



The All-Party Parliamentary **University Group**

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University APPG weekly update

A regular digest of House of Commons, House of Lords and higher education sector business.

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Click on the items in the Table of Contents to go straight to the debates, answers, forthcoming business, etc.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Parliamentary Business | 3 |
| Lords Science and Technology Committee inquiry session on ‘delivering a UK science and technology strategy’ | 3 |
| 10 Minute Rule Motion on Institutes of Technology (Royal Charter) | 3 |
| Backbench debate on DfE speaking on the national tutoring programme and adult education | 4 |
| Lords question on the Horizon Europe programme | 4 |
| Forthcoming business..... | 5 |
| Education Oral Questions | 5 |
| Lords Science and Technology Committee inquiry session on ‘delivering a UK science and technology strategy’ | 5 |
| Science and Technology Committee session on ‘Diversity and inclusion in STEM’ | 5 |
| Written Questions | 6 |
| Private investment in R&D | 6 |
| Regional disparities in private investment in R&D | 6 |
| Impact of HE reforms on social mobility and levelling up policy | 6 |
| OfS survey questions relating to destinations of international students | 7 |
| Marginal rate of tax for graduate earning over £27,295 | 8 |
| Chevening Scholarship Programme..... | 8 |
| Average salary of a person who has completed an apprenticeship and degree | 9 |
| Number of places available for students to study medicine and nursing..... | 10 |
| Women entering higher education | 10 |
| Men entering higher education..... | 11 |
| Ukraine | 12 |
| Horizon Programme..... | 12 |
| Student accommodation | 13 |
| Sector News..... | 13 |
| Office for Students’ student guide to tackling harassment, hate and sexual misconduct | 13 |
| Commons Library briefing on Estimates Day Debate | 13 |
| Secretary of State for Education letter on Skills and Post-18 Education Bill | 14 |

Parliamentary Business

Lords Science and Technology Committee inquiry session on ‘delivering a UK science and technology strategy’

On Tuesday 8 March, the Science and Technology Committee held a session on ‘Delivering a UK science and technology strategy’.

The Chair, Baroness Brown of Cambridge (CB), opened the session by asking the witnesses how important government support was for R&D in the UK. Helen Kennett, Director of Government Relations at Rolls Royce, said that government R&D was incredibly important to their company, especially in the civil area space business and the defence business (both of which had significant industrial bases in the UK). In her opinion, such funding packages which covered more than one government electoral cycle were important, as it allowed them to take confidence in the government's support for the sector, and to make long-term investments in a long lifecycle business.

Lord Holmes of Richmond (Con) asked the witnesses about the regulatory landscape in the UK. Helen Kennett said she was not aware of any regulations inhibiting investments in R&D. Moreover, she said regulations could be a powerful innovation driver if it set the direction of travel and the demand signal. Mr Nigel Toon, CEO and co-founder, Graphcore, said there were no significant regulatory barriers for start-ups in the UK.

The Chair commented that the Research Excellence Framework could act as an inhibitor. Helen Kennett disagreed. She believed, however, that it was important to consider how could business work better with the REF. For example, it was important to consider where there was potential for applied science, which could perhaps be measured in a different way under the REF.

Baroness Rock (Con) asked the witnesses a question about the perception that ideas were born in UK universities and commercialised elsewhere. Nigel Toon said the UK was probably number two for discovery science in the world, with some of the world's leading academic institutions based in the UK. However, the UK struggled with applied research, which fit between science and innovation.

Finally, Lord Rees of Ludlow (CB) asked the witnesses a question about the talent pool and links to universities. Nigel Toon responded that the UK had a massive talent pool in the leading institutions, which should be safeguarded. In his opinion, it was important to continue to create links between academic institutions and industry.

You can read a transcript of the debate will be published [here](#).

10 Minute Rule Motion on Institutes of Technology (Royal Charter)

On Tuesday 8 March, Sir Robert Buckland MP (Con) moved a 10 Minute Rule Motion titled ‘Institutes of Technology (Royal Charter)’ to bring in a Bill that would make provision for Institutes of Technology (IoTs) to apply to receive a Royal Charter.

