

## Coronavirus and specialist colleges: survey findings

12 May 2020

### Executive Summary

There are over 100 specialist colleges which deliver further education and training for students with learning difficulties and / or disabilities. In the seven weeks since the general closure of schools and colleges in mid-March, specialist colleges have been working hard to maintain provision, conducting individualised risk assessments, devising new home-learning strategies, keeping families informed and supported, and striving to keep sites open whilst also dealing with significant operational challenges.

To assess the impact of coronavirus on specialist colleges, Natspec conducted two surveys: firstly examining the state of play in the week commencing 23 March (the first week of the stricter lockdown rules) and the second in early May. The results show how the seven weeks of shutdown has affected provision both on and off-site and look to the future in terms of what impact COVID-19 will have on specialist FE provision in the longer term. The response rate was high: 70% in the first survey and 56% in the second. The survey took place before the most recent announcements about the planned re-opening of education settings from June 1, but colleges were asked how they were preparing to readmit students.

This report presents the survey results and examines how the virus has affected provision for over 5,000 students with complex needs at Natspec colleges.

#### The headlines results are as follows:

- The majority of specialist college sites have remained open, and the proportion open has grown between March and May (from 58% to 81%).
- The proportion of students still attending on college sites is also growing with further increases expected in May and June. However, most students are still at home (around 90% of day students and 60% of residential students) with colleges taking a variety of approaches to ensure they can still access the curriculum.
- Challenges relating to staffing remain significant, but the situation is improving with an average of 17% of staff unavailable to work, down from 32% in March.
- There is a high degree of trust from local authorities (LAs) in the risk assessments undertaken by specialist colleges: 82% report that their decisions are being accepted or supported by commissioning LAs.
- Almost half of colleges find the volume and variety of monitoring and reporting unreasonable and difficult to manage, although they report that individual LA requests are mostly reasonable.
- Transition from school to college is seriously delayed this year: with an average of only 26% new starters confirmed, and 31% of colleges having NO students confirmed for next year, despite the statutory deadline of 31 March. Although this deadline is routinely missed, the COVID-19 outbreak has exacerbated the situation with decision-making significantly slowed or stalled.
- There is wide acknowledgement that social distancing will be very difficult or impossible for some learners and sites; other health and safety measures and use of PPE are being considered.
- There is significant uncertainty about the financial impact of COVID-19 on the specialist college sector. 72% of colleges indicated their financial health was affected negatively or uncertain. Cash flow is the biggest concern, with 80% of colleges indicating it is or could be a problem while 57% of colleges were concerned about solvency.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The government announced on 19 March that education settings should close due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. In the weeks leading up to the announcement, specialist colleges around the country had already been introducing new infection control measures, acutely aware of the complex needs of their students, many of whom had underlying health conditions.
- 1.2. The initial guidance on closures stated that settings should remain open for young people with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans, which is 100% of the cohort for specialist colleges. This blanket approach was entirely inconsistent with social distancing and other government guidance which said that people with certain medical needs which make them clinically vulnerable to COVID-19, are safer at home. Specialist colleges had to immediately find the right balance between keeping their sites open for students who are safer in college and ensuring that students who were safer at home remained engaged through home-based learning and support.
- 1.3. Natspec worked closely with the DfE to refine the guidance on vulnerable learners, to differentiate between individual students with EHC plans, and take into account different 'types' of vulnerability, such as medical, behavioural, social or emotional. Subsequent FE guidance and guidance on risk assessments began to consider the very specific circumstances of specialist FE colleges.
- 1.4. In the seven weeks since the shutdown, specialist colleges have been working hard to maintain provision, conducting individualised risk assessments, devising new home-learning strategies, striving to keep sites open whilst also dealing with significant operational challenges and keeping families supported and informed.
- 1.5. To assess the impact of coronavirus on specialist colleges, Natspec has conducted two surveys. The first examined the state of play in the week commencing 23 March, the first week of the stricter lockdown rules. The second survey, in early May, assesses how the seven weeks of shutdown has affected provision both on and off-site, and also looks to the future in terms of what impact COVID-19 will have on specialist FE provision in the longer term.
- 1.6. This report presents the survey results and examines how the virus has affected provision for over 5,000 students with complex needs at Natspec colleges.

## 2. Scope of survey

- 2.1. There are 125 specialist colleges in England (Feb 2020), categorised by DfE and ESFA as Special Post-16 Institutions (SPIs). ESFA funded 108 of these SPIs in 2019-20. Natspec represents the vast majority (96) of specialist colleges and distributed the survey to all its members.
- 2.2. In March, we collected data from 67 colleges – a response rate of 70%
- 2.3. In May, we received data from 54 colleges – a response rate of 56%

The surveys included questions about the extent of site closures, the measures that had been put in place for home learning, staffing issues, local partnerships and planning with home local authorities, and relationships with commissioning local authorities who fund high needs placements at specialist colleges. The survey in May also asked about the financial impact of the crisis on the sector.

