

Academies Pre-16 Funding: Options for the 2012/13 Academic Year

Consultation Response Form

The closing date for this consultation is: 25 May
2011

Your comments must reach us by that date.

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THIS FORM IS NOT INTERACTIVE. If you wish to respond electronically please use the online response facility available on the Department for Education e-consultation website (<http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations>).

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes, primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

If you want all, or any part, of your response to be treated as confidential, please explain why you consider it to be confidential.

If a request for disclosure of the information you have provided is received, your explanation about why you consider it to be confidential will be taken into account, but no assurance can be given that confidentiality can be maintained. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department will process your personal data (name and address and any other identifying material) in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, and in the majority of circumstances, this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential.

Reason for confidentiality:

Name Elizabeth Williams
Organisation (if applicable) Wiltshire Schools Forum
Address: c/o Wiltshire Council
County Hall
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
Wiltshire BA14 8JB

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If you have an enquiry related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact either:

Annie Raw (telephone: 020 7340 8143) or Victoria Ismail (telephone: 020 7783 8682)

e-mail: AcademiesFunding.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk

If you have a query relating to the consultation process you can contact the Consultation Unit by telephone: 0370 000 2288 or e-mail: consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk

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Please mark ONE box that best describes you as a respondent

<input type="checkbox"/> Academy	<input type="checkbox"/> School applying for academy status	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintained School
<input type="checkbox"/> Academy Sponsor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Schools Forum	<input type="checkbox"/> Campaign Group
<input type="checkbox"/> Union/Professional Body	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Carer	<input type="checkbox"/> Governor Association
<input type="checkbox"/> Local Authority	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

Please Specify:

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1 Do you agree with our analysis that the current system is not appropriate to fund an increasing number of Academies in a fair and transparent way? (see *section 2 in the consultation document*)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure
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Comments:

The current system is administratively inefficient for both the DfE and for LA staff and there is considerable duplication.

The funding of Academies on a lagged basis means that the budget for an academy may not be reflective of local conditions and of the local funding formula, meaning academies are not funded on a consistent basis with neighbouring schools – this may be to their advantage or disadvantage.

The current funding system is not sustainable as LACSEG adjustments will be on an ever decreasing base.

2 Do you agree with the principles for an alternative method of funding Academies in 2012/13? (see *section 3 in the consultation document*)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All	<input type="checkbox"/> Some	<input type="checkbox"/> None
<input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure		

Comments:

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3 Are there other aims we should have for the Academy funding system in the absence of cross-system reform, such as a Fair Funding Formula? If yes, what are they?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

Savings and efficiencies could be achieved through reducing the administrative burden of the funding system. This could go as far as requiring LAs to calculate budgets for academies, which would reduce the need for replication of the formula at DfE level and reduce the lag in reflecting local circumstances.

4 Do you agree with the broad analysis of how each option might work? (see section 4 in the consultation document)

All

Some

None

Not Sure

Comments:

Roll Forward – this method rolls forward the per pupil school budget share from the previous year's budgets, prior to MFG application. The benefit of this method is that it is simple and easy to explain. It also minimises turbulence in budgets for academies which is important in an interim funding regime. A potential disadvantage is that academy funding becomes further removed from that of maintained schools in the same area because it will still be based on the 2010/11 formula, meaning that funding is not equivalent between all types of schools.

Fair Funding Formula for Academies – a single formula would be developed for academies. This would mean academies are funded in a consistent way and is a potential way of trialling a fair funding formula. A risk may be that the current number of academies may not reflect the overall school population in terms of numbers and needs – for example there are significantly more

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secondary academies than primary academies. An extensive consultation would still be required with all schools to develop a fair funding formula for all schools – which may cause further turbulence for academies with successive changes in funding regime.

Local Authority Based Calculations - this would involve LAs calculating academy budgets based on their current formulae. The advantage of this option would be to remove the lagging from the current system and reduce the bureaucracy of needing to replicate LA formulae at DfE level. There is little implication for LAs in this option as authorities already calculate budgets for academies in order to determine the recoupment amount from the DSG settlement. It could be argued that this option would result in academies being more reliant on the LA and its formula although a counter argument to this could be that it creates a level playing field between schools in an area and could reflect local circumstances more consistently.

We disagree that this would mean academies would receive later notification of their funding than they currently do, because in practice converting academies have not yet received notification of indicative budgets for 2011/12.

5 Which option do you think is the best way of funding Academies in 2012/13? (see section 4 in the consultation document)

<input type="checkbox"/> Roll forward	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair funding formula for Academies only	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local authority based calculations
<input type="checkbox"/> Not sure		

Comments:

LAs already carry out the calculation and this would be the method with the least administrative burden.

6 Are there potential advantages and disadvantages in implementing each option that we have not considered? If yes, what are they?

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure
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Comments:

Increase in lag to academy budgets if the roll forward option is implemented could mean more turbulence when a fair funding formula is implemented across all sectors.

7 Are there changes you think we should consider to the way the Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant (LACSEG) is calculated for FY2012/13? If yes, what are they? (see section 5 in the consultation document)

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure
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Comments:

The current LACSEG methodology does not reflect the need or usage of a particular service.

The LA funded element of the LACSEG has already been taken in to account in the 2012/13 funding settlement and so could not be changed.

Would a straight % deduction be a more straightforward method of calculating the LACSEG?

8 What factors would you want us to take into consideration if we were to make changes?

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Comments:

Keep the interim model simple and ensure a quick move towards a national formula

9 Have you any further comments?

Comments:

The views from the Wiltshire Schools Forum in this response reflect the views of both academies and maintained schools in Wiltshire.

This response also reflects the views of Wiltshire Council and is a joint response.

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Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge individual responses unless you place an 'X' in the box below.

Please acknowledge this reply

Here at the Department for Education we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, would it be alright if we were to contact you again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

Yes

No

All DfE public consultations are required to conform to the following criteria within the Government Code of Practice on Consultation:

Criterion 1: Formal consultation should take place at a stage when there is scope to influence the policy outcome.

Criterion 2: Consultations should normally last for at least 12 weeks with consideration given to longer timescales where feasible and sensible.

Criterion 3: Consultation documents should be clear about the consultation process, what is being proposed, the scope to influence and the expected costs and benefits of the proposals.

Criterion 4: Consultation exercises should be designed to be accessible to, and clearly targeted at, those people the exercise is intended to reach.

Criterion 5: Keeping the burden of consultation to a minimum is essential if consultations are to be effective and if consultees' buy-in to the process is to be obtained.

Criterion 6: Consultation responses should be analysed carefully and clear feedback should be provided to participants following the consultation.

Criterion 7: Officials running consultations should seek guidance in how to run an effective consultation exercise and share what they have learned from the experience.

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If you have any comments on how DfE consultations are conducted, please contact Donna Harrison, DfE Consultation Co-ordinator, tel: 01928 738212 / email: donna.harrison@education.gsi.gov.uk

Thank you for taking time to respond to this consultation.

Completed questionnaires and other responses should be sent to the address shown below by 25 May 2011

Send by post to: Annie Raw, Academy Funding and Finance Team, Department for Education, Level 3, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT.

Send by e-mail to: AcademiesFunding.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk