

MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT

Moving higher and further education, apprenticeships and skills policy from the former Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to the Department for Education

1. The Prime Minister announced a series of changes to Ministerial responsibilities on 13 and 14 July 2016. This Cabinet Office paper describes the consequences for the functions of the Department for Education.
2. The Prime Minister's announcement included the transfer of Higher Education and Further Education (including all adult skills and apprenticeship policy) to the Department for Education from the former Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.
3. The expanded Department for Education will bring together in one place responsibility for all elements of education, children's services and skills – creating a seamless policy and delivery function. This new department will be better placed to ensure that individuals from all backgrounds have the best possible educational opportunities at all stages of their life – while also helping to improve productivity and the skills base, supporting the UK economy and the needs of UK industry.
4. The move provides greater coherence across the whole education system. Different elements will be better able to share expertise on educational challenges such as: ensuring that learning reflects employer needs in a changing labour market, and keeps pace with a digital age; ensuring that everyone has access to the highest-quality teaching (particularly in Science Technology Engineering Maths); and helping people, whatever their background, and wherever they come from, to fulfil their potential and make good progress to university, apprenticeship, or employment and beyond into their future career.
5. The move will also help to enhance consistency across funding systems. For example, until now responsibility for delivery of the 3 million apprenticeships target has also been split with the Department for Education funding those at school age (16 – 18) and the former Department for Business, Innovations and Skills funding those aged 19 and over. There will now be more flexibility to simplify funding arrangements for apprenticeships in a single department.
6. Previously, responsibility for the Skills Plan – an ambitious framework to support young people and adults to secure sustained skilled employment - had also been split between these two departments. A single department will now be able to lead implementation of long-term reform.
7. The Department for Education will inherit the following responsibilities:
 - delivery of 3 million new apprenticeship starts in England by 2020, ensuring that businesses have access to the skilled workforce they need;

- delivery of the Apprenticeships Levy;
- implementation of new technical routes to skilled employment;
- taking forward measures to improve adult further education in England;
- a national programme of area reviews to facilitate the restructuring of the post-16 education and training institutions;
- expansion of the Traineeships Programme;
- ensuring the financial sustainability of the English Higher Education system;
- introducing a new regulatory framework for higher education; encompassing all providers, and promoting new entry for high quality provision;
- access to higher education, ensuring that anyone with the potential to benefit from it can do so; and improving outcomes for those that get there;
- the prevention of extremism or intimidation on university and college campuses, and protection of free speech;
- through the Teaching Excellence Framework, ensuring that all students benefit from high-quality teaching;
- Setting of tuition fees and funding policy across both further and higher education;
- student loan policy, including the delivery of new part-time, masters and doctoral loans products, and developing the future strategy of the Student Loan Company;
- All adult skills including basic entitlement to Maths and English;
- devolution of the Adult Education Budget, where agreed, to cities and local areas;
- boosting skills through initiatives such as National Colleges;
- publication of outcomes data across further and higher education, to inform learner choices; and
- all careers advice and employers' involvement in the entire skills and education system.

8. It will also take responsibility for working with the following affiliated bodies:

Executive Agencies

- Skills Funding Agency

Executive non-departmental public bodies

- Higher Education Funding Council for England and the new Office for Students
- Office for Fair Access
- Student Loans Company
- Shadow Institute for Apprenticeships
- Construction Industry Training Board
- Engineering Construction Industry Training Board
- Film Industry Training Board
- UK Commission for Employment and Skills (due to be ceased March 2017)