16 to 18-year old participation in education and training – NAO report

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Summary
The National Audit Office (NAO) has published a value for money report 16-to-18-year old participation in education and training into education and training for 16 to 18 year olds (September 2014). The report examines how well the Department for Education (DfE) is implementing reforms to increase participation and improve the relevance and quality of learning for 16 to 18-year olds.

The proportion of 16 to 18-year olds participating in education and training increased between 2012 and 2013 from 79.2% to 81.2%; while those not in education, employment or training (NEETs) has fallen from 9.2% to 7.5%, the lowest level since comparable records began in 1994. This has been achieved despite an 8.1% reduction in funding since 2010-11. However, much of this improvement is put down to increasing the participation age to 17.

Overall value for money has increased though the NAO believes DfE needs better information in order to distinguish between the improvement driven by increasing the statutory participation age and improvements driven by other initiatives.

This briefing will be of particular interest to cabinet members, overview and scrutiny members and officers with responsibilities for education, economic development or regeneration.

Briefing in full
The National Audit Office (NAO) has published a value for money report 16-to-18-year old participation in education and training. It describes the challenges and what the Department for Education (DfE) is doing to address them, while assessing the progress being made to increase participation and improve the relevance and quality of education and training.

Conclusions and recommendations
The proportion of 16-18 year-olds participating in education and training is increasing and the proportion of those, not in education, employment or training (NEET) is falling. Combined with reduced overall funding and a shift to a per-person funding model meant that value for money has increased. However, the NAO believes that the DfE needs better information on which of its reforms are most effective in increasing participation and improving the quality of learning. In particular, the DfE needs to distinguish between improvement driven by raising the statutory participation age and improvement driven by other initiatives.

The NAO makes a number of recommendations for DfE:
It should commission a detailed analysis of the relevant contribution that its different reforms make, and at what cost.

Reconsider its role with regard to careers advice including whether it should intervene more directly if schools do not make careers advice independent and inspirational.

Find more ways to encourage employers, colleges and schools to work together to increase apprenticeships, traineeships and work experience for young people.

When deciding what to do to reduce further the proportion of young people who are NEET, it should systematically examine what local authorities are doing.

Challenges to increasing participation
The NAO found that among 16 to 18-year olds in England at the end of 2013:

- Participation increased by 2.0 percentage points over the year to 81.2% while the proportion of NEETs fell to 7.6% the lowest level since comparable records began in 1994.
- Historically England has had a lower proportion of young people in education and training than many other developed countries. In 2011, the proportion of 15-to-19-year-olds enrolled in education was 78% in the UK, compared to the EU average of 87% and an OECD average of 84%.
- Attainment has also improved in recent years, for instance, the proportion of those achieving a level 3 qualification (such as 2 or more A-levels) has risen by 17 percentage points since 2004. But in 2013, 14% of young people aged 19 did not even have a level-2 qualification (e.g. GCSEs graded A*-C).

Below is figure 2 taken from the NAO report showing DfE’s reforms to 16 to 18 education and training. Most reforms are being delivered through core funding to schools and colleges. In 2013-14, DfE allocated 87% of its £7 billion budget (for 16 to 18-year-olds) to schools and colleges; £700m (10%) to apprenticeships and £225m (3%) for financial support to students and £42m for the Youth Contract. That budget is 8% lower, in real terms, than in 2010-11.

