



2019-0031704MDPO

Michelle Donelan MP

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families

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James Kewin, Deputy Chief Executive
The Sixth Form Colleges Association

By email: James.Kewin@sixthformcolleges.org

Dear Mr Kewin,

Thank you for your email of 29 August, addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, about further education (FE) funding and the 'Raise the Rate' campaign. Your correspondence has been forwarded to this department and I am replying as the minister responsible for this policy area.

I recognise fully the importance of FE. It has a key role in delivering our national priorities to improve productivity, fill skills gaps and equip people with the skills both they and the economy need. FE is unique in that it provides a wide range of education and training, from basic skills to level 7. It is also a great driver of social mobility, providing education and training to both young people and adults and improving their life chances.

I recognise the pressures that FE funding is under and we have been looking at this carefully as part of our work to agree spending plans for 2020-21. You will have seen the announcement of 31 August setting out the investment of an additional £400 million in 16 to 19 education. This will allow us to increase the 16 to 19 base rate by 4.7% in the academic year 2020-21 and is the single biggest year-on-year uplift in 16 to 19 funding since 2010.

The government has also committed to providing £120 million for additional funding for more expensive and high-value subjects, along with extra funding for workforce development. We are also providing £35 million more to support students on level 3 courses who did not achieve a grade 4 in GCSE maths and/or English.

Together with the £500 million already announced in 2017 for the introduction of T Levels, this will ensure that there will be better opportunities for young people to acquire the training and skills that both they and employers need. Providers will also get the extra funding they need to deliver 16 to 19 education.

We are actively considering the efficiency and resilience of the FE Sector. We will be assessing how well current funding and regulatory structures support world-class provision and meet the costs of delivering quality FE, both now and in the future.

Thank you for writing on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michelle Donelan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Michelle Donelan MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families