

Key changes

- Raising the Participation Age (RPA)
- 16-19 funding reforms
- Introduction of study programmes
- Introduction of SEN Green Paper reforms

Key documents/links

- RPA

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/participation/rpa>

- Funding reform

<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/1/16-19%20funding%20policy%20document.pdf>

- Study programmes

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00074-2012>

- The Wolf report (which underpins the funding changes and move to study programmes)

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00031-2011>

- SEN Green Paper

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/send/b0075291/green-paper>

- Preparing for Adulthood website

<http://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/>

What might this mean for you?

RPA

From 2013, young people will be required to continue in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17. In 2015, they will be required to continue until their 18th birthday. Post-16 providers may have to adapt to accommodate a greater number of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in education or training post-16, as we know they are currently over-represented in the NEET group.

Many providers do not currently offer a full-time programme to their learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. You may find you need to increase the number of hours that you are offering your learners. 540 GLH is the standard figure for full time programmes. However, definitions of what constitutes a full-time programme for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are still not clear. The SEN Green Paper progress report states that '*the nature and length of programmes can vary. We will explore ways in which students might access a package of provision and support across 5 days a week where that is appropriate.*'

Preparing for Adulthood



The Preparing for Adulthood Programme is funded by the DfE to support the testing and implementation of the SEN reforms. It provides support on preparing young people for adulthood (transition and post 16 issues).

The programme has been set up to provide knowledge and support to all local authorities and their partners, including families and young people, so they can ensure young people with SEN and disabilities achieve the life outcomes outlined in the SEND green paper of paid work, independent living, good health and community inclusion as they move into adulthood.

The programme is delivered by a partnership between National Development Team for inclusion, the Council for Disabled People and Helen Sanderson Associates.

There are three streams of work,

- **Best practice and Information**

There is a website – www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk

[Here](#) you can sign up for a bi monthly bulletin – this provides information on the SEN delivery programme, what's happening across the PfA programme and shares best practice in relation to what helps young people achieve paid employment, independent living (choice and control over your life and support and good housing options), good health and friends, relationships and community inclusion.

- **Pathfinders**

The PfA team is working intensely with 13 out of the 20 SEN pathfinders. You can find the list of who there are working with [here](#). They are supporting these pathfinders to use best practice in preparing young people with SEN and disabled young people for adulthood as they develop their 0-25 EHC plans, personal budgets, the local offer and other aspects of the reforms. To find out what is happening in pathfinders visit [here](#).

- **Wider support**

The PfA team provides cluster events for non-pathfinder sights around the country. They also try to attend all regional transition groups. For further information on forthcoming events and to find materials and presentations from past events go to: <http://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/what-we-do/wider-support>

Web: www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk

Email: info@preparingforadulthood.org.uk

Telephone: 0207 843 6344

Funding

The main change to 16-19 funding - and for 16-24 year olds with a Learning Difficulty Assessment (LDA) or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan - is a move away from the learner responsive model where funding is based on the number and size of the qualifications a learner is taking. From 2013, it is the programme, rather than the qualification(s), which will attract funding.

These changes should make it much easier for you to design a programme around your learners' needs, interests and aspirations, rather than having to accumulate sufficient qualifications to generate the funding that you need.

There are additional changes in funding for those students deemed to have 'high needs' (costing over approx. £10,000) where any support cost over this amount will have to be negotiated with their LA directly.

[Funding guidance](#) is available on the Education Funding Agency (EFA) website.

Study programmes

From September 2013, all 16-19 year olds (and 16-24 year olds with an LDA or EHC Plan) will be expected to be following a study programme in order to draw down public funding. Study programmes do not have prescribed content but the DfE has issued guidance about the features and characteristics it is expecting of all programmes of study.

Critically, providers should be designing coherent study programmes that provide learners with an appropriately challenging learning experience which supports their progression. For young people studying below Level 2, their post-16 education should be designed to enable them to progress either to further study, training, employment with training including apprenticeships, supported employment and/or greater independence as an adult.

DfE guidance states that

Unless it can be clearly demonstrated not to be in the interests of the student... [providers] should encourage students to:

- *progress to a level of study which is higher than their prior attainment;*
- *take qualification(s) which are stretching rather than easy to pass;*
- *take qualification(s) that are judged to be of good/suitable size and level of rigour that will enable genuine progression to meaningful employment, training or higher levels of education;*
- *achieve English and maths GCSE A*-C or take English and maths provision that will lead to significant progress towards this if this has not already been achieved;*
- *participate in value-added non-qualification activity and work experience, whenever appropriate.*

Most study programmes are expected to include:

- at least one qualification of substantial size and challenge
- English and Maths for those who do not have a GCSE at grade C or above
- work experience where appropriate
- non-qualification activity

The requirements of the Study Programme will mean that a young person who has not yet achieved A*-C GCSE in English and maths or equivalent at age 16 will need to continue to study towards GCSE A*-C post-16. This requirement will become a condition of funding requiring schools and colleges to provide teaching for these qualifications from September 2014.