Sir Robert Buckland MP said one of the greatest challenges facing the UK was the skills gap and that without change productivity rates would slow and fall. The policy response had been to create an institute of technology, 12 of which had been supported by £170m of capital grant funding.

To establish IOTs as pre-eminent organisations for technical STEM education, Sir Robert Buckland MP wanted to ensure that successful ones could apply to receive a royal charter, placing them on the same level as universities. He spoke about how this played into the government's levelling up agenda and plans to support employment.

The question was put and agreed to. Sir Robert Buckland MP, Chris Skidmore MP, Carolyn Harris MP, Robert Halfon MP, Richard Graham MP, Theo Clarke MP, Sir Robert Neill MP, Kelly Tolhurst MP, Pauline Latham MP, Jo Gideon MP, James Daly MP and Edward Timpson MP presented the Bill.

You can read a transcript of the debate [here](#).

Backbench debate on DfE speaking on the national tutoring programme and adult education

On Wednesday 9 March, a backbench debate took place on 'the spending of the Department for Education on the National Tutoring Programme (NTP) and Adult Education'.

The chair of the Education Committee, Robert Halfon MP (Con), said that more needed to be done to increase the number of careers encounters that young people had at school. He said that skills organisations, FE colleges, university technical schools and apprenticeships needed to visit schools and show the alternative pathways rather than university. He said at present the whole culture in school was focused on university when it should be focused on skills.

Robert Halfon MP went on to say that there were real questions about whether the catch-up programme, particularly the national tutoring programme, was fit for purpose. He stated that the NTP was reaching 96 percent of schools in the south-east but was reaching only 59 percent in the north-east and the north-west. He added that the Department for Education's annual report and accounts, published in December 2021, rated it as critical and that the measures in the national tutoring programme to address lost learning would be insufficient.

Finally, he stressed that education needed a long-term plan and a secure funding settlement. He said that this would give stability and make a huge difference to those who work in schools, colleges and universities.

Miriam Cates MP (Con), member of the Education Committee, said that though she welcomed the national tutoring programme, there were some key questions about its deliverability.

She went on to compare the higher education budget to the spending on other parts of the education sector, such as early years and technical and vocational education. She welcomed the recent reforms to make the higher education sector fairer for the taxpayer and students, but felt the government needed to go further.

Shadow Minister for Education, Matt Western MP, said that the national tutoring programme should be a key pillar of the Department for Education's offer to allow children to catch up on lost learning, but it was not. He added that ministers had sought to cut costs at the expense of prioritising the needs of children recovering from the disruption caused by the pandemic.

The Shadow Universities Minister said the government had no intention of guaranteeing education recovery support for those who needed it most. He added explained Labour's children's recovery plan, including small group tutoring, continued professional development for teachers, catch-up breakfast clubs and extracurricular activities, and quality mental health support.

The Minister for School Standards, Mr Robin Walker MP, said that the government continue to look for ways to tilt their policies towards disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils in schools and colleges. He stated that overall, the National Tutoring Programme was on track to deliver its objectives for this year, and that the 65 percent pupil premium target was not being removed. He added that the national tutoring programme and the government's work to reform adult education shared a core mission: to help those falling behind and to provide the framework for as many individuals as possible to reach their potential, regardless of their stage of life or location.

You can read a transcript of the debate [here](#).

Lords question on the Horizon Europe programme

On Wednesday 9 March, the Viscount Stansgate (Lab) asked a question on the UK joining the Horizon Europe programme.

The Minister, Lord Callanan, responded that the government were committed to finalising association to Horizon Europe at the earliest opportunity. The Minister confirmed the government would support the UK R&D sector, either by associating to Horizon Europe or by implementing an alternative UK

programme. The Minister reiterated that it is not the UK holding up association but the EU. He said the government would continue to try to work towards an agreement.

