

STATES OF JERSEY



FULLY FUNDING EDUCATION OR TRAINING FOR ALL 16-18 YEAR OLDS

Lodged au Greffe on 4th June 2024
by Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier North
Earliest date for debate: 25th June 2024

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

- (a) that all 16- to 18-year-olds should be eligible for fully funded education or professional training in Jersey and to request the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning to implement any necessary changes to the existing provision prior to September 2025;
- (b) to request the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning to include any necessary long term additional funding within the Government Plan 2026-2029; and
- (c) to request the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning to undertake a review of education legislation and policy with a view to increasing participation in education or professional training for all young people up to the age of 18.

DEPUTY I. GARDINER OF ST. HELIER NORTH

REPORT

The topic of post 16 education and training is not a new one. In fact over the last 5 years work has been done by four different Education Ministers and by Scrutiny panels. I provide a brief overview of the outputs below –

In April 2019 the Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny panel, chaired by Deputy R Ward, published a [Scrutiny review for Post 16 Education](#) –

“The Panel found that compulsory education in Jersey ends at 16, although under the Education (Jersey) Law 1999, the Minister for Education has a responsibility to provide appropriate opportunities to people over the age of 16. There is, however, no statutory responsibility to provide post-16 education opportunities, even though over 90% of students go on to study some form of qualification post-16. As a result of the evidence received throughout the review about this situation, the Panel has recommended that as part of the review of the Education (Jersey) Law 1999, the Minister for Education investigates the merits, implications and definition of raising the school participation age to 18.”

I agree with the panel’s recommendations.

Further and Higher Education provision was reviewed and aligned with economic development plans in 2019 with the aim of shaping our education system to meet the demands of the future. Following extensive consultation the report entitled “[A Post-16 Strategy for Jersey](#)” was published. The following are some of the key objectives of that report –

- Key objective 2 – Providing access to tertiary education for all through widening participation, equality of opportunity and improving educational and employment outcomes
- Key objective 3 – Ensuring the quality and appropriateness of post-16 education provision
- Key objective 6 – Ensuring appropriate governance and financial sustainability for post-16 education

In December 2022, in my role as Minister for Education, I published the “[Further Education and Skills Actionable Agenda](#)” which was based on work undertaken during 2018-2022, including strategies and scrutiny report findings and recommendations, and set out (amongst others) the following actions in relation to post-16 education and skills

- Raise the participation age to age 18, with a corresponding entitlement and requirement for all young people to be in full-time education, or employment with training.
- Funding to follow the learner for all 16–19-year-olds (and up to age 25 for SEND), based upon a transparent formula.
- The costs of apprenticeship delivery to be reviewed and adjusted to realistic levels.

I believe this is the right time for the Assembly to express their views and to debate provision and funding for 16-18 years old, and to take decisive steps with regards the education provision for the young people who are the Island’s future.

Part A

Part A of my proposition is asking the Assembly to agree that all 16- to 18-year-olds to be eligible for fully funded education or training in the Island.

Jersey is an outlier in several respects, in relation to 16-18 education.

Page 5 of the "[Further Education and Skills Actionable Agenda for a Prosperous, Productive and Fair Jersey](#)" states that –

- 1) *As noted in the Independent Review of School Funding, its level of funding for this stage of schooling is lower than most OECD nations.*
- 2) *The legally presumed age for leaving education and/or training is still 16. In all of the nations of the UK, the participation age is now 18. The same is true for most European nations.*
- 3) *There is no formal provision made for young people with special educational needs to continue in full-time education after the age of 18. The entitlement in the UK is to age 25 for this group.*

There are numerous advantages to staying in education or training longer¹

- Young people can develop a greater range of skills
- The likelihood of unemployment is significantly reduced
- An increase in earning potential
- Offers the opportunity for young people who are disengaged with mainstream education to develop new skills in an alternative setting.

Increasing the number of young people remaining in education or training after the age of 16 will bring economic and social benefits.

