



The future of school-related quangos

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The Coalition government decided to abolish the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA), the General Teaching Council for England (GTCE), the School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB), the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (Becta), the Teachers TV Board of Governors, and the Teenage Pregnancy Independent Advisory Group (TPIAG). In addition, two other bodies that had been under review - the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) and the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) - will also be replaced. QCDA, GTCE and SSSNB, TDA and YPLA are statutory bodies.

This Standard Note provides background on the bodies affected by the Coalition government's decisions to abolish school-related quangos, and on future arrangements to cover those functions that are to be continued. The forthcoming education bill is expected to remove the provisions relating to the statutory bodies, and to provide for any associated legislative changes. The [DFE website](#) may provide further information in due course.

More generally, the *Public Bodies Bill* [HL] 2010-11, which was introduced in the House of Lords on 28 October 2010, contains enabling provision to give ministers the power, by Order, to abolish, merge and transfer functions to and from certain public bodies listed in the Schedules to the Bill. Library Standard Note [SN/PC/5609](#) provides background on the Bill.

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1 General background

On 14 October 2010, the Cabinet Office published its cross-government review of public bodies. This affects all government departments. Michael Gove, the Education Secretary, confirmed which of the DfE's arm's length public bodies will close 'as part of plans to improve accountability, transparency and efficiency.'¹ The Qualifications and Curriculum

¹ Department's plans for arm's length bodies, [DFE News 14 October 2010](#)

Development Agency (QCDA), the General Teaching Council for England (GTCE) and the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (Becta) had already been told they would close. The 14 October announcement also said that the Teachers TV Board of Governors and the Teenage Pregnancy Independent Advisory Group (TPIAG) would close. At the time, a number of bodies were still under review, including the School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB); however, since then the Education Secretary has announced that the SSSNB will also close, and that the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) and the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) will be replaced.²

QCDA, GTCE, SSSNB, TDA and YPLA are statutory bodies. Becta, Teachers TV Board of Governors and the Teenage Pregnancy Independent Advisory Group (TPIAG) are not statutory bodies.

The forthcoming education bill is expected to remove the provisions relating to the statutory bodies and to provide for any associated legislative changes.

More generally, the *Public Bodies Bill* [HL] 2010-11, which was introduced in the House of Lords on 28 October 2010, contains enabling provision to give ministers the power, by Order, to abolish, merge and transfer functions to and from certain public bodies listed in the Schedules to the Bill. Library Standard Note [SN/PC/5609](#) provides background on the Bill.

2 Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA)

2.1 Background

QCDA was created by the previous government to develop the curriculum and administer tests. The *Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009* made provision for the replacement of the then Qualifications and Curriculum Authority by the new QCDA, and for regulatory functions regarding examination and assessment boards to be transferred to a new regulatory body called Ofqual.

Currently QCDA collaborates with the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) and the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment in Northern Ireland (CCEA).

On 27 May 2010, the Education Secretary, Michael Gove, announced that QCDA would close. He wrote to the chairman of the QCDA to say he would bring forward the necessary legislation.³ A [revised remit letter](#) from the DFE was sent to QCDA on 15 September 2010.⁴

2.2 Future arrangements

QCDA will carry out its statutory functions until the legislative changes are made. The [revised remit letter](#) from the DFE to QCDA on 15 September 2010 explained that some functions currently carried out by QCDA would be discharged differently, some would continue, and others would stop completely. The letter set out funding details including savings, and arrangements for the transitional period including the following priorities:

Statutory Assessment 2011:

Supporting accuracy and consistency of Early Years Foundation Stage Profile results

² [The Importance of Teaching](#), DFE, Cm 7980, November 2010

³ Letter from the Education Secretary to Christopher Trinick, chair of QCDA, Library deposited paper: Dep 2010/1258

⁴ <http://www.qcda.gov.uk/news/7173.aspx>

Supporting accuracy and consistency of KS1 results

KS2 National Curriculum Tests delivery and procurement for future test delivery

KS2 Science Sample Tests delivery

Examinations Delivery:

Support for Diploma Awarding

Centre Support for General Qualifications and the Diploma

General Qualifications Logistics

General Qualifications Online Access Arrangements

Achievement and Attainment Tables

Research:

Continuation of research and evaluation functions and tools that will need to be transferred to other bodies.