DfE has also announced that it will reduce the funding rate of £4,000 to £3,300 per learner because of budget pressures, making the challenge that much greater, as funding falls and participation increases in combination. Hence, DfE needs to have a good understanding of what reforms are most effective, and accurate forecasting of demand and provision. While the DfE has sought to improve its forecasting by using more timely data and reviewing wider sources of participation data, such as data from local authorities, the NAO believe this still needs to be improved.
### Figure 2
The Department’s reforms to 16- to 18-year-old education and training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Start date</th>
<th>Funding allocated for 2013/14 (£m)</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legislation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Skills Act 2008</td>
<td>September 2013</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>In summer 2013, students who left year 11 had to continue in education or training for at least one further year, and students who left year 11 in summer 2014 were the first cohort required to continue until at least their 18th birthday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Act 2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reforms</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 to 19 Study Programmes</td>
<td>August 2013</td>
<td></td>
<td>Schools, colleges and private training providers must offer learners a tailored programme based on prior attainment and career aspirations. This should include meaningful work experience, and maths and English for learners who have not achieved at least grade Cs in these subjects at GCSE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traineeships*</td>
<td>August 2013</td>
<td>£6,116</td>
<td>Traineeships are designed to prepare young people for apprenticeships or work. They last between 6 weeks and 6 months, and include work preparation training, English and maths and a high-quality work placement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent, impartial careers advice and guidance</td>
<td>September 2012</td>
<td></td>
<td>Schools now have a statutory duty to provide independent careers advice and guidance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16–19 Bursary Fund</td>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>£180</td>
<td>Providers distribute money to young people to pay for clothing, books and other equipment or for transport and food. This replaces the Education Maintenance Allowance, funding for which in 2010–11 was £565 million.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Contract</td>
<td>April 2012</td>
<td>£42 (from HM Treasury)</td>
<td>The Education Funding Agency pays providers an average maximum payment of £1,768 per young person for them to engage the hardest to reach young people who are NEET, so that they can participate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship reforms</td>
<td>From August 2012</td>
<td>£700</td>
<td>Apprenticeships to last for 12 months or longer and to offer maths and English to learners who did not get grade Cs in these subjects at GCSE. By 2017/18, all apprenticeships will be based on standards designed by employers and funding will be routed through employers rather than providers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Careers Service*</td>
<td>April 2012</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Department provided funding to the National Careers Service, which has a helpline and website for young people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ongoing support</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other financial support</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>£44</td>
<td>The Department gives financial support through the Care to Learn grant; Dance and Drama Awards; the Residential Bursary and Residential Support grant.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes**
1. The figure includes £5 million that is paid to Traineeship providers through the Skills Funding Agency.
2. In 2013-14, the Department transferred £4.7 million to the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills for the young people’s element of the National Careers Service helpline.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of Departmental data

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Progress in increasing participation

At the end of 2013, the proportion of 16-to-18-year olds in education or training rose by 2 percentage points during the year, to 81.2% (from 79.2% a year ago) while the proportion of NEETs fell by 1.6 percentage points to 7.6%. This is the lowest proportion of NEETs since constant records began in 1994. In detail, at the end of 2013, of nearly 2 million young people aged 16 to 18:

- 1.5 million (81.2%) were in education or (government funded) training;
- 148,000 (7.6%) were not in education, employment or training (NEET);
- 133,000 (6.7%) had a job without training; and
- 87,000 (4.4%) were in training not funded by the government.

Why has the participation rate increased?

According to the NAO, much of the increase in participation rates can be put down to the increase in the statutory participation age as evidenced by a 2.8% increase in participating 16-year-olds. Since September 2013, young people have had to stay in full time education and training until they are 17. The NAO found it difficult to distinguish the impact of other factors including DfE’s reforms and the health of the wider economy. The data does not show even progress: while participation rose for this age group as a whole, it fell slightly for 17-year olds. While the proportion of 18-year olds entering full time education rose by 2.4 percentage points (to 27.4%), the number of 16-to-18-year-olds in apprenticeships only rose by 0.2 percentage points (to 5.7%).

The fall in the proportion of young people who were NEET according to the NAO was probably due to a combination of causes. The new law requiring 16-year-olds to participate in education or training was significant; the data show falls both in those who were not learning and those who were working. While more 17 and 18-year olds were also working but not learning, as their employment rate increased; at the end of 2013 these were 42% and 55% respectively. Other factors may also have contributed but these cannot be isolated from the data.

Improving career advice and guidance

An Ofsted thematic review, published in September 2013, assesses the impact of the new duty on schools to secure independent careers guidance. It concluded that while there was some excellent careers support in some schools, elsewhere it remained “patchy” and most schools’ provision was not independent; only 12 out of the 60 schools Ofsted visited provided all students sufficient information to consider a wide breadth of career possibilities. The NAO noted that with each learner worth at least £4,000, schools with sixth form provision have an incentive to encourage learners not to move to other institutions.

Evidence from the NAO’s own focus groups was that awareness of vocational training and the process to access those courses was very low among young people who were NEET. This tallied with previous research from the Centre for Analysis of Youth Transitions, which found that schools’ careers advice often focused on staying there or going to college, ignoring vocational options, while advice from external agencies was more likely to be independent.

