

16-19 Funding Formula Review

Consultation Response Form

The closing date for this consultation is:

4 January 2012

Your comments must reach us by that date.

Department for
Education



**Young People's
Learning Agency**

THIS FORM IS NOT INTERACTIVE. If you wish to respond electronically please use the online response facility available on the Department for Education e-consultation website (<http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations>).

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes, primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

If you want all, or any part, of your response to be treated as confidential, please explain why you consider it to be confidential.

If a request for disclosure of the information you have provided is received, your explanation about why you consider it to be confidential will be taken into account, but no assurance can be given that confidentiality can be maintained. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department will process your personal data (name and address and any other identifying material) in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, and in the majority of circumstances, this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential.

Reason for confidentiality:

Name	Alison Boulton
Organisation (if applicable)	Natspec: Association of National Specialist Colleges
Address:	c/o Derwen College Oswestry Shropshire SY11 3JA

If you have a query related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact YPLA on

Telephone: 024 76 82 35 13

e-mail: yplaformulaconsultation@ypla.gov.uk

If you have a query relating to the consultation process you can contact the Consultation Unit on:

Telephone: 0370 000 2288

e-mail: consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk

Please select one box which best describes you as a respondent

<input type="checkbox"/> General FE colleges (GFEs)	<input type="checkbox"/> Sixth form colleges (SFCs)	<input type="checkbox"/> Academies
<input type="checkbox"/> Schools with sixth forms (SSFs)	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent private providers (IPPs)	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent specialist providers (ISPs)
<input type="checkbox"/> Local Authorities (LAs)	<input type="checkbox"/> Provider or stakeholder organisations	<input type="checkbox"/> Awarding organisations
<input type="checkbox"/> Learner	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Association	X Other

Please Specify:

Natspec is the membership association for independent specialist colleges (ISCs) and currently represents all YPLA funded colleges and a further 10 FE units or sixth forms in special schools. These colleges make provision for young people whose complex learning and support needs are not best met in their local further education college.

The 3,800 full time students with learning difficulties or disabilities at Natspec colleges have a wide range of ambitions and aspirations, just like their peers. Colleges use their specialism and inter-disciplinary expertise to provide personalised learning and hands-on experience which enables students to achieve their goals and improve their life chances in relation to independent living, community participation and where appropriate, employment.

Natspec colleges create a model of inclusion that works for each individual. They offer innovative and creative solutions, using technology where appropriate, to promote real independence.

Natspec welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation. Our

comments relate to issues that will impact on young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in post-16 provision. The funding principles for the majority of young people in ISCs, have already been covered in the Schools funding consultation, to which we have already responded

Initial comments

We would like to make a few initial points prior to responding to some of the specific questions below.

- We have some concerns that by including them in the cohort of disadvantaged learners, the consultation does not fully take account of the broad range of learning difficulties and disabilities. Most students with LLDD are disadvantaged because the system does not meet their learning and support needs fully or appropriately. Some may also experience other aspects of disadvantage, for example linked to economic deprivation. Others may be low attainers, but some will be high attainers – the NAO report '*Oversight of special education for young people aged 16–25*' noted that 5% of young people with a Statement of Special Educational Needs go on to university. Many young people with learning difficulties will achieve important learning goals linked to independent living or acquiring a job even if they do not gain qualifications – these young people are not low attainers in terms of their individual achievements. The same NAO report found that 30% of those with a Statement of Special Educational Needs at 16 are NEET at 18. Although the characteristics of these young people are not clearly defined, it seems likely that they might present more challenging behaviour, mental health needs and may also experience economic disadvantage. They are likely to present a big challenge to the post-16 system with regard to RPA. Clearly there is a wide spectrum of needs, and we want to see a system that takes full account of these and does all it can to meet them – simplification is always welcome, but the system must be fit for purpose.
- We have already expressed our concerns about the proposals for funding students with higher levels of needs in our response to the schools funding consultation, and discussions about this are on-going. Although the funding systems draw a clear line between those in the 'higher needs' category and those with 'lower level needs', in practice there are a lot who are on the margins. It would therefore make sense to ensure some coherence between the two funding systems to ensure equality of opportunity and equal access to post-16 learning.

Section 1: Introduction

There are no questions in this section.