You can read a transcript of the question [here](#).

Forthcoming business

Education Oral Questions

On Monday 14 March, the Secretary of State for Education, Rt Hon Nadhim Zahawi MP and his ministerial team will answer questions for the floor of the house.

Questions have been tabled on

- Ukrainian students and UK students in Ukraine
- the impact of changes to the student loan requirements
- access to higher education for young people from deprived backgrounds
- improving the quality of higher education
- and Institutes of Technology.

You can watch the questions [here](#).

Lords Science and Technology Committee inquiry session on ‘delivering a UK science and technology strategy’

On Tuesday 15 March at 10:15am, the Science and Technology Committee will be holding a session on ‘Delivering a UK science and technology strategy’.

Witnesses for this session include

- Andrew McCosh, Director General at Office for Science and Technology Strategy
- Stuart Wainwright OBE, Director at Government Office for Science
- Louise Dunsby, Deputy Director, Critical and Emerging Technology at Cabinet Office
- Dr John Holdren, Research Professor of Environmental Policy at Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government
- Dr Marga Gual Soler, International Science Diplomacy Expert at SciDipGlobal,
- Dr Ami Appelbaum, Chairman of the Board at Israel Innovation Authority, and Chief Scientist at Ministry of Economy and Industry (Israel)

You can watch the session [here](#).

Science and Technology Committee session on ‘Diversity and inclusion in STEM’

On Wednesday 16 March at 9:30am, the Science and Technology Committee will be holding a session on ‘Diversity and inclusion in STEM’.

Witnesses for this session include

- Sam Freedman, Senior Fellow at Institute for Government and Senior Adviser, at Ark
- Russell Hobby, CEO at Teach First
- Claudenia Williams, Assistant Headteacher at Kingsley Academy
- Professor Rachel Oliver FREng, Professor of Materials Science and TIGER-in-Charge at University of Cambridge and The Inclusion Group for Equity in Research and STEM
- Professor Narendra Ramnani, Professor of Neuroscience at Royal Holloway University of London

You can watch the session [here](#).

Written Questions

Private investment in R&D

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to statement on page 170 of the Levelling Up White Paper that the additional Government investment will seek to leverage twice as much private sector investment over the long term, what baseline figure for leveraging private sector investment was used for that commitment; and what time period is meant by over the long term. [135480]

George Freeman: In setting the R&D mission, BEIS referred to published research on leverage, which found that we expect public R&D to leverage at least £2 of private R&D funding for every £1 of public R&D expenditure over the long term. This is based on a 2020 study published by BEIS and conducted by Oxford Economics, which estimates that each £1 of public R&D investment eventually stimulates between £1.96 and £2.34 of private R&D investment, the study found that almost all leverage is realised within 15 years.

BEIS is working with DLUHC and other government departments on measuring and reporting on missions in the Levelling Up White Paper and further detail will be made available in due course.

Regional disparities in private investment in R&D

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the reasons for the regional disparities in Private Non Profit R&D funding in 2019 in the ONS dataset Gross domestic expenditure on research and development, by region; and what steps he is taking to help increase the proportion of Private Non Profit R&D investment outside the Greater South East. [135479]

George Freeman: We recognise the important role that the private non-profit sector, such as charities, play in both funding and performing R&D. In 2019, the private non-profit sector funded £1,766 million worth of R&D and performed £843 million of R&D. The Greater South East contributes the highest share of private non-profit expenditure on R&D, with 84% of total expenditure in 2019 vs 16% for outside of the region.

The Levelling Up White Paper shows that we are committed to increasing total investment in R&D across the whole of the UK, of which private non-profit R&D is an important element.

Impact of HE reforms on social mobility and levelling up policy

Baroness Deech: To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the speech by the Minister for Higher and Further Education on 24 February regarding their response to Dr Philip Augar's Review of Post-18 Education and Funding, published in May 2019, what assessment they have made of the impact on their (1) social mobility policy, and (2) Levelling Up policy, of (a) the decision not to restore maintenance grants for university students, and (b) the extension of the tuition fee loan repayment period.

