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Submitted to Post-16 Level 2 and below study and qualifications in England: Call for Evidence
Submitted on 2021-01-26 17:13:58

Introduction

Personal information

1 What is your full name?

Name:
Kay Moore

2 What is your email address?

Email:
consultation@nnpcf.org.uk

3 What is your role, or in what capacity are you responding?

Please select :
Parent

If you have selected other, please provide details.:

4 If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please provide details.

What is the full name of your organisation?:
National Network of Parent Carer Forums

Please select :
Representative body

If you have selected other, please provide details.:

5 Would you like us to keep your responses confidential?

No

Reason for confidentiality:

Making level 2 programmes more effective at supporting 16 to 19 year olds to progress to level 3

6 Would a new form of transition programme be the best way to support progression for 16 to 19 year olds who want to take a level 3 but are not quite ready to progress and do not plan to take a T Level?

Yes

Please give reasons for your response. If you answered no, please suggest an alternative approach.:

“Those who have learning difficulties find it much harder to have the aspiration or see relevant opportunities for work but this starts at college level as very limited courses are on offer 6 years after the SEND Reforms.”
Parent Carer Forum member

7 Do you have evidence of existing effective practice in the design of study programmes to support 16 to 19 year old student progression to level 3?

Please provide details. :

8 Which elements should be included in a new form of transition programme to address barriers to progression to level 3?

Please provide details. :

Improving outcomes for students who enter employment following level 2 study: Questions for employers

9 Are there employment opportunities in your industry, additional to those on the occupational maps, for students qualified at level 2?

Not Answered

What are they?:

Do they require specific level 2 qualifications?:

10 Alongside apprenticeships, are classroom-based alternatives at level 2 necessary in your industry?

Not Answered

Please give reasons for your answer.:

Improving outcomes for students who enter employment following level 2 study: Question for employers and providers

11 Where level 2 classroom based study leads to employment, our starting point is that it should be aligned with employer-led standards. What further actions can we take to ensure that, as far as possible, classroom-based qualifications hold the same value in the labour market as apprenticeships and that they work alongside each other effectively?

Please give reasons for your answer.:

Improving outcomes for students who enter employment following level 2 study: Questions for providers

12 What evidence can you provide of existing effective practice in the design of level 2 classroom-based study and qualifications to support students to enter employment?

Please provide details of effective practice, and specify whether your examples support students into apprenticeships or other job roles.:

13 Where level 2 classroom-based study leads to employment, our starting point is that it should be aligned with employer-led standards. Which types of level 2 classroom-based study leading to employment would this not be suitable for?

Please give reasons for your answer.:

Level 2 study that supports adults in employment to upskill

14 How useful are level 2 qualifications for the purpose of upskilling adults in employment?

In your answer please provide specific examples or indicate whether other methods are more effective.:

15 Does level 2 study play a role in supporting adults in employment to progress to level 3 qualifications?

Not Answered

Please give reasons for your answer.:

Effective level 1 and entry level study for 16 to 19 year olds

16 What are the main factors providers consider when deciding whether a student should start at entry level rather than level 1?

Please give reasons for your answer.:

17 How do providers define good outcomes for 16 to 19 year olds studying at entry level?

How do you define good outcomes? :

Which features are most effective in achieving these good outcomes? :

18 What are the main factors providers consider when deciding whether a student should begin study at level 1 rather than level 2?

Please give reasons for your answer.:

19 How do providers define good outcomes for 16 to 19 year olds studying at level 1?

How do you define good outcomes? :

Which features are most effective in achieving these good outcomes? :

Level 1 and entry level study for adults

20 How do providers deliver personal, social and employability skills to adults?

Please give reasons for your answer:

Not Answered

Please give reasons for your answer.:

21 How do providers deliver introductory vocational level 1 and entry level skills to adults?

Please give reasons for your answer:

Not Answered

Please give reasons for your answer.:

Entry level qualifications (all age groups)

22 What are the benefits of having three sub-levels at entry level?

Please give reasons for your answer.:

Personal, social and employability qualifications: Question for employers

23 When you are recruiting, do you value or recognise qualifications in employability, personal and social skills, or independent living?

Not Answered

Please give reasons for your answer.:

English and maths qualifications

24 Which students are GCSEs and FSQs not appropriate for, and why?

Please give reasons for your answer.:

What are the most effective features of alternative English and maths qualifications? :

25 Are the National Standards for Adult Literacy and Numeracy and the Adult English Literacy and Numeracy Core Curriculum still relevant for the English and maths qualifications that are available alongside GCSEs and FSQs?

Not Answered

Please give reasons for your answer.:

ESOL

26 Which features of ESOL qualifications are most effective in supporting students to progress to further learning or into employment?

Please give reasons for your answer.:

27 Are ESOL qualifications at levels 1 and 2 necessary?

Not Answered

Please give reasons for your answer, if you answered yes, what role do they play? :

28 Are the National Standards for Adult Literacy and ESOL Core Curriculum still relevant and useful in relation to ESOL qualifications and their teaching?

Not Answered

Please give reasons for your answer.:

English, maths and ESOL: Questions for employers

29 When you are recruiting, do you value or recognise ESOL qualifications?

Not Answered

If yes, please give specific examples of qualifications that employers have used and valued, and how they are used during recruitment or promotion.:

If no, please explain how you assess communication and language skills.:

30 When you are recruiting, do you value or recognise English and maths qualifications that are not FSQs or GCSEs?

Not Answered

If yes, please give specific examples of qualifications that employers have used and valued, and how they are used during recruitment or promotion.:

If no, please explain how you assess literacy and numeracy skills.:

Digital skills qualifications at level 2

31 Do you agree that we should remove funding approval from the level 2 ICT FSQs and level 2 ICT User qualifications?

Not Answered

Please give reasons for your answer.:

Supporting students with special educational needs, learning difficulties or disabilities at level 2 and below

32 What needs to be retained or improved in the current level 2 and below offer to ensure that providers can accommodate the needs of:

16 to 19 year olds with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)?:

Families describe their young people approaching school leaving age as “the cliff edge”. Whilst at school, they understand the provision and support their young person is receiving and can align this with the outcomes for their young person. However, upon leaving school the offer from many, if not most local areas is less clear and very often families are unable to see how the course, services and provision available will serve to deliver the best possible outcomes for their young people. This is because information about the local education offer is often poor and too frequently, the services and support parents believe their young person needs are just not available.

‘It is a ‘one size fits all’ approach. Not many specialist provisions take children up to 19 so the LAs view is that It’s college or nothing. They do not support young people who may need something else.’
Parent Carer Forum member

Forums would like to see:
1. A Post 16 curriculum that supports social and communication development and good mental and physical health as well as academic skills.
2. More level 2 options, or bespoke packages of support for those who are not ready to study at this level.

The NNPCF surveyed our members regarding Post 16 options and Employment pathways and opportunities in their Local Authority area.

• 96% of forums who responded to the survey said that they were either unaware of whether their Local Authority had an Employment strategy for disabled people or their Local Authority did not have an Employment strategy for disabled people.
• 59% of forums who responded said that their Local Area offer supported employment opportunities for young people with SEND.
• 26% of forums said that this has led to an increase in the number of young people with SEND who is in employment.
• 41% of forums reported an increase in young people with SEND who are not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).

Forums advise that the main reasons for the rise in the number of young people with SEND who are NEET are:
1. Lack of appropriate locally available vocational courses and employment opportunities
2. Low aspirations relating to work
3. Poor information about employment and training opportunities
4. Off rolling, reduced timetables, exclusions
5. Lack of travel training opportunities
6. Narrowing of curriculum with fewer vocational courses on offer
7. Quality of FE courses for young people with SEND.

The NNPCF are concerned that the opportunities for a young person with an EHC Plan and a young person at SEND Support in a mainstream education setting differ. Those who do not have an EHC Plan are often forgotten; these young people may get support from school but once they leave education they lose all access to information, advice and support.

“The education system does not realise the full potential of many of our young people and it does not help them to achieve anything or to help them move into employment.”
Parent Carer Forum member

Supporting their child to prepare for adulthood is a very complex and difficult time for families. Many forums are reporting that their Local Authorities do not provide any information, advice or guidance to families to enable their young person to progress to the next level of qualifications or the courses available do not prepare for their child life beyond full time education.

The NNPCF strongly requests that it is a requirement for each Local Authority to review their Post 16 Education offer as part of their Preparing for Adulthood strategy. The strategy and information about Post 16 courses for young people with SEND should be on published on the Local Offer.

There needs to be a clearer understanding of how local authorities and providers within the post-16 high needs system can work together to manage an

increased demand for support for High Needs students to prepare them for employment, and what more can be done to make best use of resources. Funding also needs to be made available to FE colleges to support students with lower level SEN.

“If a young person is off the radar or out of education then there seems to be lack opportunities or even no progression/further advancement for the young person.”
Parent Carer Forum member

Those who are NEET, educated out of area or who are supported at SEN Support level have found their options restricted. Supported Internships are only available for a small number of students with EHCPs whilst apprenticeships become unavailable to some SEN students who are unable to secure the necessary grades to access their chosen course.

Forums report that young People with Mental Health difficulties, anxiety and/or high functioning Autism Spectrum Condition have less opportunity to access appropriate education and therefore are at greater risk of NEET.

“My daughter completed a supported internship in June 2019, it was meant to lead to a job. It didn't. She wasn't given enough training to make her employable. She doesn't meet criteria for any support & is now claiming benefits when she would prefer to work.”
Parent Carer Forum member

Research shows that coproduction can bring out positive solutions to the many difficulties faced by families caring for a young person with SEND. We would like the Government to reinforce the message to Local Authorities and other partners on the need to co-produced solutions and develop the Post 16 Education Offer for young people with SEND.

Here are some examples:

Oxfordshire PCF were involved with the Post 16 Network which consisted of post 16 providers, colleges, alternative providers, health, education, children and adult social care, providers of supported internships and employers keen to support employment opportunities for disabled young people. The forum supported work on supported internships, plus special events created in local Job Centre with DWP. The event enabled young people with SEND to meet face to face local employers.

Calderdale PCF are involved in the PFA work stream and have worked with the local authority setting up Project Search and improving the 5 day offer for young people (18-25) with SEND.

Many other PCFs are working with their LAs to improve the SEND offer from local colleges.

Adults with learning difficulties or disabilities?:

Closing

33 Thank you for taking the time to share your views, we may wish to contact you to discuss your responses in more detail. Are you willing to be contacted at the email provided in the personal information section?

Yes, I am willing to be contacted