However, the DfE recognises that for learners at Entry and level 1,

programmes will vary considerably, including the proportion of the Study Programme focused on achieving qualifications. In a few cases, for example, where a student has profound and/or complex learning difficulties or disabilities, the Study Programme may contain no qualifications at all and either be focused on work experience or on non-qualification activity that will contribute to a young person's preparation for adult life. In such cases, the Study Programme must still include some English and maths teaching at an appropriate level (for example, improving a student's communication skills, or improving their understanding of money).

For most learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities their programme of study will be a holistic learning experience, with (often unaccredited) literacy, language and numeracy skills embedded into a curriculum that supports broader learning goals that are concerned with life and work.

The ultimate responsibility for developing an appropriate curriculum sits with the provider. You can choose to design a programme that does not meet the DfE guidelines, provided that you can demonstrate that the curriculum is leading to positive progression for the learners. You will also need to demonstrate that you are applying rigorous quality assurance procedures to your provision. This is particularly important where some or all of your provision is unaccredited. This is best achieved through

adopting a carefully planned and managed system of Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement (RARPA).¹

Further guidance on using RARPA can be found at FE colleges and training providers can offer **supported internships** to young people with an LDA or EHC Plan as part of the new study programmes from September 2013. (Note there is no requirement for accreditation with this approach to a study programme.) DfE advises that job coach support is likely to be included and that the bulk of the learning should take place on employer premises but with the learning provider taking lead responsibility for the programme and the learner. Wherever possible the internship should lead to a real job at the end.

The detaching of funding from qualifications and the freedom to design study programmes that support the individual progression needs of learners together give you an excellent opportunity to explore new approaches to curriculum design and delivery. (See examples of a range of possible study programmes below, all of which - in different ways - take advantage of the flexibilities within the study programme guidelines. These case studies have been produced by LSIS and have not been formally approved in any way by DfE or Ofsted.)

Destination measures

Destination Measures were published for the first time in July 2012. The measures show how many young people progress into further education or training from individual schools and colleges. From 2013, the aim is to include employment destinations in the measures. From spring 2013, specific data will be collected on destinations for young people with special educational needs or learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

In order to build up the evidence you need to support your decisions on curriculum design you must develop rigorous data collection methods for recording learner destinations. This will be particularly important where you have chosen to deviate from the standard guidelines, for example by deciding not to use accreditation. It would also be useful to gather more qualitative data about some of the softer outcomes, including building up a portfolio of individual success stories.

¹ The Association of National Specialist Colleges (Natspec) is undertaking a project funded by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS), to run until March 2013. The project aims to test out some approaches to quality assuring the RARPA process (Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement), in a range of settings for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Nine providers from Further Education, Adult Community Learning and Independent Specialist College settings where the use of RARPA is already well established will develop and test approaches, informed by a project advisory group. <http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/25745>

Sample study programmes

Learner	Substantial Qualification	English and Maths (only for those who do not have a GCSE at grade C or above)	Work experience (where appropriate)	Non-qualification activity	Planned progression
Sarah would like to work in a restaurant. She has moderate learning difficulties.	Level 1 Certificate in Catering	E2 Functional Skills in English Unaccredited Maths curriculum focused on use of money, time and basic measuring and weighing Each embedded into catering course	Term 1: half day, increasing to 1 day per week in college restaurant Term 2 onwards: 2 days per week, minimum of 2 placements in different local catering facilities	Travel training Social skills for the work place General employability skills IT skills Active leisure/fitness sessions Tutorial/review	Employment
Michael who wants to work outdoors, is autistic and has epilepsy.	No qualification – see work experience and non-qualification activity for work skills learning	Unaccredited, college-based English and Maths curricula, covering skills identified as significant in the parks and gardens work he is undertaking as part of his supported internship, embedded into work place learning and reinforced through weekly college 'Skill Up' session	From term 2, supported internship (in the workplace) with job coach support at parks and gardens department within local council. End of course introduction to employers and working interviews where possible.	Vocational profiling Employability skills Work progress reviews Travel training Managing own medication	Supported employment
Idris wants to make more of his own decisions but isn't sure about getting a job. He has complex needs.	No qualification – instead substantial element is an unaccredited Myself/My Community course which includes self-advocacy, directing own support, becoming active within the local community and keeping fit and healthy	Personalised communication curriculum to improve use of Makaton and encourage more initiation of interactions with others Personalised numeracy curriculum to improve basic counting, sequencing and sorting Each embedded into Myself/My Community Course	Community course includes visits to different workplaces as part of diagnostic activity to determine what (if any) forms of employment Idris might aim for at a later stage	In addition to first 3 elements: Independent living skills Range of therapies Recreational activity Plan and review sessions	Increased independence Further learning (towards supported employment?)