Section 2: Funding disadvantage

Principles for the operation of disadvantage funding (paragraphs 33-34)

- Disadvantage funding would be an additional sum of funding allocated to a provider delivering to:
- any economically disadvantaged young person aged 16 or 17 who participates in education and/or training, and meets the terms of raising the participation age legislation and
- any economically disadvantaged 18 year-olds in full time education.
- The above categories cover all 16-19 provision, including Apprenticeship provision.
- It would be paid at a standard flat funding rate for all young people who qualify, regardless of where they live or other circumstances.
- It would be paid pro-rata for part time learners.
- It would be calculated as an allocation to the provider.
- The provider would be free to decide how disadvantage funding should be invested to the benefit of disadvantaged young people, in line with the Government's objectives.
- The funding would not be ring fenced and would not be accounted for at an individual level. However providers will be expected to demonstrate publicly to the communities they serve, to governors, and to the government the progress they have made in addressing issues of disadvantage through the use of this funding.

1 Do you agree that these are the right principles for the operation of disadvantage funding?

<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Neither agree nor disagree
<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree	

Comments: we agree that disadvantage funding should remain as a separate element of the budget, but we are not sure that a flat rate is going to ensure that the very wide range of needs is met

Options for the scope of funding for disadvantage (paragraphs 37-43)

Option 1: A single fund to recognise all forms of disadvantage

Option 2: A fund to address economic disadvantage only with a separate budget to address other support needs and low level LDD needs, very similar to current arrangements

Option 3: A fund to address general economic disadvantage only, with a separate budget to address low level LDD needs. Funding to address other learning support needs to be integrated into programme funding.

2 Which of these three options would you support? Do you have any comments on the three options or additional options that should be considered?

Option 1

X Option 2

Option 3

Other (please comment)

Comments: We prefer option 2 because we think it is essential that the funding for students with learning difficulties or disabilities is held separately from economic disadvantage funding, as the needs of these groups of learners are quite distinct. We would however want to be sure that it is being used properly for the intended purpose and believe it should be ring-fenced.

We think this is the only route to ensuring equal access to post-16 provision for young people with a wide range of learning difficulties and disabilities and beginning to address the high number of young people with statements who are NEET at 18. In addition, we think it is important to recognise the important value to the individual and the state; the NAO report states: 'Our model confirms that achieving greater independence and employment for people with disabilities would be likely to bring downstream benefits' and suggests that educating someone with moderate learning difficulties to live more independently can save approximately £1m over their lifetime.

Options for calculating and allocating disadvantage funding (paragraphs 45-49)

Option 1: Mirror pre-16 eligibility

Option 2: Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

Option 3: Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI)

3 Which of the three options for establishing eligibility for disadvantage funding would best reflect the Government's objectives? Do you have any comments on these three options or are there other options that should be considered?

Option 1

Option 2

Option 3

Other (please comment)

Comments: we are not sure which of these is most appropriate in a post-16 setting and think that further work needs to be undertaken

**Determining eligibility for additional funding for specific groups
(paragraphs 50-56)**

4 a) Do you agree that the removal of the additional categories for funding purposes is a welcome simplification?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Comments:

4 b) If not, what is your case for recognising some or all of these categories for all provider types?

Comments:

5 Do you believe that children in care and recent care leavers should attract additional funding?

Yes

No

X Not Sure

Comments: we agree that these young people may require additional support, but this is now available through the 16-19 Bursary funding as they are in the guarantee group for higher level funding. It will be important to assess the take up and impact on participation prior to making a final decision about this.

6 Do you believe that service children should attract additional funding?

Yes

No

X Not Sure

Comments: we are not sure that this should be applied across the board, clearly not all service children are in families who require additional support

Consultation section 3: Simplifying participation funding

Options for funding full time learners (paragraphs 64-85)

Option 1: Funding all full time learners at the same rate

Option 2: Uplift to recognise larger programmes

Option 3: Funding to recognise different programme sizes

7 a) Do you agree that a single rate for all full time learners based upon historical average delivery (option 1) is appropriate?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

X Disagree

Strongly disagree

Comments:

7 b) If yes, would you support an additional programme weighting for delivering the International Baccalaureate diploma?

Yes

X No

Not Sure

Comments:

7 c) If no, do you believe that there should be recognition of larger programmes?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

8 a) If you do believe that there should be recognition of larger programmes, do you support option 2 or option 3?

Option 2

Option 3

Comments:

8 b) For the large programme(s), would you support a further rate or weighting?

Yes

No

X Not Sure

Comments:

9 What would be the best way to avoid an upward drift to larger programme sizes?

Comments:

Part time programmes (paragraphs 86-94)

10 Do you agree with the proposal of applying a proportion of the basic full time programme funding for part time learners?

