

2014/7

24 July 2014

Policy Tracker - Keeping track of what happened in the world of education in July 2014

Main talking points

You start the month with one team and end up with another, the election must be getting nearer.

Key headlines from the month

- Ed Depts. Changing of the guard in both
- Ofsted. Issues guidance to inspectors on evaluating new assessment regime
- School buildings. Facing an £8.5bn backlog of repair according to architects
- Maths hubs. 32 pace-setters announced
- English/maths. GCSE Eng/maths seen as future national standard, stepping stone quals listed
- English and maths GCSE. NIACE commissioned to look at functional aspects
- Core maths. Government responds on the technical guidance
- School sixth forms. Will receive separate Ofsted grading from Sept 2014
- Master teachers. Labour looking at recreating
- Headteacher Boards. Elected members announced
- Tech Levels. Latest listing for 2016 tables confirmed
- Tech/voc ed. The Education Committee prepares for final major review
- Careers guidance. The Education Committee confirms follow-up inquiry
- 14-16 yr olds. More colleges bid to take on young recruits
- 16/19-24 funding. Labour considers shift to local commissioning
- QCF/GLH. Ofqual confirm consultations coming
- Apprenticeships. Public see them as degree alternatives in poll for Pearson/Sutton Trust
- Growth Deals. Government signs off first instalment
- FE. The IfL throws its lot in with the ETF
- Tech degrees. Labour lines up new high-level voc route
- UCAS. Uni applications up by 4% at end of June deadline

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

- **The Technology Strategy Board 2014-15 Delivery Plan.** The TSB announces two new catapult centres and over £400m investment in its latest blueprint for growth
- **Open Access.** A commissioned report from the Social Market Foundation calls for wider adoption of a scheme to enable more disadvantaged pupils to attend fee paying schools
- **FE Workforce Strategy.** The government lists 4 priorities: beefing up Eng/maths teaching; responsiveness; governance and leadership; and use of technology as it goes for excellence
- **Mending the Fractured Economy.** Lord Adonis's final report for the Labour Party on creating shared growth identifies £30bn of funding that could be devolved to local growth partnerships
- **Final Report from the Local Government Innovation Taskforce.** Commissioned as part of Labour's policy review, the Taskforce propose 5 measures to support people driven services
- **Migrants in low-skilled work.** The Migration Advisory Committee examines low-skilled work immigration and emerges with 5 themes that need addressing incl the youth labour market
- **Academies Annual Report.** The DfE reports Academy progress and offers a wealth of data to back up claims that they're working
- **Lifting the accreditation requirement.** Ofqual consults on lifting accreditation requirements for many non-core academic quals as the first of a number of potential regulatory changes
- **Core Maths.** No change to the size but the government agrees a number of minor adjustments as it responds to the earlier consultation on required technical guidance
- **Annual Report and Accounts 2013-14.** BIS confirm 33 out of 37 actions now complete as it continues to push for growth
- **Developing new GCSE, AS and A level quals.** The latest batch of consultations from the DfE and Ofqual focus on content and assessment for more 2016 subject starts
- **Here be dragons.** PA Consulting issue their latest annual report on how universities are coping with choppy waters and find government policies the biggest risk factor
- **Education and Skills Survey 2014.** The latest annual CBI/Pearson report highlights familiar employer concerns especially about school leaver skills and employability

- **The pupil premium: an update.** Ofsted's latest review of the impact of the pupil premium finds some evidence the attainment gap is closing but it's a long haul
- **Future Trends in Pupil Numbers.** Latest projections from DfE show the primary bulge due to hit secondary schools from 2016 and overall pupil numbers set to exceed 8m over next decade
- **Breaking the Mould.** The AoC argues that FE is well positioned to help lead the charge towards more high-level tech and voc degrees
- **Consultation on the conduct, marking and grading of spoken language skills in GCSE Eng Lang.** Ofqual consult on future assessment arrangements
- **Growth Dashboard.** The latest update from government shows knowledge intensive services growing, GDP up but labour productivity remaining weak
- **Report into allegations concerning Birmingham schools.** The Commissioner chronicles the findings of the Trojan Horse Inquiry and comes up with a number of recommendations
- **Student Loans.** The BIS Committee finds a trail of poor forecasting and potential funding gaps

Speeches of the month

- Elizabeth Truss's 2 July Maths Support speech makes the now familiar passionate pitch for both the importance of maths and the government's enthusiasm for it
- Ed Miliband's 3 July speech to the Policy Network supports the theme of inclusive prosperity and identifies 5 core challenges around skills, trust and reformed markets
- Liam Byrne's 7 July City of Westminster College speech sets out Labour principles for a locally commissioned skills system including per-student funding
- Ed Miliband's 8 July Pearson/Sutton Trust event speech points Labour HE policy in the direction of employer endorsed tech degrees
- Matthew Hancock's 8 July Pearson/Sutton Trust event speech highlights apprenticeship reforms as a key part of the government's reforms of the skills system
- Matthew Hancock's 9 July Change Board speech rehearses familiar lines about how the government is opening up opportunity by bridging the academic/vocational divide
- Michael Gove's 10 July Education Foundation speech stresses (perhaps presciently) the importance of keeping the government's school reforms going not least for social mobility

Quotes of the month

- *"There is no question of reversing his policies; the point is to preserve them with a little less controversy."* An unnamed colleague on the brief facing the new Education Secretary
- *"I am tremendously privileged and luck and happy to be given this job. Like poor Manuel, I know nothing at the moment but am keen to learn."* The new Skills Minister faces up to his new job
- *"Let us link hands and embrace the future together."* The Chancellor gets friendly on a trade mission to India
- *"My priority for expansion of university places will be tech degrees."* Ed Miliband on Labour's HE plans
- *"Only 10 out of 120 institutions will charge maximum fees of less than £9000 in 2014/15."* The HE Network reflects on the steady spread of the fee max
- *"By 2023 the number of state-funded secondary pupils aged up to and including 15 is projected to be 17% higher than in 2014."* The DfE on the pupil numbers bulge
- *"Of the 29,000 schools in Britain, 80% of the stock is beyond its shelf life."* The Royal Institute of British Architects eyes future school building work

Word or phrase of the month

- *'Whiteguymageddon.'* Apparently what the Ministerial reshuffle was all about

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