Provision of up-to-date, authoritative and comparable international evidence on curriculum, assessment and qualifications.⁵

A written answer to a PQ on 14 June 2010 said that QCDA's budget for 2010-11 was £128 million, and that the Coalition government expected to generate savings in relation to QCDA of at least £8 million in this financial year.⁶ The [revised remit letter](#) said that in order to deliver the priorities set out in the letter and as part of the DFE's declared contribution towards the £6.2bn savings this financial year, it had been decided that QCDA's budget would be reduced by £20million.

On 5 November 2010, commenting on the review of key Stage testing, the Education Secretary announced new arrangements for delivering national curriculum tests following the abolition of QCDA. The [DFE news website](#) stated:

The Education Secretary also announced today new arrangements for delivering National Curriculum tests and assessments following the abolition of the QCDA. Working within the Department, an executive agency will oversee statutory tests and assessments for children up to age 14. Its exact remit will be confirmed following consideration of the recommendations of Lord Bew's review.

Michael Gove said:

It is essential that the statutory assessment arrangements put in place following our review are delivered in a timely and effective way. It is right that accountability for ensuring this rests with ministers, and that is why I am establishing an executive agency within my department that will be accountable to me for the secure delivery of its functions.

⁵ A [revised remit letter](#), DFE, 15 September 2010

⁶ HC Deb 14 June 2010 c308W

As the independent regulator, Ofqual will continue to have an important role, as it does now, in keeping under review the agency's functions relating to National Curriculum tests and assessments.⁷

A written answer to a PQ on 11 November said that the Coalition government intends to introduce legislation in January 2010, and that closure will follow soon after the Royal Assent. The written answer went on to note:

The Secretary of State announced on the 5 November that he was establishing an executive agency within the Department for Education which would be responsible for statutory assessment and testing for pupils up to 14 (Key Stage 3). I wrote to the chair of the Select Committee for Education to inform him of the new arrangements. A copy of the letter has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses. We will announce further details about the future of any other areas of work that will need to continue beyond the abolition of the QCDA in due course.⁸

QCDA is based in Coventry (as is Becta):

British Educational Communications and Technology Agency: Coventry

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans he has to consult employees of (a) Becta and (b) the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Authority in Coventry over the planned closure of each body. [11941]

Mr Gibb [holding answer 27 July 2010]: Bringing Educational Creativity to All is a strand of work by the Government's Educational Technology Agency, BECTA, so it does not have any allocated employees itself. The British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (BECTA) and the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA), which are both based in Coventry, are planned to close.

The Department is working closely with the management teams of both agencies to ensure that staff are consulted and provided with all the support that they need as the agencies move towards closure. Staff development programmes are being delivered that will support advice and counselling, job search, career planning, and CV writing and interview skills.

Both agencies are consulting the Public and Commercial Services (PCS) union, the recognised trade union, and all staff, about the risk of redundancy.⁹

Written answers to PQs provided additional information on the future of the staff and the QCDA building:

Coventry Butts Street Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what plans his Department has for the future of the Coventry Butts Street Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency building. [18026]

Tim Loughton: The property at Butts Street, Coventry is occupied wholly by the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA). It is intended that following the abolition of the QCDA in 2012 the lease for the building will be transferred to the Department for Education.

⁷ [DFE news website](#) 5 November 2010

⁸ HC Deb 11 November 2010 cc 420-1W

⁹ HC Deb 11 November 2010 c419W

The Department is presently reviewing options for the future use of the building and a decision has not yet been taken.¹⁰

And:

Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency

Mr Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many staff presently working for the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency in Coventry he expects to transfer to his Department. [1413]

Mr Gibb [holding answer 8 June 2010]: National curriculum tests will continue and the people supporting tests will therefore continue to be needed. Some other functions, such as support for the administration of examinations, will continue at least for the medium term, and again we will need to retain the people who work on these areas.¹¹

2.3 Comment

Some critics stressed the need to retain a body with responsibility for curriculum matters to sit between the government and the teaching profession. However, commentators have also pointed to problems when relations between such a body and the government of the day become strained, noting that the department had set up groups to review the curriculum in parallel to QCDA.¹²

3 General Teaching Council for England (GTCE)

3.1 Background

The GTCE was established under the *Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998*. Its main functions are to maintain a register of qualified teachers in England, regulate the teaching profession, and provide advice to government and other agencies on issues affecting the quality of teaching and learning. Further information on its role is available on the [GTCE website](#).

