



# Basic & Workplace Skills Bulletin

Issue 340

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## 203 college leaders write to the Chancellor and Education Secretary

**T**he leaders of every general further education college in England have joined forces to write an open letter to the Chancellor and Secretary of State for Education urging them to “answer the calls from business” and respond to the “challenges of technological change and Brexit” by urgently investing in the country’s technical and vocational education system by implementing the main recommendations of the government’s recent Post-18 Education Review.

The 203 leaders are responsible for institutions that educate and train 2 million people each year, they employ 180,000 staff and have a combined turnover of £6 billion per annum. The leaders pointed out that the Augar Review had called for, amongst other things, an end to the 17.5% cut in education funding for 18-year-olds, support so that everyone, regardless of age, could get to at least level three, and a rebalancing of the traditional post-18 educational landscape.

The letter Key pointed out that the Post-18 Review had understood that employers and communities needed more high-quality technical and professional education and training, industry standard facilities, expert staff and the unique curriculum that colleges already provided. The letter added that the review had also recognised that colleges were the key vehicle for the flexible, local delivery of national strategies, supporting industrial policy, productivity, skills development and genuine social equity and it also acknowledges that all of that would require serious investment.

Bev Robinson OBE, member of the Independent Panel and co-author of the Augar Review said that choosing to enact the recommendations of the review would demonstrate the Government’s commitment to the much-needed skills revolution which the country needs, which industry was crying out for and which would promote social equity for all adults, not just the current 50%.

David Hughes, Chief Executive of the Association of Colleges, said it had been “extraordinary” to see every leader in every general further education college in the country collaborating in such a way. But he added that in extraordinary times, college leaders were working closely with local, national and international business, supporting individuals to get on in life, and driving the social mobility agenda.

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## Framework sets standard for external quality assurance

**T**he Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education has published a new framework for the external quality assurance of end point assessment. It sets out guidelines for EQA organisations to assure apprentices and employers that end point assessments for apprentices were delivered to a consistently high standard. Nikki Christie, the Institute's Deputy Director for Apprenticeship Assessment and Quality, said that EPA was one of the key aspects of modern apprenticeships, as it provided a robust and independent test that an apprentice who had completed their apprenticeship could do their job to the high standards that were required. She added that it was therefore vitally important that quality assurance in terms of EPA was consistent and highly effective.

Ms Christie explained that every apprentice must pass an EPA before completing their apprenticeship, known as an apprenticeship standard, to prove that they had learned the skills, knowledge and the behaviours required to thrive in a role. She pointed out that the Institute had worked with EQA providers and stakeholders to produce the new framework and ensure that all assessments, from an actuary to a laboratory technician, would be carried out and quality assured to the same high standard.

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Tom Bewick, Chief Executive of the Federation of Awarding Bodies, welcomed the development of the quality assurance framework which provided much greater clarity and set out consistently what EPA and EQA providers could expect in the future.

Mark Dawe, Chief Executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, said that moving to one framework should satisfy the need for consistency and coherence, thereby lowering the cost of EQA and leading to less confusion. He said it was good to see the core principles of assessment reflected as valid, reliable and manageable.

## TLPD Teacher Regional Improvement Projects underway

**T**he first 31 Teacher Regional Improvement Projects will take place as part of the Education and Training Foundation's T-Level Professional Development offer. Twelve will be in the northern Knowledge Hub region, ten will be in the central Knowledge Hub region, and nine will take place in the southern Knowledge Hub region.

The TRIP will focus on topics including soft skill development to prepare students for industry placements, the inclusion of learners with SEND, assessment, pedagogy by pathway, industry updating, preparing teachers for T-Level delivery, employer engagement, co-curriculum design and delivery, English, maths and digital skills. Further launch events, to seek applications for 19 more TRIPs, will take place in August and September 2019.

# Virtual reality tool leads new drive to train next generation of health specialists

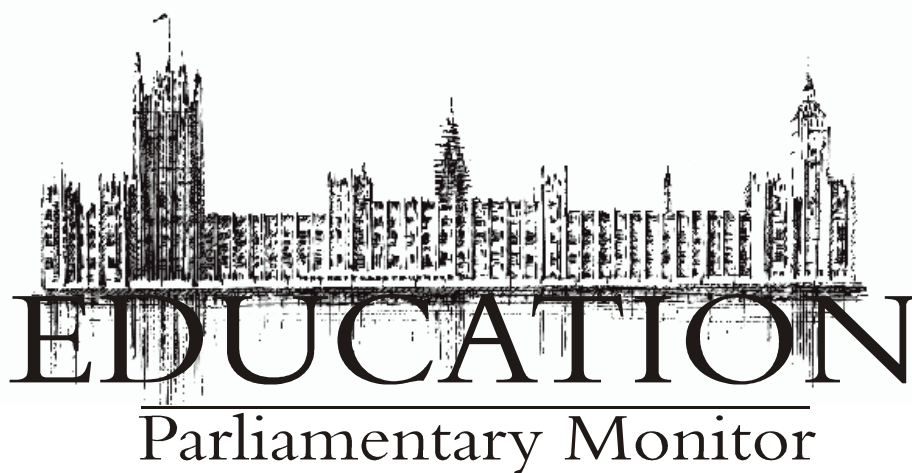
**A** new virtual reality tool developed by the University of Leeds, which aims to promote nursing and other specialist health subjects to prospective students, is one of several innovative projects that have been awarded funding by the Office for Students. The project will use VR technology and educational workshops to engage school students in a range of simulated clinical scenarios to allow them to respond to real-life challenges through the eyes of healthcare professionals.

The project will also use online mentoring to support student university applications, with an emphasis on recruiting more male students to healthcare courses. Ten projects have been awarded a combined £440,000 by the OfS in a nationwide scheme which aims to attract more students to nursing, midwifery and allied healthcare courses – including orthoptics, podiatry, and therapeutic radiography.

The fund also aims to stimulate innovation in the delivery of the disciplines. On top of OfS funding, an additional £480,000 worth of resources have been committed by participating universities and partners.

- The University of Chester, in partnership with six other universities, will develop an online tool to help students who had unsuccessfully applied to nursing and allied health courses to build their skills to enable them to reapply successfully the following year.
- The University of Huddersfield, in partnership with four regional trusts, will set up student-led, multidisciplinary clinics to raise awareness of allied health disciplines as well as public health issues and interdisciplinary approaches among students.
- Coventry University's Healthpro Challenge will run taster days featuring interactive clinical simulations to raise awareness of health careers – particularly among male career changers.

Grants were also awarded to projects led by: University of Nottingham; Sheffield Hallam University; University of East London; University of Wolverhampton; University of Hull; and University of Liverpool. The funding is the final round of the Challenge Fund competition run by the OfS as part of the Strategic Interventions in Health Education Disciplines programme – which aims primarily to increase the number of students entering and completing small, specialist healthcare courses.



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# Education system leaving young people unprepared for modern world

**A**lmost one in four young people aged 17-23 do not feel adequately prepared by their education for the workplace, according to data from the CBI. As 44% of employers found that young people leaving school, college or university were not ready for the workplace, businesses have called for character and broader skills, from team leadership to problem solving, to be embedded in the educational curriculum to a much greater extent.

The report, *Getting Young People Work Ready*, found that 47% of teachers believed that there were fewer opportunities to develop employability skills and competencies due to changes in GCSEs and A-Levels. They citing a new focus on rote learning as a detriment to developing the skills and attitudes needed for work. In the report, employers identify three broad areas that are essential for the workplace: character, knowledge, and skills. The CBI argued that to address the situation the Government, supported by a greater contribution from employers, should:

- Rethink the role and form of GCSEs in an education and training system that went to 18, rather than 16.
- Reform the English Baccalaureate to ensure that it fully encompassed a “broad and balanced” curriculum, especially when it came to creativity.
- Develop a shared understanding of what “character” really meant with educators, government and employers - starting with the SkillsBuilder framework.
- Better coordinate the support available to young people from government, employers and educators - including the joining up of the Careers Strategy and Youth Charter.

John Cope, CBI Head of Education & Skills, said that whether it was globalisation, longer and more diverse careers or rapid technological change - employers, government and educators must work better together to prepare young people for the modern world. He argued that too often, young people were left feeling unprepared for work and employers felt the same when those starting out joined their companies. Mr Cope stressed that while young people had knowledge and potential in abundance, the rounded character, real world experience and creativity that was needed to apply knowledge was sometimes lacking. But he pointed out that ensuring that young people were prepared for the modern world was not the education system’s responsibility alone, as to help the education system to keep up with a rapidly changing world, it was vital to help the two-thirds of employers who wanted to get more involved in education to do so. Mr Cope said that whether it was helping deliver parts of the curriculum, offering work experience and careers advice, or getting involved as a governor or trustee, employers had an immense contribution to make.

Commenting on the CBI’s report, Dr Mary Bousted, Joint General Secretary of the National Education Union, said that the NEU welcomed the CBI’s report, and particularly the recognition of teachers’ concerns about the limiting nature of the EBacc and the challenges schools faced in teaching a breadth of subjects as well as offering a broad range of experiences to support young people in their future lives in work and in society, families and relationships.

Dr Bousted said that time and time again the NEU had warned that the EBacc policy would penalise schools for offering a broad and balanced curriculum, tailored to the needs and interests of their children, and GCSE entries were continuing to collapse across many subjects. She argued that the policy had reduced the breadth of subjects offered in many secondary schools, limited opportunities for children, and driven many staff out of the teaching profession. Dr Bousted added that long-term damage had been inflicted on creative and technical subjects which had been excluded from the EBacc; such as art, music and technology, that were not just crucial for economic prosperity but for enriching lives, were disappearing from schools.

She stressed that the need for a high quality and impartial careers services in schools and colleges was more important than ever, yet funding an adequate infrastructure to provide such a service had been continually cut back or removed entirely.

## Employers and public services must adapt to support young people to adapt to a rapidly changing labour market

**L**earning and Work Institute research has concluded that young people were increasingly likely to be self-employed, in busier jobs, and they needed to update their skills, as a result of longer working lives and technological change. The latest report from Learning and Work Institute's Youth Commission, said that young people were likely to have 50-year careers and they would face big changes in the workplace.

It pointed out that the UK's 2030 workforce was likely to be more diverse, include more women and disabled people in work, and there would be a growth in the number of people with caring responsibilities. The report said that self-employment in areas such as the gig economy was also likely to grow and rising demand for skills would mean that young people without good qualifications could struggle to find work or build a career.

The report, which looked at how to improve education and employment outcomes for 16-24-year-olds in England, suggested that, if recent trends continued, by 2030 750,000 young people could be self-employed and 500,000 could be in insecure work where their hours could change unexpectedly. The research found that while employment was currently at a record high overall, there were concerns about the quality of work and whether young people would get the chance to move up the career ladder. The report pointed out that 31% of people had said that their jobs required them to work at high speed most or all the time, which was up from 27% in 2011.

Stephen Evans, chief executive of Learning and Work Institute, said that while attention often focused on the risk of robots replacing jobs, further growth in self-employment and changing skills requirements in most jobs could have bigger impacts. He stressed that young people must get the support they would need to prepare for such a future. Mr Evans argued that it was no good just focusing on the skills needed for current jobs, as young people needed the skills to adapt to future changes, many of which could not be predicted accurately.

***“Stephen Evans, chief executive of Learning and Work Institute, said that while attention often focused on the risk of robots replacing jobs, further growth in self-employment and changing skills requirements in most jobs could have bigger impacts.”***

The report concluded that to help young people to prepare for and adapt to the changes, they would need to have good literacy, numeracy and digital skills and employers would need to adapt to a future workforce which would be more diverse and where more people would have multiple caring responsibilities.

## Ofqual at the AELP Annual Conference 2019

**P**hil Beach CBE, Executive Director for Vocational and Technical Qualifications at Ofqual, spoke to delegates at the AELP Annual Conference, in London about the importance of ensuring quality, not just in T-Levels, but across the range of regulated qualifications, including apprenticeship End Point Assessments. He stressed that Ofqual placed a premium on high-quality and assessment validity and its statutory objectives included securing and maintaining qualification standards and promoting public confidence in them.