The same Ofsted report also found that the all-age National Careers Service (given through a website and telephone service) was “poorly promoted” and was “little used” by young people.
Face-to-face support is only available from the National Careers Service to adults aged 19 and over or to 18-year-olds receiving out-of-work-benefits.

DfE has since revised and reissued the statutory guidance for schools, which emphasises that school careers advice should tell young people about post-16 options beyond those at their existing schools, and that schools should work with local employers and use external careers advisers to provide independent advice. Compliance with the duty and statutory guidance is via Ofsted’s routine school inspections, which are giving higher priority to this issue by using destination measures to reach broad judgements about the quality of careers advice.

**The 16-19 Bursary Fund**

The Bursary Fund replaced the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) in 2011/12 as it was judged by DfE to represent poor value for money after research showed that 88% of recipients would have been in education without it. A study by Institute for Education and the Institute for Fiscal Studies for the DfE estimates that replacing the EMA with the Bursary Fund, which costs less than half as much, had led to just a 0.7% fall in participation in 2011/12. DfE’s own evaluation found it to be more flexible in supporting learners with the NAO believing that the bursary fund had the potential to be even more effective through greater awareness and improvement to the fund’s administration.

**Initiatives for those who need extra support**

There are a number of initiatives to help prevent those most at risk young people from becoming NEET, and to improve their chances of joining mainstream further education and training:

- **Traineeships** are a new initiative which began in August 2013 to get participants ready for an apprenticeship or a job. Some 5,400 16-to-18-year-olds started Traineeships during the first nine months of the programme.
- The **Youth Contract** introduced in August 2012 provides extra support for 16-and-17-year-olds who are the hardest to reach to move into education, training, or work (with training); there are an estimated 70,000 individuals in this group.
- **European Social Fund** is used by the Education Funding Agency, Skills Funding Agency and local authorities to encourage young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET; and
- **Youth Engagement Fund** is a new £16m fund designed to improve the educational achievements and employability for around 16,000 disadvantaged 14-to-17-year-olds in 100 schools.

The NAO finds that the DfE faces a challenge in achieving its ambitions for Traineeships as while they had expected around 420 providers to be delivering them in 2014/15 only 200 out of the 459 eligible training providers had recorded starts as at June 2014.

Meanwhile there has been a “significant improvement” in the enrolment of young people on to the Youth Contract since it began in April 2012. By March 2014, 18 months into a 30 month programme (the programme will end in March 2015), 18,570 young people had been recruited – 26% of the estimated 70,000 young people the programme is aimed at. This improvement has been put down to the widening of the eligibility criteria from only young people with no GCSEs (at C or above) to those with fewer than two GCSEs (A to C), young offenders and those who are, or have been, in care. The original tighter eligibility criteria meant that providers were only able to
work with young people who were genuinely hard to reach. However, some providers reported difficulty finding enough eligible 16- and-17-year-olds in their area, while the maximum payment available was considered too low to cover the costs necessary to work successfully with the most difficult cases.

DfE’s evaluation has found the Youth Contract has helped the ‘hard to reach’ into education and training and was positive about the soft skills being developed through the scheme’s one-to-one support. By the end of 2013 - after 19 months - the programme had reduced the number of NEETs in England by 1.8%. (It takes 12 months before the Youth Contract achieves a successful outcome).

That evaluation also found that some providers thought that the commissioning of the programme had focused too much on cost rather than quality while the design of the payment by results system had not encouraged new or innovative approaches to engaging young people.

Local authorities’ role (including on transport)

The NAO states that the DfE needs local authorities to meet their statutory duties (to secure sufficient, suitable education and training for all young people in their area, and to support participation, including the identification of young people who are NEET) if it is to raise the participation rate and monitor and measure the effectiveness of the reforms. For instance, it uses information that local authorities collect, to understand what young people are doing between the ages of 16 and 18 though the quality of this information can vary and is sometimes incomplete or inaccurate. While attempts to improve data quality have been successful last year, DfE wrote to 12 local authorities reminding them of their duty to collect information on 16 to 18-year-olds’ participation in education and training.

The NAO believes that DfE could also further facilitate knowledge sharing among local authorities about the different approaches they have developed to engage with young people at risk of becoming NEET. The NAO reviewed six local authorities finding “some innovative and interesting practices”; these case studies are set out in Appendix Three of the report (online only).

