

# POLICY TRACKER

2009/01

31 May 2009

## Keeping track of education developments in May 2009

### *Main Talking Points*

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Two familiar talking points this month: testing and funding. On testing, Ed Balls's Statement to Parliament on 7<sup>th</sup> May, following the publication of the Expert Advisory Group Report on Assessment, heralded the start of the annual testing and exam summer season. No Key Stage 3 tests this year but continuing media interest in Key Stage testing all the same. On funding: Government Departments have been getting to grips with the previous month's Budget Statement; both Education Departments have been looking at how to secure efficiency gains, an additional £650m for DCSF and £400m for DIUS.

### *Progress on the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill*

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The [Bill](#) completed its final stages in the Commons, largely intact, on the 5<sup>th</sup> May. It has now passed over to the Lords, with the Committee Stage due to begin on 16<sup>th</sup> June.

### *Key headlines from the last month*

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- [Consultation](#) closed on the Specification for Apprenticeship Standards in England. All Frameworks due to be compliant by March 2011.
- The Expert Advisory Group published its [Report on Assessment](#) with 9 proposals
- Ed Balls announced £450m for National Challenge Schools from September.
- Ofsted reported on its [consultation](#) on changes to FE and skills inspections.
- Ofqual published its first [Chief Regulator's Report](#).
- The UK Commission published its first [annual audit](#) of UK skills and employment; "our projections suggest that the UK's relative international position is unlikely to improve by 2020".
- The first four SSCs to be [re-licensed](#) were announced.
- NIACE's regular [survey](#) for Adult Learners' Week highlighted just a 1% increase in adult participation in learning over the last 3 years.

### *Word/Phrase of the Month*

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- 'More for less.' It's what efficiency is all about

### *Gossip*

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Will Ed Balls move as part of Cabinet changes? BERR or the Treasury seem to be favourites.

### *Look out for*

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- Schools White Paper due imminently, focusing on accountability.
- Skills White Paper focusing on Skills Activism.
- A Strategy Paper on IAG.
- A new long-term framework for HE based on last year's reviews.

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