



2024-0026091

**The Rt Hon Baroness Jacqui Smith
Minister for Skills**

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William Baldwin
Principal, Brighton Hove and Sussex Sixth Form College
By email: w.baldwin@bhasvic.ac.uk

11 September 2024

Dear Mr Baldwin,

Thank you for your correspondence of 13 August, addressed to the Secretary of State, regarding sixth form college (SFC) teacher pay. I am replying as the minister responsible for this policy area.

I want to assure you that I recognise the vital role that SFCs play in equipping learners with the opportunities and skills that they need to succeed in their education and drive growth in our economy.

The funding we announced is calculated based on overall costs facing schools at a national level. We fund maintained schools and academies on an equivalent basis so former SFCs that have academised will benefit from this funding. SFCs that have not academised remain in the statutory further education (FE) sector. As you know, government does not set or recommend pay in FE.

As the Chancellor has set out, the fiscal context is very challenging. However, I appreciate your concerns, and we will continue to consider the important contribution of non-pay review body workforces, including in SFCs. We will also consider workforce sufficiency and what this might mean for funding in future years in advance of the spending review.

We will continue with our plans to invest in FE teachers, as part of around £600 million funding across financial years 2024-25 and 2025-26 announced last autumn. This includes extending retention payments of up to £6,000 after tax to eligible early career FE teachers in key subject areas. We will also work with the FE sector to recruit 6,500 additional teachers across schools and colleges to raise standards for children and young people.

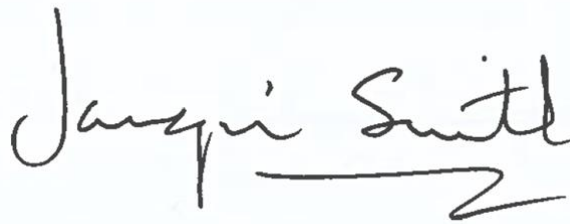
In addition, we will of course seek to secure a good funding outcome for post-16 education and training. As you will be aware, the Chancellor has announced a Budget on 30 October, followed by a multi-year spending review which will be in the spring. Decisions about future post-16 funding will be subject to the outcomes of these fiscal events.

SFCs have been able to convert to academy status since 2015. As part of the programme of area reviews in 2015-19, SFCs that applied to convert to academy status following the outcome of their area reviews were able to apply to convert as a single or as a multi-academy trust. Since the closure of the area review programme (in March 2019), all SFC academy conversions that have been progressed have involved SFCs joining or forming a multi-academy trust. This is because, under the previous administration, the vision for the academies sector was developed to focus on the multi-academy trust model. To support SFCs which wished to convert to academy status but faced difficulties in finding partner institutions, SFCs were able to discuss academy conversion options with their departmental territorial team and regional director.

As you will appreciate, the ministerial team is currently working with department officials on plans to deliver our manifesto commitments and put education back at the forefront of national life. Our aim is to deliver better life chances for all, through a system which works for all. With regard to SFC academy conversion under this administration, the government will review this policy in due course.

Thank you again for writing and I hope that this response is useful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jacqui Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

**The Rt Hon Baroness Jacqui Smith
Minister for Skills**