

# College Catch-up Funding and Remote Education

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AoC Survey and Policy Proposal



ASSOCIATION  
OF COLLEGES

April 2021

## **College Catch-up Funding and Remote Education - AoC Survey Spring 2021**

The Association of Colleges is the national voice for England's colleges, with more than 90% of the sector in membership. For more information, visit [www.aoc.co.uk](http://www.aoc.co.uk).

This rapid turnaround survey was developed as part of AoC's ongoing work to support colleges at this challenging time and to strengthen and immediately evidence our work on colleges' behalf with Government and other key stakeholders. The survey specifically looked to gather information on lost learning, catch up tuition and remote learning in relation to the pandemic. The questions asked in the survey on remote learning and devices/connectivity were asked about issues prior to 5 March 2021.

If you have any questions about this report, please contact David Corke, Director of Policy via [david.corke@aoc.co.uk](mailto:david.corke@aoc.co.uk).

## Foreword

This is an important report which informs the vital work of the Education Recovery Commissioner as he grapples with the challenge of how to support young people through this Covid crisis. There is no doubt that the pandemic has had a profound effect on everyone and that the ramifications will be with us for some time. For young people in schools and colleges, the impact is still not fully understood, but our survey helps to paint the picture for the 16 to 19 phase of education, which we know is a pivotal time in the lives of young people as they develop from children to become adults. The picture for adults is equally worrying, with practical learning, ESoL and lower-level learning in particular being so difficult to deliver online.

Despite fantastic work to support online learning, young people and adults are not at the levels we would normally expect them to be at this stage in their learning. That's hardly surprising and not yet a crisis; there is time to put it right. The appointment of the Education Recovery Commissioner shows that the Government recognises the challenge and is prepared to invest the resources required. But that time is quickly running out; colleges and their students need decisions and resources to be opened up very soon if they are to be able to provide the learning and support that we believe is needed.

Our proposals for investment will deliver what young people and adult learners deserve but they will also deliver a clear and obvious economic and social impact. Recessions always result in more people making logical and forward-thinking decisions to improve their skills so that they can compete better in a tougher labour market. Colleges are a sanctuary to find the practical, emotional, and educational support which help people at times of national crisis. The impact of lost learning amplifies that need and underlines the importance of early decisions to invest more in young people and adults.

Colleges have shown their adaptability and their unerring focus on students' needs and progress throughout this pandemic. They now need to be backed with the investment which will ensure they can deliver the support young people and adults need.

**David Hughes,**  
Chief Executive,  
Association of Colleges

## Executive summary

All students have experienced a negative impact on their progress and development due to the pandemic. For 16 to 18-year-olds, colleges rated the pandemic as having 47% high and very high impact. A staggering 77% of 16 to 18-year-olds are performing below expectations. 75% are one-to-four months behind. For adult students, 69% are performing below expectations and 71% are one-to-four months behind.

The greatest impact can be seen in practical areas such as construction, engineering, motor vehicle, and hair and beauty. For these subjects, online delivery is most challenging. English, maths and ESOL are also causes for concern as engagement online has been varied, especially for lower-level students, those with special educational needs and where digital poverty bites hardest.

While there is good engagement with the tuition fund by colleges many of them feel it is too restrictive (in terms of focus on small groups) meaning they find it hard to meet the range of needs of large numbers of students across college provision including personal and social development and enrichment. Only 22% feel that it is having a significant impact, while 56% think the impact is moderate. Many colleges have found it difficult to staff and resource additional small group hours. 71% of colleges are providing additional tuition over and above the tuition fund, 77% are providing online catch up, and 63% are providing mentoring. Many were planning to teach over Easter.

Key issues raised with colleges by 16 to 18-year-olds include increased incidences of poor mental health and well-being such as: sleep problems, feeling demotivated, suicidal thoughts and self-harming, lack of physical activity, depression, anxiety, increased domestic harm, increase in eating disorders, feeling isolated and lonely when learning online and missing interaction with teachers and fellow students, financial hardship, substance abuse, relationship breakdowns within the family unit, housing problems, lacking an appropriate area to study at home, concern around how grades will be calculated, fears around future job security. For adults there are the additional challenges of juggling learning with home education (of their own children) and the fact that employers are less willing to give time to those who are learning online rather than in college.

Colleges have quickly adapted to online delivery. During the third national lockdown from January 2021, 85% scheduled live online lessons for at least 60% of timetables sessions. Colleges are using a range of digital collaborative/learning systems to support delivery including Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Google Classrooms, Padlet and Moodle. 97% of colleges are using digital content and resources from their Awarding Organisations with around half of colleges using JISC e-books and digital content

and TES resources. Over the past year staff confidence at delivering online has grown with 87% of colleges rating it as good or excellent.

While 64% of colleges felt they now had sufficient devices for students to study online, 36% stated that they still did not. 32% of colleges indicated that they had more than 300 students with inadequate internet access at home.

## Policy proposals

There are two distinct groups of students we believe need to be supported through five proposals - those continuing to learn in college or moving to college this autumn from schools; and those planning to leave college this summer.

Continuing college students and those making the transition from schools this year will benefit from the recently announced £102m 16-19 Tuition Fund extension, but that alone is not enough. Three further steps are required:

1. **Fair funding and hours** - young people in education in England have fewer hours of teaching and support compared with their counterparts in other countries, receiving less than 15 hours per week compared with between 25 and 30 in other OECD countries. This was partly recognised in September 2019 when the 16-19 base rate was increased by 4.7% for the 2020-1 academic year as part of a £400 million budget increase but DfE has reverted to no change for 2021-2. Colleges and school sixth forms have funds for a rising student population but fixed flat cash funding for each student. An increase in funding per student is needed to help all students to get the education and skills they need. This is particularly true of practical courses where costs are higher and group sizes smaller for safety reasons.

***The cost of each additional hour per week based on the current funding rate and a 36-week academic year would cost around £350 million.***

2. **Targeted support for those most disadvantaged through 16-19 student premium** - there is ample evidence that the disadvantage which holds back school pupils continues in the 16-to-19 phase. There is no clear justification for stopping the premium at age 16 – a decision affecting 150,000 young people each year. The pupil premium should be paid to 16,17 and 18 year olds to reflect the commitment to supporting the needs of all young people.

***Using the secondary school eligibility criteria and funding level the cost of this model would be £100 million. Most pupil premium students transfer to further education colleges at 16 but support would follow the student.***

This does not take into account the service premium or looked after children premium who are not currently flagged in Individual Learner Record.

Learning has been especially disrupted for many High Needs SEND students, with a particular impact on their transition into and out of college. A specific fund is required with the flexibility to meet the varied needs of this group.

3. **Building self-confidence and well-being** - Large numbers of disadvantaged students will have missed out on the social interactions at school and college over the last year. A base rate increase or specific funding for more after-college study, homework and enrichment opportunities would have a major impact on well-being and self-confidence. We know that extra-curricular activities such as sport, drama, music, volunteering all support students to be ready for progressing into work and onto further study, but these activities are too-often stopped as competition for scarce resources increases in a college.

AoC is currently undertaking base rate costings research to illustrate the impact on learners and the economy and will publish these proposals in June 2021.

***Based on early findings, the rate is at least 15% too low and impacts core delivery and enrichment programmes. To close this gap would cost approximately £900 million. Around £200 million extra will be needed to service 16-19 growth due to demographic increases and declines in apprenticeship starts for young people.***

Students aiming to leave college this summer face at least two extra hurdles this year. The first is the disruption they have suffered and the impact that has on skills, confidence, and competence. The second is that the labour market will be a tough place for those with little work experience and unproven skills. Two steps are needed to address this:

4. **Education recovery year** - Every college student finishing this year should have access to a guaranteed additional fully-funded year of study where they need it, ensuring that nobody is left behind. This means removing the 17.5 per cent fall in funding at 18 that currently exists and supporting colleges to offer the flexibility they need to help young people move as quickly as possible into work, an apprenticeship or onto further learning. A simple, flexible fund is needed, which allows colleges to design programmes to meet different needs and outcomes. For some students, an extra term or 6 months will be sufficient, whilst others might need a full year to progress. A bursary will be required to support students to be able to participate.

***Based on R06 data for 2020/21 the cost of a guaranteed third year of full funding for 18-year-olds would be an additional £70 million.***

5. **Joining up DfE and DWP programmes** - the Chancellor has invested in programmes in both Departments to support 16 to 24-year-olds, but they do not operate in tandem and are difficult to make work for employers, for students/unemployed people and for colleges. This needs urgent attention, to allow a more person-centred approach in which JobCentre Plus can support Universal Credit recipients to undertake training where it would increase their chances of finding work.

