

Press statement

Issue: Thursday 25 August 2016

GCSE results: A second chance shouldn't mean second best

In response to the 2016 GCSE results, Andy Ratcliffe, Impetus-PEF Chief Executive, said: "We are setting up too many young people to fail. This is the first year where you have had to retake your maths and English GCSEs if you didn't get a C at 16. But these results show that less than one in three resits passed the second time around.

"We urgently need to improve the quality of catch-up provision because resits should be a second chance not second best.

"The situation is particularly stark for young people from poorer backgrounds. As our [Life after school](#) campaign shows, less than half will go on to achieve the crucial English and maths qualification even by the time they reach 19."

Background

1. We launched our *Life after school* campaign earlier this year, more information on the data we uncovered can be found [here](#).
2. We want to see young people getting the second chance they deserve by:
 - **Focusing attention on the problem:** as a minimum, we need reliable data on attainment in Level 2 maths and English at both 16 years and 19 years, and success rates in catch up qualifications. The government might consider setting a goal of increasing the percentage of all young people attaining Level 2 English and maths by the age of 19 to 77%, doubling the current progress rate between 16 and 19.
 - **Acknowledge the uneven financial playing field between FE colleges and schools:** FE colleges get [less money](#) per 16 to 18 year old than school sixth forms, despite serving more disadvantaged pupils. This is in effect a 'pupil penalty' for poorer students which undermines some of the benefits of the pupil premium in schools.
 - **Better evidence of what works in catch up education:** The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) are starting work to review the evidence on catch up teaching to improve our understanding around what works and identify areas of promise. We at Impetus-PEF are committed to working with them and our charity partners to identify and spread the most effective approaches.

Media enquiries

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Impetus-PEF (Impetus – The Private Equity Foundation) transforms the lives of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds by ensuring they get the support they need to succeed in education and employment. It does this by partnering with the most promising charities and social enterprises which serve young people, providing them with a combination of long-term core funding and sustained management support. Impetus-PEF currently works with more than 20 charity partners, which in turn reach over 80,000 young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. For more information, please visit www.impetus-pef.org.uk or call 020 3474 1007.



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