Mr Beach pointed out that Ofqual was particularly in the public consciousness over the GCSE and A-level exam season, but he stressed that its assessment and regulatory expertise was equally applicable to vocational and technical areas. He said that whatever the type of qualification, or End Point Assessment, there was a judgement to be made about knowledge, skills and behaviours. Mr Beach said that how that assessment was designed, developed, and delivered had to be right for the subject or skill area, and for those who would use and depend on the qualification result. He said that while the same principles of validity applied whether an academic or vocational assessment, the assessment approaches would vary.

Mr Beach pointed out that fairness included making sure that assessments covered the expected content and that they were clear and error-free, that marking was completed on time and was of high quality, and that grade boundaries were set to fairly reflect the demand of the paper. He said that fairness meant designing qualifications so that they were accessible to the full range of students who would take them, and that the requirements were clear to all teachers and trainers, including making sure that students who needed them had access to enlarged or Braille question papers, a scribe, or other reasonable adjustments.

Turning to T-Levels, Mr Beach explained that when it came to regulating the Technical Qualification that sat within T-Levels, Ofqual would be working with the same seriousness and focus that it regulated GCSEs and A-levels. He said that to do that, Ofqual had introduced tailored rules that would operate in parallel with the Institute's contract management process. But Mr Beach pointed out that regulating with the same seriousness and focus as General Qualifications did not mean treating them the same as both Ofqual's approach, and the design of the Technical Qualification, enabled appropriate tailoring of the assessment to the subject content that had been set by employers, through the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education.

He said that he wanted to put the misconception that Ofqual sometimes "over-academised" assessments "to bed" as it was important to recognise that Ofqual was not a content-setting body and in the case of T-Levels, the subject content was being set by panels of employers, through the Institute. Mr Beach added that Ofqual's current role was to ensure that the content could lead to a qualification that would support valid outcomes, not to determine how academic the subject matter was. He said that as Ofqual could and did encourage flexibility, for Technical Qualifications there was flexibility in terms of the size of the core versus the occupational specialism and there was therefore flexibility within the core, in terms of the weightings for the core exam and the core project.

Mr Beach pointed out that there was also flexibility in the assessment methods for practical tasks and validity required the most appropriate form of assessment to be used for each Technical Qualification. But he added that Ofqual should expect to see a variety of approaches, much as it did in the apprenticeship End Point Assessments it regulated. Mr Beach said that Ofqual was working closely with the Institute to bring together respective expertise and maximise the different levers available to the organisations.

He pointed out that the Institute was running tenders to select awarding organisations to deliver Technical Qualifications and it would subsequently approve each qualification to ensure that it met employers' needs and the requirements of the contract. From an Ofqual perspective, Mr Beach said it had consulted on and introduced Technical Qualification-specific rules, including issues such as the number of assessments, timing, retakes, marking, recognition of prior learning and reviews of marking, moderation and appeals.

## Policy papers published last week

### *Apprenticeship Levy and Workplace Opportunities for Young People*

**Author:** Edward Scott

**Source:** House of Lords Library

**Document type:** Lords Library Notes

**Published:** Thursday 27 June 2019

**Reference:** LLN-2019-0085

**Geographical coverage:** United Kingdom

**Description:** This House of Lords Library briefing has been prepared in advance of the debate on the apprenticeship levy and the case for the effective delivery of workplace opportunities for young people which is due to take place in the House of Lords on 4 July 2019.

<https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/LLN-2019-0085>

### *Spending of the Department for Education*

**Authors:** Shadi Danechi, Nerys Roberts, David Foster, Rachael Harker and Paul Bolton

**Source:** House of Commons Library

**Document type:** Debate pack

**Published:** Thursday 27 June 2019

**Reference:** CDP-2019-0170

**Geographical coverage:** England

**Description:** On 1 July 2019 there will be an Estimates Day debate on the spending of the Department for Education. The subject for this debate was selected by the Backbench Business Committee, following the publication of the 2019-20 Main Supply Estimates on 9 May 2019.

<https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CDP-2019-0170>

### *Investment in the Provision of English for Speakers of Other Languages*

**Author:** Robert Long

**Source:** House of Commons Library

**Document type:** Debate pack

**Published:** Wednesday 26 June 2019

**Reference:** CDP-2019-0169

**Geographical coverage:** United Kingdom

**Description:** On 3 July 2019, there will be a Westminster Hall debate on Investment in the provision of English for speakers of other languages, due to begin at 2:30pm. The debate is sponsored by Preet Kaur Gill MP. This briefing pack has not yet been produced. The House of Commons Library will produce a briefing or material for the debate and you can be notified when this takes place by emailing [papers@parliament.uk](mailto:papers@parliament.uk).

### *Augar Review of Post-18 Education and Funding*

**Author:** Sarah Tudor

**Source:** House of Lords Library

**Document type:** Briefing pack

**Published:** Monday 24 June 2019

**Reference:** LBP-2019-0070

**Geographical coverage:** England

**Description:** This Library Briefing Pack contains a selection of material relevant for the forthcoming House of Lords debate on the Augar Review of Post-18 Education and Funding.

<https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/LBP-2019-0070>

## Education statistics published last week

**E**very week the Government publishes a wide range of statistics about every aspect of its many activities. We list here those reports that are relevant to education and training. This covers official statistics, national statistics, statistical data sets, transparency data and guidance about statistics. Information is taken from the Department for Education, other Government departments and Government agencies involved in education and training.

In the table that follows, the title of the document is given in red, followed by the date of publication, the issuing authority, the classification of information covered and, where there is one, a reference code. On the next line is a brief description of the data, followed by a web link to the statistics.

### **NEET Statistics Annual Brief: 2018**

28 June 2019

DfE

National statistics

These six files give estimates from the Labour Force Survey of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) in England. The figures cover 16 to 24-year-olds in England, together with age breakdowns such as 16 to 17-year-olds. The figures also include breakdowns by region, gender and labour market status. This release was published quarterly until February 2019, but is now published annually.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/neet-statistics-annual-brief-2018>

### **Participation in Education, Training and Employment: 2018**

27 June 2019

DfE

National statistics

These eight files give updates to national participation figures for the end of 2017, released in June 2018, and provisional estimates for the end of 2018. It contains information from different post-16 learning options, including:

- school
- further education colleges
- apprenticeships
- higher education

Headline measures are the percentages of 16 to 18-year-olds:

- in education and apprenticeships
- who are not in education, employment or training.

Breakdowns are set out by:

- age
- gender
- mode of study
- type of learning
- institution type (for example, further education colleges, schools)
- labour market status
- highest qualification being studied.

The additional tables show figures dating from 1985.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/participation-in-education-training-and-employment-2018>

### **Rural Skills Statistics**

27 June 2019

DEFRA

Official statistics

This file contains an analysis of skills by work place and residence base in rural and urban areas. Metadata indicators:

[\(Continued on page 9.\)](#)



*(Continued from page 8.)*

- percentage of working age population with at least one qualification
- percentage of working age population with at least National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) (level 2 (or equivalent) or above
- percentage of working age population with at NVQ level 4 (or equivalent)
- proportion of employees and self-employed of working age receiving on the job training.

Data source: Office for National Statistics Labour Force Survey. Coverage: England. Rural classification used: Rural urban local authority classification 2011.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rural-skills-and-qualifications>

### ***Advanced Learner Loans Paid in England, AY 2018/19, August to April***

27 June 2019                      SLC                      Official statistics

These two files, one of which is a pre-release access file, give statistics on advanced learner loans issued to further education providers in England for their students. They will compare the payments made from August 2018 to April 2019 with the same period in the previous two academic years.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/advanced-learner-loans-paid-in-england-ay-201819-aug-to-apr>

### ***Further Education for Benefit Claimants in England: 2017 to 2018***

27 June 2019                      DfE and DWP                      Official statistics

These four files provide experimental statistics on further education activity funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency for adult benefit claimants in England. It uses data from the Department for Education and the Department for Work and Pensions.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/further-education-for-benefit-claimants-in-england-2017-to-2018>

### ***Further Education and Skills Inspections and Outcomes as at 28 February 2019***

27 June 2019                      Ofsted                      Official statistics

These ten files give details of inspections of further education and skills in England and are made up of:

- main findings in html format, pdf format and Word format
- tables, charts and individual provider-level data in Excel format and csv format
- quality and methodology report in pdf format
- pre-release access list in pdf format.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/further-education-and-skills-inspections-and-outcomes-as-at-28-february-2019>

## **Abbreviations**

BEIS	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
DEFRA	Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DfE	Department for Education
DfE(NI)	Department for the Economy (Northern Ireland)
DoE(NI)	Department of Education (Northern Ireland)
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
ESFA	Education and Skills Funding Agency
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
HMPPS	Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service
NHS	National Health Service
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
SLC	Student Loans Company

## Consultations and outcomes published last week

There were no education consultations published last week. There was one consultation outcome published last week, details of which are given below.

### ***Consultation Decisions. Reform of the Exam Procedures Review Service. Consultation on Changes to Ofqual's Exam Procedure Review Service***

Ofqual received six responses to this consultation. All respondents were based in England or Wales. Of these, the awarding organisations and one representative body answered via our online portal and responded to most or all of the individual questions asked in the consultation. Ofqual has decided to implement all of the proposals on which it consulted. The proposed changes were designed to:

- Speed up the EPRS process by removing the use of formal hearings to decide some EPRS cases.
- Remove the requirement for some final decisions to be taken by a panel which includes external members.
- Extend the remit of EPRS to include Technical Qualifications as they become available.

Ofqual has also published the Exam Procedures Review Service: 2017 Report that reviews the work of Ofqual's EPRS function for the 2017 exams series in England.

**Reference:** Ofqual/19/6515/1

**Department or agency:** Ofqual

**Geographical coverage:** England and Wales

**Document type:** Government consultation response and impact assessment

**This response published:** Friday 28 June 2019

**The original consultation** ran from 8 February to 8 March 2019

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/812788/6515-1\\_Reform\\_of\\_the\\_Exam\\_Procedures\\_Review\\_Service\\_-\\_Consultation\\_Decisions.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/812788/6515-1_Reform_of_the_Exam_Procedures_Review_Service_-_Consultation_Decisions.pdf)

## Statutory instruments issued last week

There were no relevant statutory instruments issued last week.

## Education oral questions

**In the final session of oral questions on education before the summer recess, and the end of Theresa May's Prime Ministership and her replacement by a new Tory leader, Richard Graham (Con, Gloucester) asked the Minister what recent assessment her Department had made of the effect of the apprenticeship levy on the number of apprenticeships. (House of Commons, oral questions to the Department for Education, 24 June 2019.)**

The Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills, Anne Milton (Con, Guildford) said that while she was "very aware" of the number of apprenticeships, comparing numbers before and after the reforms that had been made would be like comparing apples and pears, because the Government had put quality at the heart of apprenticeships. She said that the number of people starting on the new employer-designed standards in the first half of 2018-19 had increased by 79%, which was an indication of the quality.

Richard Graham said that chambers of commerce did not believe that the two-tier system was working and that more funding for small and medium-sized enterprises would enable them to train more engineering apprentices. Anne Milton said that her Department would move smaller businesses on to the apprenticeship system.

The Liberal Democrat Leader Sir Vince Cable (LDP, Twickenham), who will hand over the his successor in July, asked the Minister to explain why good companies with generous apprenticeships and training schemes were making a net contribution to the Treasury through the levy scheme rather than being rewarded through tax relief or in other ways. Anne Milton said that the decisions, which had been made some time ago, had enabled the Department to make sure that by 2020 spending on apprenticeships would have more than doubled since 2010.

Gordon Marsden (Lab, Blackpool South) said that the National Audit Office had told FE Ministers in March in no uncertain terms that there was a risk that the apprenticeship programme would be financially unsustainable. He added that the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education had warned that it could be overspent by £0.5 billion in the current year. Anne Milton insisted that the apprenticeship system was working well, and levy payers in particular, as well as small businesses, were "grabbing" at the opportunities that apprenticeships offered. But she added that as her Department was aware of the budgetary pressures on the system, it would make representations ahead of the spending review.

### Post-18 Education and Funding Review

Wes Streeting (Lab, Ilford North) asked the Minister what assessment he had made of the merits of the recommendations of the Post-18 education and funding review. The Minister for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation, Chris Skidmore (Con, Kingswood) said that the Government would consider the review panel's recommendations carefully and conclude the overall review at the spending review. Wes Streeting asked the Minister for an assurance that the Government's approach would be one of levelling up funding and not of robbing Peter to pay Paul. Chris Skidmore said that the report was a post-18 review which had looked at creating unity of purpose which would follow students across all parts of their life course, which was what the Government would consider when it came to looking at the 53 recommendations as part of the spending review.

Ben Bradley (Con, Mansfield) said that while there had been many positive recommendations in the Augar review, including the proposed lifelong learning loans, the proposed tuition fee cut could have a negative effect, as it would reduce the money available for widening access. Chris Skidmore said that the HE system had put an additional £6 billion of resource into universities since 2012 as a result of the fee level rise.

Maggie Throup (Con, Erewash) asked the Minister whether she recognised the important role that further education colleges played in bridging the gap between schools and universities. The Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills, Anne Milton (Con, Guildford) said that 160,000 young people studied A-levels at colleges.

# Education and industrial strategy

**B**aroness Bull (CB) asked the Government what assessment it had made of the role for further education colleges in the delivery of the Industrial Strategy. (House of Lords, oral question debate, 24 June 2019) Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education, Lord Agnew of Oulton (Con) said that as a much greater emphasis had been placed on skills and professional technical education, further education colleges would have an increasingly key role to play in delivering the skills needed to support the industrial strategy.

He pointed out that FE colleges would form part of the skills infrastructure by delivering the full range from basic skills to high-level technical training. The minister added that colleges would also be key to delivering existing professional technical and apprenticeship training, and they will be important to the delivery of T-levels and the national retraining scheme.

Baroness Bull said that while the industrial strategy investment in skills was welcome, the sums were tiny alongside the £7.4 billion that had been set aside for research and development. She argued that although innovation was vital, so was a skilled and adaptable workforce. Baroness Bull asked the Minister whether he had been concerned by the Augar report's warning of shrinking numbers enrolling in colleges at technician level, declines in adult learning and a 45% fall in spending on adult skills over the last decade. Lord Agnew said that the Government recognised the pressures that FE funding was under and it was looking at the situation carefully ahead of the spending review.

Lord Watts (Lab) pointed out that despite the massive skills gap between the UK and Germany, the Government had made cuts every year. Lord Agnew insisted that the Government had protected the base rate of 16 to 19 funding to 2020 and it was putting in money "in slightly different ways", such as the provision of £500 million in the current year for disadvantage funding. He added that additional funding had been provided to support institutions to grow participation in level 3 in maths and for T-levels.

Baroness Blackstone (Ind Lab) asked the Minister to explain why the cuts that the Government had already made had been instigated in the first place. Lord Agnew said he could not speak for what had happened in 2010 or earlier.

Baroness Wolf of Dulwich (CB) asked the Minister how the Government could possibly deliver on some of the specific commitments of the industrial strategy without rethinking in major form the way in which it funded further education. She pointed out that more than 60% of all private sector jobs were in small and medium-sized enterprises, which operated in a way that meant they could not work easily with universities and therefore they depended directly on the further education sector. Baroness Wolf argued that while the industrial strategy, among other things, had committed to putting the UK at the forefront of high-efficiency agriculture and transforming construction techniques, she could not see how that could be delivered without changing the funding system. Lord Agnew said that the industrial strategy aimed to support education and skills with a package of £400 million, which included a four-year programme to improve teaching and participation in computer science, an additional £50 million to improve the quality of post-16 maths teaching, £100 million of new government funding for the national retraining scheme, and £20 million to support providers to prepare for T-levels.

Baroness McIntosh of Pickering (Con) asked the Minister to confirm not only that the Government was putting more money into apprenticeships but that more apprenticeships were being completed, and more full-time jobs were being offered to those who had completed their apprenticeships. Lord Agnew agreed and added that the number of starts for the first quarter of 2018-19 had been 76,000, compared with 41,000 a year ago. Lord Storey (LDP) said that while the creative industries were an important part of the industrial strategy, there was difficulty in finding people to go into the creative industries as the number of students following creative subjects was declining in schools. Lord Agnew said that there were an increasing number of apprenticeships in creative subjects. Lord Brooke of Alverthorpe (Lab) asked the Minister whether he was content with the present FE funding arrangement. Lord Agnew said he was concerned about funding for further education and he believed that it needed to be a priority in the spending review. Admiral Lord West of Spithead (Lab) pointed out that while there was a shipbuilding strategy in the industrial strategy, it did not involve any ships being ordered. Lord Agnew said that in a globalised world the priority was to encourage skills in the areas that were growing most rapidly.

The following written questions were answered in Parliament last week.

## House of Commons

### Department for Education

#### Apprentices: Taxation

**Catherine McKinnell:** [267747] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent discussions he has held with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on the barriers preventing NHS organisations from being able to fully utilise their Apprenticeship Levy funds; and if he will make a statement.

**Anne Milton:** The Department for Education and the Department of Health and Social Care are working together, along with employers and Health Education England (HEE), to make sure that the NHS is fully supported to recruit the apprentices that they need to deliver high quality care. I met my hon. Friend, the Minister of State for Health, in January 2019, where we had a constructive discussion about the ways in which we are jointly supporting the NHS.