**The total cost of this education recovery measures listed above is more than £1.5 billion a year. This is a substantial sum, but it represents an investment in a generation of young people whose lives have been disrupted by the pandemic and whose future contributions will be needed over the rest of this century.**

## Responses

80 colleges responded (33% of the total)

Type	Number of responses	Number of colleges in England	Percent within type
General further education college	65	164	40%
Sixth form college	5	49	10%
Specialist college	9	24	38%
<b>Total England</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>33%</b>
Other*	1		
<b>Total survey responses</b>	<b>80</b>		

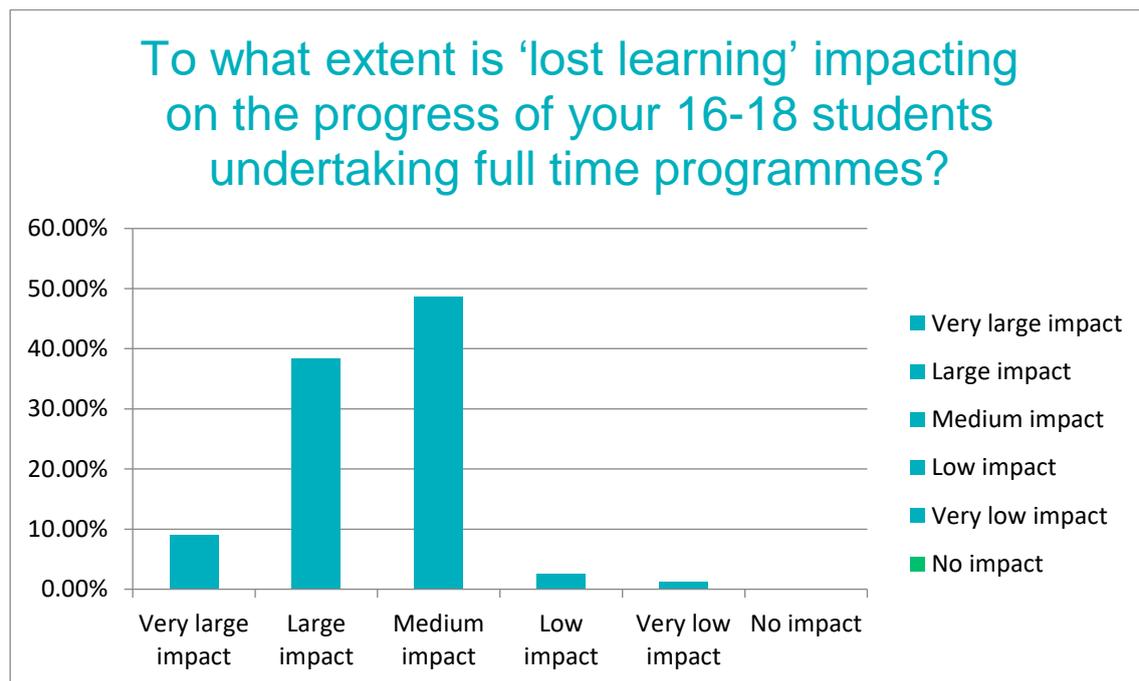
\*Academy (school sixth form college conversion)

Region	Number of responses	Number of colleges in region	Percent within region
Eastern region	5	23	22%
East Midlands	5	13	38%
Greater London	9	34	26%
North East	7	14	50%
North West	9	42	21%
South East	10	37	27%
South West	14	23	61%
West Midlands	7	24	29%
Yorkshire and the Humber	13	27	48%
<b>Total England**</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>33%</b>

\*\* Excludes Academy (School sixth form college conversion)

## To what extent is 'lost learning' impacting on the progress of your 16-18 students undertaking full time programmes?

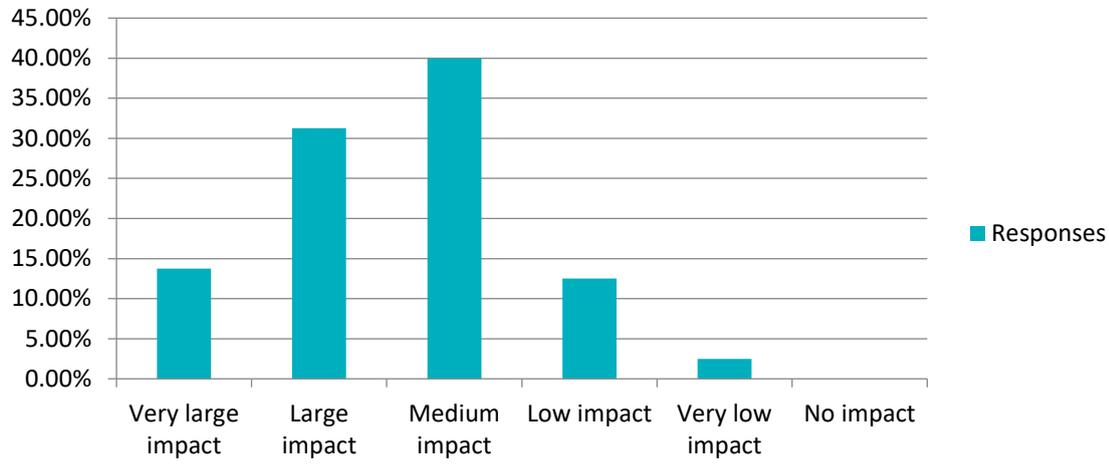
**100%** of respondents said that lost learning is impacting on the progress of 16-18 students, ranging from **4%** saying it was having a low or very low impact to **49%** saying it was having a medium impact and **47%** saying it was having a high or very high impact on 16-18 students.



## To what extent is 'lost learning' impacting on the progress of your 19+ students undertaking full time programmes?

**100%** of respondents said that lost learning is impacting on the progress of 19+ students, ranging from **15%** saying it was having a low or very low impact to **40%** saying it was having a medium impact and **45%** saying it was having a high or very high impact on 19+ students.

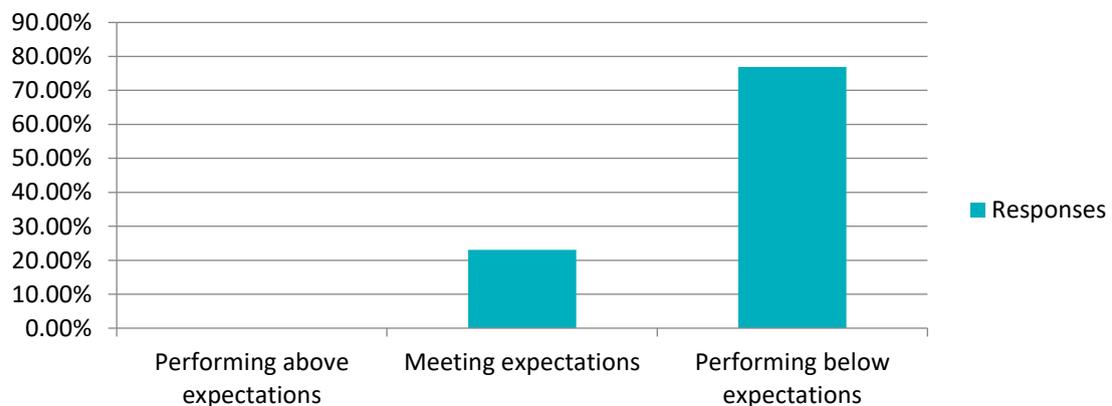
## To what extent is 'lost learning' impacting on the progress of your 19+ students undertaking full time programmes?



## On average, how does the progress of your 16-18 students compare to expectations for this point in the normal academic year?