On 2 June 2010, Michael Gove said that he was ‘deeply sceptical’ about the purpose of the General Teaching Council for England:

This Government trusts the professionals. That's why we want to give teachers greater freedoms and reduce unnecessary bureaucracy. Since I have been shadowing education and more recently held the brief in Government there has been one organisation of whose purpose and benefit to teachers I am deeply sceptical - the General Teaching Council for England. I believe this organisation does little to raise teaching standards or professionalism. Instead it simply acts as a further layer of bureaucracy while taking money away from teachers. I want there to be stronger and clearer arrangements in relation to teacher misconduct and I am not convinced the GTCE is the right organisation to take these forward. I intend to seek authority from Parliament to abolish the General Teaching Council for England.¹³

The current cost of the GTCE to the exchequer is estimated to be around £16 million a year:

¹⁰ HC Deb 26 October 2010 c286W

¹¹ HC Deb 22 June 2010 c206W

¹² “Scrapping the QCDA”, *Education Journal*, Issue 124: “So, who will decide on the curriculum now?” *Independent* 3 June 2010, p4

¹³ DFE News, 2 June 2010, [General Teaching Council for England \(GTC\) to be scrapped](#)

Ed Balls: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what estimate he has made of the (a) cost and (b) savings to the Exchequer arising from the abolition of the General Teaching Council for England in (i) 2010-11, (ii) 2011-12 and (iii) 2012-13. [1203]

Mr Gibb [*holding answer 7 June 2010*]: There are a number of factors which may have an impact in terms of potential cost and savings arising from the abolition of the General Teaching Council for England (GTCE) over the period 2010-2013, including factors relating to the extent of any transfer of the GTCE's existing functions and GTCE staff to other bodies. The current cost of the GTCE to the exchequer is estimated to be around £16 million per year. Our aim is to introduce new arrangements for the regulation of the profession which are more cost-effective and efficient than the current system.¹⁴

3.2 Future arrangements

Nick Gibb, the Schools Minister, said in a written answer to a PQ on 18 October 2010 that the Government is considering a range of options for handling GTCE's current functions, including how its regulatory and disciplinary functions should operate in the future:

Mr Woolas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what the status of decisions relating to a teacher's professional standing made by the General Teaching Council (GTC) will be following the abolition of the GTC. [13831]

Mr Gibb: The Government are committed to maintaining an efficient and effective regulatory system for the teaching profession. Detailed arrangements are yet to be agreed, but the GTCE's decisions relating to disciplinary action against teachers will be upheld after its abolition, subject to the normal processes of appeal. The GTCE will continue to make those decisions until the point at which it is abolished. We are now in the process of considering a range of options for handling the current suite of GTCE functions, including how the regulatory and disciplinary functions should operate once the GTCE has been abolished. We will announce further details on how these functions will operate in due course and we hope to include these within new legislation later in the year.¹⁵

The closure date for the GTCE is expected to be 31 March 2012. An article in the *Times Educational Supplement* on 5 November 2010 commented on this.¹⁶

The [GTCE website](#) provides the following information:

The Government is working towards a closure date for the GTC of 31 March 2012. In the interim, teachers must continue to register with the Council; and employers must continue to ensure that teachers are registered, and refer disciplinary cases to the Council.

The Secretary of State for Education has confirmed that the GTC will be charging a registration fee for the financial year 2011-2012 set at the current rate of £36.50. This is the final fee the GTC will levy, even if uncertainties in the parliamentary process put back the final closure date.

The Government is also expected to outline its broad intentions in relation to the schools workforce, and how it intends to improve and manage performance, in the Education White Paper expected late November. Greater detail on any possible

¹⁴ HC Deb 6 September 2010 c349W

¹⁵ HC Deb 18 October 2010 cc 475-6W

¹⁶ "Beleaguered GTC is given 18-month stay of execution", *Times Educational Supplement*, 5 November 2010, p23

transfer of the GTC's statutory functions will then follow in the Education Bill in the New Year.

Key points:

Expected closure date is 31 March 2012.

Registration remains a legal requirement.

The fee will be kept at £36.50 for 2011-2012.

There will be no GTC fee for the financial year 2012-2013.