### 3. On-site / off-site learning

#### Headlines:

The majority of specialist college sites have remained open, and the proportion open has grown between March and May (from 58% to 81%).

The proportion of students still attending on the college site is also growing and is expected to increase further in May and June.

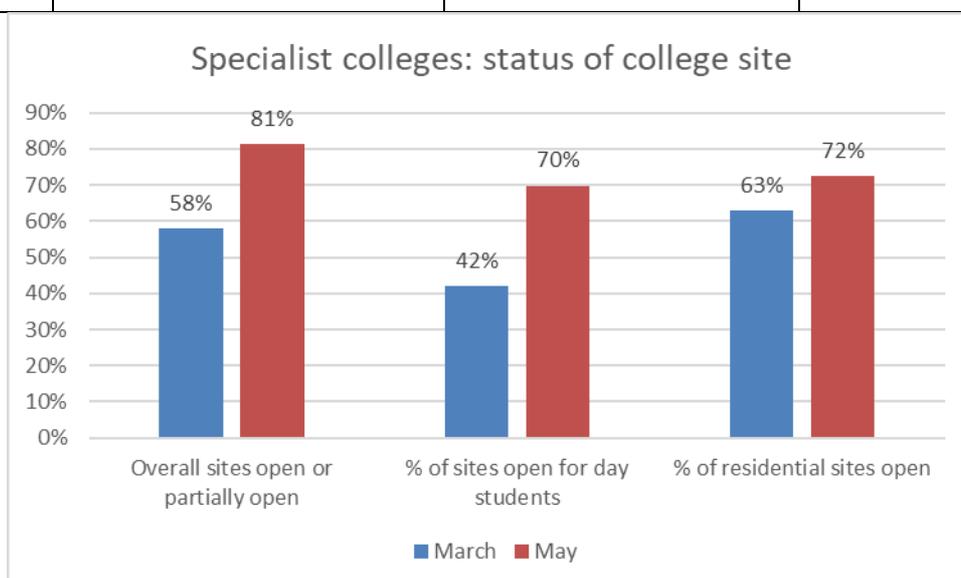
Despite the gradual return to the college site, most students are still working from home (around 90% of day students and 60% of residential students) and colleges have devised a variety of approaches to ensure learners with different needs can still access the curriculum.

- 3.1. Specialist colleges have worked hard to maintain provision throughout the shutdown, both on and off-site, despite staff shortages and difficulties in securing essential supplies including food, cleaning products and personal protective equipment (PPE). Over half of colleges have kept their sites open throughout and introduced staffing rotas to work with students on-site. Rotas were also used to enable around 20% of colleges to stay open throughout the Easter holidays and Bank Holiday weekends, to provide continuing support for residential students or other learners who needed continued on-site provision. Colleges also offered emergency respite and support for keyworker parents as appropriate.

#### Percentage of specialist colleges providing learning on-site

- 3.2. The immediate impact of the outbreak and the government announcement was that many specialist colleges closed their sites, with staff shortages making provision on-site impossible. In March, 58% of sites remained open overall for either day or residential students, or both (42% of sites were open for day learners and 63% of residential sites stayed open).
- 3.3. By May, 81% of colleges were open, including some that had initially closed due to staff shortages.

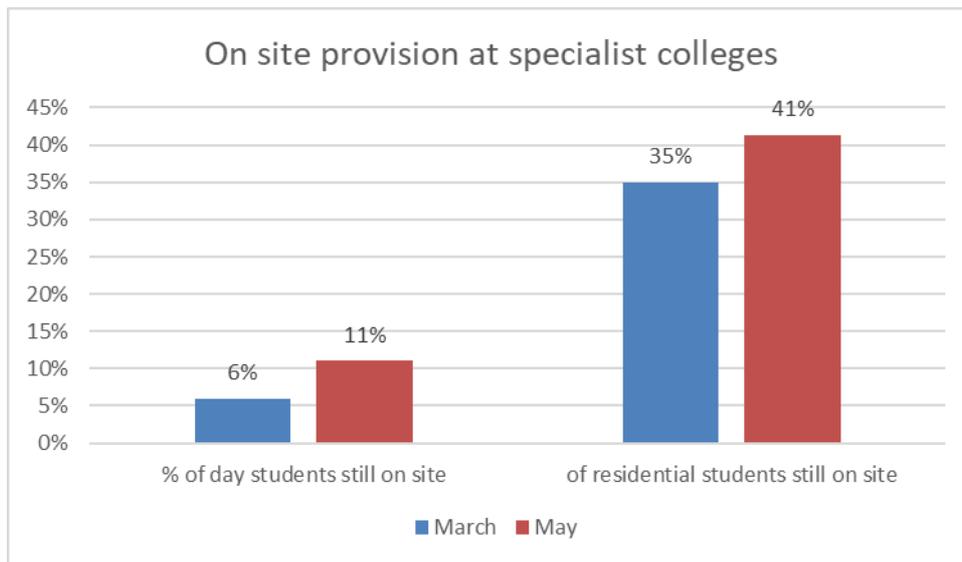
Date of survey	Overall sites open or partially open	% of sites open for day students	% of residential sites open
March	58%	42%	63%
May	81% (44/54 responses overall)	70% (37/53 day sites)	72% (21/29 residential sites)



### Number of learners on-site

- 3.4. Just as the number of sites open increased, the number of learners attending college has also risen during the lockdown. This is due to a number of factors, most notably the return of staff who had been self-isolating, and the fact that many families were unable to sustain keeping their young people at home for extended periods due to their specific and complex needs.
- 3.5. There are approximately 5,200 students on roll at Natspec colleges. The percentage still attending on-site, split between day and residential, has risen from 6% to 11% for day students, and 35% to 41% for residential, as shown in the chart below:

### Proportion of students still attending on-site at specialist colleges



- 3.6. Some specialist colleges also have separate adult social care contracts. This data was also collected in the survey in May, and the numbers of people funded by social care receiving provision at specialist colleges is shown below:
  - Percentage of social care on-site (day care): 17%
  - Percentage of social care on-site (residential care): 65%

### Remote / home-based learning

- 3.7. Natspec colleges have been creative in devising different forms of home-learning and wellbeing support for students, parents and families. Learning for young people with SEND is not easily moved online as much of it is experiential. Specialist colleges have had to devise remote support for students who may have sensory impairments, be non-verbal or non-literate, or require intensive learning, behavioural, medical or therapy support. In this way they have provided continuity of provision where possible, also using Assistive Technology, online classes, or emailing or posting home working packs.
- 3.8. Staff are checking in with phone calls, keeping in touch and providing welfare and pastoral support. Some colleges are continuing their therapies, with staff also delivering virtual sessions and designing sessions for parents to deliver. Some colleges have kept on-site shops open,

selling basics essentials for staff at cost. One college told us it is distributing vegetable packs to the local community. Where colleges have access to outside space, they have moved much of their learning outdoors, with students undertaking practical tasks that also allow them to practise social distancing where possible.

## 4. Staffing

### Headlines:

Challenges relating to staffing remain significant, despite an increase in the number of staff available to work.

An average of 17% of staff remain unavailable to work, down from 32% in March.

- 4.1. The COVID-19 outbreak has had a significant impact on staffing at specialist colleges. Initially, many colleges could not maintain the high staffing ratios required by many students. The challenges faced by the specialist FE sector in maintaining provision on and off-site without the necessary staff to do so have been immense, as reflected in some of the comments below:

"This has been the most challenging time in my career, with over 1000 staff on many sites; the planning, communications and problem solving have been on a scale never experienced before. Staff have been amazing, and parents so supportive and grateful."

"We've reluctantly had to start to close ...This is because our residential staffing had fallen to 50% due to those self-isolating or social distancing as a result of health conditions."

"We anticipate problems with staffing from Friday as a high percentage of staff have children and with schools closing, grandparents self-isolating etc... it will bring us below minimum staffing levels."

"We have approximately 1/3 staff self-isolating or with long term, at risk, conditions. A number of staff have been told that they will not be able to send their children to school/nursery as insufficient places available."

- 4.2. Since March, the proportion of staff unable to work has decreased over time, with serious and significant problems in March and into April, but many staff are now returning to work. The data from the surveys show that:

- In March, the average proportion of staff not working was 32%, with a range of 0 to 80%.
- By May, this had reduced to 17%, with the range between 0% and 55% of staff.

## 5. Planning and co-ordination: Local Authority partnerships

### Headlines:

The crisis has demonstrated the important role specialist colleges have in their communities. 90% of specialist colleges report a partly or very collaborative relationship with their home LA.

Specialist colleges have been undertaking risk assessments and there is a high degree of trust from funding LAs regarding these assessments and professional judgement: 82% of colleges report that their decisions are being accepted or supported.

The volume and nature of monitoring and reporting presents a challenge for specialist colleges, with multiple requests for different information in different formats. Whilst individual LAs are asking mostly reasonable requests, almost half of colleges find the volume and variety unreasonable and difficult to manage.

There are inconsistencies across the country regarding monitoring and reporting; with DfE national data being collected but often repeated at local level and different levels of detail being asked for across the country.

- 5.1. We asked specialist colleges to comment on the local planning and co-ordination of provision, undertaken by local authorities as part of their statutory duties to have oversight of all young people with EHC plans. The Department for Education asked all colleges to maintain records of attendance, and LAs have also been requiring colleges to report on provision both on and off-site for their learners.

### **"Home" local authority**

#### **Qu: During the pandemic, how collaborative has the working relationship been with your home LA?**

- 5.2. The vast majority of colleges – 90% – reported that their relationship was "somewhat collaborative" or "very collaborative", indicating that specialist colleges are an important part of the SEND system at local level. Some of the comments indicating this include:

"They have provided PPE stocks as possible and provided testing for staff and families and students if needed."

"I have invited the LA to be involved in the Transition Task Group. Social Care's Transition Manager has already agreed."

"Good conversations regarding transitions and support for home learning."

"Our principal is having daily conference meetings with the LA."

"Our college contact (at the LA) has been very helpful as have the SLT authority members in supporting us."

"They have been supportive. Tried to help us with PPE situation (not very successful) so we can open for more students. They have been happy to accept our updates."

"They have been easy to contact and have returned calls." "Very collaborative transport plan."

"Quick to provide guidance and responsive and supportive of our decision making".

- 5.3. However, just under 10% of colleges reported that their relationship with their home LA was "Not at all collaborative" and the comments below illustrate some of these difficulties:

"They have just been asking us for advice."

"Very limited contact. One planned phone conference with all social care providers which failed to take place due to technical problems. One email asking for our risk assessments around keeping staff and clients safe. Info received about testing. No contact from the SEND team."

"No contact with LA, despite keeping them updated with everything."

"All correspondence initiated by college until Friday 1st May 20, when it was identified that we'd been omitted from LA updates."

### **Other LAs that commission provision**

#### **Qu: Are commissioning LAs accepting outcomes of your risk assessments and ongoing provision for individual students?**

- 5.4. Specialist colleges work with an average of 19 LAs, with high needs funding coming from LAs across a much wider regional, or sometimes national, catchment. Co-ordinating provision with

limited staff numbers whilst keeping all commissioning LAs up to date and responding to their requests has presented many challenges.

- 5.5. 87% of colleges responded “yes” to this question, indicating that colleges have generally been trusted to undertake thorough risk assessments with the best interests of their students at the centre.
- 5.6. Comments regarding risk assessments and commissioning LAs include:

“Our decisions are being respected and LAs have received comprehensive risk assessments for all of our students which detail how we are supporting students and their families. The risk assessments confirm that our students are safer at home than at College and LAs are currently in agreement with this. We send data in regularly.”

“We have provided more information than they have asked for.”

“LA proactive and accessible in discussions around transition.”

“We work with 48 LAs, all requiring different information on different forms. They appear to have accepted our responses.”

“Our decisions have been supported by our LAs.”

“Some have been challenging but accepting once we have gone through risk assessment detail with them.”

“LA have accepted risk assessments in our own templates rather than having to re-do in set LA templates.”

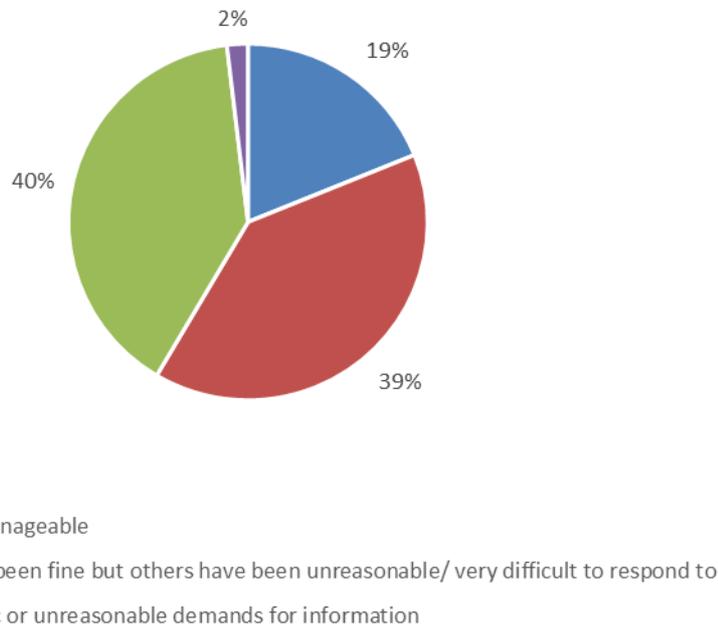
## Monitoring and reporting

DfE’s record of attendance has been completed daily by specialist colleges. In addition, the commissioning local authorities are responsible for monitoring attendance and planning across the area to ensure that all vulnerable children and young people who need to attend an educational setting can do so. This means that specialist colleges are in the difficult position of having to report to up to 50 or more different bodies, as well as DfE, often using different forms and processes.

We asked colleges to rank the amount of information being asked for. The chart below shows that 39% of respondents felt that the reporting and form-completion being asked of them was reasonable and manageable, 40% had a mixed response and 2% felt that it was wholly unreasonable or overly bureaucratic. One comment summed up our data:

“It is not the demands as such, but that everyone wants the same information in different ways including central government.”

### Reporting: how much information is being asked of you?



The information being requested varies by LA. One college reported that they had only been asked to share information by one of their commissioning LAs.

The following list gives an indication of the type and nature of the monitoring being undertaken, with some of the comments about the requests included:

- register of attendance "Multiple requests for student attendance in different formats"
- detailed individualised risk assessments
- business continuity plans
- resources supplied to students / support being offered for learners not in college
- contact made with students, parents/carers
- information regarding service recovery and attendance
- information about how EHCP outcomes will be affected
- funding detail "down to the last penny"
- questions between what constitutes education and what constitutes health

A common theme in the comments was the repetition, duplication, and variety of formats or depth of detail being requested:

"A lot of repetition and different versions of forms."

"Repeated requests for the same information. Why can't LA's receive the DFE data as this is submitted daily?"

"Some are requesting their format for risk assessments and won't accept ours. Most then come back with additional questions about why and how the decision was made."

“There are inconsistencies: those who think students should be at college when at home (you're open, why aren't they with you?) and vice versa (surely it's safer to be at home?)”

## 6. Transition into college

### Headlines:

Transition from school to college is seriously delayed this year: with an average of only 26% new starters confirmed, and 31% of colleges having NO students confirmed for next year at all.

This risks great uncertainty for families and will have a serious impact on the ability of specialist colleges to set budgets or plan staffing levels.

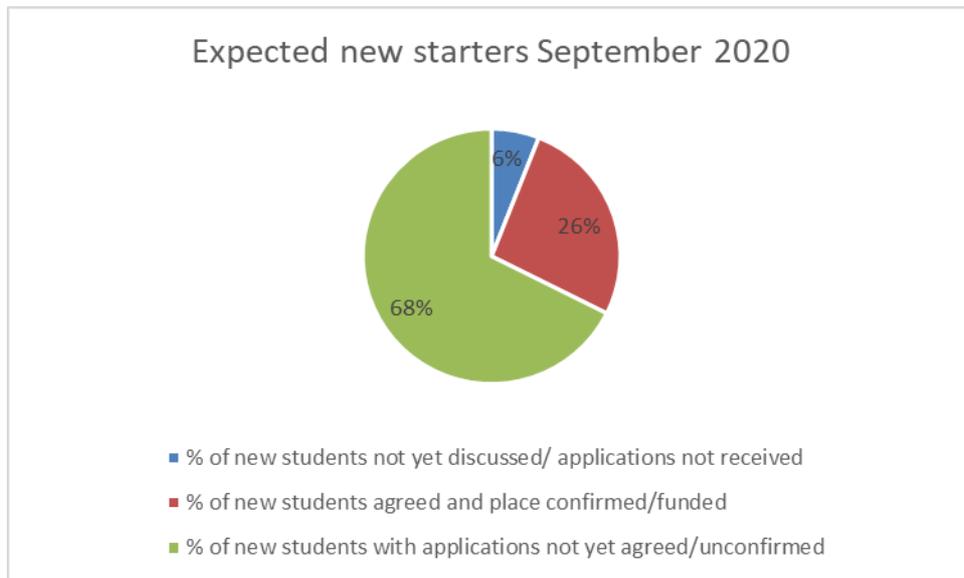
The statutory guidance states that places should be confirmed by 31 March each year; this deadline is routinely missed, and the COVID-19 outbreak has made the situation far worse this year.

- 6.1. With over 5,000 students across 108 SPIs, the average size of a specialist college is just under 50 students; the largest have up to 300 students and the smallest have between 10 and 20. This means that it is critical to have a full cohort of first year students each year in terms of the ongoing sustainability of the college.
- 6.2. Transition is a critical time for students and their families and is usually carefully planned over a long period, with young people involved as key decision-makers in the process. For students coming into college, there are usually visits, taster days, full assessments to understand the exact needs of the students, and discussions with current teachers as well as families. None of the usual practices for transition, assessment, and support into college is possible during the pandemic.
- 6.3. The SEND Code of Practice places a statutory responsibility on LAs to have transition reviews between school and college completed, with a named post-16 provider agreed, by March 31 each year. In practice, this deadline is routinely missed. Natspec has repeatedly reported over 50% of placements not agreed by June each year.
- 6.4. The anxiety experienced by young people and their families awaiting decisions about FE placements is particularly acute and damaging for this cohort of young people with complex needs requiring specialist support.
- 6.5. Natspec's survey asked colleges how many young people they were expecting to transition into college in September 2020, how many had placements agreed, and how many applications had not yet been agreed.

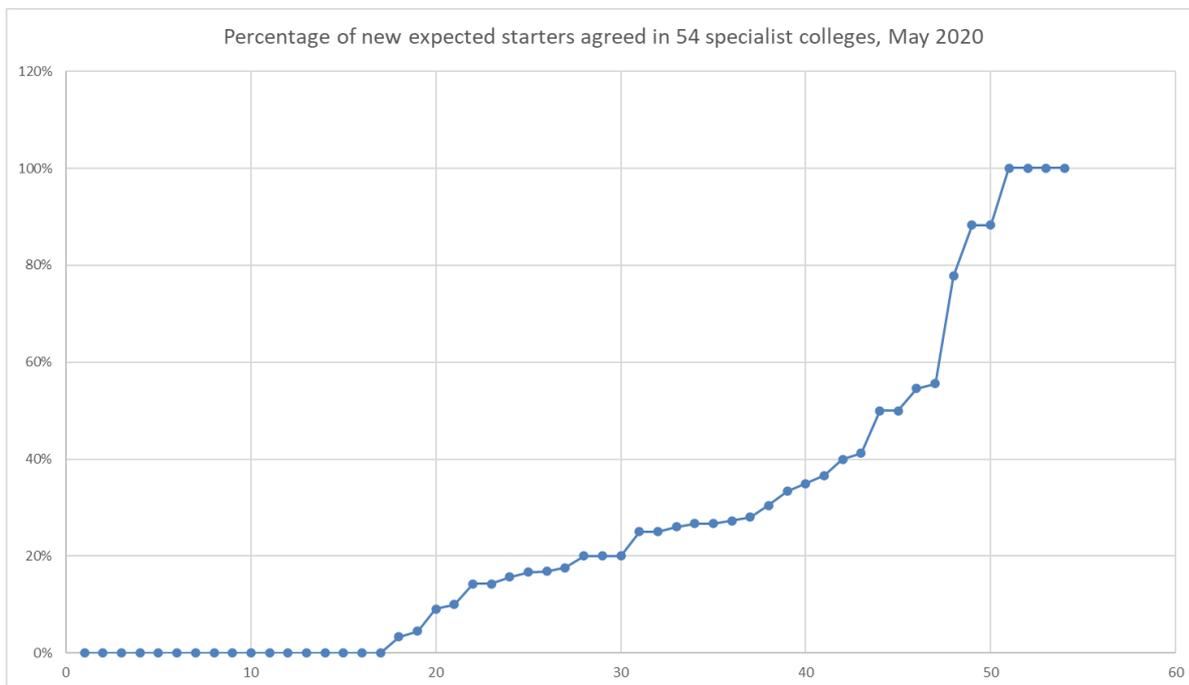
**Qu: Based on September 2019 figures, and factoring in any anticipated growth or reduction in numbers, approximately how many new starters are you expecting to admit in September 2020?**

- 6.6. The average number of new starters expected in September 2020 was 25 per college.

6.7. The chart below shows that 74% of expected new starters have either not had their place confirmed or are not even known to the college.



6.8. 26% of expected places are confirmed on average, but the chart below shows that for a majority of colleges, the percentage of expected starters having had their funding agreed is under 20%. For 17 out of 53 responses, there have been no new starters agreed.



6.9. As stated earlier, late decisions on placements is an annual problem for students, their families and colleges. We asked Natspec members how much more uncertainty than usual they were experiencing around numbers for 2020/21. Over half (53%) of colleges stated that there was more uncertainty than usual, with the rest (47%) stating that it was about the same.

6.10. The comments from colleges regarding transition into college illustrate the extent of the problem:

"I sent out all funding and placement offers in Feb and gave a deadline for 31st March, not one funding agreement was made by that date, despite constant chasing and additional information being provided. Now LA's are just ignoring emails or saying they can't agree to anything. Leaves us with no students having agreed ongoing provision yet for next year!"

"We normally get applications during this time, but we are not getting any enquiries from parents. We have had a few from local authorities but these have been high behavioural needs."

"Several of the potential new starters have not been able to complete the assessment process yet, so are on hold."

"Panel meetings have been pushed back, which has delayed applications."

"There is great uncertainty around continuing students' placements and new starters as we aware LAs are behind with their decision making due to Covid-19 and this will shorten the timeframe parents have to appeal within before September."

"Some of our students have shielding letters and may not return in September."

"The assessment process has been hindered, the communication with SEND team is difficult."

"Balancing extension requests with new students is going to be a huge challenge."

"It is always uncertain and often last minute and each year we are told we will hear earlier."

"Many of our referrals come through schools in the first instance and with schools mostly shut down, this route obviously has stopped. I am expecting a run of placement consultations in July/August."

"As we take in learners all year round, some LAs have used this 'downtime' to try and push through early starts for some where their schools have closed."

"Difficulties with assessment - schools not providing enough information to enable us to make an informed decision as to whether we can meet needs."

"The LA have not communicated regarding placement requests. I have had to chase and ask families to chase."

"This is really, really concerning. We are behind where we would hope to be at this time."

"Confirmation of admissions can often be as late as June/July."

## 7. Continuing students

- 7.1. Even where students are undertaking two-year courses, their funding is only confirmed on an annual basis. So, as well as the questions on expected new students, we also asked colleges how many of their continuing students (existing 1st or 2nd year students) have had their funding confirmed for next year.
- 7.2. 26% of colleges told us that the number of continuing students who have had their funding confirmed is "less than usual", 70% said "about the same" and only 4% are reporting more funding confirmations than usual.

## 8. Return to college

### Headlines:

Colleges are planning a variety of measures to ensure safety of staff and students on-site.

Staggered start times, revised timetables, a mix of home/college learning, and reconfiguration of sites are some of the ideas being discussed.

There is concern about learners who were due to transition from college to employment or supported living, and some requests for extended placements have been made.

There is wide acknowledgement that social distancing on-site will be very difficult or impossible for some learners and sites; other health and safety measures and use of PPE are being considered.

- 8.1. Looking forward to the coming months when more students return, colleges are already planning what a return to on-site learning might look like.
- 8.2. The themes emerging from the ideas so far are as follows:

### Safeguarding, social distancing, PPE and infection control:

- 8.3. Colleges are undertaking detailed planning to increase capacity of their on-site provision whilst maintaining health and safety standards. There are major concerns around PPE, social distancing, and a desire to see more guidance on protocols and standards.

"I can't see any practical way to enforce social distancing in our setting. We will need good supplies of PPE, and ways to test any potential cases as quickly as possible".

"Hoping to get back to normal classes and curriculum, although this may need to be staggered to compensate for social distancing."

"Putting together a lockdown protocol which will link to different types of lockdown, numbers of students, zones on-sites and contract cleaning. Support and information sharing of what other colleges are providing."

"Concerns around full number of students returning. Impossible to socially distance with some learners/sites if social distancing is still to be observed."

"Early planning stages and awaiting further guidance from government. Some ideas include splitting timetable across the week, staggering start and end times, prioritise the outdoor curriculum and phased return for different year groups, prioritising student return in line with risk assessment."

"Social distancing is problematic given our buildings are not designed with lots of space as learning takes place in the community."

### Organisation of college day / continuation of partial online or home-based learning:

- 8.4. Colleges are planning new ways of working, including staggered start times and flexible learning or more home-based learning or use of technology and e-learning. Some are considering a 'transition term' in September to help learners understand the new way of working in the college.

8.5. Some of the comments below illustrate the approaches being planned:

"We are looking at 2 days onsite learning and 1 day off site learning initially with the day in the middle (Wednesday) been used to deep clean between cohorts."

"We're working on if we can set up more remote learning and transition support from September as an alternative to physically being at college."

"New students will need longer to transition over the half term and continuing students may need to return part time if social distancing continues."

"Potentially a split timetable with different groups coming in AM and PM possibly over a two-week rota."

"A return to learning will require considerable transition planning for some learners. Initial assessments will need to be revisited, outcomes reviewed and applications for an additional year may need to be considered."

### **Curriculum considerations:**

8.6. The curriculum in specialist colleges is likely to be significantly impacted, with learning spaces such as shops and hospitality venues closed or employers not able to take supported interns or other students on work experience.

8.7. Some of the comments relating to how colleges are thinking about their revised curriculum are shown below.

"New learners and learners in their 1st or 2nd year, who have had their learning disrupted, will need to be supported to regain knowledge, understanding and skills lost during this time. It will also be essential to ensure the curriculum focuses on learners' emotional health and wellbeing on return to college."

"A recovery curriculum. Bereavement Resources".

"It is going to be difficult to place all the students with an employer".

"The curriculum could be significantly impacted - rebuild links with employers, revise practical community-based activities dependent on social distancing - rebuild learners' ability to cope with day to day demands."