Baroness Barran: This government is committed to levelling up and true social mobility. Our higher education (HE) reforms will help ensure that students are doing courses that give them the skills and knowledge to move into high-value employment that benefits both them and our dynamic economy. The HE system must be supported to do this, which is why we are putting in almost £900 million of new investment into HE over the next three years, including the largest increase in government funding for the sector to support students and teaching in over a decade.

Our changes to student loans will make the system more sustainable and fairer for students and taxpayers, while continuing to enable anyone with the ability and the ambition to benefit from HE to do so. There will be up to £75 million to deliver a new national state scholarship to support high-

achieving disadvantaged students. We have previously announced that maximum maintenance loans will be increased by 2.3% in academic year 2022/23, following a 3.1% increase in 2021/22, taking the support available for the lowest-income students to record levels in cash terms.

A full assessment of the impacts of the HE reform policies and proposals, including changes to student loans and their regional impacts, has been conducted and is available [here](#).

OfS survey questions relating to destinations of international students

Lord Johnson of Marylebone: To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps the Office for Students is taking to improve survey response rates to questions relating to the destinations of international students graduating from higher education institutions in England. [HL6347]

Baroness Barran: Action 6 of the International Education Strategy 2021 update focuses on the employability of international students. Sector representatives are collaborating to build an understanding of the UK's skills needs, international labour markets, and barriers to international graduate employability. They will also share examples of best practice across the sector.

The department supports these efforts by expanding data resources available in relation to international student graduate outcomes. My noble Friend will be aware from recent answers to Questions HL5793 and HL5795 that the department now publishes employment and study outcomes one, three, five, and ten years after graduation for all international students who remain in the UK after study and contribute to the UK economy.

Graduate outcomes surveys are carried out by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). This includes international graduates surveys. In response to my right hon. Friend, the Minister for Higher and Further Education's announcements on reducing bureaucracy for the higher education sector in September 2020 and lowering the cost to providers of participating in HESA data collections, there has been some scaling back of HESA's graduate outcomes survey methodology. This impacts 2020/21 academic year graduates. The survey will be published in spring 2023.

Non-EU international graduates will continue to participate in the survey. The process of contacting international graduates by telephone, if they have not already participated online, is discontinued. This has resulted in a lowering of the subscription cost of graduate outcomes to higher education providers by approximately £350,000. HESA continues to explore and implement strategies aimed at increasing online response rates.

The value of the HESA graduate outcomes survey data is not solely determined by its response rates. The current response rate target for the survey of international graduates is at 20%. This is high for social surveys. Over the last three years, the survey has achieved on average a 30% response rate for this group. This is 5 percentage points above the previous target. Around half of these responses were collected over the telephone.

Conclusions drawn on the international graduate outcomes will be driven by how representative the students who respond to the survey are of the overall student population. The Office for Students intends to undertake research looking at the outcomes for international students. It will re-introduce telephone contact, should it significantly impact the conclusions that can be drawn from the data.

Lord Johnson of Marylebone: To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the additional cost to the Office for Students of collecting information on the progression of international students to (1) graduate employment, or (2) further study, by telephone, when responses have not been received by email. [HL6348]

Baroness Barran: Action 6 of the International Education Strategy 2021 update focuses on the employability of international students. Sector representatives are collaborating to build an understanding of the UK's skills needs, international labour markets, and barriers to international graduate employability. They will also share examples of best practice across the sector.

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Marginal rate of tax for graduate earning over £27,295

Imran Hussain: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the marginal rate of tax, taking student loan repayments into consideration, will be for a graduate earning over £27,295 after the Government's National Insurance rise and changes to the student loan system are implemented. [132275]

Lucy Frazer: The Health and Social Care Levy introduces a new 1.25 per cent tax. In the 2022-23 tax year this will be collected via a temporary increase to National Insurance contributions (NICs). Revenue raised will be ringfenced to support UK health and social care bodies. The rate of repayment for student loans remains at 9 per cent on all income above the relevant threshold for Plan 1, Plan 2, and Plan 4 loans. For Post Graduate Loans (PGL) the repayment rate is 6 per cent.

In 2022-23, a graduate employee with earnings of £27,295, excluding a PGL loan, will have a marginal deduction rate of 42.25 per cent. This is made up of Income Tax (20 per cent), NICs (13.25 per cent), and Student Loan deduction (9 per cent).

In contrast, a graduate employee with earnings of £50,270 would have a marginal deduction rate of 52.25 per cent. This is made up of Income Tax (40 per cent), NICs (3.25 per cent), and Student Loan deduction (9 per cent).

Other factors including any reliefs, pension contributions, or receipt of certain means-tested welfare benefits could adjust these marginal deduction rates.

Chevening Scholarship Programme

Carol Monaghan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to provide information to the Afghan Chevening Scholars on their immigration status.

Victoria Atkins: The Home Office 's Policy Statement (updated 13.9.21) explained that we had introduced a concessionary approach which applied to any Afghan national who had permission under work or study routes to be in the UK before 1 September 2021. This means that Chevening scholars already in the UK may be eligible to apply to either the Graduate or the Skilled Worker route. The Graduate route allows individuals to spend 2-3 years in the UK looking for and undertaking work at any skill level, before switching into another economic route (including the Skilled Worker route). The Skilled Worker route provides a pathway to settlement.

Carol Monaghan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will provide clarity to the 2021-22 intake of Afghan Chevening Scholars on their immigration status.

Victoria Atkins: We have contacted all of those from the 2021/22 cohort who came to the UK as part of Op Pitting, and registered their applications for Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) onto HO systems. This means that they have continuing permission to be in the UK, and their ILR applications will be processed by April 2022. Any 2021/22 Chevening Scholars who were already in the UK have ongoing permission to be here.

Carol Monaghan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that Afghan Chevening Scholars are able to contact her Department directly regarding their immigration status.

Victoria Atkins: Chevening Scholars should continue to liaise with their Chevening contact who can provide more detailed advice. In addition, they can contact the Home Office at Public.Enquiries@homeoffice.gov.uk

Anne McLaughlin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many Chevening alumni there are in Afghanistan. [132296]

James Cleverly: It is not known how many Chevening alumni are currently in Afghanistan.

Average salary of a person who has completed an apprenticeship and degree

Andrew Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what comparative assessment he has made of the average salary of a person who has completed (a) an apprenticeship and (b) a university degree; and what steps his Department is taking to ensure parity between those average salaries.

Alex Burghart: High quality apprenticeships are available at all levels, from GCSE equivalent at level 2 to undergraduate and master's degree equivalent at levels 6 and 7. Apprenticeships are undertaken by people of all ages, aged 16 and over, from young people taking the first steps in their careers to older workers looking to retrain or upskill.

Apprenticeships are jobs with training, created by employers, designed to support an apprentice to achieve occupational competence in that occupation. Apprentices earn while they learn, do not incur tuition fees, and we know that upon completion apprenticeships offer good wage returns. Some apprenticeships may include a mandatory qualification, such as a degree or a professional accreditation.

Our latest published data, for the tax year 2019/20, shows that five years after study, median annualised earnings for learners who achieved an intermediate (level 2) apprenticeship in the 2013/14 academic year were £20,530. For advanced (level 3) apprenticeships this rose to £21,990, and median annualised earnings five years after study for level 4 higher apprenticeships were £29,180. Level 5-7 apprenticeships compare well to the earnings of first-degree graduates five years on, although it is important to note that these apprenticeships span the equivalent of a foundation degree (level 5) to a master's degree (level 7) and that at this time, level 5+ apprenticeships were a much smaller part of the programme. Our latest comparable data, for tax year 2018/19, show that median first degree graduate annual earnings five years after graduation in the 2012/13 academic year were £27,400, compared to £29,030 for level 5+ apprentices.