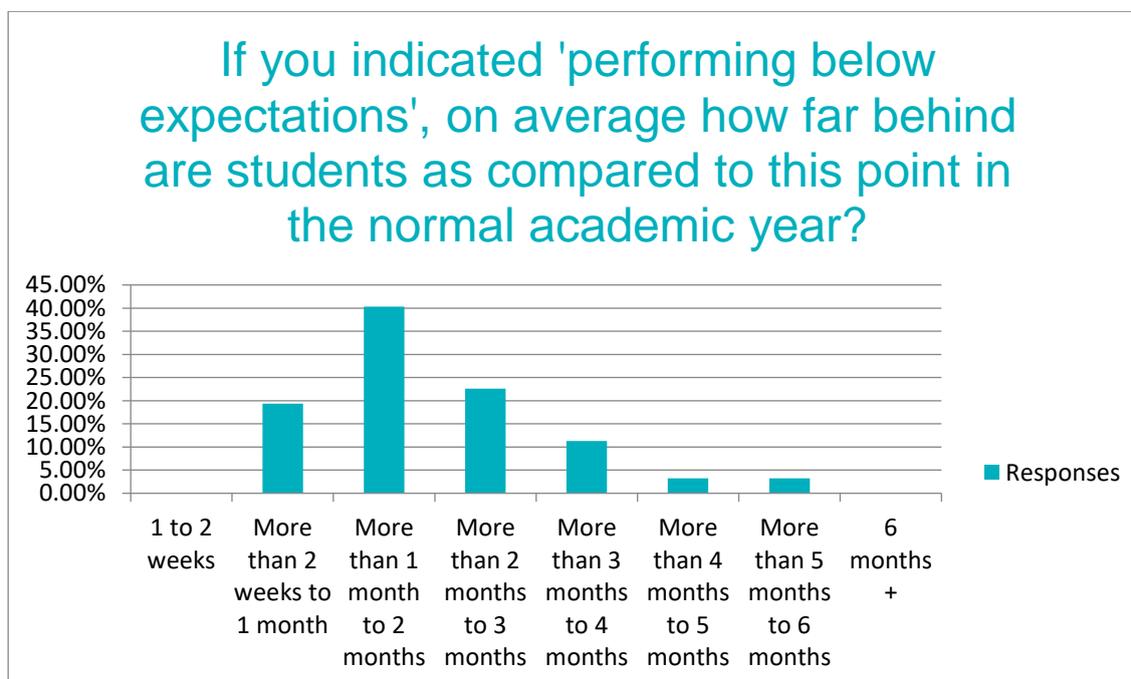
**None** of the colleges responding said that 16-18 students were performing above expectations. **23%** said that 16-18 students were meeting expectations, but **77%** said that 16-18 students were performing below expectations in comparison to this point in the normal academic year.

## On average, how does the progress of your 16-18 students compare to expectations for this point in the normal academic year?



## If you indicated 'performing below expectations', on average how far behind are 16-18 students as compared to this point in the normal academic year?

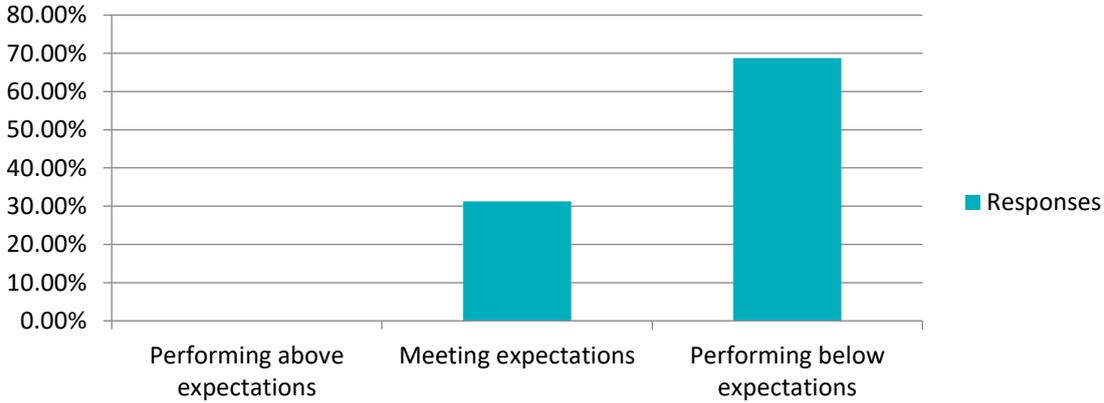
**19%** of colleges say that 16-18 students are more than 2 weeks to 1 month behind, but **75%** of colleges say that students are behind by between one and four months with a smaller number of **6%** saying that students are behind by an even greater time period of between four and six months.



## On average, how does the progress of your 19+ students compare to expectations for this point in the normal academic year?

**None** of the colleges responding said that 19+ students were performing above expectations. **31%** said that 19+ students were meeting expectations, but **69%** said that 19+ students were performing below expectations in comparison to this point in the normal academic year.

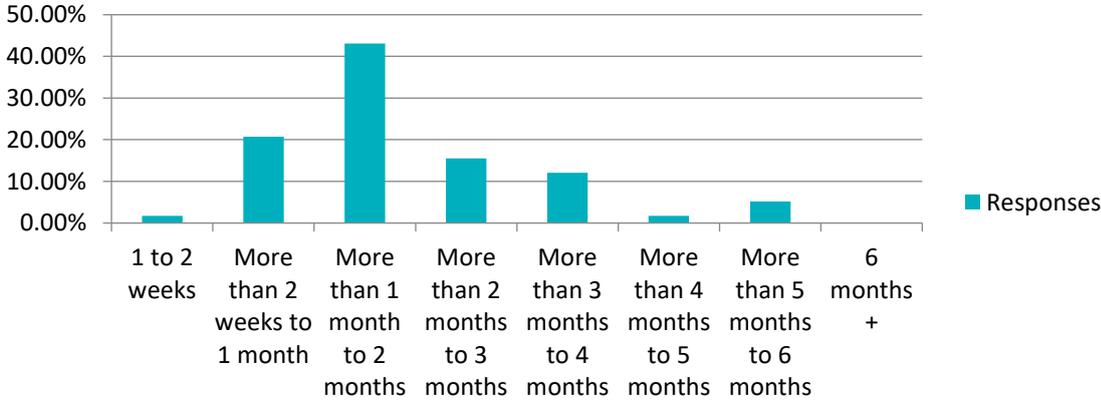
## On average, how does the progress of your 19+ students compare to expectations for this point in the normal academic year?



## If you indicated 'performing below expectations', on average how far behind are 19+ students as compared to this point in the normal academic year?

Only **one college** said that 19+ students were behind by one to two weeks. **21%** said that 19+ students were behind by between two weeks to one month with **71%** saying that 19+ students were behind by between one and four months. A smaller number of **7%** saying that 19+ students are behind by an even greater time period of between four and six months.

## If you indicated 'performing below expectations', on average how far behind are students as compared to this point in the normal academic year?



## Please identify up to three subjects where full time students have the greatest need for catch up support.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, those subjects with a high practical skills content were identified as in greatest need for catch up support with Engineering and motor vehicle at **48%**, Construction at **61%** and Hair and Beauty at **42%**. Similarly, basic skills were also identified as in greatest need for catch up support with English and ESOL (Level 2 and below) at **30%** and Maths (Level 2 and below) at **34%**. SEND delivery was also identified as having the greatest need for catch up support by **14%** of colleges. Only Travel and Tourism was identified as having no need for catch up support, but other subject areas indicated there was less need of support for certain subjects such as Health and Social Care (**9%**), Early Years and Childcare (**8%**), Sport and Public Services (**8%**), Animal Care (**3%**), Computing and IT (**3%**), Hospitality and Catering (**13%**), Media and Arts (**9%**), Business (**1%**) and Employability courses (**3%**).

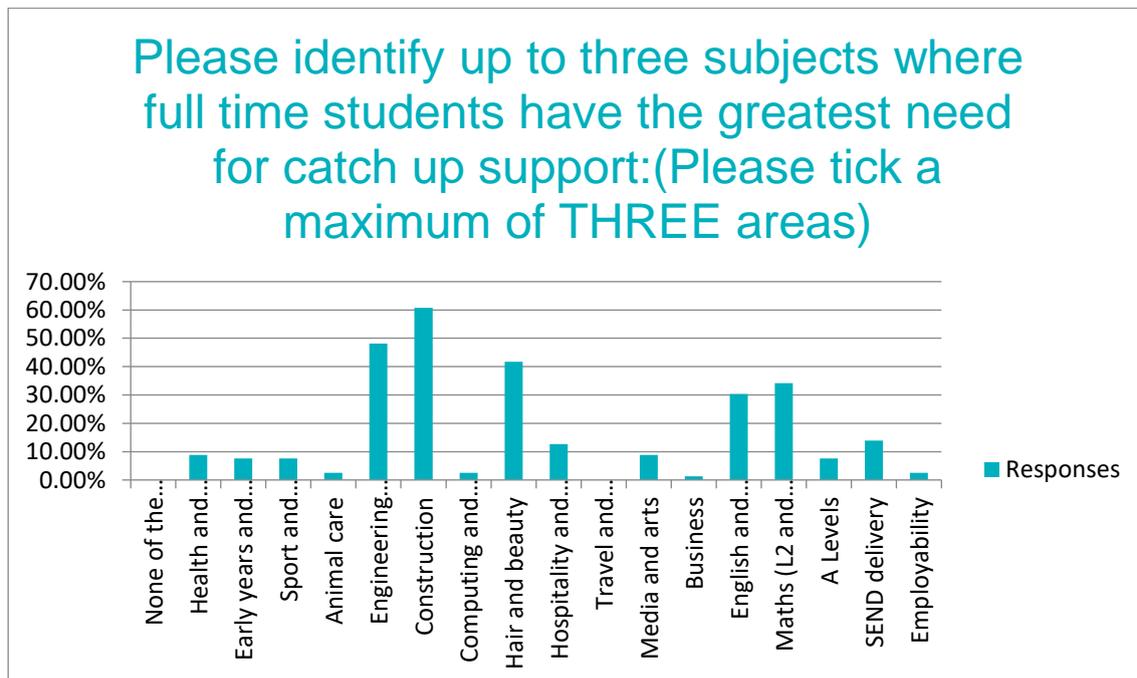
Colleges stated that whilst they were limited to only choosing three subjects in the greatest need for catch up support they could have chosen more, with some stating that they chose mainly practical subjects and those 'license to practice' subjects but would like to have added in English and Maths. This would obviously have an impact on the above figures and potentially increase them. Many made the point that traditional A Levels were less likely to be affected.

