



Key educational sector update for employers

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Key movements

- Post 16 Skills White Paper – introduced in October 2025
- Schools White Paper – introduced in 2026
- SEND reforms – introduced in 2026
- Level 3 Qualification reforms – introduced in 2026



Post 16 Skills White Paper

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Post 16 Skills White paper

Key focus on

- Meeting the needs of the economy
- Closing the skills gap
- Supporting growth

It sets out to reform national Higher Education, Teaching and Research within

- Post 16 education and training providers
- Local and strategic authorities
- Employers

Post 16 Skills White Paper

- Invest 1.2 billion per year by 2028/29
- Reform the Level 2 and Level 3 qualification landscape
- Increased power to bar 'unsuitable people' to lead FE colleges
- Roll out Technical Excellence colleges
- Improve Teacher training and education
- Bring Further and Higher Education organisations together
- Simplify the funding formulas for colleges
- Increase tuition fee caps in HE and increase maintenance loans
- Develop a sustained research approach in education
- Align education, employers and the skills landscape

Post 16 Skills White Paper – impact

- 66.7% of young people engage in higher-level training/education
- 10% of young people are studying higher-level apprenticeships
- Reduction in skills shortages (priority areas *)
- Increase in engagement in education (priority areas *)
- Deliver 6,500 more teachers
- Measure the % of 16–21-year olds in education, work or training to reduce NEET %
- Drive up apprenticeship starts to 30,000

*Advanced manufacturing, Clean energy industries, Defence, Digital Technologies, Financial Services, Life sciences, Professional and Business services, Housing and Health and Social Care)



Schools White Paper

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Schools White Paper

Every Child Achieving and Thriving

Setting every child up to succeed - rebuilding public services and wrap-around support for young people

Narrow to broad - revising the curriculum to provide a broad and enriched offer that develops key skills at all stages and provides effective transition between settings

Sidelined to included - reducing the disparity in education and ensuring all young people regardless of ability and background, are not sidelined by a system that doesn't meet their needs

Withdrawn to engaging - targeted support to provide settings with clear measures of providing inclusion, breaking down access barriers and increasing engagement and attendance

Schools White Paper - Impact

- 6,500 more teachers in secondary, special schools and colleges
- Attendance increase by 1.3% (20 million more days each year by 2028/2029)
- Ensure mainstream education is inclusive
- Embed a revised enriched curriculum – broader with new enrichment offer
- Deliver targeted deprivation funding
- Deliver 1.6 billion over three years to provide mainstream inclusion
- Deliver 1.8 billion in more 'experts at hand' to support SEND needs
- Revise EHCP and SEND support services
- Deliver 3.7 billion in capital funding for inclusion hubs
- Deliver 200 million in funding to deliver SEND training to all teachers



SEND reforms

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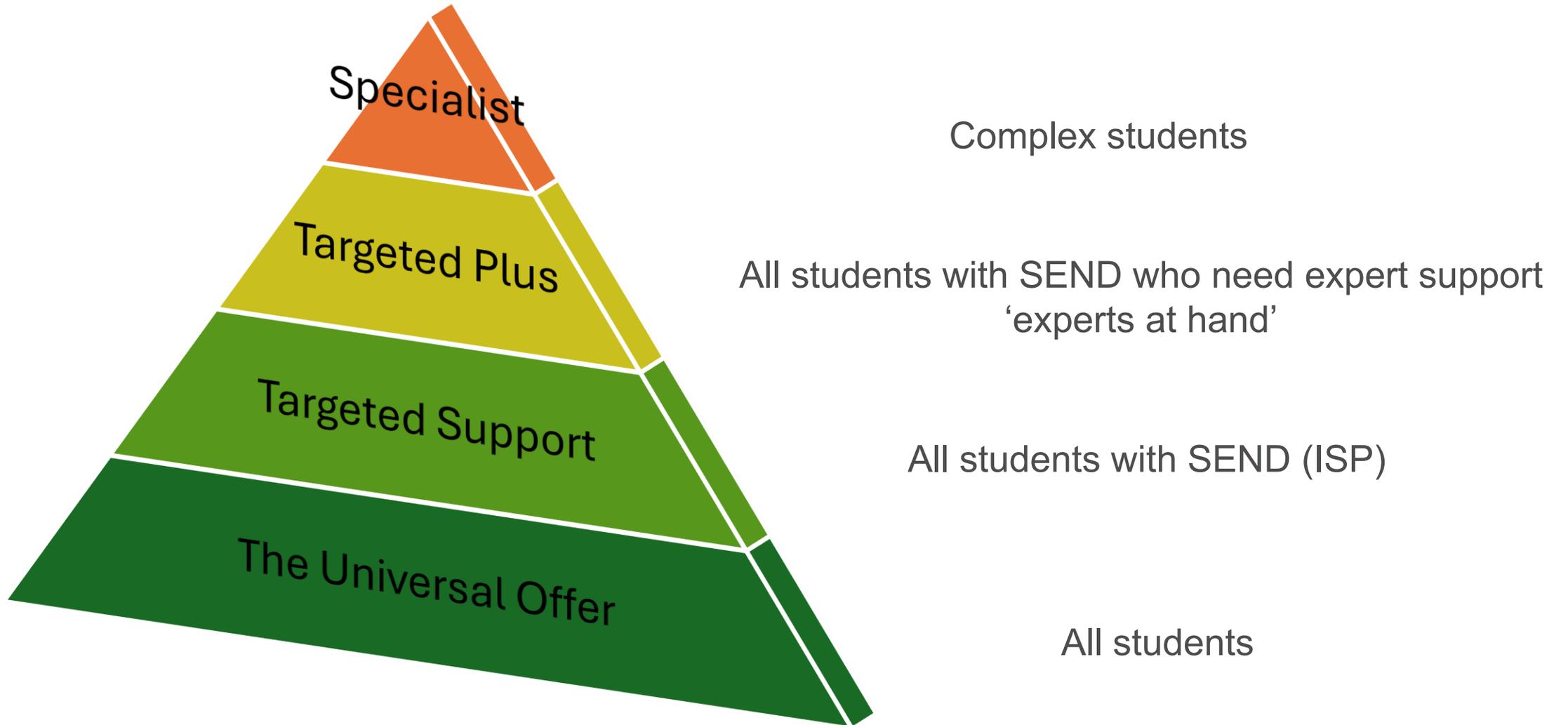
SEND reforms