We caution against direct comparison between post- apprenticeship earnings and post-degree earnings due to the range of levels at which an individual can undertake an apprenticeship. We are committed to supporting more people to benefit from high quality apprenticeships. We are promoting apprenticeships through our 'Get the Jump' and 'Skills for Life' campaigns, and we continue to support employers to develop apprenticeships to meet their skills needs and to train apprentices in the ways that work best for them.

Number of places available for students to study medicine and nursing

Charlotte Nichols: To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will increase the number of places available for students to study medicine and nursing at university. [131338]

Edward Argar: We have funded an additional 1,500 undergraduate medical school places per year in England. In addition, we have temporarily lifted the cap on medical and dental school places for students who completed A levels in 2020 and 2021 and received an offer from a university in England to study medicine or dentistry, subject to their grades. There are no current plans to further increase the number of medical school places.

There is no limit or cap on the number of nursing places at universities. We are offering non-repayable grants of at least £5,000 per year to eligible students and investing £40 million in expanding clinical placement capacity. Over 30,000 students accepted places to study nursing and midwifery at English universities in 2021 recruitment cycle – an increase of 28% compared to 2019.

Women entering higher education

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, for each of the last fifteen years, how many young women (a) turned 18, (b) aged between 18 and 21 entered university, (c) commenced a level 6 qualification in higher education and (d) completed a level 6 qualification in higher education; and what proportion of those who (i) commenced and (ii) completed a level 6 qualification in higher education did so in STEM subjects. [132239]

Michelle Donelan: The department's annual publication 'Participation measures in higher education' provides a time series of the initial participation of students in higher education (HE), available [here](#).

This release includes age-specific data showing the number of English domiciled entrants to higher education in the UK who participate for a minimum period of six months for the first time. It also includes age-specific population estimates for England, which were calculated from Office for National Statistics population data, available [here](#).

These two sources are combined to derive the Higher Education Initial Participation measure, calculated as the sum of age specific participation rates for 17 to 30-year-olds in England . Statistics are published for the 2006/07 to 2019/20 academic years.

The bespoke table below has been generated from the publication containing age and gender breakdowns for initial entrants to higher education, as well as the associated population estimates for England. The table is available [here](#).

This shows, for example, that the 18-year-old population estimates for England in 2019/20 were 301,745 for females and 318,390 for males. There were 163,370 female initial entrants and 134,285 male initial entrants aged 18-21 in the 2019/20 academic year.

The other breakdowns requested are not available on the same basis as the figures stated above. However, detailed statistics on entry and qualification in higher education have been published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) as far back as 1994/95.

HESA statistics refer to HE students at UK higher education providers only[1]. Explicit data mapped to National Qualifications Framework level 6 are not published by HESA, however first degrees can be selected as an indicative estimate to observe trends over time. Further details on the qualifications are available [here](#).

Counts of student entrants and enrolments are available by subject (including science subject areas) and sex for the academic years 2019/20 to 2020/21 in Figure 13 of HESA 's Higher Education Student Data pages, available [here](#).

Counts for the academic years 2014/15 to 2018/19[2] are available in Table 9 of HESA 's Higher Education Student Data pages [here](#) [3]

Counts of student qualifiers are available by subject (including science subject areas) and sex for the academic years 2019/20 to 2020/21 in Figure 17 of HESA 's Higher Education Student Data pages: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/sb262/figure-17>

Counts for the academic years 2014/15 to 2018/19[4] are available in Figure 17 of HESA 's Higher Education Student Statistics: UK, 2018/19 publication [here](#). [5]

HESA 's publication archive for academic years prior to 2014/15 can be found [here](#).

[1] This does not include students studying higher education qualifications at further education colleges.

[2] Figures prior to the academic year 2019/20 exclude a small minority registered at Alternative Providers.

[3] A new subject classification system, the Higher Education Classification of Subjects (HECoS) was introduced in the academic year 2019/20, hence figures for 2018/19 and earlier are not directly comparable with the following years.

