



Government publications on post-16 education reform in England

Briefing Paper – 21 January 2021

The Government has published a number of documents relating to post-16 education in England:

- A [Skills for Jobs](#) white paper on post-16 education
- A short [interim response to the Review of Post-18 Education and Funding](#) (Augar Review)
- A [consultation on post-qualification admissions](#)
- The [Independent Review of the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework](#) (Pearce review) has been published alongside a [government response](#).
- The Government has announced plans to reform Office for Student teaching grant allocations. The Secretary of State has [written](#) to the OfS outlining his proposals. The OfS has [written](#) to accountable officers at HEIs setting out timescales for the changes and its plans for consultation this Spring.

What you need to know

Reform of teaching grant allocations

Government wants the higher education teaching grant to be used to 'ensure that more of taxpayers' money is spent on supporting provision which aligns with the priorities of the nation, such as healthcare, STEM and specific labour market needs.' The Secretary of State's [letter](#) to the OfS is an important read.

Government will:

- Reprioritise funding towards high-cost, high-value subjects that support the NHS and wider healthcare policy, high-cost STEM subjects and/or specific labour market needs. Nursing and allied health profession courses will be eligible for this high-cost funding. There will be an overall increase of £85m (13%) for high cost, strategically important subjects. This includes an £11m increase in DHSC funding to expand medical places.
- The OfS is expected to reduce funding by 50% for high-cost subjects that do not support these priorities and may seek further reductions in future years. Subjects moving from C1 to C3 are art and design, music, dance, drama and performing arts, media studies and archaeology. Medium

and lower tariff institutions have a larger proportion of students on subjects currently in the C1 band, over 60% of which on average will be moved into C3 funding. Lower tariff institutions have the lowest proportion of students studying price group A and B subjects so will experience the most change, overall estimated to be a reduction of 6% of teaching grant funding for this group. However, the letter states that it expects 'many lower tariff providers to see increases with some gaining due to their focus on strategically important high-cost subjects, such as nursing'.

- The OfS will remove all £64m of weighting for London providers. This will have significant implications for some London universities. Greater London providers are expected to lose 13.7% of their teaching grant on average.
- Expenditure on the nursing, midwifery and allied health supplement will remain unchanged.
- By cutting expenditure on Uni Connect by £20m the OfS is expected to allocate an additional £5m to student hardship support and £15m to student mental health.
- The OfS will increase funding for specialist providers, particularly those which are world leading in performing and creative arts.

The Teaching Capital fund will be changed from a broad formula allocation to a targeted bidding system 'allocating capital funding to projects that will support high quality provision in subjects aligned to the needs of the economy and contribute to the levelling up of disadvantaged areas of the UK'. Eligibility and assessment criteria are set out in the letter. Priority will again be given to high-cost strategically important subjects.

The OfS expects to launch a consultation on its approach to funding, including the above proposals, in mid-February 2021 and to make decisions following consultation in May 2021. It expects to announce initial allocations for most elements of recurrent grant for 2021-22 in June 2021, which it acknowledges is later than normal. It expects to invite bids for capital funding to be submitted in early May.

Interim response to the Review of Post-18 Education and Funding

- The sector has been waiting for a Government response to the Augar Review. The Government believes that this is not the right time to respond fully as it focuses on the pandemic. It has instead published a short interim response.
- A full response to the Augar Review is expected alongside the next Comprehensive Spending Review. The full response will include consideration of student finance terms and conditions, minimum entry requirements to HEIs and the treatment of foundation years.
- The interim response outlines the changes being made to post-16 education.
- Government will consult on a move towards a modular system of higher education.

- Government intends to freeze the maximum tuition fee cap, initially for one year, while it considers changes to the student finance system.

The Government plans to consult on further reforms to the higher education system in Spring 2021.

Skills for Jobs White Paper on post-16 education

This 79-page [paper](#) sets out plans for post-16 education. The proposed changes are summarised on pages 9-12. The Council will consider the implications of these policies for our members.

Proposals aim to 'put employers at the heart of post-16 skills', increase access to advanced technical and higher technical skills through a National Skills Fund, implement a lifelong loan entitlement, simplify funding, improve governance and support teaching.

Future of the Teaching Excellence Framework

The [Independent Review of the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework](#) (Pearce review) has been published alongside a [government response](#). The OfS has been asked to develop a revised and improved provider-level TEF. Subject-level assessment has been ruled out for now. The OfS will consult on the new TEF framework.

For more information contact:

Fleur Nielsen, Head of Policy, fleur.nielsen@cod-health.ac.uk