Whilst the percentage for Health and Social Care is relatively low at 9%, colleges state (perhaps because they were limited to only naming three subjects) that these students have been unable to complete work placements or carry out practical work saying that whilst colleges are able to cover this now it is far from ideal as it is always best for Health and Social Care students to learn the theory and be putting it into practice alongside the practical experience. The same points were made about Early Years and Childcare and many colleges said they were concerned about only being able to choose three subjects.

Some made the point that this is the second year of impacted learning for some students. In particular, those retaking English and Maths this year were impacted last year also and any student who is in the second year of a course is substantially disadvantaged, as they have been disrupted in both the first and second year e.g. all Level 3 students and any first year Level 3 students who did a Level 2 last year.

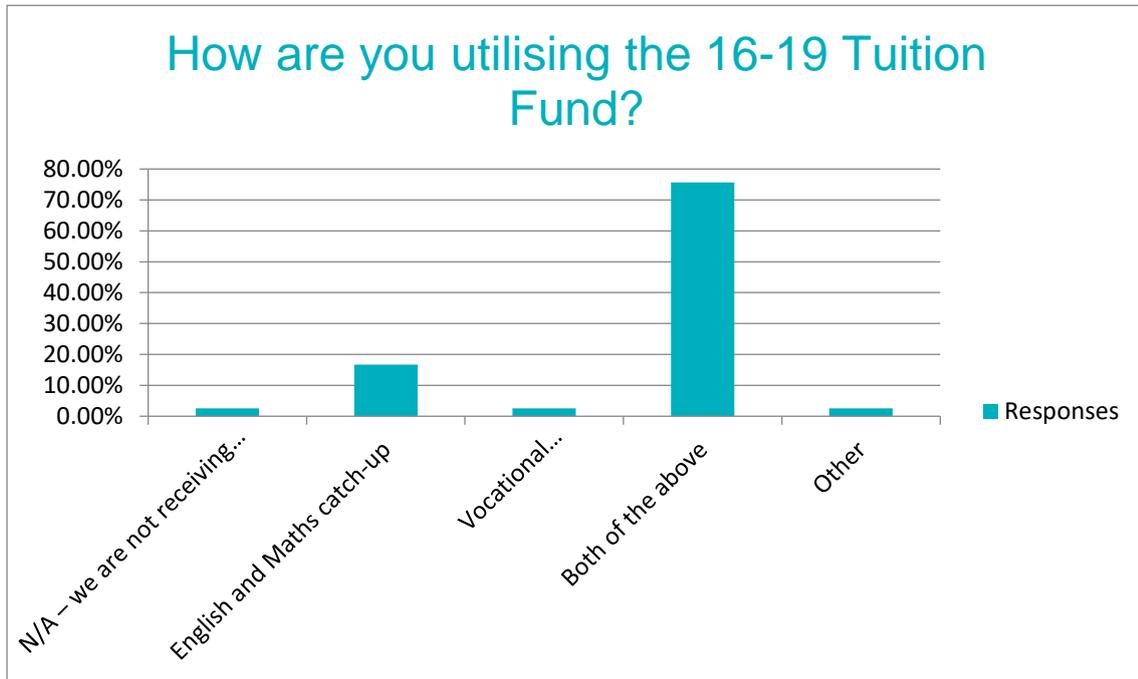
ESOL and SEND students have found it harder to engage remotely. SEND students had low levels of engagement as they need the interactions and support in class and students with conditions such as autism have struggled with lack of routine of coming into college and boundaries – some see college as a physical space where they study and not at home, so it has been particularly difficult to motivate these students. Adult ESOL learners were suffering from digital poverty and, where they did have devices and digital access, were prioritising use for their children's remote

learning. ESOL learners also had the least stable home environments in which to carry out effective remote education. Some colleges reported that they felt that, whilst certain courses were disproportionately affected, most students across the college needed catch up on general study skills including academic skills and revision.



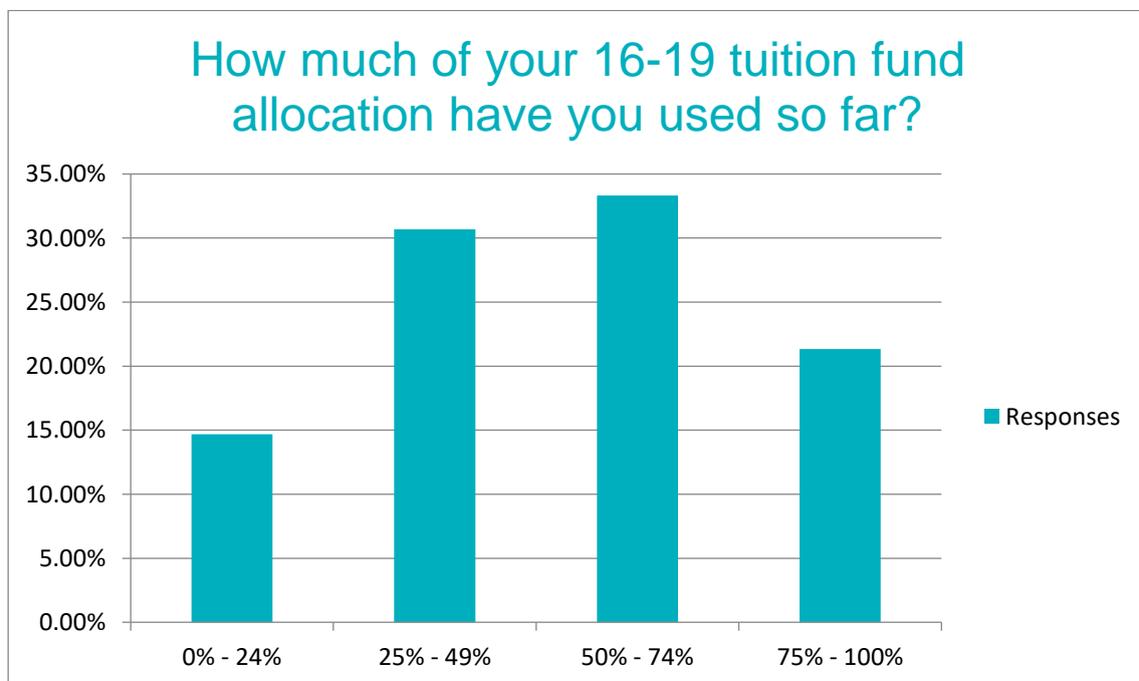
### How are you utilising the 16-19 Tuition Fund?

**17%** of colleges are utilising the 16-19 Fund for English and Maths catch up. **3%** are utilising the fund for vocational/technical catch up, but **76%** are using the fund for both English and Maths and vocational/technical catch up. **3%** stated they were using it for other purposes with examples ranging from supporting A-Level students who received grade 4 for English and Maths GCSE and are now struggling to progress with A-Level content. Others are using it for study skills support and digital skills support.



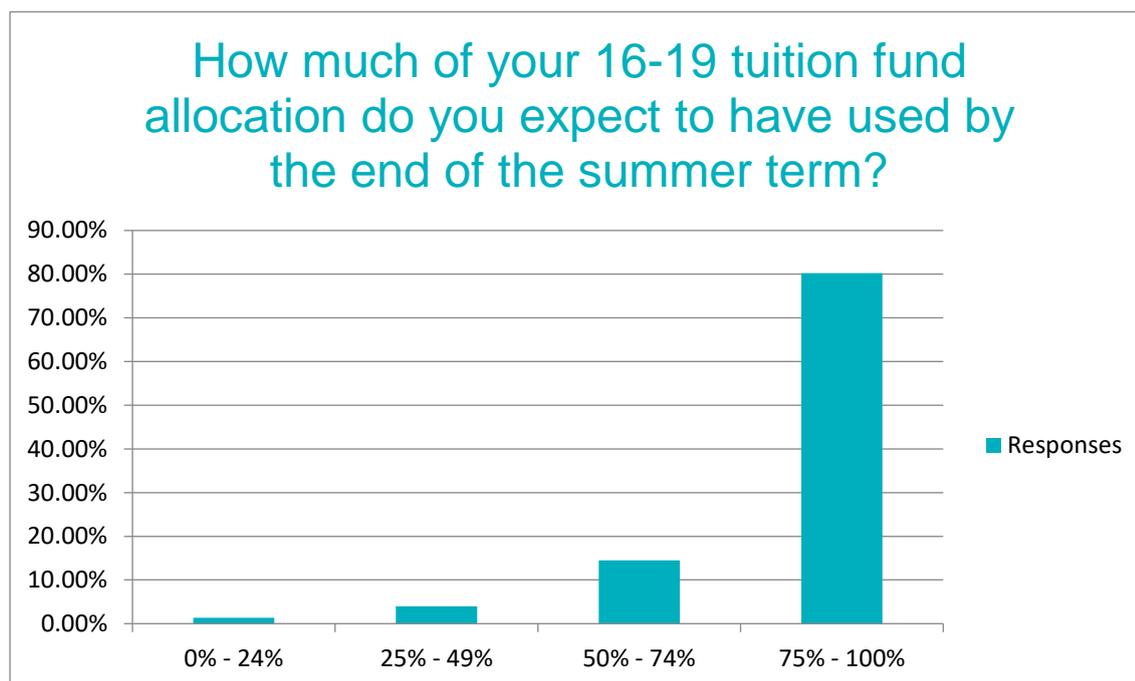
### How much of your 16-19 Tuition Fund allocation have you used so far?

**15%** of colleges have used between 0% and 24% of their allocation. **31%** have used between 25% and 49%. **33%** have used between 50 and 74% and **21%** have used between 75% and 100% of their allocation.



## How much of your 16-19 Tuition Fund allocation do you expect to have used by the end of the summer term?

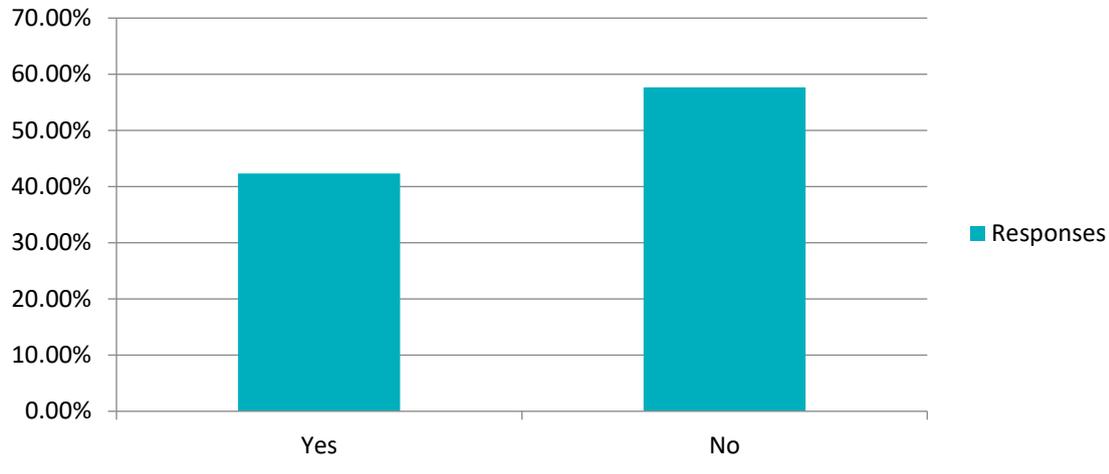
**95%** of colleges will have used between 50% and 100% of their 16-19 Tuition Fund allocation by the end of the summer term. **One** college said they will have only used between 0% and 24% by the end of the summer term and **three** colleges will have only used between 25% and 49% of their allocation.



## Are you planning on delivering any summer tutoring activities using your 16-19 tuition fund allocation?

Colleges were fairly evenly split with **42%** saying they would be delivering summer tutoring activities and **58%** saying they would not be delivering summer tutoring activities using the 16-19 tuition fund allocation. This might explain the reason that some colleges would not be using all of their allocation before the end of the summer term if they intend to run summer tutoring programmes.

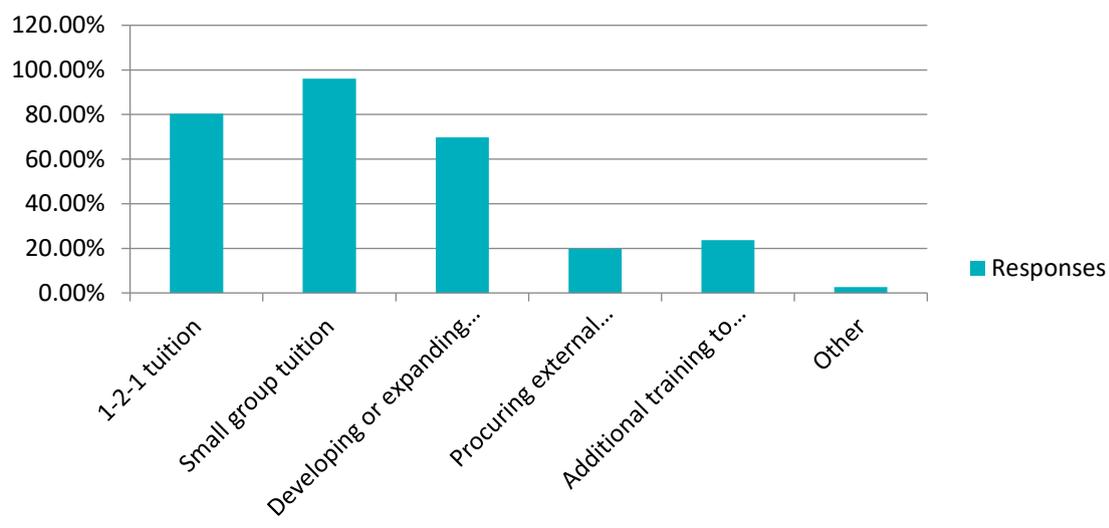
## Are you planning on delivering any summer tutoring activities using your 16-19 tuition fund allocation?



## How have you used your 16-19 Tuition Fund allocation?

Colleges were asked to tick all options that were applicable. **96%** of colleges were using their 16-19 Tuition for small group tuition. **80%** were using it for one-to-one tuition. **70%** were developing or expanding their in-house catch-up support offer. **24%** were using it for additional training to support tuition and **20%** were using it to procure external services/resources.

## How have you used your 16-19 Fund allocation?(Please tick all that apply)



1.

## To what extent is 16-19 Tuition Fund activity helping to mitigate the impact of lost learning?

**22%** of colleges said that the 16-19 Tuition Fund activity is largely helping to mitigate the impact of lost learning. **56%** said it is moderately helping and **19%** said it is slightly helping to mitigate the impact of lost learning.

Colleges were concerned about the limitations and restrictions of the fund saying that they often need additional practical sessions for all students on technical courses with examples given of having to split groups into four so that there are only 4 students in a group which then limits the impact as it limits the time that courses can use specialist facilities. They suggest that what they need is more hours for whole group teaching to focus on practical content.

Colleges reported that it was often more difficult to engage students in extra sessions during lockdown. Following a full timetable online was a challenge for many students and, whilst they welcome the offer of extra support, more time online is not what they wanted. Colleges did acknowledge that this should improve when they were back to face-to-face sessions although then there would be additional pressure on timetabling, staffing and room availability. Many colleges said that recruiting extra staff was a significant challenge.

## What (if any) support are you providing/planning to provide to help students 'catch up' above and beyond activity through the 16-19 Tuition Fund?

Colleges were asked to indicate all options that were applicable. **71%** of colleges are providing additional tuition above planned hours. **63%** are providing additional mentoring. **77%** are providing online catch-up materials. **45%** are providing additional catch-up during holidays (e.g. summer schools). **8%** are signposting students to additional external tutoring services with **8%** saying they were doing other activities. These included additional pastoral support and some double staffing in classes (the college is bearing the cost of this as it is not eligible for funding).

## Where you have indicated you are providing or planning to provide 'catch up' support, can you provide further detail.

Some colleges said that they did not have any room in their budget for catch up support above that from the national scheme. Some are providing additional teaching sessions over the Easter period and Spring break, but for classes as opposed to small groups. Some are providing English and maths work to address

skills gaps plus small group support for learners who are behind on vocational courses.

During lockdown students are not keen to attend extra sessions - they find following a full timetable online to be a challenge and whilst they welcome the offer of extra support more time online is not what they want. Should improve when we can put on face-to-face sessions although this will put pressure on rooming when we are back in college and need additional space for catch up classes alongside the full timetable.

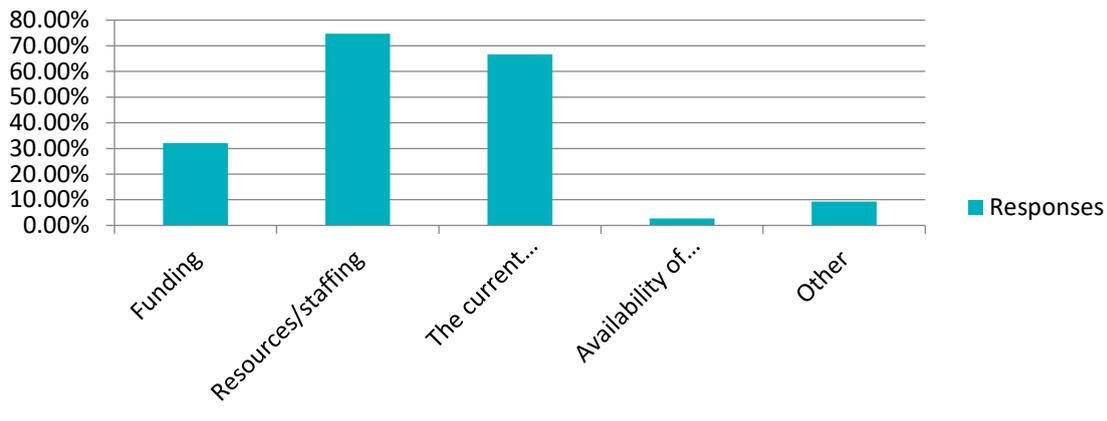
Colleges were planning more intense support, once the Teacher Assessed Grades (TAG) process has concluded with many planning skills focused projects to ensure that students have developed the key skills and behaviours needed to support progression to the next level or destination. One college said that, where possible, these projects will take the form of live briefs from local employers.

The main concern appears to be around practical based sessions. Theory was easier to deliver online, but many colleges are now trying to fit in practical sessions to ensure students have the skills they need to progress.

### **Are there any particular barriers that are preventing you from delivering 'catch up' support programmes?**

The main challenge for colleges in delivering 'catch up' support programmes over the second term has been staffing and resources, with **75%** citing this as a particular barrier. **67%** said that the national lockdown which began after Christmas hampered their delivery of catch up sessions. Certainly, practical based workshop classes were not able to take place but also, as stated previously, theory based catch up was also affected as students whose learning moved online during the lockdown were less motivated to stay online for extra catch up sessions. **32%** cited funding as a barrier and **3%** said the lack of availability of external tutoring services was a challenge. Other barriers were the lack of flexibility on the support needed. Colleges said that it wasn't just English, Maths and subjects that needed the catch up support, but also personal and social development and enrichment. Some colleges have found it difficult to fill vacancies which were intended to deliver some of the catch up tuition/support. Existing staff capacity has been impacted due to the increased demands and expectations which has resulted in fatigue and impacted on staff mental wellbeing.

Are there any particular barriers that are preventing you from delivering 'catch up' support programmes? (Please tick all that apply)



**For each element of online learning listed below, please indicate how much it has been adopted by your college**

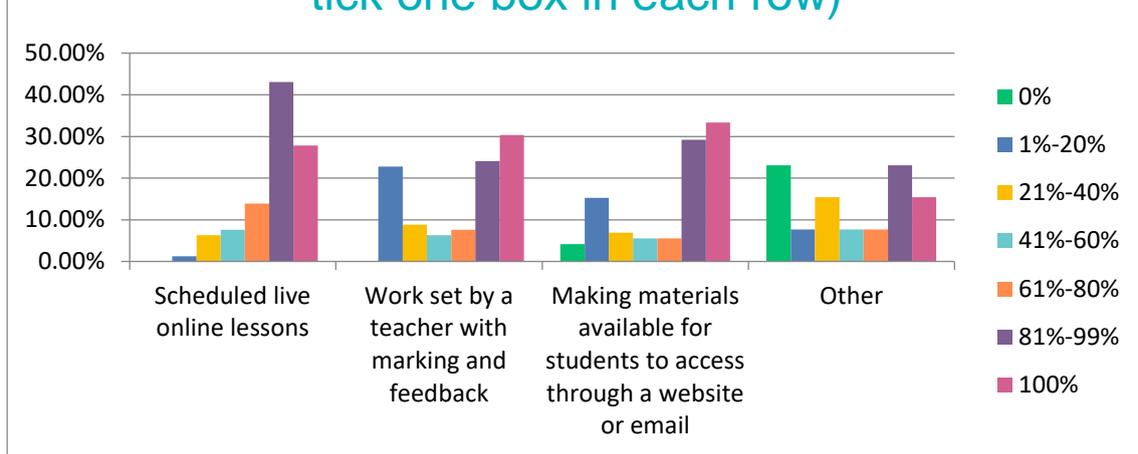
Scheduled live online lessons were used extensively by those colleges responding with **85%** of colleges saying they were delivering upwards of 60% of lessons in this way. **28%** of colleges delivering 100% as live online lessons.

All colleges that responded said teachers were setting work online and providing marks and feedback with **23%** delivering up to 20% of work setting in this way, **9%** delivering between 21 to 40% this way, **6%** delivering between 41% to 60%, **8%** delivering between 61% to 80%, **24%** delivering between 80% to 99% and then **30%** of colleges setting all work online in this way.

**96%** of colleges are making some materials available through a website or by e-mail for students to access, with **33%** saying that they make 100% of materials for students available through a website or by e-mail.

Additionally, colleges reported that they were doing other things to support learning remotely such as setting projects with industry, posting practical kit out to students to use at home, providing pre-recorded practical demonstrations for students to access, providing one-to-one reviews, tutorials, and pastoral support online.

For each element of online learning listed below, please indicate how much it has been adopted by your college:(Please tick one box in each row)



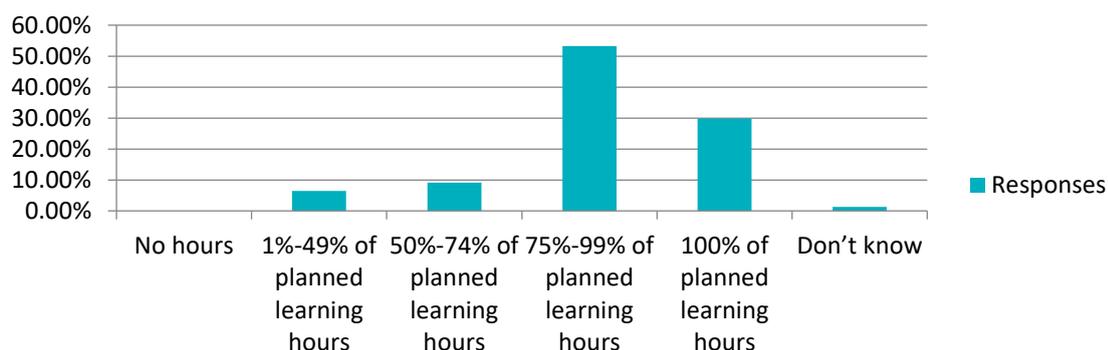
### Approximately what proportion of all learners are continuing their learning remotely?

Colleges were asked to indicate what percentage of learners were continuing their learning remotely. Most said that learners were continuing learning remotely with the majority saying over **80%** were continuing learning remotely.

### For learners aged under 19, what proportion of planned learning hours do you estimate are being delivered remotely during the third national lockdown?

**83%** of colleges said that they were delivering over 75% of planned learning hours remotely during the third national lockdown with **30%** of colleges saying that they were delivering 100% of planned learning hours remotely.

