: Physical intervention in schools guidance consultation](#) Closes: 25 October 2022
- [Scotland: Inspection of early learning and childcare and school age childcare services in Scotland](#)
Closes: 28 October 2022
- [Welsh Government: Additional national INSET days 2022 to 2025](#) Closes: 28 October 2022

Ongoing consultations

- [Office of the Independent Adjudicator: Good Practice Framework: Handling complaints and academic appeals](#) Closes: 31 October 2022
- [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education: Subject Benchmark Statements consultation](#)
Closes: 2 November 2022
- [Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education: Transport & Logistics Route Review](#) Closes: 4 November 2022
- [Office for Students: Consultation on a new approach to regulating equality of opportunity in English higher education](#) Closes: 10 November 2022
- [NI Executive: Department of Education's Draft 2023-2028 Corporate Plan](#) Closes: 15 November 2022

What's happening in Parliament next week

Monday 24 October

House of Commons

- Education Oral Questions

Commons Committees

- [Levelling Up Committee: The work of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities \(with Secretary of State Simon Clarke\)](#)

All-Party Parliamentary Groups

- [APPG for the Teaching Profession](#)

Tuesday 25 October

Commons Committees

- [Education Committee: Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance \(CEIAG\)](#)

Lords Committees

Policy Watch

Week ending Friday 21 October 2022

- Science and Technology Committee: People and skills in UK science, technology, engineering and mathematics
- Communications and Digital Committee: A creative future

All-Party Parliamentary Groups

- APPG for School Exclusions and Alternative Provision
- APPG on T Levels

Wednesday 26 October

House of Commons

- Women & Equalities Oral Questions
- Ten Minute Rule Motion – Details to be provided (Robert Halfon, Con, Harlow)

Westminster Hall

- Online harms (Damian Hinds, Con, East Hampshire)

Commons Committees

- Work and Pensions Committee: Plan for Jobs and employment support

House of Lords

- Baroness Benjamin (Lib Dem) to ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to implement Part 3 of the Digital Economy Act 2017 to protect children from online pornography, until Ofcom begins any enforcement of the same under the Online Safety Bill
- Universal Credit (Removal of Two Child Limit) Bill - Committee Stage (Lord Bishop of Durham, Bishops)

All-Party Parliamentary Groups

- APPG for Students
- APPG on Social Mobility