Strongly agree

X Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Comments:

11 Do you agree that it is appropriate to fund at three part time levels?

Strongly agree

X Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Comments:

Weighting for programme funding (paragraphs 95-107)

12 Do you agree that we should merge the lowest two programme weightings into one?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Comments:

13 Do you agree that we should reduce the number of weightings for vocational programmes?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Comments:

14 Would reducing the number of weightings for vocational programmes be a significant simplification?

X Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

15 Do you think that the proposed weightings for programmes would appropriately reflect the relative delivery costs?

X Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

Consultation section 4: Success rates (paragraphs 112-124)

Option 1: Continue to recognise success

Option 2: Remove the success factor completely from the funding formula

Option 3: Remove the achievement element but keep the retention element:

3a: retention element calculated at programme component level

3b: retention element calculated at learner level

16 Which option would you support for reforming success within the funding formula?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Option 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Option 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Option 3a
<input type="checkbox"/> Option 3b	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please comment)	

Comments: we agree that it is important to recognise success, both for individuals and for providers. However, we have some concerns that the achievements of young people with learning difficulties and disabilities are not always fully reflected in the data, and would welcome a revision of the achievement categories to ensure this happens more consistently. This would ensure that success rates measures are not a disincentive to take learners who may present specific challenges, and may go some way to reducing the high proportion of NEET young people with statements.

Section 5: Further simplification

Area costs (paragraphs 127-131)

17 Would you support retaining the current area costs methodology, or would you support a change to the same area costs methodology as used for pre-16 funding?

Current methodology

Change to same as for schools pre-16

Other (please comment)

Comments:

18 Do you support removing the calculation of residential care standards funding from the formula and distributing it directly to the providers that qualify?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

Short programme modifier (paragraphs 136-140)

19 Do you agree that the YPLA should stop using a short programme modifier?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Comments:

Data and audit (paragraphs 142-146)

20 Do you have any comments on the impact that the proposed options for changes would have on data collection or audit?

Comments: we welcome simplification of the audit requirements. However, we also recognise the significant lack of data about young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities that is available nationally and agree that it is only by collecting consistent and comparable data that the impact of post-16 education can be measured. We believe that DfE and BIS should develop a consistent set of data collection across all providers, relating to a wide range of achievements and outcomes, including independent living, work, voluntary work and qualifications if appropriate.

Destination data for these learners is only meaningful if it reflects the input required from other departments to enable young people to achieve the destinations that education has prepared them for.

Equality analysis (paragraphs 147-149)

21 Do you believe these proposals will have an impact on any specific groups?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments: we are concerned that disabled people are not included in the list of protected groups in annex C and we believe this is incorrect. Paucity of data should not lead to the exclusion of this group. Instead we believe that DfE and BIS must make a determined effort to improve data collection and to understand the implications of their policies on participation by this group of learners, in line with the recommendations of the NAO report.

Section 6: Implementation

Transitional protection (paragraphs 157-163)

22 Should transitional protection be applied across a fixed period of three years or extended across a longer period?

Three Years

Longer Period

Other (please comment)

Comments:

23 Do you think that there should be phased implementation of the proposed changes?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments: we believe this is essential to ensure stability cross the system at a time of both significant changes and funding cuts

Further comments

24 Do you have any other comments you would like to make?

Yes


No

Comments:

Feedback on responding to this consultation

25 Please let us have your views on responding to this consultation (for example, the number and type of questions, was it easy to find, understand, and complete).

Comments:



Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge individual responses unless you place an 'X' in the box below.

Please acknowledge this reply

Here at the Department for Education we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, would it be alright if we were to contact you again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

XYes

No

All DfE public consultations are required to conform to the following criteria within the Government Code of Practice on Consultation:

Criterion 1: Formal consultation should take place at a stage when there is scope to influence the policy outcome.

Criterion 2: Consultations should normally last for at least 12 weeks with consideration given to longer timescales where feasible and sensible.

Criterion 3: Consultation documents should be clear about the consultation process, what is being proposed, the scope to influence and the expected costs and benefits of the proposals.

Criterion 4: Consultation exercises should be designed to be accessible to, and clearly targeted at, those people the exercise is intended to reach.

Criterion 5: Keeping the burden of consultation to a minimum is essential if consultations are to be effective and if consultees' buy-in to the process is to be obtained.

Criterion 6: Consultation responses should be analysed carefully and clear feedback should be provided to participants following the consultation.

Criterion 7: Officials running consultations should seek guidance in how to run an effective consultation exercise and share what they have learned from the experience.

If you have any comments on how DfE consultations are conducted, please contact Carole Edge, DfE Consultation Co-ordinator, tel: 01928 738060 / email: carole.edge@education.gsi.gov.uk

Thank you for taking time to respond to this consultation.

Completed questionnaires and other responses should be sent to the address shown below by 4 January 2012

Send by post to: Consultation Unit
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Castle View House
Runcorn
Cheshire WA7 2GJ

email: 16-19Funding.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk