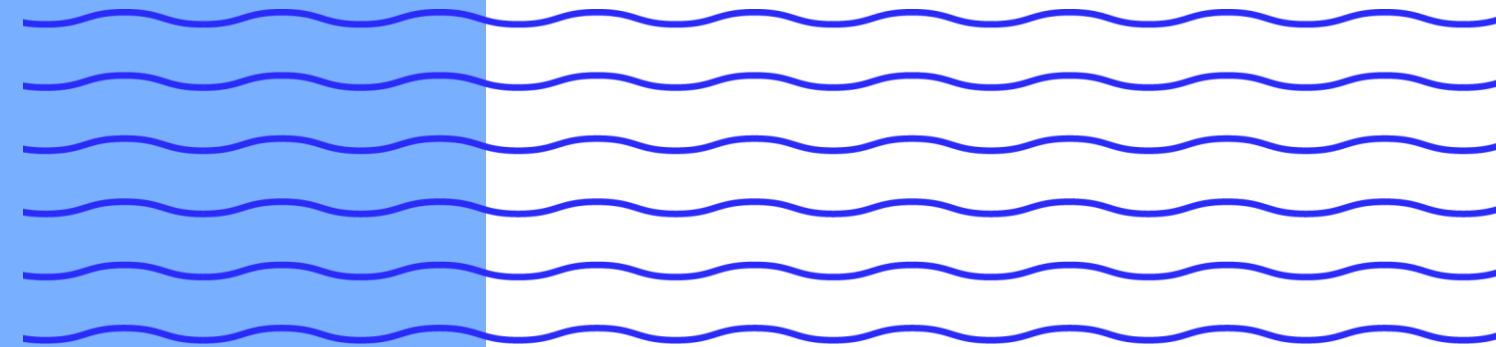


Regulatory landscape

What's happened over the
summer?

JIM DICKINSON, WONKHE



WONKHE

“Boots on the ground”

Regulator launches eight investigations into poor quality courses

The Office for Students (OfS), the independent regulator of higher education in England, has today launched eight new investigations designed to tackle poor quality courses.



“Boots on the ground”

Regulator opens investigations into quality of higher education courses

On 26 May 2022, the Office for Students (OfS) launched investigations into the quality of the business and management courses at eight universities and colleges.

The OfS has notified the providers concerned.

These investigations will consider whether the relevant courses meet the OfS’s [conditions for quality](#), which came into effect in May this year.

Business and management courses are focused on because this is a large subject area where there is significant variation in performance across the sector, as shown in intelligence drawn from student outcomes data and National Student Survey responses.

Investigations focus on universities and colleges with larger student populations. This means that, should the OfS determine that the courses are not meeting minimum requirements for quality, any intervention made to improve those courses will have a positive impact on a significant number of students.



“Boots on the ground”

- Strategic guidance
- B3 (and other intel) then leads to B2 interrogation?
- Business and management courses
- “Large subject area where there is significant variation in performance across the sector, as shown in intelligence drawn from student outcomes data and National Student Survey responses.
- Computing next?



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“Boots on the ground”

Assessors and Lead Assessors – Quality of Higher Education Courses (Computing and related subject areas)

Remote working with some business travel

Part-time

Fixed fee remuneration per assessment

About the OfS

We are the independent regulator of higher education in England. Our primary aim is to ensure that English higher education is delivering positive outcomes for students – past, present, and future.

Following comprehensive consultation, the OfS has announced changes to our regulation of quality in English higher education providers. Our revised requirements set out our minimum requirements for quality. They will allow us to intervene where higher education courses fall below our expectations and help us to ensure that all students, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, have meaningful choices of high-quality courses and are effectively supported to succeed.

WONKHE



Advertise your HE jobs

Reach our influential community in higher education directly with targeted job ads.

MORE INFORMATION



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Blended learning review

- Expert panel report
- OfS response grounding findings within the (revised) regulatory framework
- Brings to life the regulatory approach and helps explain the new baseline
- International?



Blended learning review

On-campus teaching and learning

64. Students reported to the panel that they had difficulty finding facilities on campus where they could engage appropriately with digitally delivered teaching and other digital learning resources. The panel expressed particular concern about this issue when there was not a coherent approach to timetabling of blended learning courses. Its view was that providers should consider how students engage with online elements of their course while they are physically on campus.

Links to OfS regulation

65. This theme links to the aspect of condition B2 that relates to whether a cohort of students receives sufficient resources (see 37.a), including 'physical and digital learning resources' as appropriate to the content and delivery of the higher education course (see 37.c).

Compliance considerations

66. Where a course is delivered through a blended approach with a significant quantity of digitally delivered teaching, or requiring the use of digital learning resources, the cohort of students on that course is unlikely to have a high quality academic experience if students are not able to access and engage effectively with digital learning.

67. Such resources as described in paragraph 64 are likely to fit within the definition of 'physical and digital learning resources' in condition B2. We have specified in the guidance that underpins condition B2 that having consistent access to an appropriate place to study is an example of digital learning resources for the purposes of that condition.²¹ Such facilities also clearly correspond to the 'physical locations' element of the definition of physical and digital learning resources.



Blended learning review

68. We are **likely to have compliance concerns** in relation to condition B2 if a provider requires students to spend a significant proportion of their time engaging with digital learning, without ensuring access to appropriate physical spaces to allow them to do so.

Case study examples

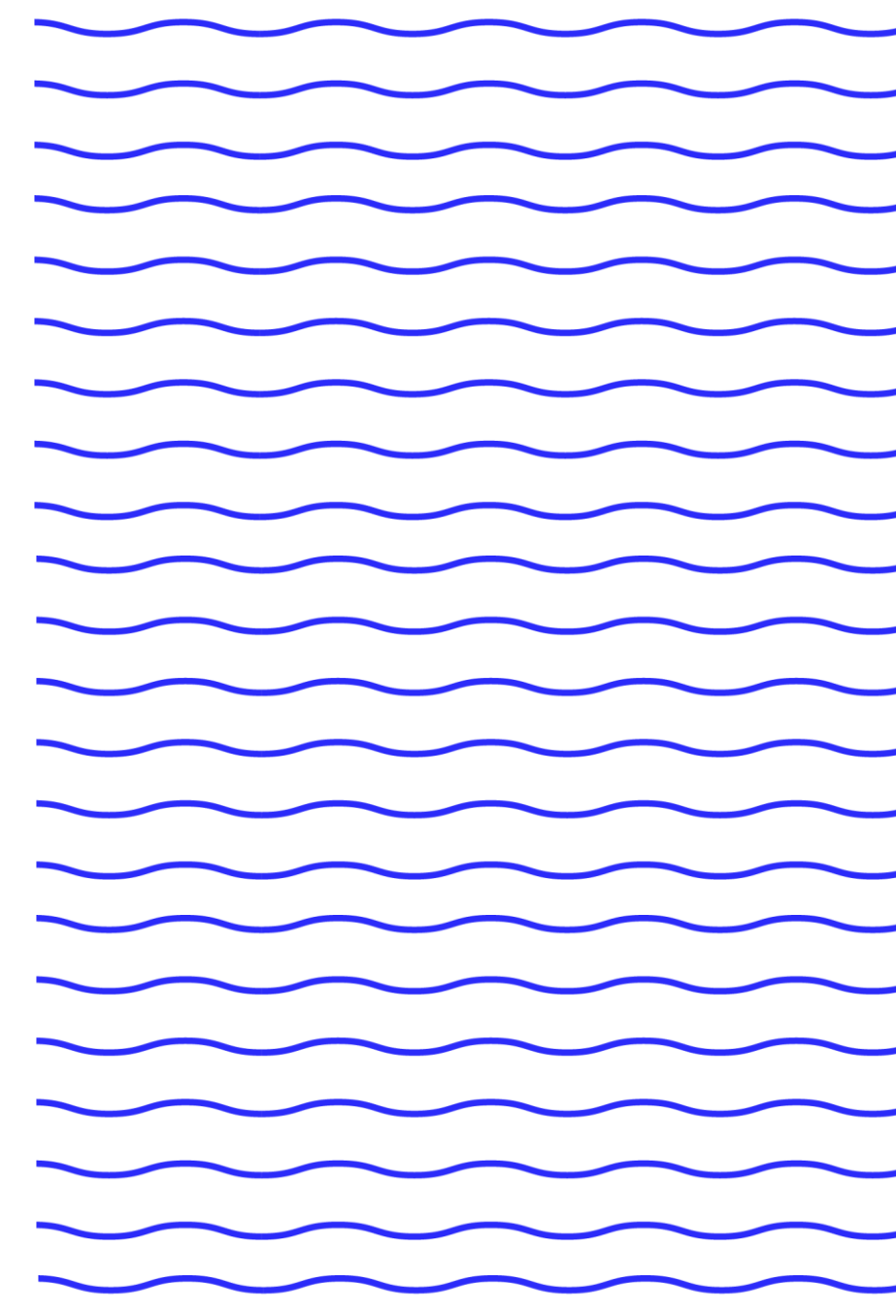
69. At one provider, students (citing overcrowding on campus) reported struggling to find space to study or to join online lectures. Some students felt that this issue was compounded by an increasing quantity of online lectures. One student suggested that a traditional campus-based teaching calendar would not be able to accommodate the number of lectures that were produced.

70. We would be **likely to have compliance concerns** in relation to condition B2, if, because of a lack of suitable facilities on campus, a cohort of students could not participate in online learning or study at appropriate times relevant to the delivery of their course.



Harassment and sexual misconduct

- Statement of expectations will become formal part of the regulatory framework
- Prevalence research (sexual) with provider level results
- Standardised reporting?
- Prevalence up but reporting down would give concern
- Training (what works, impact)
- Jurisdiction



Teaching excellence framework

- Final guidance published on the TEF
- End of January for next Summer
- Student submission finalised and confirmed
- Interaction between two processes interesting!
- Panel will include students as experts...
- 50/50 metrics and qualitative via the two reports
- Theory of change around generating improvement beyond the baseline?
- Consistency?



Access and participation

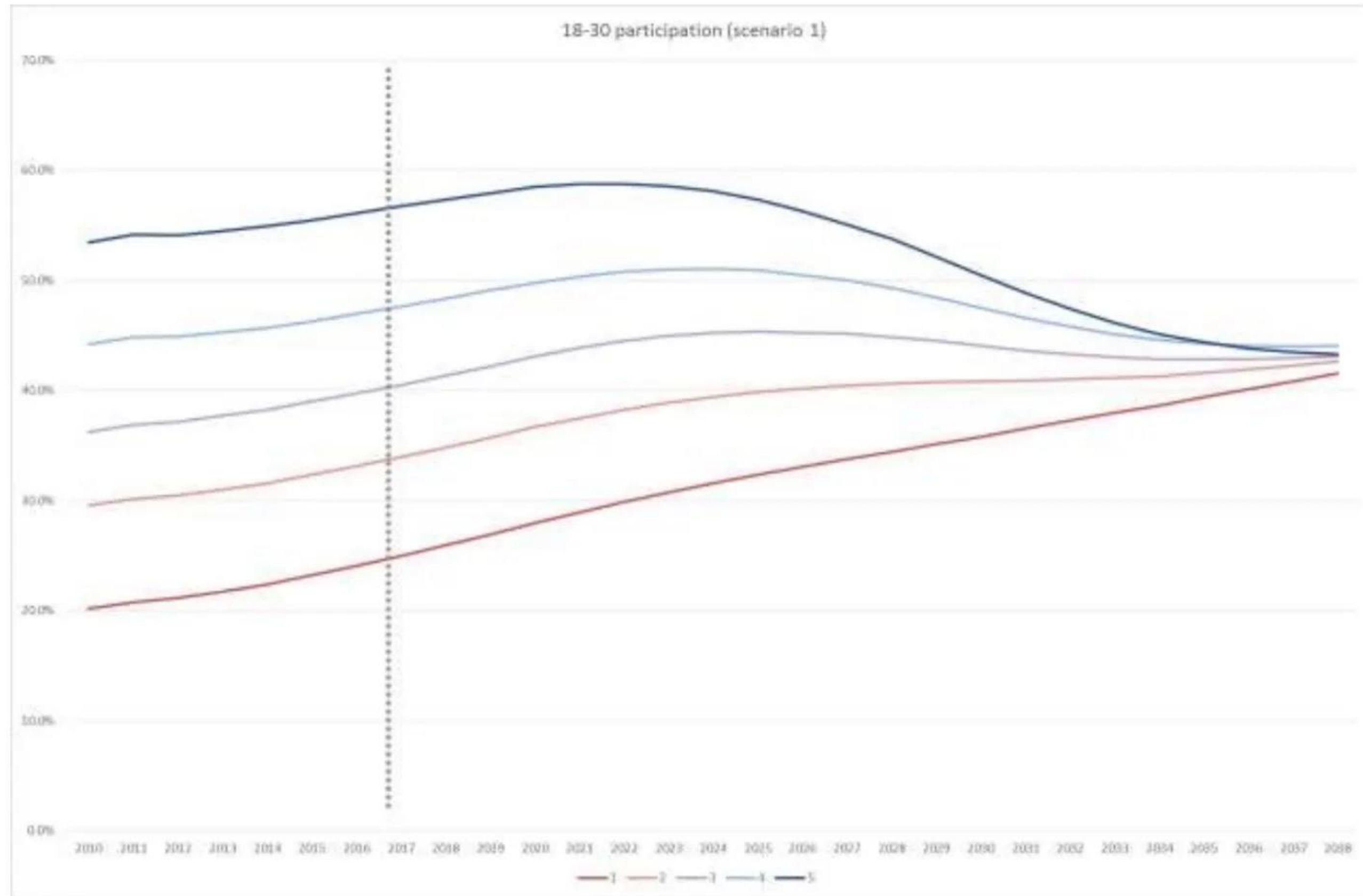
- New scheme will focus on “risks to equality of opportunity” (EORR)
- National EORR – pay due regard to – and local
- Cat and mouse on meeting requirements v internalise and demonstrate
- Equality of opportunity or equality of outcome?



Acc

- New oppo
- Natio
- Cat a
- inter
- Equa

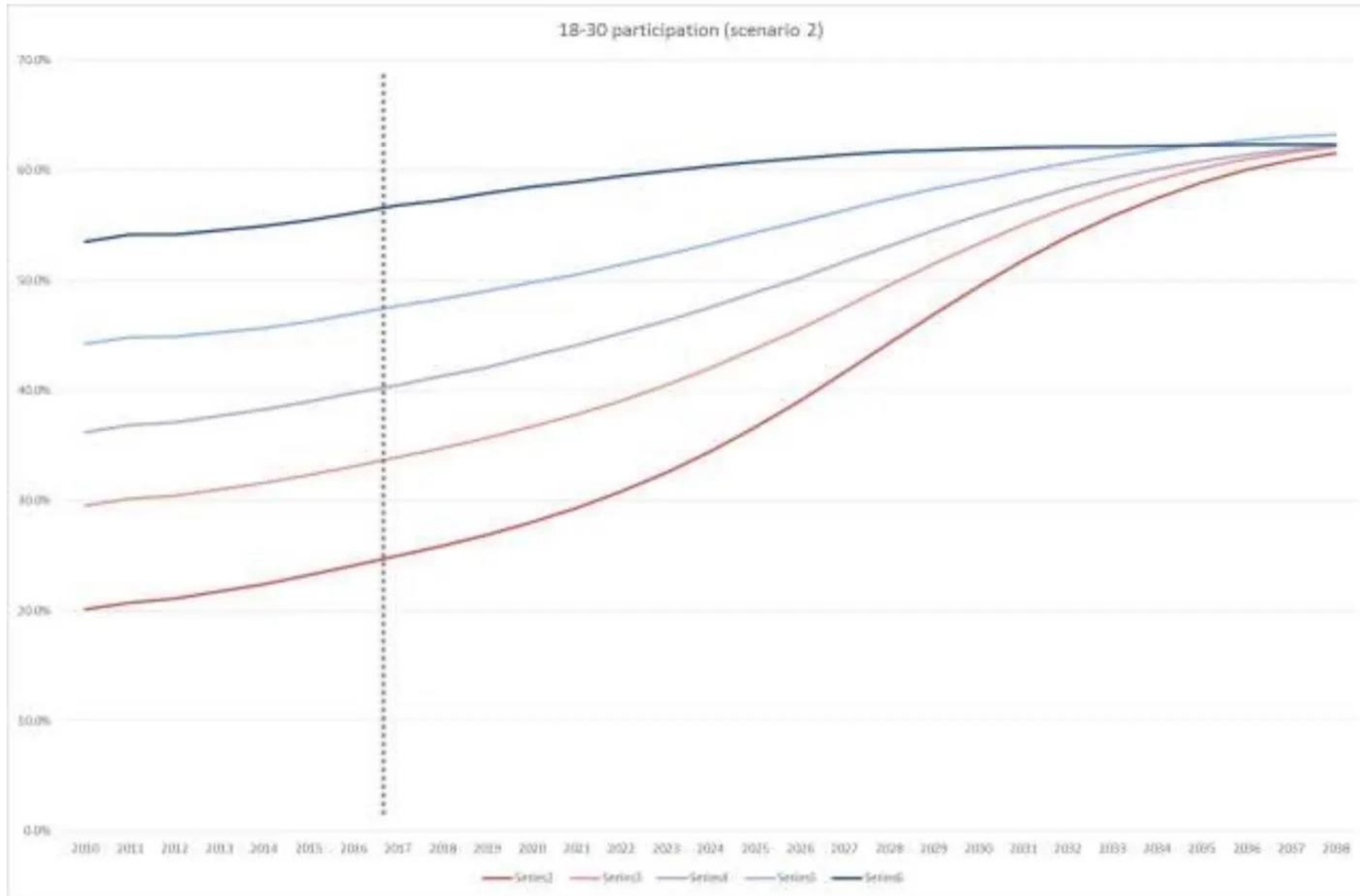
Scenario 1: Maintaining the current size of the higher education sector (relative to the wider population) so that the participation rates for all quintiles converge at the current sector average.



Acco

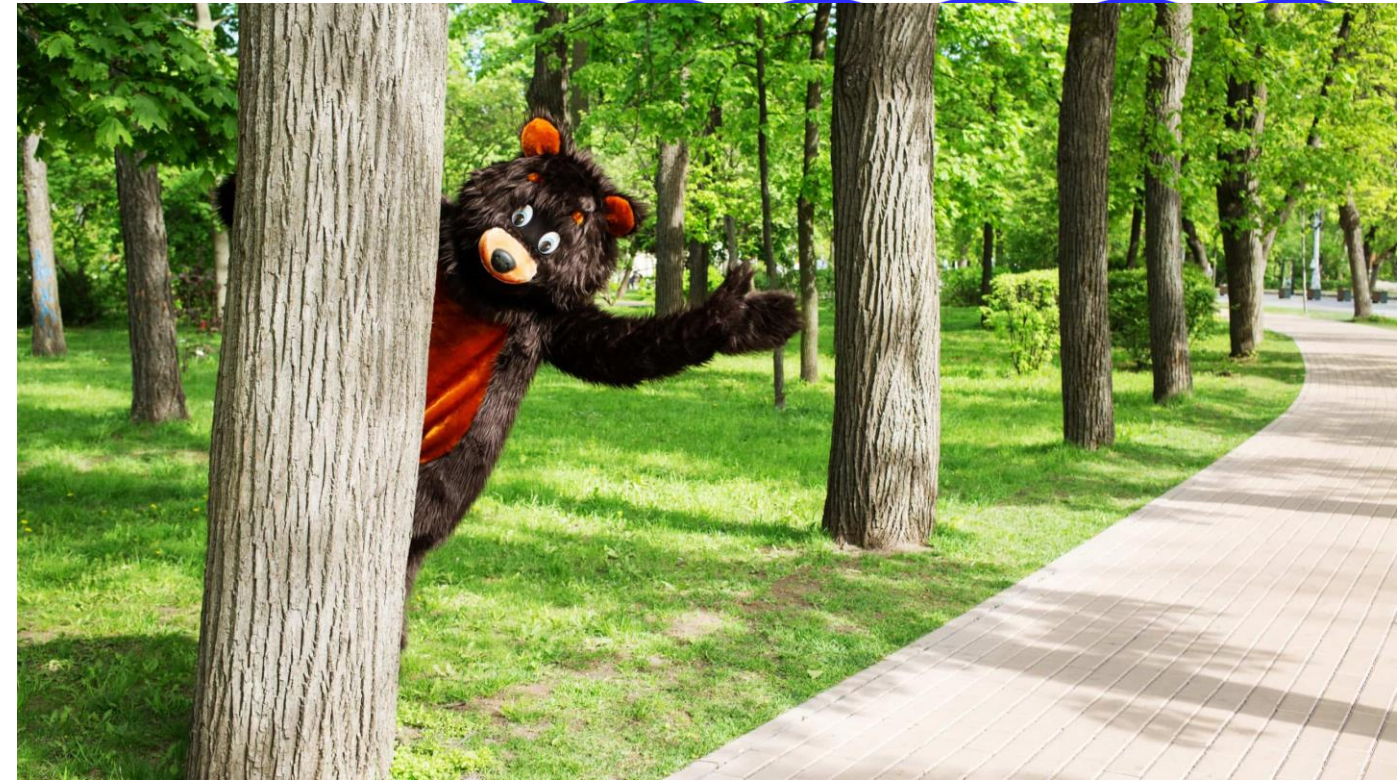
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- Equal

Scenario 2: Expanding the size of the higher education sector so that the participation rate for quintiles 1-4 increases to that of quintile 5. This would mean increasing the size of the sector by about half over the next 10-20 years.



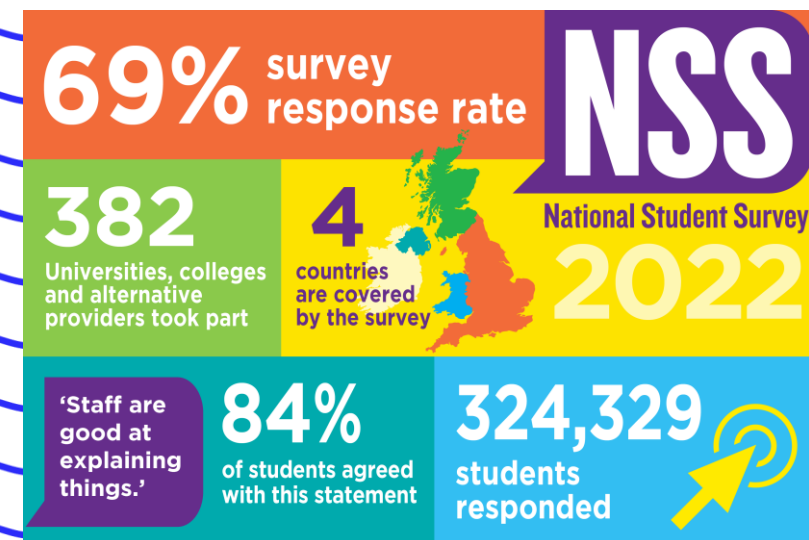
B3 and new outcomes thresholds

- New outcomes thresholds confirmed for continuation, progression and completion
- A clutch of providers will be announced as causing initial concern this month
- Context/Justification/Excuses and future work to address exercise will now play out



National student survey

- Summative question now gone (in England)
- New M/H comms question (UK wide)
- New freedom of expression question (England)
- Abolition of NAND
- Deletion of learning community questions
- No sign of all years or PG strategy for NSS
- Widespread upset about “consultation”



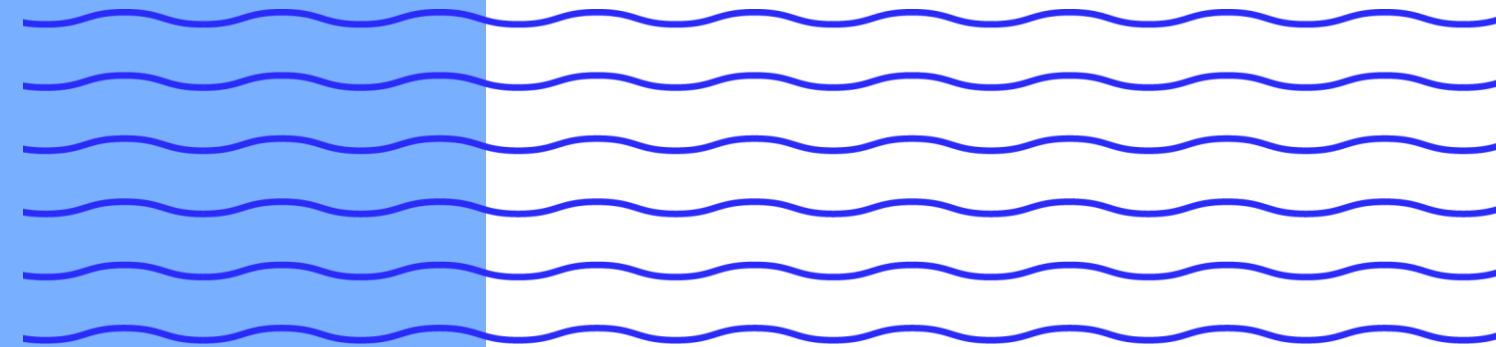
Plus

- 3 providers investigation into grade inflation (using new Condition B4)
- DQB and QAA
- Fraud investigation

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