### **Mental health and wellbeing**

8.8. There are particular worries about the mental health and wellbeing of both staff and students. One college summed up the potential issues which may arise:

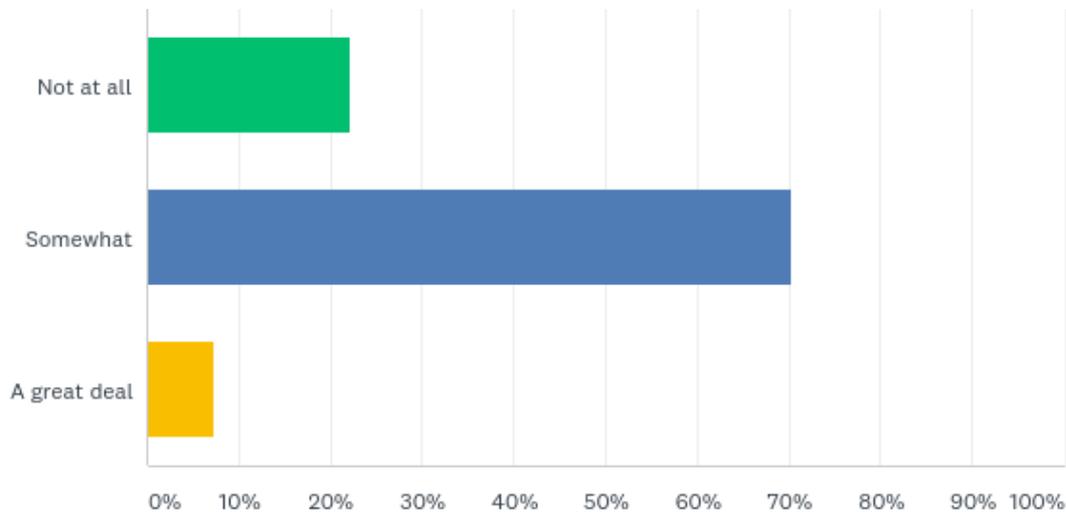
"Not being able to say 'goodbye' to peers • Regressing to behaviour they've outgrown • Showing greater fear at being separated from parents/family • Trouble sleeping • Expressing sadness, anger or fear • Wanting to talk about coronavirus all the time • Not wanting to talk about the current situation at all • Having trouble concentrating • Becoming afraid to leave the house • Distancing themselves from their friends and family • Exhibiting intense emotions but being unable to talk about what they're feeling • Weight gain due to lack of exercise • Physical wellbeing due to lack of access to therapies • Loss of social and communications skills".

### **Providing support for college leavers:**

8.9. Colleges are concerned that some students who were due to leave college will have missed so much of their important transition planning that they will need some sort of extension, either to confirm post-college placements, fill gaps in accreditation, or support the student into their next accommodation. For example: "There will be a significant impact on transition out of college and, in particular, transition into paid or voluntary employment - we may request additional funding on a termly basis in order to secure positive outcomes for learners."

## 9. Support required by specialist colleges

To address some of the issues and challenges listed above, we asked whether Natspec members would need some form of external support and challenge. The response is shown in the chart below:



As shown above, around 22% of respondents did not feel external support would be necessary, but 77% of respondents said that they would need external support, with 70% responding “somewhat” and 7% “a great deal”.

The support required by colleges broadly covers the following themes:

### **Strategic guidance**

- “We need to be aware of the impact on our staff and leadership teams. We will all need time to plan, adjust and a steady way of returning to what might be a new normal.”
- “We are concerned that if we do not get students funded and those due to leave do then we will have a lower income and need to make some financial decisions. A financial support strategy from the government to help over this period would help.”

### **Curriculum guidance**

- Colleges expressed the need for support on re-defining the curriculum, in particular relating to community or work-based learning opportunities which may no longer be available in the same way.
- Natspec is working on a project to define quality in relation to home-based learning. Respondents thought the results of this would be very useful to colleges.

### **Comments on the role of Ofsted**

- There was a general consensus that inspections should not be re-started in the first term, but that some degree of support and guidance from Ofsted would be welcomed.
- Colleges would like clarity on whether the inspection process will take into account the necessity of prioritising wellbeing, health and safety during this period, rather than the usual primary focus on educational outcomes
- A request that Ofsted provides guidance on how they expect progress and achievement to be illustrated, given the interruption in learning and the difficulties of remote learning for SEND students. There was a desire to understand Ofsted’s expectations on predicted against actual

outcomes and the change to progress measurements due to the emergency (“we may have 6 months of missing progress data”).

## 10. Financial impact of COVID-19 on specialist FE provision

### Headlines:

There is significant uncertainty about the financial impact of COVID-19 on the specialist college sector. Cash flow is the biggest concern, with 80% of colleges indicating it is or could be a problem. 72% of colleges indicated their financial health was affected negatively or uncertain, and 57% of colleges were concerned about solvency.

Does the financial impact of COVID-19 cause any of the following?

	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Unsure</b>
Significant cash flow issues	20%	11%	69%
College’s financial health will be affected	28%	11%	61%
College’s solvency is affected	43%	4%	54%