The [Leitch Review](#) demonstrated the importance to the economy of improving workers' skills, as businesses face an increasingly competitive international environment. Increasing post-16 participation is a crucial part of increasing the skill levels of the workforce.

An example cited in the paper [Labour market value of higher and further education qualifications: a summary](#) details that,

“On average, studying for a qualification in higher education (HE) or further education (FE) is positively correlated with someone’s future earnings.”

¹ [Participation of young people in education, employment or training - childlawadvice.org.uk](#)

Figure 32: Earnings by level and type of qualification at age 26 in FE for men

Percentage difference in earnings relative to the earnings of someone of similar characteristics who studied a qualification at the level below.

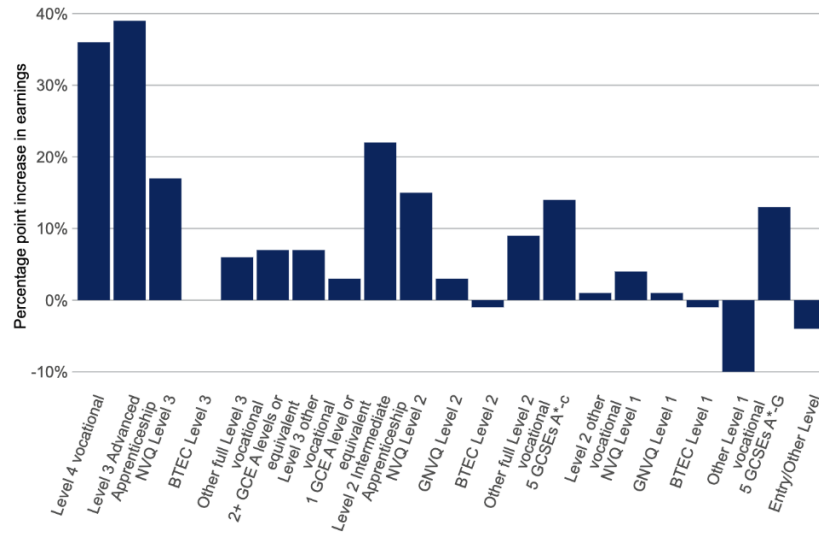
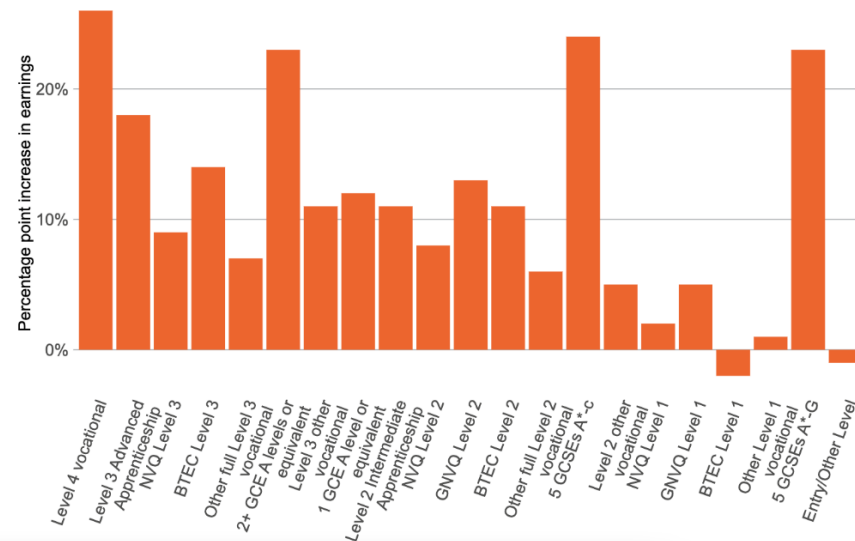


Figure 33: Earnings by level and type of qualification at age 26 in FE for women

Percentage difference in earnings relative to the earnings of someone of similar characteristics who studied a qualification at the level below.