The future of the GTC's functions has yet to be determined by the Government.¹⁷

3.3 Comment

The chief executive of GTCE was said to be 'shocked and bewildered' by the decision.¹⁸ The chief executives of the GTC for Scotland and the GTC for Wales have expressed concern about how information about teachers who are guilty of misconduct will be shared across the UK when the GTCE is abolished.¹⁹ A Department for Education spokesman said that the department will be in touch with the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and will consult them as operations are developed for the future arrangements in England.²⁰

Some commentators questioned the GTCE's effectiveness, and were not surprised at the decision to abolish it; nevertheless, they have pointed out that its abolition sits uneasily with the Coalition government's commitment to raise the status of the teaching profession.²¹ It has been stressed that 'ridding teachers of the GTCE does not rid the profession of the need for registration and regulation', and that whatever replaces it should be the outcome of consultation and deliberation rather than ministerial whim.²²

Lord Puttnam, who was closely associated with establishing the GTCE and served as its first chairman, has described the decision to abolish the GTCE as "incredibly short-sighted", pointing out that while it may not have been perfect, the last thing the government should do is to "destroy public bodies to no purpose and with absolutely no plan."²³

There is concern that the GTCE will not be able to fulfil its functions during the transitional period as significant numbers of staff leave, and it has been pointed out that the abolition of the body could affect the collection of remaining fees.²⁴

A head teacher, who is concerned about the consequences of teachers not having a professional body, is leading a protest against the abolition of the GTCE and has called for teachers in England to join the Welsh GTC.²⁵

¹⁷ GTC closure in 2012, GTC website, 5 November 2010:

http://www.gtce.org.uk/media_parliament/news_comment/gtc_closure2012/

¹⁸ "Bewildered' GTC mulls legal fit for survival" *Times Educational Supplement*, 11 June 2010, p4; "Gove's haste to axe GTC greeted with disquiet", *Times Educational Supplement*, 11 June 2010, p4 and pp 28 and 29

¹⁹ "Gove warned that GTC closure could see incompetent staff sneak across the border", *Times Educational Supplement*, 27 August 2010, p7

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ e.g. "The abolition of the GTCE", *Education Journal*, Issue 124, p18

²² "GTC dismissal is no more than a crowd-pleaser", *Times Educational Supplement*, 11 June 2010, p2

²³ "Puttnam slams GTC abolition as 'shortsighted'", *Times Educational Supplement*, 8 October 2010, p9

²⁴ "Discipline hearings may go as GTC struggles to cope", *Times Educational Supplement*, 22 October 2010 p13

Other commentators, however, have questioned the effectiveness of the GTCE in regulating poorly performing teachers and seriously misbehaving teachers.²⁶ Some believe that the GTCE has been ‘a waste of time and money in practice’ and has been ‘no more than a talking shop’.²⁷

4 School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB)

4.1 Background

The *Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009* established a new body known as the School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB), which became a statutory advisory body in January 2010. Its remit is to consider and seek agreement on matters relating to the remuneration and conditions of employment relating to the duties or working time of school support staff who work in maintained schools in England. Background on it is provided in [Library Research Paper 09/15](#), which was prepared for the second reading debate on the *Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill*.

Details of the work of the SSSNB were set out on the [Local Government Employers website](#).²⁸

On 28 October 2010, the Education Secretary announced in a Written Ministerial Statement that the SSSNB would be abolished as it ‘does not fit well with the Government’s priorities for greater deregulation of pay and conditions arrangements for the school workforce.’²⁹ (see below). The Education Secretary wrote to the SSSNB’s independent chair on [28 October 2010](#) confirming the intention to abolish SSSNB using the forthcoming Education Bill.³⁰

4.2 Future arrangements

The Written Ministerial Statement on 28 October 2010 said that school support staff will continue to have their pay and conditions determined at the local level by employers:

The Secretary of State for Education (Michael Gove): The SSSNB was established by the previous Government to develop a national pay and conditions framework for school support staff working in maintained schools in England. The Government have conducted a review of the future policy direction for determining school support staff pay and conditions, including the role of the SSSNB, and have concluded that the SSSNB does not fit well with the Government’s priorities for greater deregulation of the pay and conditions arrangements for the school workforce. I therefore propose to introduce legislation to abolish the SSSNB at the earliest opportunity.

