



The All-Party Parliamentary University Group



Dear Colleague,

Welcome back to all following the Easter break. It's been a busy few weeks back for parliamentarians and universities alike, but happily a number of you were still able to join us on Tuesday 12 April for our meeting on 'Flexible pathways: part-time, adult education and life-long learning'. I found this meeting particularly useful as the group heard from non-traditional HE providers and I think it is always helpful to remember how HE is required to work within the bigger picture.

The coming weeks for parliament are like to be consumed by the upcoming European Union Referendum. Similarly, I know that universities are fully committed to their roles as places of discussion and I understand that many of our members have or will be providing platforms for both sides of the debate, as well as working to ensure that students are registered to vote. Those that have not yet had the opportunity but are interested in hearing how each camp thinks a possible Brexit will affect universities may be interested in reading our [issue paper](#) on the subject by Bernard Jenkin MP and Professor Dame Julia Goodfellow. Neil Carmichael MP also provided a blog for the group on the subject back in November, you can read this and other blog posts [here](#). If you were interested in contributing to the blog please do [get in touch](#).

Ahead of the Summer break, which doesn't feel too long away now, we do of course have two more meetings. One on the 25 May on the subject of 'Students as consumers in their education: where student fees go, how universities explain their financial decisions to students, the public and government', and on 28 June we have our Summer drinks reception, please do hold the date. Finally, we are working on an interesting programme of meetings for the coming 2016/17 session and hopefully you should have received a request to renew your membership, please do get in touch if you've not received this.

Roberta Blackman-Woods MP

Chair, All-Party Parliamentary University Group

Upcoming meetings

Wednesday 25 May

Students as consumers in their education; where student fees go, how universities explain their financial decisions to students, the public and government (Joint meeting with the APPG on Students)

6pm-7.30pm, Committee Room 2a, followed by dinner

Speakers to include; Sorana Vieru, Vice-President (Higher Education), NUS and Nick Hillman, Director, HEPI (invited)

Tuesday 28 June

University APPG Summer Reception

Churchill Room, times to be confirmed

This update is produced by Universities UK. It provides links to all relevant parliamentary business and sector announcements for the previous week and notes upcoming business. The APPG council have also suggested that university members may like to suggest inclusions from their institutions, such as major reports, speeches or events. If you did wish to do so, please do get in touch.

The University APPG twitter account ([@universityappg](https://twitter.com/universityappg)) will also be tweeting updates of parliamentary business and sector announcements. We would encourage all members to follow the account.

The University APPG blog is now up and running and I would like to encourage members who may be interested in writing a piece to please get in touch.

Table of Contents

Forthcoming Business	4
Commons Science and Technology Hearing on Science Communication	4
House of Lords oral question on electoral participation by young people	4
BIS Oral Questions	4
Joint Committee on Human Rights: Evidence taken on Prevent and education institutions	4
House of Commons debate on NHS bursaries	5
House of Lords debate on polytechnics	5
House of Lords debate on BME people: workplace issues	5
Written Questions	5
Future of HEFCE and QAA	5
Role of HEFCE in degree standards	6
Degree apprenticeship numbers	6
Value and anticipated repayment of non-UK student loans	6
The European Union and universities	6
Impact of student loans on securing mortgages	6
Changes to student loan eligibility for those without settlement	6
‘Anti-lobbying’ clause in government grant terms	6
Gender pay gap in higher education.....	6
Support for student victims of sexual assault.....	6
Curtailment of student visas	6
Regional supply of teachers	7
Teacher training and the Education White Paper.....	7
University curricula and employee needs.....	7
Financial support for trainee clinical psychologists	7
Skills shortages in workforce	7
Sector news	7
Research councils delivery plans for 2016-2020.....	7
RCUK and the research councils have published their delivery plans for 2016-2020.	7
Social Market Foundation pamphlet on teaching and learning	7

Forthcoming Business

Commons Science and Technology Hearing on Science Communication

On Tuesday 10 May the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee will hear evidence from the Natural Environment Research Council on science communication. For further information see <http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/science-and-technology-committee/news-parliament-2015/science-communication-evidence1-15-16/>

House of Lords oral question on electoral participation by young people

On Thursday 12 May, Lord Kinnock will ask the government “what steps they are taking to emphasise the importance to citizens, particularly young people, of registering to vote to enable them to participate in the referendum on the United Kingdom’s membership of the European Union on 23 June.” Peers may then ask questions supplementary to this, for a period of roughly 15 minutes.

Queen’s Speech

Parliament is expected to prorogue on the Thursday 12 May until the Queen’s Speech on Wednesday 18 May.

BIS Oral Questions

The Business, Innovation and Skills ministerial team took oral questions on Tuesday 3 May. Among the questions asked were:

- A questions from Margaret Greenwood MP on the ‘anti-lobbying’ clause ([link to transcript](#))
 - A question from Andrew Jenkyns MP on work being undertaken with schools and universities on social mobility into the professions ([link to transcript](#))
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Joint Committee on Human Rights: Evidence taken on Prevent and education institutions

The Joint Committee on Human Rights took evidence from the education sector, including universities, as part of their evidence-gathering process in advance of the expected publication of an Extremism Bill in the Queen’s Speech. The session focussed in particular on the impact of the Prevent duty on education institutions.

A transcript will become available shortly on the Committee’s website ([link to relevant page](#)), but the session can be viewed in full at <http://www.parliamentlive.tv/Event/Index/eca3e01e-c5ef-4de1-bb5e-37a39dad0ad9>.

Those giving evidence were: Professor Louise Richardson, vice-chancellor of the University of Oxford; Dr Jessie Blackbourn, lecturer at Kingston University; Christine Abbott, university secretary and director of operations at Birmingham City University; and Karon McCarthy, assistant principal and Prevent officer at Chobham Academy.

House of Commons debate on NHS bursaries

The House of Commons held a debate on 4 May on an Opposition motion related to the government’s proposed changes to support provided to student nurses, midwives and other allied health professions ([link to full transcript](#)).

House of Lords debate on polytechnics

The House of Lords held a debate on 3 May on polytechnics, and the potential for a ‘new generation’ of polytechnics to address a shortage of technical skills in the labour force ([link to full transcript](#))

House of Lords debate on BME people: workplace issues

The House of Lords held a debate on 5 May on the issues faced by black and minority ethnic people in the workplace. There were references to the position of BME people working in higher education, and to the role of higher education in promoting better career outcomes for BME people ([link to full transcript](#))

Written Questions

The answers to written questions can be found by clicking the name of the MP or Lord beneath the title. Members may appear more than once if they have asked several questions on the same topic.

Future of HEFCE and QAA

[Gordon Marsden MP](#)

Role of HEFCE in degree standards

Gordon Marsden MP

Degree apprenticeship numbers

Peter Kyle MP

Value and anticipated repayment of non-UK student loans

Bernard Jenkins MP

Bernard Jenkins MP

Anti-semitism and universities

Robert Jenrick MP

Lord Patten

The European Union and universities

William Wragg MP

Gavin Newlands MP

Impact of student loans on securing mortgages

Danny Kinahan MP

Changes to student loan eligibility for those without settlement

Gordon Marsden MP

Gordon Marsden MP

'Anti-lobbying' clause in government grant terms

Andrew Smith MP

Andrew Smith MP

Andrew Smith MP

Gender pay gap in higher education

Cat Smith MP

Support for student victims of sexual assault

Neil Coyle MP

Neil Coyle MP

Curtailement of student visas

The Marquess of Lothian

Regional supply of teachers

[Nic Dakin MP](#)

Teacher training and the Education White Paper

[Nic Dakin MP](#)

[Nic Dakin MP](#)

[Nic Dakin MP](#)

University curricula and employee needs

[Paul Flynn MP](#)

Financial support for trainee clinical psychologists

[Luciana Berger MP](#)

Skills shortages in workforce

[Seema Kennedy MP](#)

Sector news

Research councils delivery plans for 2016-2020

RCUK and the research councils have published their delivery plans for 2016-2020.

AHRC - <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/newsevents/news/delivery-plan-2016-20/>

BBSRC - <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/news/policy/2016/160504-n-bbsrc-publishes-delivery-plan/>

EPSRC - <https://www.epsrc.ac.uk/newsevents/news/scienceforsuccessfulnationdeliveryplan/>

ESRC - <http://www.esrc.ac.uk/news-events-and-publications/publications/corporate-publications/delivery-plan/>

MRC - <http://www.mrc.ac.uk/about/spending-accountability/delivery-plan/>

NERC - <http://www.nerc.ac.uk/about/perform/reporting/reports/>

STFC - <http://www.stfc.ac.uk/about-us/our-purpose-and-priorities/delivery-plan/>

RCUK - <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/documents/rcukexecutivedirectoratedeliveryplan-pdf/>

Social Market Foundation pamphlet on teaching and learning

The Social Market Foundation have published a pamphlet written by Sir Anthony Seldon, vice-chancellor of the University of Buckingham, on teaching and learning in universities.

<http://www.smf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Social-Market-Foundation-Teaching-and-learning-at-British-universities-Embargoed-0001-030516.pdf>