Local authorities also have a duty to publish a transport statement setting out what arrangements they have to support young people of sixth-form age to access education and training. This duty does not have to include providing financial assistance but many local authorities do provide help with the transport costs. The NAO found that most 16-to-18-year olds live near a school with a sixth form (88% have one within 5 miles), smaller numbers have a further education or sixth form college nearby (60% and 33% within 5 miles, respectively). The NAO found that 63 local authorities in areas where young people were likely to face high transport costs did not subsidise travel.

Progress in improving relevance and quality

Among the reforms it is pursuing DfE has started to allocate funding on a per-pupil rather than a per-qualification basis (while continuing to adjust for differences in the content of courses and for high-needs students). The NAO believe this has removed a key value for money element, namely, that providers will encourage learners to take easy and shorter qualifications rather than the most useful and appropriate ones. Additionally, it has helped to mitigate the year-on-year funding reductions.

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While they participate in education and training in a variety of settings where young people choose to study has not changed significantly in the past 20 years. This is with the exception of a major drop of more than 50% in participation in government-funded training. At the end of 2013, just under half (46%) studied in either a further education or sixth form college. Around 8% were in government-funded training.

16 to 19 Study Programme

In order to promote more individualised learning since September 2013 schools and colleges have to offer each student a personal 16-19 Study Programme based on their prior attainment, and designed to support their development and progression in line with their future career plans. This might include work experience or a traineeship placement, and mathematics and English for learners who do not achieve grade C in these subjects at GCSE.

DfE plans to monitor how successful they are by tracking the number of young people who are: studying and achieving English and maths GCSEs; studying for vocational qualifications; and doing work experience or a Traineeship. Additionally, from 2016, providers will be required to publish performance data on their websites including 16- to 18-year-olds’ progress and attainment, retention rates, and destinations, such as whether young people go into higher education or employment.

The NAO identified a number of risks to the Study Programme initiative:

- Providers have not been advised on how much they should be spending on designing Study Programmes, meaning there may be variation in the quality of implementation.
- According to a CBI survey, only 46% of employers offer work placements of more than a fortnight to young people.
- According to the Association of Colleges, 32% of colleges reported a shortfall in the numbers of staff needed to deliver Level 2 maths and a 28% shortfall in the numbers needed to teach Level 2 English.

In recognition of the last point the government has published a further education workforce strategy and has committed £30 million over two years to support the recruitment and training of teachers, with a particular focus on supporting the recruitment and training of existing teachers of maths and English.

Improving the quality of apprenticeships

Following the Richard Review, apprenticeships are being reformed and lengthened (to last a minimum of 12 months) to provide deeper learning and skills while employers are being given more say in their design and running, including determining assessment standards and grades. Apprenticeships will include English and maths for those without at least a grade C in these subjects at GCSE and will end with an assessment of full competence. The aim is to have the new system of apprenticeships fully in place from 2017/18. While the existing ‘programme-led apprenticeships’ which allowed people to begin work on an apprenticeship with an education or training provider without being employed are being phased out. The Government believes apprentices should be employed from the first day of their apprenticeship in order to develop the skills and knowledge they need for their occupation. Already, the number of apprentices starting an apprenticeship of 12 months or more has increased by 32% in the year to 2012-13; but over the same period there was a 12% fall in the number of young people starting apprenticeships.

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The NAO see potential risks to the overall participation rate. Namely that longer apprenticeships, in the context of reduced funding, might lead to fewer apprenticeships in total, which, in turn, could reduce overall participation. They also see risks in moves to make employers 'co-investors' in apprenticeships and customers of training, which DfE considers will incentivise them to take more responsibility for improving quality. Currently the government pays the full cost of training 16- to-18-year-old apprentices. By 2016, employers will have to contribute towards their apprentices' training costs (apart from the costs of English and maths study). In addition, the government plans to cap the maximum level of its funding for each apprentice and give providers funding using payment by results. However, the NAO note that employers do not have to have apprentices carrying the risk that fewer may do so if they have to meet the training costs themselves.