This decision means that school support staff will continue to have their pay and conditions determined in accordance with existing arrangements whereby decisions are taken at a local level by employers.

In reaching this decision the Government have considered very carefully the views of the SSSNB trade union and employer member organisations, and the SSSNB independent chair. I will be writing today to the independent chair and lead

²⁵ “Head fighting GTC abolition urges teachers to join Welsh counterpart”, *Times Educational Supplement*, 15 October 2010, p15

²⁶ “Gove’s haste to axe greeted with disquiet”, *Times Educational Supplement*, 11 June 2010, pp 28 and 29

²⁷ “Save England’s GTC? It’s useless at getting rid of bad apples and costs too much. But at least it’s worth a laugh”, *Times Educational Supplement*, 15 October 2010, p27

²⁸ http://www.ome.uk.com/example/School_Support_Staff_Negotiating_Body.aspx

²⁹ <http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/w/written%20ministerial%20statement%20on%20abolition%20of%20the%20sssnb.pdf>

³⁰ http://www.ome.uk.com/example/School_Support_Staff_Negotiating_Body.aspx

representatives of the SSSNB member organisations to notify them of the Government's decision.³¹

The letter of [28 October 2010](#) to the SSSNB independent chair, withdrew from immediate effect the matters referred to SSSNB by the former Secretary of State (in his referral letter of 29 July 2009). These matters include producing a core contract of employment to cover remuneration, duties and working time; designing national job profiles to cover core support staff roles; developing and producing a method for converting those job role profiles into a salary structure; and a strategy to effectively implement the national pay and conditions' framework in all school maintained by local authorities in England.

4.3 Comment

Unison, which represents 200,000 teaching assistants, opposes the abolition of the SSSNB.³² Commenting on the decision, the [Unison website](#) stated:

School support staff not beaten

Members of UNISON's national school's committee met in Nottingham, 5-6 November, and discussed the future programme of work for school support staff.

Temperatures were running high over the government's cavalier treatment of our members and its announcement that the School Support Staff Negotiating Body would be abolished.

The Body was at the stage of testing job profiles in schools and was advanced in discussions about working time, when the ConDem government came to power. That this is a major setback cannot be denied but the committee was keen to let our school members know that UNISON will fight on for a better deal for them.

There was need to regroup, protest about the government action, refresh the agenda and revitalise the campaign on Justice for School Staff. It was agreed that communication is of the essence and that members should understand that UNISON's demands still stand and that the fight goes on.

It was also felt that members should have the opportunity to direct the future campaign and that a consultative ballot of members should take place in the New Year. This would present options for the way forward in terms of industrial action, negotiating possibilities and campaign priorities.

In the meantime, work would continue to keep the profile of school support staff high and to resist a return to the invisibility days. Regional school committees and forums would be discussing local responses and feeding back to the national committee and office.

The education unions met on 8 November and pledged support. In particular it was agreed that the TUC General Secretary, Brendan Barber, would write to Michael Gove requesting a meeting to discuss the abolition of the SSSNB and future prospects for school support staff as a matter of urgency.

If no progress is made, education unions have agreed to boycott a meeting of the Government's Education Partnership on 17 November.³³

³¹ HC Deb 28 October cc 14-5WS

³² "Support staff debate strike over the axing of pay body", *Times Educational Supplement*, 5 November 2010

³³ http://www.unison.org.uk/education/pages_view.asp?did=12068

5 Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA)

5.1 Background

The TDA was created under the *Education Act 2005*. It is the national agency and recognised sector body responsible for the training and development of the school workforce. The TDA receives an annual remit letter from the DFE that sets out its priorities and objectives for the coming year. Further information is provided on the [TDA website](#).³⁴

The schools white paper, *The Importance of Teaching*, published on 24 November 2010, announced:

2.22 Subject to legislation, the key functions of the Training and Development Agency (TDA), some of which are outlined above, will transfer to the Department for Education, where they will be exercised by an executive agency that is directly accountable to Ministers.

5.2 Future arrangements

The Education Secretary wrote to the chair of the TDA on 24 November 2010 acknowledging the contribution it had made, and stressing that its responsibilities should be carried out in a different way in the future. The precise scope of the new executive agency's responsibilities has yet to be finalised. The [letter](#) goes on to say that there will be an extended transition to the new arrangements but that the process is expected to be completed by 2012.³⁵

5.3 Comment

At the time of writing, the decision had attracted little comment.