SEND reforms have a clear purpose to provide all students with early intervention and diagnosis , improved transition between settings and equitable access to services which break down their barriers to equitable opportunity and outcomes in all schools and post 16 settings

The current three tier system is being revised (graduated response)

- Targeted Small group-based intervention based on evidence-informed strategies delivered by college staff
- Targeted Plus Includes the new 'experts on hand', bringing expert advice from health and education into settings(OT, SaLT, EP)
- Specialist – Support will be provided through nationally defined Specialist Provision packages (SSP's). This will underpin entitlement in EHCP

SEND reforms



SEND reforms

- The Equality Act, the Children's Act, and the SEND Code of Practice still underpin all SEND practice
- Legal protection remains for students with an existing EHCP
- Local Authority retains the statutory responsibility for students 0-25 with SEND

- EHCPs will be retained and improved for those with the most complex needs, over and above what can be routinely provided in mainstream education. Learners with existing EHCPs will see no changes before September 2030 at the earliest – will move to a national standard model

- For children with the most complex needs, new nationally defined, evidence-based Specialist Provision Packages will be developed by an independent expert panel and will be legally enforced. These will underpin future EHCPs from 2030

SEND reforms

- New Individual Support Plans for all young people with SEND and identified as needing targeted support and above. These are a digital record of the learner's needs and day-to-day support
- Improved transition processes from school to college, beginning at least 12 months in advance, so that young people are supported to access further education from day one
- Stronger focus on preparing young people with SEND for adult life, employment, higher education and independent living, as appropriate, including the new 1619 'stepping stone' maths and English offer
- Reform commences in 2026 in three phases, the final phase being implemented in 2029. These reforms are systemic across multiple landscapes (schools, colleges, social and educational services and Local Government) and will take ten years to be fully embedded



Qualification reforms

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Qualification reforms

Underpinned by three principles -

Progression - qualifications must deliver positive outcomes, enabling them to progress into further study at a higher level or employment

Future Proof - Each qualification must be high quality and adaptable to the future skills needs. Each qualification should be equally prestigious

Clarity of choice - Qualifications must be easy to navigate, freedom of informed choice is key and should have options for specialised or broader study

In practice this means.....

Qualification reforms

- Introduction of one V Level per subject- smaller Level 3 qualifications that can be packaged to be the same size as a T Level or A level
- Revise current T Levels – will be the only large Level 3 qualification
- Introduce new T Levels in subjects currently with no T Level
- A Levels remain unchanged
- Current Level 3 qualifications will be replaced and defunded (phased)
- Redesign of Level 2 qualifications to two pathways only
 - Occupational Certificate route to work or an apprenticeship
 - Technical Certificate route to Level 3 study
- Introduce Level 1 maths and English qualifications

Timeline

Academic Year	Occupational Certificates	Foundation Certificates	V Levels	New T Levels
2027/2028	Catering and Hospitality Education and Early Years	Digital Education and Early Years	Digital Education and Early Years Finance and Accounting	-
2028/2029	Care Services Construction & Built Environment Digital Engineering & Manufacturing Business and Admin Health and Science Finance Sports and Leisure	Business Admin and Law Care Services Construction Engineering & Manufacturing Health and Science Sport, fitness and Exercise science	Business and Admin Care Services Construction & Built Environment Engineering & Manufacturing Health and Science Legal Sales, Marketing and Procurement Sports, fitness and Exercise science	Care Services Sports, fitness and Exercise science
2029/2030	Agriculture, Environment & Animal Care Horticulture and Floristry	Agriculture, Environment & Animal Care Catering and Hospitality Hair and Beauty Protective services	Agriculture, Environment & Animal Care Catering and Hospitality Hair and Beauty Protective Services	Catering and Hospitality Creative and Design (expansion) Hair and Beauty Protective Services
2030/2031	-	Art and Performing Arts Creative and Design Travel and Tourism	Art and Performing Arts Creative and Design Travel and Tourism	Art and Performing Arts Travel and Tourism

Apprenticeship defunding

- Team Leader
- Operations Manager
- Coaching Professional
- Chartered Manager
- Facilities Manager Supervisor
- Learning and Skills Manager
- Clean Hygiene Operative
- Custody and detention Professional
- Professional Security Operative
- Improvement Leader
- Public Sector Compliance Investigator and Officer
- Legal Practitioner in Adult Care
- Improvement Practitioner
- Security First Line Manager
- Learning and Skills Assessor

Funds from the above will be diverted to support more young people gaining an apprenticeship

Defunding will not take place before 1st September 2026

619 ITP's, Colleges and Universities currently deliver the above apprenticeship standards

Over 10,000 starts are currently seen on these standards