The detailed steps that we have taken together are set out in the government's response to the Education Select Committee's inquiry on nurse degree apprenticeships, which was published in March 2019. We are already seeing the positive impact that apprenticeships can make in the NHS to workforce recruitment and retention. For example, in the last financial year, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust employed nearly 600 Level 2 to 7 apprentices, across 29 programmes and a variety of disciplines, ranging from Business Administration to Facilities Management to Dental Nursing. The Trust has used the apprenticeship levy to build interest across the organisation and attract employees into rewarding apprenticeship roles. In addition, Registered Nurse degree apprenticeship and Nursing Associate starts in the first half of 2018/19 are 77% and 30% higher respectively than the starts reported in the entire 2017/18 year. Both departments continue to collaborate and work closely with employers and our delivery partners to share best practice and support a wide programme of activities to help NHS employers to get the most from our apprenticeship reforms.

**Catherine McKinnell:** [267748] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what (a) proportion and (b) total value of Apprenticeship Levy funds available to NHS organisations is currently unspent; and if he will make a statement.

**Catherine McKinnell:** [267749] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of allowing NHS organisations to use their Apprenticeship Levy funds to cover the backfill costs incurred by providing apprenticeship places.

**Anne Milton:** As the NHS is made up of a large number of diverse employers, it is not possible to identify apprenticeship levy contributions or expired funds for the NHS as a whole. Moreover, due to taxpayer confidentiality, we are unable to publish the amount that individual employers have contributed through the apprenticeship levy. We introduced the levy to create long-term sustainable investment in high quality apprenticeship training. Widening the scope of the apprenticeship levy would divert funding away from apprenticeship training and reduce the opportunities for individuals and employers to benefit from them. It is important that we maximise the effectiveness of government investment in training and our reforms are making sure that apprenticeships are delivering the high-quality training that both individuals and employers need.

**Catherine McKinnell:** [267750] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the value of Apprenticeship Levy funds expiring from employers' accounts was in May 2019; and what plans the Government has for those funds.

**Anne Milton:** The amount of funds entering employers' digital apprenticeship service accounts in May 2017 was £135 million, of which £11 million in unspent funds expired in May 2019. This was the first month of expiry of funds. As well as funding apprenticeships in levy-paying employers, levy contributions are also used to fund training for existing apprenticeship learners and new apprenticeships in non-levy paying employers. We do not anticipate that all employers who pay the levy will need or want to use all the funds in their accounts, however they are able to.

*Wednesday 26 June 2019*

### **Apprentices: Taxation**

**Rebecca Long Bailey:** [268543] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding his Department allocated from the apprenticeship budget to (a) apprenticeship levy paying employers, (b) top up payments to apprenticeship levy paying employers, (c) non-apprenticeship levy paying employers, (d) ongoing costs of apprenticeships already in training prior to 1 April 2017, (e) English and maths qualifications, (f) incentive payments for 16- to 18-year-old apprentices and (g) additional support for apprentices that are care leavers or have special needs in financial year (i) 2017-2018 and (ii) 2018-19.

**Anne Milton:** The balance that levy payers see in their apprenticeship service accounts is distinct from the department's ring-fenced apprenticeships budget. The balance in employers' accounts is based on their total levy contributions and how many of their employees live in England. The department also tops up these funds by 10% after this English portion has been calculated. Levy-paying employers can use the funds in their accounts to place orders for the training and assessment of their apprentices. The department then pays the relevant providers and end-point assessment organisations directly from its ring-fenced apprenticeships budget. An amount equal to the value of this provider payment is also deducted from the levy payer's account balance.

The department's ring-fenced apprenticeship budget is set in advance by Her Majesty's Treasury to fund apprenticeships in England only. The expenditure on various parts of the apprenticeship programme is calculated based on the cash payments made from this ring-fenced budget. It should be noted that aggregated information on spending by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and the department for 2017-18 is held by the ESFA and included here, but information for 2018-19 will be published in the audited annual reports and accounts later this year.

Annual data on levy collected in 2018-19 will be published by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. In 2017-18, spending on apprentices employed with levy payers, and who started training after the levy was introduced, was £268 million. In making employers' levy contributions available as funds in their apprenticeship service accounts, the government applies a 10-per-cent top-up to these contributions. However, the balances in these accounts are distinct from the department's ringfenced budget for apprenticeships.

Where employers are using some or all of this top-up to fund new apprenticeships, this spend is reflected in the answer to (A) above. £189 million was spent on training for apprentices who started on or after 1 May 2017 with employers who do not pay the levy. In 2017/18, £1,065 million was spent on ongoing costs of training apprentices who started before the levy was introduced in May 2017. Of the £457 million spent on new starts in 2017-18 (£268 million on levy payers and £189 million on non-levy payers), £38 million was spent on English and Maths teaching.

£72 million was spent on additional provider payments and employer payments for apprentices aged 16 to 18 and apprentices aged up to 24 years old who have either an education, health and care plan or who have been in local authority care. £27 million was spent on other smaller elements of funding

policy, such as learning support.

*Thursday 27 June 2019*

### **Apprentices: Taxation**

**Nic Dakin:** [267318] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much apprenticeship levy was paid by levy employers in (a) May 2017 and expired in April 2019 and (b) June 2017 and expired in May 2019 because the funds had not been used.

**Nic Dakin:** [267319] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will publish from May 2019 the monthly (a) proportion and (b) amount of unused apprenticeship levy following the expiry of the two-year period for its use.

**Anne Milton:** When employers pay the Apprenticeship Levy, their contribution (as well as a 10% top up) is made available to them via the digital apprenticeship service to spend on apprenticeships in England. We recognise that employers want and need flexibility. Employers have 24 months to spend their levy and levy-paying employers can transfer 25% of funds to other employers.

The amount of funds entering employers' digital apprenticeship service accounts in May 2017 was £135 million, of which £11 million in unspent funds expired in May 2019. This was the first month of expiry of funds. The amount of funds entering employer' accounts in June 2017 was £152 million, for which the expiry of unspent funds will occur at the end of June 2019. These figures are for employers in England and include the 10% government top up.

The proportion of an employer's levy contributions made available as funds in their digital apprenticeship service account depends on how many of their employees live in England and the proportion of their pay bill paid to these employees.

Unspent funds are used to support existing apprenticeships learners, levy paying employers who spend more than the funds available in their accounts and to fund training for non-levy paying employers. We do not currently intend to publish expiry of funds information on a monthly basis.