## For learners aged under 19, what proportion of planned learning hours do you estimate are being delivered remotely during the third national lockdown?



## For learners aged under 19, to what extent does the proportion of planned learning hours being delivered remotely vary by subject?

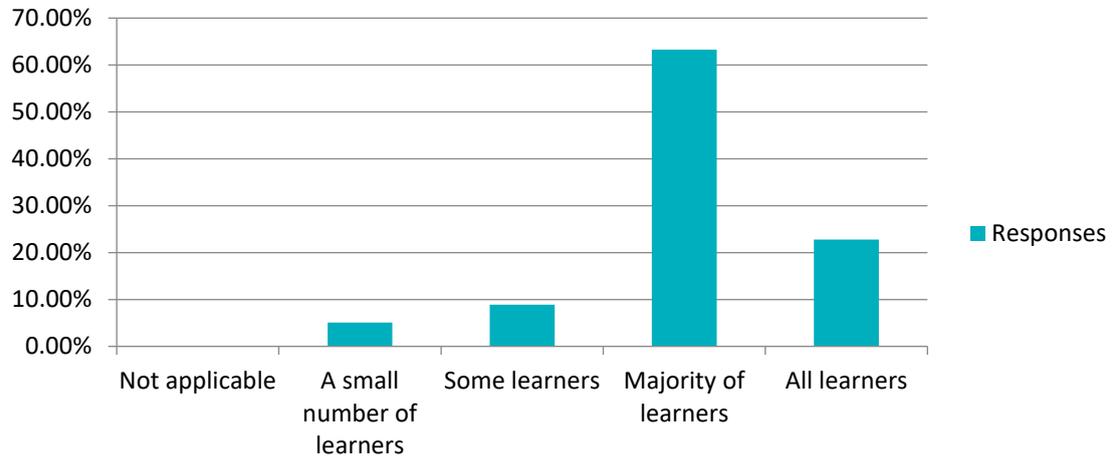
Most colleges said there was some variation by subject to the proportion of planned learning hours being delivered remotely with **36%** saying there was some variation and **43%** saying there was a small amount of variation. Only **3%** said there was a lot of variation and **18%** said there was no variation by subject.

Some colleges said that the only students learning on site were vulnerable learners or lower-level learners with students struggling to engage in home learning have been taught on site in a one-to-one setting and in small groups. Colleges also said that the variation by subject was dependent on staff availability and on whether a subject had a particularly practical based element to it. The latter were more difficult to deliver remotely and many colleges front loaded theory content so that practical could be delivered when on site provision resumed.

## Approximately what proportion of your 19+ learners are continuing their learning remotely?

**63%** of colleges said that most of their 19+ learners were continuing to learn remotely and **23%** said that all 19+ learners were continuing to learn remotely.

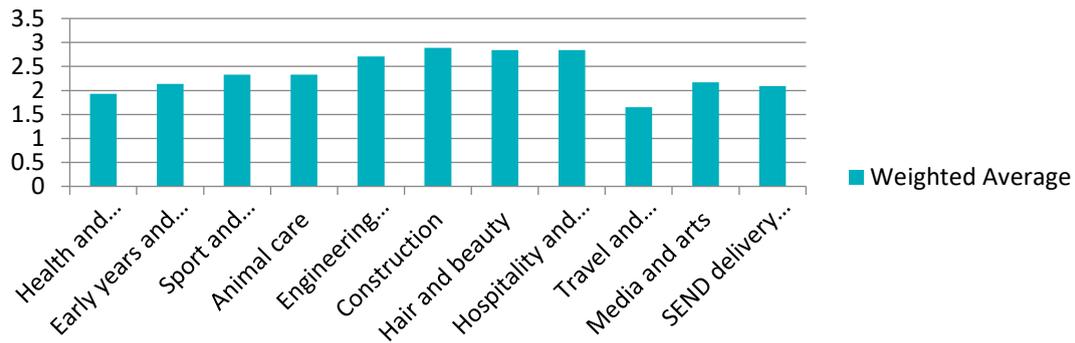
## Approximately what proportion of your 19+ learners are continuing their learning remotely?



### For students undertaking courses requiring access to specialist equipment and hands on supervision, to what extent are you able to continue to deliver courses remotely during the spring term?

The impact on the workshop/lab elements of practical courses has been profound. Courses such as Engineering and Motor Vehicle (**9%**), Construction (**11%**), Hair and Beauty (**10%**) and Hospitality and Catering (**7%**) had the highest number of colleges saying that they were unable to deliver most of the course. But most colleges were able to deliver with either minor or significant changes or with parts of delivery deferred.

For students undertaking courses requiring access to specialist equipment and hands on supervision, to what extent are you able to continue to deliver courses remotely during the spring term?



	Able to continue course with minor changes	Able to continue courses with significant changes	Able to continue some parts of course, other parts deferred	Unable to deliver majority of course	Total
Health and social care	28 40%	19 27%	23 33%	0	70
Early years and childcare	23 33%	14 20%	33 47%	0	70
Sport and public services	17 24%	16 23%	34 49%	3 4%	70
Animal care	8 20%	12 30%	19 47.5%	1 3%	40
Engineering and motor vehicle	6 9%	13 20%	41 62%	6 9%	66

Construction	3 5%	8 13%	45 71%	7 11%	63
Hair and beauty	3 5%	10 16%	42 69%	6 10%	61
Hospitality and catering	2 3%	11 18%	44 71%	5 8%	62
Travel and tourism	34 57%	13 22%	13 22%	0	60
Media and arts	16 23%	29 41%	24 34%	2 3%	71
SEND	19 27%	28 40%	21 30%	2 3%	70

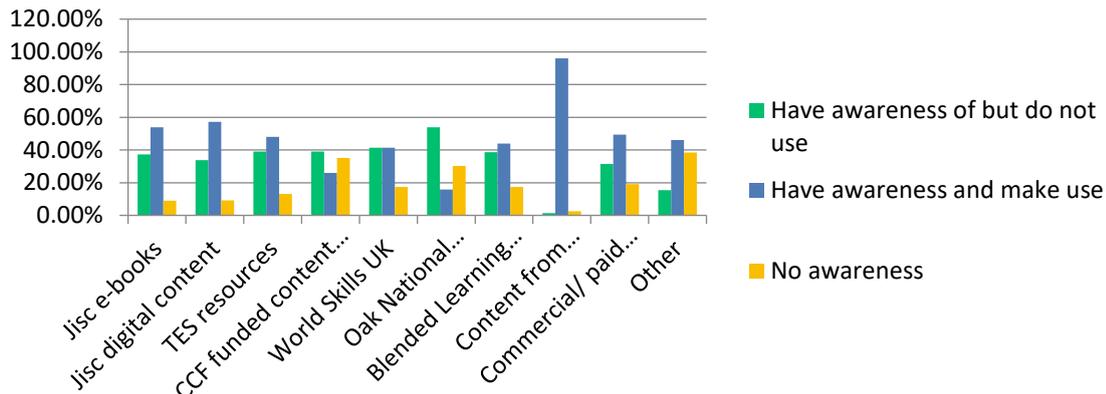
### Which digital collaborative/learning system are you using?

Colleges are using a range of digital collaborative/learning systems to support delivery including Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Google Classrooms, Padlet and Moodle.

### What is your awareness and use of following digital curriculum content and resources?

**97%** of colleges are using digital content and resources from their Awarding Organisations with around half of colleges using JISC e-books and digital content and TES resources. Very few say they use Oak National Academy but that is more targeted at schools. There is an interesting gap between being aware of content and using it. For example, 90% of colleges know about Jisc's e-books and digital content but just over half choose to use them.