[4] Figures prior to the academic year 2019/20 exclude a small minority registered at Alternative Providers.

[5] A new subject classification system, the Higher Education Classification of Subjects (HECoS) was introduced in the academic year 2019/20, hence figures for 2018/19 and earlier are not directly comparable with the following years.

Men entering higher education

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, for each of the last fifteen years how many young men (a) turned 18, (b) aged between 18 and 21 entered university, (c) commenced a level 6 qualification in higher education and (d) completed a level 6 qualification in higher education ; and what proportion of those who (i) commenced and (ii) completed a level 6 qualification in higher education did so in STEM subjects.[132240]

Michelle Donelan: The department's annual publication 'Participation measures in higher education ' provides a time series of the initial participation of students in higher education (HE), available [here](#). This release includes age-specific data showing the number of English domiciled entrants to higher education in the UK who participate for a minimum period of six months for the first time. It also includes age-specific population estimates for England, which were calculated from Office for National Statistics population data, available [here](#).

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Ukraine

Drew Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her oral statement of 1 March 2022 on Humanitarian support for Ukrainians, whether the humanitarian sponsorship pathway route will be open to the immediate families of Ukrainian students studying in the UK. [133217]

Kevin Foster: The Home Office has indicated that it will not be possible to answer this question within the usual time period. An answer is being prepared and will be provided as soon as it is available.

Horizon Programme

Chi Onwurah: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if his Department will publish a regional breakdown of the successful applications to the Horizon programme. [133177]

George Freeman: As Horizon Europe only recently started, data on successful bids will be reviewed as the programme progresses. The regional distribution of funding under Horizon 2020 – the predecessor programme to Horizon Europe – is publicly available data. It can be seen in the table below. UK entities are already eligible to apply to Horizon Europe calls ahead of formal UK association to the programme.

| UK Regions | % of UK receipts |
|-----------------|------------------|
| London | 25.30% |
| South East | 17.00% |
| Scotland | 11.40% |
| East of England | 11.30% |
| South West | 7.90% |

| | |
|----------------------|-------|
| Yorkshire and Humber | 6.30% |
| North West | 6.10% |
| West Midlands | 5.40% |
| East Midlands | 3.10% |
| North East | 2.90% |
| Wales | 2.00% |
| Northern Ireland | 1.00% |

Student accommodation

Rachael Maskell: To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps he is taking to help ensure that developers prioritise student needs when building student accommodation. [132314]

Stuart Andrew: The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that it is for local authorities to identify the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community, including students, and to reflect this in their local planning policies.

Our planning practice guidance goes further to state that local authorities need to plan for sufficient student accommodation whether it consists of communal halls of residence or self-contained dwellings, and whether or not it is on campus.

Local authorities should also engage with universities and other higher educational establishments to ensure they understand the student accommodation requirements in their local area.

Sector News

Office for Students' student guide to tackling harassment, hate and sexual misconduct

On Tuesday 8 March, the Office for students published a 'Student guide to tackling harassment, hate and sexual misconduct'.

The guide is designed to help students understand

- what to expect from a university or college
- what to do if those expectations aren't being met
- where a student can get help if they've experienced harassment or sexual misconduct.

You can find the guidance [here](#).

Commons Library briefing on Estimates Day Debate

On Tuesday 8 March, the House of Commons Library published a research briefing on spending on the National Tutoring Programme (NTP) and adult education ahead of the Estimates Day Debate in the House of Commons.

The research briefing outlines the estimates process, DfE spending in 2021-22, the National Tutoring Programme and adult education funding.

You can read the briefing [here](#).

Secretary of State for Education letter on Skills and Post-18 Education Bill

On Wednesday 9 March, the National Audit Office published a report on 'Regulating the financial sustainability of higher education providers in England'.

The report focuses on the OfS's responsibilities to protect students' interests from the consequences of financial risk in higher education providers. As the OfS is a young organisation, the NAO reviewed its performance with a view to identifying areas where it should focus as it continues to mature.

You can read the report [here](#).