

2012/9

30 Sept 2012

Policy Tracker - Keeping track of what happened in the world of education in September 2012

Main talking points

A month which has seen some new faces at both Education Depts but some familiar challenges continuing. For schools, GCSE issues still prevail with the added twist that consultation on a successor qualification is now under way. Elsewhere the month has seen more money announced for the pupil premium and new teacher appraisal systems arrive. For FE, the challenge remains the funding and operation of the skills system with September seeing the launch of a new Industrial Strategy and the announcement of the first Employer Ownership Pilots. Elsewhere, the wheels are beginning to move under the 24+ fee loan system with a series of developments due. For HE, the month has seen fierce debate about the impact of fees on student numbers with a projected 54,000+ fewer students arriving to take up places. Elsewhere, the month has seen the emergence of a battery of 'go-compare' data for students as two new websites are launched

Key headlines from the month

- Pupil premium. Rises to £900 per eligible pupil next year
- Catch up cash. Announced to help with English and maths
- GCSE. Inquiries continue as long term replacement proposed
- 16-19. Advisory Panel holds first meeting
- 24+ loans. New comms campaign about to start
- ESOL. Ofqual launch consultation
- HE. UKHE takes 4 of the top 6 global rankings
- Which? Launches its university comparison website for students
- Student numbers. Potential 50,000+ drop this year
- Polytechnics. Celebrate 20 years since becoming universities
- Employer Ownership Pilots. 269 bids received, first 34 'winners' announced
- Local Enterprise Partnerships. Core funding announced
- Unemployment. Down to 2.59m but up for 16-24 yr olds to 1.02m

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

- [Local Pay, Local Growth](#). The Policy Exchange think tank support the case for local pay arrangements arguing that, as the title implies, it can lead to local growth
- [Collaborations, alliances and mergers in HE](#). HEFCE trawl the case studies to see what lessons can be learned from working together in the HE sector
- [Plan I](#): The Case for Innovation-Led Growth. The charity NESTA identify 12 innovation-based strategies that could help get the economy going
- [A Long Division](#). The think tank IPPR argue that narrowing the attainment gap in England's secondary schools requires targeted interventions especially early on
- [Meeting Employer Skills Needs](#). The National Apprenticeship Service launch a one month consultation on the statutory requirements for Higher Apprenticeships
- [Top marks?](#) School performance across UK cities. The Centre for Cities point to the importance of English and maths in improving employment prospects in depressed areas
- [Education at a Glance 2012](#). The OECD's latest annual audit of different education systems points to the importance of investing in education even though times may be tough
- [Sustainable Prosperity and Jobs](#). The Lib-Dems emphasise employability, STEM subjects, apprenticeships and New Enterprise Hubs in their latest Skills Policy Paper
- [Industrial Strategy: UK Sector Analysis](#). A BIS Economics Paper analyses the role and importance of some of the key sectors in the economy
- [Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Role of Group Training Associations](#). The Commission call for a level funding playing field and stronger strategic role for GTAs

- [Raising aspirations and smoothing transitions](#). The Work Foundation's latest Report in its 'Missing Millions' series expresses concerns about what's happening to careers provision
- [Reforming Key Stage 4 Qualifications](#). The DfE launch its anticipated consultation on long term replacements for GCSEs
- [Getting to good](#). Ofsted report on how enterprising school leaders have helped transform schools
- [How colleges improve](#). Ofsted do the same for colleges highlighting 10 characteristics that can help colleges improve
- [The Pupil Premium](#). Ofsted survey over 250 school leaders to see how they're spending the pupil premium money and come back with some disconcerting answers
- [Youth Unemployment and the Youth Contract](#). The DWP Select Committee report on their recent inquiry and conclude youth unemployment requires more than a one off strategy
- [When qualifications fail](#). The Centre for Market Reform of Education takes a forensic look at 14-19 education reform
- [ICT in secondary schools](#). The NASUWT find little positive in the changes to ICT
- [Learning to Work](#). The CIPD examine the prospects for the youth labour market and find a hard road ahead

Speeches of the month

- David Davis's 4 September CPS speech concludes that the economy needs some 'shock therapy' to help stimulate growth
- Ed Miliband's 6 September Policy Network speech hints at some new Labour thinking on the economy and skills
- Vince Cable's 11 September Imperial speech launches a new Industrial Strategy intended to support the growth of key sectors, skills and technologies
- David Willetts' 13 September UUK speech finds three positives in the new fee regime: more money; more choice; more informed 'customers'
- Michael Gove's 17 September Statement to the House sets out the Government's case for reform of the exam system at Key Stage 4
- Vince Cable's 24 September Conference speech reflects on how things are going in the economy and announces the introduction of a new business lending bank

Quotes of the month

- *"I came back to Parliament more determined than ever to cut through the dither that holds this country back."* The Prime Minister claims he's no mouse
- *"If you want to change anything for the better in Britain it's best not to waste too much time trying to reform existing institutions."* Lord Baker speaks from experience in his review of Lord Adonis's recent book on education
- *"At the end of this new term there will be many students returning home where parents will be asking what they got for £3000."* David Willetts reminds the UUK Conference about the power of the new consumer culture in HE
- *"Those who are able to predict the future are lying, even if it turns out they are right."* Vince Cable adapts an old proverb for his new Industrial Strategy
- *"The GCSE was conceived and designed for a different age and a different world."* Michael Gove's requiem for the GCSE heralds the birth of the EBacc

Word or phrase of the month

- *'Pre distribution.'* Not sure either but it's the latest economic slogan to cross the Atlantic
- *'Redoubtment.'* Resitting a school year, one international practice the EBacc hopes to avoid

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It is also possible to follow some of the team with [Steve Besley](#) and [Louis Coiffait](#) on Twitter, and to subscribe to our [YouTube](#) and [Vimeo](#) channels.

Policy Tracker on what happened in Sept 2012

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