6 Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA)

6.1 Background

The YPLA, established by the *Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learners Act 2009*, was launched in April 2010. It supports the delivery of training and education to all 16 to 19 year olds in England, and is responsible for funding and supporting academies. Further information is available on the [YPLA website](#).³⁶

The schools white paper, *The Importance of Teaching*, published on 24 November 2010, announced that the YPLA would be replaced by a new Education Funding Agency (EFA) as an executive agency of the DFE. The new Education Funding Agency will, in due course, be responsible for the funding of provision for young people in further education colleges, sixth form colleges and independent providers. The Education Funding Agency will also distribute resources to local authorities for them to pass on, as now, to those schools which are not academies:

8.13 Subject to legislation, we intend to replace the existing Young People's Learning Agency and set up a new Education Funding Agency (EFA) as an executive agency of the Department with responsibility for the direct funding of the growing number of Academies and Free Schools and all 16–19 provision. This will include the funding of 16–19 provision in FE colleges, sixth form colleges and independent provision. As Academy status increasingly becomes the norm, the EFA will distribute more funding

³⁴ <http://www.tda.gov.uk/about.aspx>

³⁵ http://www.tda.gov.uk/about/~media/resources/about/secretary_of_state_letter_241110.pdf

³⁶ <http://www.ypla.gov.uk/>

directly to schools. The EFA will also distribute resources to local authorities for them to pass on, as now, to those schools which are not yet Academies.

8.14 Academies and Free Schools will continue to receive funding for the services which maintained schools receive from their local authority but which Academies and Free Schools are expected to pay for, given their independence from local authorities – for example behaviour support. We are reviewing the calculation of this additional funding to ensure it is fair both for local authorities and for Academies and Free Schools.

The DFE's *Economic Impact Assessment* of the schools white paper notes the expected efficiency savings from the changes.³⁷

6.2 Future arrangements

The YPLA Chair and Chief Executive have been asked by the Education Secretary to lead the process of transition for the YPLA into the Education Funding Agency. The Education Secretary wrote to the chair of the YPLA on 23 November to this effect.³⁸ It is expected that the transition will be complete by April 2012. The YPLA website states:

YPLA business will continue as planned until the Education Funding Agency is established. Immediate priorities are to manage the funding allocations for 16-19 and for academies for the 2011/12 academic year over the next four months, to support the increasing number of academies and to work with local authorities to develop new arrangements to provide better support for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities.

YPLA partners have welcomed the announcement of a managed transition and stressed the achievements of the YPLA since its launch earlier this year. Leading the transition into the Education Funding Agency, the YPLA Chair, Les Walton and Chief Executive, Peter Lauener, are committed to building on the strong relationships already established with partners.³⁹

6.3 Comment

Commenting on the announcement, YPLA Chair, Les Walton said:

"I am very proud of the work that the YPLA does. From the start, our key focus has been to put the student at the centre of everything that we do.

I understand and respect the decision to ensure direct ministerial responsibility for education funding. I look forward to leading the transition of the YPLA into the Education Funding Agency.

I have been extremely pleased with the regard that the Secretary of State and our partners have for the YPLA, the strong messages of support we have received for the work we do and the impact we have made since we were established in April this year. We will continue to work closely with all our partners and make sure that it is 'business as usual' and that everyone continues to receive the level of service that they have come to expect from the YPLA.

In the last 18 months, I have been struck by the professionalism, expertise and dedication of YPLA staff. I have absolutely no doubt that along with the Board they will

³⁷ *Economic Impact Assessment*, DFE, 24 November 2010, paragraphs 89 to 91

³⁸ Education Secretary's letter to the chair of the YPLA, dated 23 November 2010: http://readingroom.ypla.gov.uk/ypla/ypla-michael_gove_to_les_walton_re_white_paper-le-nov10-v1.pdf

³⁹ YPLA news; <http://www.ypla.gov.uk/news/latest/schools-white-paper.htm>

embrace change with the continued enthusiasm and expertise demonstrated since our establishment this April. I look forward to working with them during this next change in our country's education system."⁴⁰

7 Non-statutory bodies

7.1 British Educational Communications and Technology Agency

The British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (Becta) is the lead agency for ICT in education. It was established in 1998 through the reconstitution of the National Council for Educational Technology (NCET). Like QCDA, Becta is based in Coventry.