In additional there may be particular barriers for small and medium-sized enterprises, which are relatively under-represented among providers. Less than 29% of firms with fewer than 50 employees, and 67% of medium-sized enterprises with 50 to 249 employees, provide apprenticeships. The DfE is seeking to address those barriers this through the Apprenticeship Grant for Employers of 16- to 24-year-olds supporting businesses, with fewer than 1000 employees, to recruit young people as an apprentice, who may not otherwise have done so. Up to April 2014, the grant had supported 53,600 16- to 18-year-olds.

**Ofsted reports**

The NAO's report was published within days of a number of publications from Ofsted on the quality of further education being provided to the 16 to 18 year group. The NAO report does not take account of this work.

Ofsted analysis **Securing a better future for all at 16 and beyond – Background information, data and case studies to the annual lecture for further education and skills 2014** (September 2014) shows a diverse picture:

- In March 2014, 90.3% of 16-to-18-year-olds were participating in some form of education or training, up from 1.4% from the previous year;
- Only 77% of young people eligible for free school meals in mainstream schools entered a sustained destination at 16, compared with 88% of those not eligible for free school meals;
- The proportion of young people who are NEET and those whose ‘situation unknown’ varies considerably by region. See diagram below.
- At a national level, around 42,000 16-17-year olds’ activity is unknown. The proportion of young people whose activity is unknown is higher than that for young people who have been identified as NEET in over half of local authorities.
- Just one in 40 of young people who achieve 5 or more GCSEs A* to C are NEET at age 17, compared with one in six who obtained fewer GCSEs;
- A smaller proportion of white 16-17-year olds are recorded as in education and training than any other ethnic group.
- Although it has fallen steadily over the last two years, the number of young people aged 16 to 24 who are NEET is still 13.6% in England; varying from 11.7% in London and the South East to 18.2% in the North East. See diagram below.
- A higher proportion of young women aged 16 to 24 (15.3%) are NEET than young men (11.9%).
- The UK and four other European countries have a youth unemployment rate that is three or more times greater than the adult rate.
Long-term youth unemployment fell in the year to May 2014 by 25% compared to a fall of 16% for the 25 and over age group.

Only 47% of people without qualifications were employed in the period April to June 2013, compared with 87% of graduates.

The proportion of 16–18-year-olds who were NEET or where their activity is unknown at the end of 2013, by region:


These figures were published before Ofsted’s annual learning and skill lecture Further Education and Skills annual lecture 2014 speech: Securing a better future for all at 16 and beyond (10 September 2014). Lorna Fitzjohn, the inspectorate’s director for further education and skills, posed the question whether school and provider autonomy was working locally, observing that strategic planning for post-16 provision “seems to be increasingly disparate and fragmented, with unclear accountabilities”. This reflected Ofsted’s experience of undertaking ‘14 to 19 area reviews’ which found: it was difficult to identify the combined curriculum that was on offer for young people in a particular local area; there was little systematic collaboration among providers to reduce duplication and unnecessary competition; and there was no clear structures or lines of accountability to ensure the range provision serviced all young people well. While nationally managed structures “have too poorly aligned with local delivery” which do not reflect the local differences in the nature and extent of local youth unemployment and NEETs, echoing the view of the Local Government Association expressed in their recent report Council views on the effectiveness of the 16-19 commissioning process.
Lorna Fitzjohn called for more local solutions and aligning provision to the needs of local employers and for all local players – Councils, FE colleges, academy chains – to work better together. Government should ensure there are clear lines of local accountability for the range and content of education either through local enterprise partnerships, local authorities or other bodies. She also recommended that local providers, local authorities and Job Centre plus should be mandated to share information about learners’ backgrounds to help provide for more individualised support when learners transfer to different providers.

The Ofsted lecture was used to launch a survey report *Transforming education and training: the early implementation of the 16 to 19 study programmes* (September 2014). The report examines how FE providers are coping with the new requirements introduced in August 2013 for individualised training and education programmes to support young people achieve their planned next step in further or higher education, training or employment. This is something the NAO also looked at.

Ofsted found that too many providers are not implementing the study programmes’ requirements or the key principles underpinning them with many school and academy leaders interviewed by Ofsted unaware of the full extent of the requirements and the implications for their sixth form provision. The quality of teaching in English and maths was deemed to be not good enough and too much careers guidance is weak.