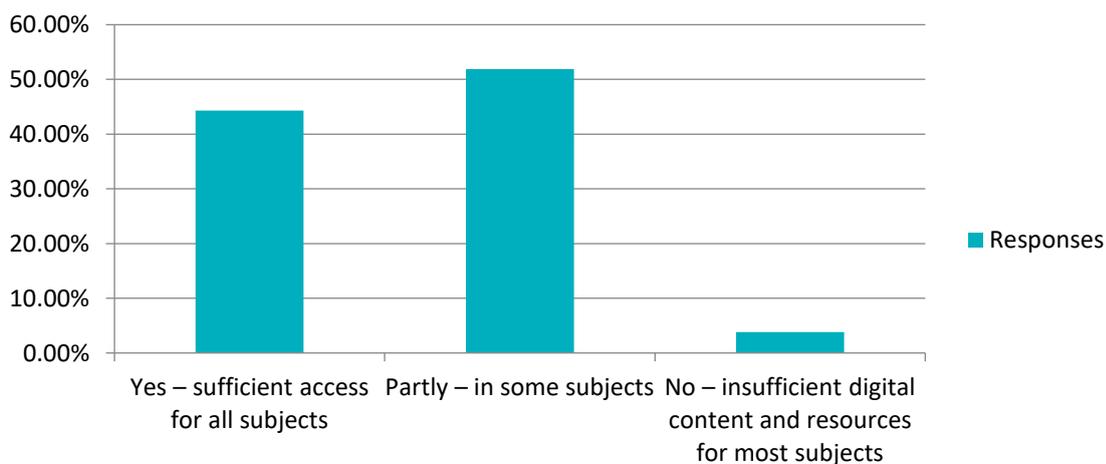
## What is your awareness and use of following digital curriculum content and resources?(Please tick one box in each row)



## Are you able to access sufficient high quality digital content and resources to support your remote learning offer?

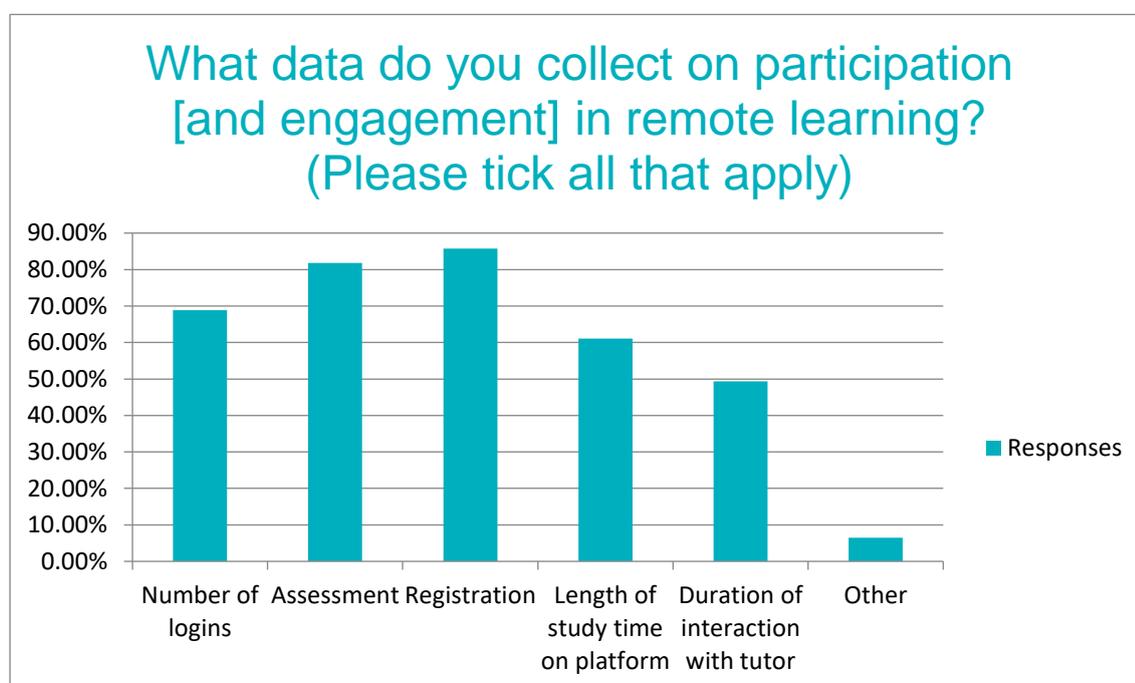
**44%** of colleges are able to access sufficient high quality digital content and resources to support their remote learning offer. **52%** say that they have partly been able to access sufficient content and resources and a further **4%** said that there was insufficient high quality content and resources in most subjects.

## Are you able to access sufficient high quality digital content and resources to support your remote learning offer?



## Do you have systems in place to collect data on participation in remote learning?

**97%** of colleges had systems in place to collect data on participation in remote learning. **86%** of colleges collect data on participation and engagement through online registration. **82%** also use assessment to collect participation and engagement data with **69%** also saying that they count the number of logins and **61%** logging the length of study time on the online platform. Colleges also said that they used Student Voice to monitor remote learning engagement.



**95%** of colleges are confident that they will be able to evidence delivery of planned hours undertaken remotely. Colleges did, however, say that the challenge with evidencing remote learning is that logging in is different to engagement. The other challenge is that extra activities like enrichment, trips and visits are either not happening or happening in a limited way, therefore there is a need for auditors to be flexible.

## Please rate the confidence and skills of your staff in teaching online

Since we last asked this question in a previous survey staff confidence and skills have improved in teaching online with **81%** of colleges saying that staff confidence is good and **6%** saying it is excellent. **10%** say that staff confidence and skills are average with only **3%** saying they need some support.

## **Have you set minimum standards for teaching remotely that you expect all your teaching staff to deliver, or work towards achieving?**

**95%** of colleges have set minimum standards for teaching remotely that all teaching staff are expected to deliver or work towards. **98%** are using in-house minimum standards with **3%** using external standards set by Ofsted, ETF or QAA guidance on remote learning as well as Microsoft Innovator standards.

## **Please estimate the number of 16-18 students at your college who do not have a stable internet connection at home to undertake remote learning?**

**23 out of the 71** colleges who responded said that they had upwards of 300 students without a stable internet connection. A couple of colleges said they had over 1000 students without a stable internet connection. **96%** of colleges said that the issue was no fixed broadband. **78%** said there was an issue with mobile internet access and **79%** said the issue was with students having insufficient data.

## **By the end of January you should have received an email notifying how many devices you may order through their Get Help with Technology programme. Please confirm whether this will provide adequate devices to ensure that every 16-18 year old enrolled at your college has their own device to access their learning online?**

**64%** of colleges have said that the Get Help with Technology programme will provide adequate devices to ensure that every 16-18 year old enrolled at your college has their own device to access their learning online. **36%** said that it would not provide adequate devices stating that they are still significantly short of devices.

Some colleges received a good number of devices but very few dongles to allow an internet connection. This led to many devices being unable to be utilised. This may be resolved by free data uplifts for 16 to 18 year olds introduced in late February. Other colleges reported that in the third lockdown students often found that they were having to share devices with parents/carers and siblings. One college stated that they specifically had 1006 requests for laptops but only received 333 from the Get Help with Technology Scheme so have had to resource the additional 673 laptops themselves.

**96%** of colleges said that being from a low income family was the main reason for students not have access to devices or connection. **86%** said that some students did not have their own device for learning, despite sufficient household income and **81%**

said students were choosing to use devices that are not ideal for their remote learning such as devices without keyboards.

### **How are you providing ongoing support for students' welfare needs (bereavement/isolation)?**

Alongside counselling, tutoring, one to ones with teachers and support staff to support students' welfare needs, some colleges are recruiting additional student wellbeing staff, specifically with bereavement counselling experience. They are also signposting to appropriate external support, where needed.

Some college safeguarding and wellbeing teams are working closely with curriculum staff to provide support to those bereaved and isolated. Many colleges say they schedule in regular welfare calls to the students with many sending daily wellbeing texts to all students.

One college has invested £5,000 in a 24 hour, 7 days a week open access support system for students requiring support or experiencing mental health issues.

Many colleges are also using and promoting enrichment activities to support student wellbeing.

### **Please state up to three issues your students aged 16-18 have most frequently raised with you this term.**

Sadly, many colleges are seeing students come to them with concerns and issues. These were so significant that we felt compelled to list as many as we could: sleep problems, feeling demotivated, suicidal thoughts and self-harming, lack of physical activity, depression, anxiety, increased domestic harm, increase in eating disorders, feeling isolated and lonely when learning online and missing interaction with teachers and fellow students, financial hardship, substance abuse, relationship breakdowns within the family unit, housing problems, nowhere appropriate to study at home, concern around how grades will be calculated, fears around future job security.

One college said that they had four suicide attempts from learners within the last term.

### **Please state up to three issues your adult learners have most frequently raised with you this term?**

Issues raised by adult learners were much the same as those for 16-18 learners, however in addition the following were raised: Employers more reluctant to provide time for home study compared to attending college and more pressure to work

additional hours which means students cannot engage in education; Inability to continue with education because of caring and home schooling responsibilities; Inability to continue with education because of change in family circumstances; domestic abuse; not getting the access to specialist resources that they feel they paid for - especially on some HE courses; concerns with employment opportunities; concern as to why functional skills students have to do exams when GCSEs are to have teacher assessed grades and language difficulties for ESOL learners causing social isolation.

Association of Colleges – April 2021

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