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The study [Post-18 Education: Who is Taking Different Routes and How Much do they Earn?](#) sums these findings up – “at age 26, we find that:

- All higher-level qualifications appear to lead to better earnings outcomes than finishing at Level 3, for both men and women.”

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/labour-market-value-of-higher-and-further-education-qualifications-a-summary-report/labour-market-value-of-higher-and-further-education-qualifications-a-summary-report#further-education>

There are always will be small percentage of young people who will disengage. This is why the Government have in place NEET - “not in employment and education”.

During 2023 work undertaken to coordinate various NEET programs and put in place a coherent framework, including necessary funding allocated in the [Government Plan 2024-2027](#). This will require follow up to ensure that the newly created framework works as expected and achieves its objectives.

I-CYP-GP24-003 Investment in young people workforce participation

The effects of young people disengaging from education, employment or training, or simply not having a clear destination established upon leaving statutory education can cause long term detrimental effect on their prospects.

It is challenging to engage this group of young people and support them to access the wide range of opportunities generally available. Sometimes there is no appropriate provision to match their individual needs and sometimes the choice is confusing.

This provision will consolidate all current provisions and services working to reduce the number of young people without a destination after finishing full time education. Through partnership working the opportunities for these young people will be reimagined and a young person centric approach will be created. This will include a Triage Service that will act as an instrument to assist young people identified as, or at risk of becoming, 'NEET' (not in employment, education, or training) to be supported in re-engaging in bespoke education or training opportunities as well as more traditional routes into education and/or employment. Throughout, a support network will be in place to reduce confusion and improve engagement, with the aim to always have a supportive relationship with the young person.

To put Part A in the nutshell - are we ready to extend provision for 16-18 years old which will allow them to stay in education and training longer, to the ultimate benefit of a prosperous and healthy Island? It's a decision on the principal of education.

Part B - funding

I believe that, as was previously the case with the NEET funding, post 16 funding is routed through different budget lines, some of which are easily identifiable and some which are not.

In the first instance, Government will be required to establish the cost of the provision and to bring all funding streams in coherent allocations.

It was agreed in 2019 that an independent review of school funding for 16-18 provision would be undertaken³ -

	Findings	Comments
24	There is widespread agreement across the post-16 providers that funding is less than optimal for the education system in general. This view has been echoed by the Ministerial team.	Agree – The Minister for Education has commissioned an independent review of school funding and all 16 – 18 provision is within scope of the review.

³ <https://statesassembly.gov.je/scrutinyreports/2019/ministerial%20response%20-%20post-16%20education%20addendum%20-%202031%20july%202019.pdf>

This [Independent School Funding Review](#) was published in 2020 and included the following recommendation –

Ensure that 16-18 technical education is appropriately funded for the future by levelling up per-student funding in technical education and implementing the post-16 education review

Students following a technical education route through Highlands College currently receive £1,100 less per year than those educated on the academic route through Hautlieu. We recommend that this gap be closed by levelling up 16-18 funding for technical education to match funding for students on the academic route.

The school funding formula has been updated and extra funds were allocated, As detailed within the response to my [Written Question 8/2024](#) –

The Schools Funding Formula is now in its third year and allocates budgets to schools in a way which reflect that the majority of costs in a school are fixed or semi-fixed with very little of the cost driven directly by pupil numbers, age or key stage. Schools are now funded for their planned activities and committed costs with additional funding for individuals with identified high needs. This gives each school what it needs to run its classes, recognising that this will be different from school to school.

But does that mean that everything has been fixed and is working perfectly, with all students receiving equivalent funding?

For the purpose of this proposition and indications, I refer to the response to my [Written Question 39/2024](#) in relation to the total annual budget for Hautlieu School. The response includes all years, but in general terms, the spend between £7000 and £8000 a year including everything for student. A reminder that Hautlieu is the only fully funded Government provider for A-Level qualifications –

School budgets are set annually on a financial / calendar year basis so it is not possible to provide an annual total budget figure for an academic year.

Financial Year - January to December			
	2021	2022	2023
Total annual budget	£6,361,000	£6,440,000	£7,273,000

Academic Year September to August			
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Student Numbers	752	806	846

In comparison, the response to my [Written Question 24/2024](#) states that –

“The current Trackers Subsidy model is capped at £1600 per individual, per year. Where the course fees are more than this the individual or business pay the remainder.”

This presents a stark disparity in funding, which can be seen in more detail through the data presented in [Written Question WQ 23/2024](#), and [Written Question 113/2024](#) –

Apprenticeship	Student Numbers	Funding	Funding per student	Actual cost per learner*	Deficit
Childcare	67	£107,200	£1,600	£3,400	£1,800
Electrical	125	£424,300	£3,394.40	£5,600	£2,205.60
Plumbing	52	£186,300	£3,582.69	£5,200	£1,617.31

*Differences in Cost per course are linked to differing number of learning hours

It is acknowledged that these figures are not precise, that the funding allocation cannot be accurately compared due to the differences in methodology – in fact it is acknowledged that this is complicated and that I do not have all parts of the information jigsaw.

But it cannot be denied that there is an inequality of funding.

This was also highlighted within the [Actionable agenda](#) –

The Independent Review of School Funding also concluded that 16–18-year-olds at Highlands College received less per capita funding than the same age group in schools, including Hautlieu. This has clear implications for the regard in which vocational education is held compared to academic provision and is deeply unfair given overall level of disadvantage amongst students at the College.

The costs of apprenticeship provision in Jersey is notably opaque, and most likely significantly underfunded, being effectively cross-subsidised from other funding schemes within Highlands College.

We have invested in the 16-18 provision in Highlands and additional funding was allocated in the Government Plan 2021-2025. This Government Plan looked at adding £7.9m to Education to help cover the new funding model, one aim of which was that it –

“should ensure the 16-18 funding is levelled up between students on a technical education course at Highlands College and those educated on the academic route through Hautlieu”

We have also invested extra funding into JPQ Jersey Professional Qualifications with options to progress to level 3 Diploma through Highlands College provision.

However, I think that we need to ask the question of why other forms of education for 16–18-year-olds, for example apprenticeships, do not receive equivalent funding.

We are an affluent and prosperous Island – there is no reason that we should be ranking lower than other OECD nations for support of Education for 16-18 years old.

Paragraph C

Finally, Part C of my proposition requests the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning to undertake a review of education legislation and policy with a view to

improving non-compulsory participation in education or professional training for all young people up to the age of 18.

Once again, this is not a new topic, nor I would hope a contentious one. As detailed above, it is about the benefit of ongoing education and training for our young people and for our Island. And for the Minister, it is really about continuing work that has been ongoing for the last few years –

Post-16 Education (S.R.7/2019)

153. During the hearing the Group Director for Education confirmed that over 90% of students continue to study post-16 courses or engage in some form of educational programme (i.e. Trackers).¹⁹² Given the high percentage of young people engaging in post-16 provision, and given the fact that there is no statutory obligation for this provision to be provided under the Education (Jersey) Law 1999, consideration should be given to prescribing something within Law.

Post-16 Education (S.R.7/2019): Response of the Minister for Education -

Finding 32 and Ministerial Comment -

32.	The current school leaving age in Jersey is 16 years of age, although the Minister is obligated under the Education (Jersey) Law 1999 to offer opportunities for people to continue in education over the compulsory.	Agree- It is reassuring to see that there is 92% staying on-rates for Post-16. Further work is in train to better track the progression and destinations of young people and identify those at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) as early as possible and supporting them appropriately. Two work streams: a Review of the Education (Jersey) Law 1999 and a review of Schools' funding will assist encouraging participation in Education or Employment beyond the current compulsory school age.
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Recommendation 13 and Ministerial Comment -