The report was also critical of many local authorities who are failing in their duty to track progress of learners, pointing to the fact that it is unknown whether 40,000 16-to-17-years olds are in education, training or employment. Ofsted called for more reliable systems for tracking educational progress, and for greater powers for local authorities to ensure all providers (including academies and FE colleges) co-operate to provide with reliable and timely information. In her lecture, Lorna Fitzjohn had some sympathy with local authorities on the difficulties they faced, saying that when young people do drop out of education and training and are known to local authorities “they often receive very good personal support”.

The Ofsted report also covers the introduction of **Traineeships**, coming to the conclusion which accords to the NAO’s own assessment that their growth has not happened quickly enough. Indeed according to Ofsted it was below target in almost all of the providers they had spoken to and caused by a shortage of sufficient good-quality work placements and progression routes to apprenticeships. Many providers had delayed their offer because they were not fully ready while the proportion of learners in the first cohort who successfully moved on to an apprenticeship or employment was considered to be too low. Ofsted concluded that where learners were carefully selected and prepared to meet the aim of traineeships and where providers had identified employers who will provide work placements before learners had enrolled, progress was higher.

In her lecture Lorna Fitzjohn makes the point that, after school, for many young people further education (and the wider skills sector) often represents their last chance before dropping out of education and training altogether. This places a greater need for the very best learning experience to be provided. This was further highlighted by another Ofsted report *Teaching, learning and assessment in further education and skills – what works and why* (September 2014) which reviewed 20 outstanding providers in the sector and what made them so. But across the sector they found relatively little outstanding practice in the teaching of English and maths. There was too much focus on completing learning activities with enough attention paid to ensuring that learning is understood while teachers had low expectations of learners. In these institutions, there was a
culture driven by: policies, strategies and documents, and not by teaching practice; lack of rigour in evaluating the quality of provision which focused too much on what teachers were doing as opposed to the impact of the teaching; a lack of accountability and leadership and some complacency in senior management teams about the quality of the teaching and learning; and a resistance to change on the part of some teaching staff, and little investment in staff development.

Ofsted statistics, as reported by the TES in September 2014, tell us that Colleges and FE providers have recorded a significant improvement in their performance as evidenced by their inspection reports. 70% of providers inspected between September 2013 and June 2014, which were previously rated as “requiring improvement” or as “satisfactory”, recorded an improvement in grade. This is up from the 49% improvement rate recorded in the previous year’s figures.

This comes at the same time, as part of wide-ranging reforms to all inspections carried out by Ofsted the inspectorate is considering separate grades for different areas of FE provision which could also include 16-19 study programmes, employability and community learning. Driven by concerns about the quantity and quality of apprenticeships – which can be delivered by FE colleges, the move – if implemented – would allow young people and employers (who fund places) to make informed choices depending on what provision they require.

Comment

The key headline from the NAO report is that between the ages of 16 and 18, NEETs are at their lowest level for 20 years – or since comparable records began. However, the situation is much more complex than that and not really comparable with that in 1994. In 2013, the compulsory participation age in education and training was raised to 17 (end of year 12). The NAO attribute much of the drop off in NEETs to that factor. In addition, we can expect the number of 16 to 18-year olds in this category to continue to fall as next year the participation age will rise again, to the 18th birthday. But this will amount to nothing unless their time in further education is meaningful. It may lead the NEET problem shifting to later years.

External Links

NAO 16-to-18-year old participation in education and training
Ofsted Going in the right direction? Careers guidance in schools from September 2012
Ofsted Teaching, learning and assessment in further education and skills - what works and why
Ofsted Speech by Lorna Fitzjohn, National Director for Further Education and Skills - Securing a better future for all at 16 and beyond
Ofsted Transforming 16 to 19 education and training: the early implementation of 16 to 19 study programmes
Ofsted Briefing Paper - Securing a better future for all at 16 and beyond – Background information, data and case studies to the annual lecture for further education and skills 2014
LGIU Briefings

*Ofsted consultation – Better inspection for all* (October 2014)

*Traineeships: Funding Reform in England – BIS and DFE consultation* (July 2014)

*Careers guidance provision for young people in schools – DFE guidance* (May 2014)

*Careers Services – update* (September 2013)


*Locally Led Delivery Projects for Raising the Participation Age, DFE research* (October 2013)

*Raising the Participation Age: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities* (April 2013)

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