Becta's role and work was outlined in its annual report, *Harnessing Technology for Next Generation Learning: Becta at work*.

On 24 May 2010 the Coalition Government announced the planned closure of Becta. Its closure programme is set out in its *next steps document*.

Stephen Crowne, Becta's chief executive, stressed that Becta has saved schools and colleges many times more than its running costs.⁴¹ Other commentators have also pointed out that the UK is ahead of other European countries in using technology in schools, and emphasised the role of Becta in this.⁴²

7.2 Teachers TV Board of Governors

Teachers TV Board of Governors was established in January 2005 to advise on the best practices of a UK public broadcasting service and to help ensure that the Teachers TV supplier is held accountable for the public funds it receives.⁴³

On 14 October 2010 the Education Secretary announced that Teachers TV Board of Governors will end. The Government's contract with Teachers TV will come to an end in April 2011.⁴⁴ Clare Healy, Chief Executive of Teachers TV said:

"We can confirm that the Department for Education has written to Teachers TV explaining our contract with them will come to an end in April 2011. Teachers TV will be working closely with the Department for Education to formulate a clear transitional process between now and the termination of the contract.

"All of the 4,000 programmes will continue to be made available online. This will ensure that teachers, headteachers, teaching assistants and governors can continue to access www.teachers.tv for practical support, advice and guidance."⁴⁵

In future Teachers TV will operate on a commercial basis:

Mr Barry Sheerman (Huddersfield) (Lab/Co-op): Does the Secretary of State agree that head teachers and school governors, as well as teachers, found Teachers TV very liberating in terms of knowledge, improving school administration and teaching? Will he think again about winding up Teachers TV?

⁴⁰ *ibid.*

⁴¹ Becta website: <http://news.becta.org.uk/display.cfm?resID=42305>

⁴² "UK acclaimed as 'at the forefront' in ICT – and Becta gets the credit", *Times Educational Supplement*, 3 September 2010, p21

⁴³ <http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/inthenews/a0065289/departments-plans-for-arms-length-bodies>

⁴⁴ "Pay-for-use could be Teachers TV survival plan", *Times Educational Supplement*, 29 October 2010 p4

⁴⁵ Teachers TV Statement in response to the termination of contract with the Department for Education: <http://www.teachers.tv/pressreleases/78831>

Michael Gove: I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman, and I know how committed he is to improving continuous professional development. Our White Paper will say more about how we can do that. Teachers TV will operate in future on a commercial basis. That is one of the many ways in which outside organisations can attempt to improve education. In that respect, we will allow teachers, governors and heads to make decisions about the type of external support that they buy in to help them to improve the valuable work that they do.⁴⁶

Mike Baker, the BBC's education correspondent pointed out that Teachers TV was planning to become self-funding from 2013, and that 'the rug is being pulled from under it before any plans are in place' for the future.⁴⁷

7.3 Teenage Pregnancy Independent Advisory Group (TPIAG)

On [14 October 2010](#) the Education Secretary announced that TPIAG would close. It was set up in 2000 as a result of a recommendation in the Social Exclusion Unit's 1999 report on teenage pregnancy that an independent, expert group should monitor the previous Government's ten-year Teenage Pregnancy Strategy.⁴⁸ Further information on its work, including its annual reports, is available on the [TPIAG website](#).⁴⁹

8 Other DfE arm's length public bodies

The [DFE announcement on 14 October 2010](#) listed bodies that were still under review, and also noted that the following bodies will be retained: Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual), Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB). The School Food Trust (SFT) is to remain as a charity with the potential to become a community interest company.⁵⁰ As noted above, since the 14 October announcement the Coalition government has announced its decisions on the SSSNB, the TDA and the YPLA.

⁴⁶ HC Deb 15 November 2010 c625

⁴⁷ "How very brave Mr Gove", Education *Guardian*, 16 November 2010 p2

⁴⁸ <http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/inthenews/a0065289/departments-plans-for-arms-length-bodies>

⁴⁹ <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/healthandwellbeing/teenagepregnancy/tpiag/tpiag/>

⁵⁰ <http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/inthenews/a0065289/departments-plans-for-arms-length-bodies>