13.	The Minister for Education should, as part of the review of the Education (Jersey) Law 1999, investigate the merits, implications and definition of raising the school participation age to 18.	Minister for Education	Accept	<p>The Minister has already engaged officers in the review of Education Law. One of the priorities is to consider raising the participation age.</p> <p>This is formally part of the work schedule for the Children's Legislation Transformation Programme.</p> <p>The Minister is keen to ensure there is a clear definition of participation post 16 that suits the needs of Jersey's young people and industry.</p> <p>In doing so we will consider lessons learnt from other jurisdictions who have recently raised participation ages, including the UK and Portugal. Other post-16 options such as a clearly defined 16-19 apprenticeship route will be explored as part of the Strategic vision for post-16 Education.</p>
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Response of the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning to Oral Question 19/2024 –

“To get back into the 16 to 18 agenda, there are some real benefits and they are recognised in jurisdictions around the world. Just to give one piece of information on that, which I have found interesting from research, if you leave school at 16 you are very unlikely, but about 16 per cent of those people who did not reach the basic standards that we would require in terms of literacy and numeracy, for example, reach those levels. If you stay until 18, 60 per cent of those people will get a second chance and do that. So it is an investment in our

future. It is an investment in our Island and it is certainly the best thing to do if we are genuinely looking at lifelong learning and having a skilled population.”

I would like to briefly touch on the situation in the UK, as this should be a factor in the Minister’s considerations.

As result of legislation introduced in September 2013, the UK law now requires that young people continue in education, employment or training until the age of 18. This change was introduced to improve the career and life prospects for young people.

There are multiple options available, including –

- to study full-time at school, college or with a training provider. The definition of full-time participation is at least 540 hours a year; this is around 18 hours per week.
- full-time employment or volunteering (full-time is counted as more than 20 hours a week) combined with part-time study or training. To count as full-time work, the job must be for 8 or more weeks consecutively and for 20 or more hours per week. Part-time education or training alongside full-time work must be at least 280 hours per year.
- enrolment in an apprenticeship, traineeship or supported internship.

The legal requirement to participate is on the young person, not the parent/carer. Enforcement does not form part of the current law, and therefore young people will not receive a sanction for non-participation.⁴

Conclusion

This Proposition is purposefully simple and non-prescriptive. It asks the Assembly the simple question – should we be providing equal opportunities for skills and education for all young people, and are we ready to do so?

I share the Education Minister view that Education is our investment in the future.

Financial and staffing implications

Parts A and B of the proposition would have a financial impact.

To fully calculation the financial impact, there needs to be clarity of total cost required per year, what the gaps are and where.

Using the information provided within Written Questions 23 and 24/2024, the total cost to fund all apprenticeships without age restriction to 100% would be £2,200,000.

Apprentices aged 18 total only 147 of the total 417 students⁵ –

⁴ <https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/participation-of-young-people-in-education-employment-or-training/>

⁵ It is noted that there are differing totals used in the Written Questions.

(f) of the apprentices identified in (a) (b) and (c), the number that were aged 18 and under and the number that were over the age of 18?”

Age	2021	2022	2023
18 and under	142	169	147
19 and above	320	346	270

Therefore, and taking into account that the £2.2 million requirement is for all apprenticeships, the requirement for 18 and under is only £775,572.⁶

This amount should be further ameliorated by the existing £650,000 funding available through Trackers for apprentices of all ages, along with funding available to Highlands College as a Government grant, employers payments and other sources of income.

I would note in passing that we still need to think about the model for apprentices for 19+.

Part C would require staffing in the Education Policy team, to review the current model and to identify the best ways forward.

Children’s Rights Impact Assessment

A Children’s Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) has been prepared in relation to this proposition and is available to read on the [States Assembly website](#).

⁶ (Total budget / Total number of students) x number of 18 and under students.