*Friday 28 June 2019*

## **Department of Health and Social Care**

### **Doctors: Training**

**Mohammad Yasin:** [266890] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure that an adequate number of doctors are trained to meet future needs.

**Stephen Hammond:** The interim NHS People Plan sets out the action we will take now and over the long term to meet the challenges of supply, reform, culture and leadership, and changes in demand for health care. The Government has already committed to having 5,000 additional doctors in general practice, and to funding for universities to offer an extra 1,500 undergraduate medical school places.

The first 630 places were taken up in September 2018 and the remaining additional places will have been made available by 2020/21. By 2020, five new medical schools will have opened in England to help deliver the expansion.

*Thursday 27 June 2019*

## Health Professions: Training

**Mark Hendrick:** [267189] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to reinstate bursaries for UK nursing, midwifery and medical students to ensure an adequate supply of qualified staff in the NHS; what funding schemes he plans to make available to recruit and train midwifery, nursing and medical students; and what steps he is taking to retain UK-trained medical health professionals in the NHS.

**Stephen Hammond:** The Government has no plans to reinstate bursaries for pre-registration nursing and midwifery degree students. The tuition fee model means universities can offer more places removing the cap that was in place under the previous centrally funded system. Eligible pre-registration nursing and midwifery students can now receive more funding than under the National Health Service bursary system through tuition fee loans and living cost support from the Student Loans Company.

To support pre-registration nursing and midwifery students whilst attending the clinical placement element of their courses, the Government introduced a Learning Support Fund. Eligible students can apply for annual payments of £1,000 for child dependants allowance, reimbursement of all clinical placement travel costs above their usual daily travel and exceptional hardship payments of up to £3,000. Eligible undergraduate medical students can access Student Loans Company tuition fee and living cost support for the first four years of their degree. Students on these courses will continue to have access to NHS bursaries for years five and six of their courses.

The interim People Plan published on 3 June 2019 sets out some of the steps needed to ensure the NHS have the staff they need to deliver high quality care, including growing our nursing workforce by 40,000 in the next five years.

*Thursday 27 June 2019*

## Ministry of Justice

### Prisons: Education

**Richard Burgon:** [264477] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 8 May 2019 to Question 248729, if he will place in the Library a copy of the joint action plan for improving progression of prisoners serving sentences of Imprisonment for Public Protection.

**Richard Burgon:** [264478] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 8 May 2019 to Question 248729, what additional resources his Department has made available to improve progression of prisoners serving sentences of Imprisonment for Public Protection.

**Edward Argar:** HMPPS and the Parole Board keep the joint IPP action plan under continuous review so as to ensure that the actions in it meet the changing needs of the IPP population. Initially, the focus of the joint action plan was principally to make the parole system more efficient and to eradicate the substantial backlog of oral hearings, which had built up in the Board for IPP and life sentence offenders. A summary of the Joint IPP Action Plan will be placed in the House library.

In 2017/18 the Ministry of Justice increased the Parole Board's budget by £3.361m. The additional funding enabled the Board to induct and train over 100 new members and to hear more cases each month, so clearing a backlog. In October 2018, the Parole Board received an additional £1.5m to enable them to conduct additional hearings. This extra funding has delivered substantial improvements to the efficiency of the process, so that prisoners serving IPP sentences have their cases heard as quickly as is appropriate. In November 2016, we secured £100 million investment to fund the recruitment of additional prison officers and deliver the Offender Management in Custody Model (OMiC). This has introduced key workers,



who have a vital role in supporting IPP prisoners. They, and the introduction of qualified case managers in prison for prisoners serving longer term sentences, including IPP prisoners, will improve the way we support prisoners through their sentences.

*Monday 24 June 2019*

### **Prisons: Education and Employment**

**Imran Hussain:** [265538] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how much his Department spent on education and employment services in prisons in each year from 2010.

**Robert Buckland:** Responsibility for prison education in England transferred from the Department for Education to the Ministry of Justice in November 2016. We can therefore only supply financial information for offender learning from that point onwards. Offender learning includes education focussed on supporting offenders into employment, including activities such as CV and interview training. The information below is taken from Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service's annual accounts.

Offender learning spend:

2015/16 - £145,682m

2016/17 - £146,682m

2017/18 - £158,274m

We must ensure that offenders leave prison with the basic skills that are essential to entering the workplace and with the skills employers need. That is why we have put governors in full control of the education provided in their prisons so that they can tailor it, both to their specific populations and for the local jobs market.

*Monday 24 June 2019*

### **Prisons: Teachers**

**Imran Hussain:** [265535] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many teaching posts in prisons are currently vacant.

**Robert Buckland:** As of 20 June 2019, there were 138 teaching posts reported vacant by the education providers who deliver services to 102 establishments in England under the Prison Education Framework. New education contracts have recently been put in place across England which has resulted in some churn in staffing. This is being managed by our providers via the monitoring of Teacher Quality Management Plans that they must have in place, which detail vacancies and proposed actions for filling them.

We must ensure that offenders leave prison with the basic skills that are essential to entering the workplace and with the skills employers need. That is why we have put governors in full control of the education provided in their prisons so that they can tailor it, both to their specific populations and for the local jobs market.

**Imran Hussain:** [265536] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many teachers were employed in prisons on (a) 31 December 2010, (b) 31 December 2018 and (c) 31 May 2019.

**Robert Buckland:** Education contracts were not managed by the Ministry of Justice prior to November 2016, so we are unable to provide figures for 31 December 2010. The following figures were reported by Prison Education Framework providers and are correct as of 20 June 2019. The number of teachers employed in establishments with publicly funded education services across England is provided below:

DATE	NUMBER OF TEACHERS EMPLOYED
31 December 2018 (services delivered under the Offender Learning and Skills Services contracts)	2,865
31 May 2019 (services delivered under the Prison Education Framework contracts)	2,530

We must ensure that offenders leave prison with the basic skills that are essential to entering the workplace and with the skills employers need. That is why we have put governors in full control of the education provided in their prisons so that they can tailor it, both to their specific populations and for the local jobs market.

*Monday 24 June 2019*

### **Prisons: Education**

**Imran Hussain:** [265533] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how much has been paid from the public purse to Staffline Group Plc for the provision of education services in prisons in each of the last three years.

**Imran Hussain:** [265534] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, in which prisons Staffline Group Plc provides education services.

**Robert Buckland:** PeoplePlus, a subsidiary of Staffline Group PLC, were awarded contracts worth the following for providing prison education services over the last three years:

Aug 2016 – Jul 2017: £11.246m

Aug 2017 – Jul 2018: £11.246m

Aug 2018 – Mar 2019: £7.498m\*

\*This period ended when new prison education contracts commenced on 1 April 2019.

PeoplePlus are (with effect from 1 April 2019) delivering education services in HMP Bedford; HMP Littlehey; HMP & YOI Norwich; HMP Bure; HMP Wayland; HMP Leicester; HMP Onley; HMP Lincoln; HMP North Sea Camp; HMP Whatton; HMP The Mount; HMP & YOI Chelmsford; HMP Warren Hill; HMP & YOI Hollesley Bay; HMP Highpoint; HMP Nottingham; HMP Ranby; HMP Stocken; HMP Sudbury; HMP & YOI Foston Hall; and HMP Drake Hall.

*Tuesday 25 June 2019*

## Prisoners' Release: Education

**Richard Burgon:** [267347] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 13 June 2019 to Question 262419 on Prisoners' Release: Education, what information his Department collects in order to keep under review the volume of courses delivered.

**Robert Buckland:** The department has mechanisms in place to collect data on volumes of courses offered nationally and on what is delivered. Data regarding the number of starts and completions of accredited programmes is published in Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) Annual Digest, and can be found at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/prison-and-probation-trusts-performancestatistics>.

National data tools, including segmentation of the prison and probation population, are made available to HMPPS periodically to support business planning decisions at a local and national level. Data relating to referrals and suitability is held locally. We also keep under review and closely monitor courses that are offered and delivered to ensure that standards are maintained.

*Friday 28 June 2019*

# House of Lords

## English Language: Education

**Lord Judd:** To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that comprehensive support is available in England to enable all refugees to learn English; and when they plan to match the provisions available in (1) Scotland, (2) Wales, and (3) Northern Ireland. [HL16352]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** The government recognises that learning English is essential in enabling refugees to rebuild their lives. We are working across government to develop a new strategy for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) in 2019, which will include addressing the needs of refugees. The department funds ESOL through the Adult Education Budget (AEB), which is allocated to providers on an annual basis.

Colleges and adult learning providers have the freedom and flexibility to determine how they use their AEB allocation to meet the needs of their communities. This includes planning, with local partners, the ESOL courses that they will deliver locally. The Home Office and Department for Education have provided £10 million to enable refugees resettled through the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme to access additional classes.

*Tuesday 25 June 2019*

## Refugees: English Language

**Lord Alton of Liverpool:** To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made on their commitments given to co-ordinate and fund community-based English language provision made in their Integrated Communities Action Plan published in February; whether they intend to respond to Refugee Action's campaign Let Refugees Learn and the recommendations in its report Turning words into action, published in June; and what assessment they have made of the importance of refugees learning English as a driver for integration and in combatting social exclusion. [HL16235]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** Following the commitments set out in the cross-government Integrated Communities Action Plan (attached), the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) established a new Integrated Communities English Language programme, worth £4.5 million, in April 2019. It will deliver community-based English language learning in 2019-20 for over 19,000 learner places. In addition, MHCLG has committed £1.2 million to support 8 local authorities to deliver coordination models through the Integrated Communities English Language Coordination Fund.

The government recognises that learning English is essential to enabling refugees to rebuild their lives. We are working across government to develop a new strategy for English for speakers of other languages in 2019. This strategy will provide a shared vision for all publicly funded English language provision and this will include addressing the needs of refugees.

We will consider the 'Turning Words into Action' report as we develop the strategy. The Answer includes the following attached material: HL16235\_report [Integrated\_Communities\_Action\_Plan.pdf] HL16235\_report [Turning\_Words\_into\_Action\_report.pdf] The material can be viewed online at: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-06-11/HL16235>

*Tuesday 25 June 2019*

### **Education: Refugees**

**Lord Lexden:** To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by Refugee Action Turning Words into Action: why the Government must invest now to let refugees learn, published in June. [HL16314]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** The government recognises that learning English is essential in enabling refugees to rebuild their lives. We are working across government to develop a new strategy for English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) in 2019. The strategy will provide a shared vision for all publicly funded English language provision and it will include addressing the needs of refugees.

We will explore what needs to be done to enable good local solutions and to support greater access to English language provision. We will consider the 'Turning Words into Action' report, attached, as we develop the strategy. The department funds ESOL through the Adult Education Budget (AEB), which is allocated to providers on an annual basis. Colleges and adult learning providers have the freedom and flexibility to determine how they use their AEB allocation to meet the needs of their communities. This includes planning, with local partners, the ESOL courses that they will deliver locally.

The Home Office and the Department for Education have provided £10 million to enable refugees resettled through the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme to access additional classes. From the start of the 2019/20 academic year approximately 50% of the AEB will be devolved to 6 Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) and to the Mayor of London through the Greater London Authority (GLA).

The MCAs and GLA will be responsible for commissioning and funding AEB provision, including ESOL, for learners resident in their areas. We know that there are many examples of good practice to overcome barriers for learners with childcare needs. Through the ESOL strategy, we will explore what else needs to be done to enable good local solutions and to support greater access to English language provision. The Answer includes the following attached material: HL16314\_report [HL16314\_Turning\_Words\_into\_Action\_report.pdf] The material can be viewed online at: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-06-12/HL16314>

*Wednesday 26 June 2019*

## **Company of Watermen and Lightermen of River Thames: Apprentices**

**Lord West of Spithead:** To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the Watermen's Company apprenticeship scheme on maritime safety on the Thames. [HL16523]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Department for Transport does not carry out assessments of maritime apprenticeships, nor their impact on maritime safety.

*Thursday 27 June 2019*

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