

Background to Shared Learning Grants

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Wolf Review of Vocational Education (March 2011)



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In England today, around 2.5 million young people are aged 14 to 19. Most now take some vocational courses before they are 16; and post-16 the majority follow courses that are largely or entirely vocational.

But many of England's 14-19 year olds do not progress successfully into secure employment or higher level education and training. Many leave education without the skills that will enable them to progress at a later date.

Young people are encouraged to take qualifications at age 14-16 which will block their progression to many valuable post-16 options, and for reasons that have nothing to do with the pupils' own best interests.

At least 350,000 16-19 year olds get little to no benefit from the post-16 education system.



Wolf Review Key Recommendations

- Introducing principles to guide study programmes for young people on vocational routes post-16:
 - to ensure young people can gain skills that will lead to progression into a variety of jobs or further learning
 - to ensure that those who had not secured a good pass in English and mathematics GCSE continue to study these subjects
- Making sure the regulatory framework for vocational qualifications has moved away from accrediting individual qualifications to regulating awarding organisations.
- Removing the requirement that all qualifications offered to 14 to 19 year olds should fit within the Qualifications and Credit Framework.
- Enabling FE lecturers and professionals to teach in schools.



Key Recommendations Result Cont.

- As a direct result of these recommendations cont:
 - Students who have not yet achieved an A*- C GCSE in English and maths by the age of 16 now continue to study these subjects as part of their 16-19 education.
 - Sixth Forms and Further Education Colleges are funded and have their performance reported in the same way. Funding is on a 'per student' basis giving education providers the freedom to design programmes that best meets students' needs and ambitions.
 - Ofsted inspections, headline and progress measures in school and college performance table measures, minimum standards and destination measures have all been reformed to hold schools, colleges and other training providers to account for the provision of these reforms and provide transparent information to inform student choice of course and institution.



Ofsted Survey.

Transforming 16 to 19 education and training: the early implementation of 16 to 19 study programmes.

The survey was commissioned by the DfE to evaluate how effectively further education and skills providers, schools and academies with sixth forms have implemented the 16 to 19 study programmes and made the best use of the changed funding arrangements.



Key Findings

- Inspectors found little evidence of the transformational 'step change' intended with the introduction of the 16–19 study programmes.
- The extent that the new flexibilities were being used to tailor students programmes to their prior learning and education and employment goals was limited.
- Most providers surveyed had made some changes, although levels of awareness of the new requirements were much more limited in school sixth forms and academies.
- There was a high-level of awareness about the study programme maths and English requirements and the new funding condition amongst all types of provider.



Some Recommendations for the DfE

- Identify and disseminate best practice to increase the pace of the improvements in the quality of provision for learners without a GCSE grade C in English, mathematics or both.
- Work with all stakeholders to increase the availability, take-up and success rates of traineeships and encourage wider take-up of supported internships.
- Clarify the role of voluntary work in successful work experience.



Progress to date

- Progress is promising on the Ofsted survey report findings: it is still early days but much achieved in short period.
- Early data suggests that the 16-19 funding and study programme reforms are now beginning to have a measurable impact on student provision.
- The number of 16 year olds participating in full-time programmes increased by 104,800 from 373,100 to 477,900.
- The number of 17 year olds increased by 93,000 from 248,000 to 341,000. The majority of these increases were in Further Education Colleges.
- Students are also studying fewer, but more substantial qualifications.
- The number of learning aims per student has fallen from 3.38 to 3.25 with most of this reduction taking place in FE Colleges where there were concerns that students were being entered for too many low level qualifications.



Progress Continued.....

- More students are studying maths and English qualifications with 27,800 more studying English GCSE and 16,622 more studying maths GCSE.
- 5,800 more students were studying other English “stepping stones” and more 18,000 were studying other maths qualifications.
- 16-19 Technical and Vocational Education – Colleges are now teaching qualifications from the approved lists and new high quality qualifications valued by employers.
- Overall this shows that providers are beginning to grasp the potential of the new 16-19 world.



Progress Continued.....

- The final progress report on the Wolf recommendations has now been published:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wolf-recommendations-progress-report>

- Overall, of the 27 recommendations set out in the report 20 have been implemented in full, 6 are still in the process of being implemented. One recommendation was implemented in part.



Key Recommendations Result

- As a direct result of these recommendations:
 - Apprenticeships have been redesigned by employers to meet employers' needs.
 - DfE published approved lists of technical and vocational qualifications for 14 to 16 and 16 to 18 year olds.
 - DfE will report only these qualifications in the performance tables.
 - All 16 to 19 year olds in education are now offered a study programme based on their prior attainment, education, and employment goals.
 - nearly all students spend at least half their time studying one or more substantial qualifications such as A levels or technical and vocational qualifications that meet DfE's requirements, alongside other activities such as tutorials or work-experience.



New routes to university, an apprenticeship or skilled employment

14 to 16

GCSE English and GCSE Mathematics

+

GCSEs in core subjects

At least three choices from:

Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)

Computer Science

Languages

Geography

History

+

Optional subjects

At least three choices from any combination of:

Other GCSE subjects e.g. Art and Design
Religious Education
Music

and

Technical awards

High-quality qualifications that equip students with applied knowledge and practical skills

+

Other qualifications for students with particular needs that do not count in performance tables

16 to 19

Continuing with English and Mathematics

For all young people to at least GCSE level

A-levels

A range of academic qualifications that support progression into university

Applied general qualifications

University-endorsed qualifications that offer the opportunity to gain applied knowledge and skills alongside A-levels

Tech levels

Employer-endorsed qualifications for those who want to specialise in a particular occupation or industry sector

Technical certificates

Employer-endorsed qualifications for those who need initial training before starting a Tech Level or entering a skilled trade

Apprenticeships

A real job with training that leads to further employment opportunities or studying at university level

Traineeships

A scheme to help young people who want to get a job or an Apprenticeship but don't yet have right skills and experience¹²

ACADEMIC

TECHNICAL

WORK-BASED