



The All-Party Parliamentary **University Group**



Dear Colleague,

Since our last update, the Higher Education and Research Bill has almost completed its Committee Stage in the House of Lords with one more session taking place on Monday 30 January. It has been a thoughtful debate with over 600 amendments tabled. It's expected that the Bill won't reach Lords Report stage until after the February Recess but we will be sure to let you know as soon as the date is confirmed.

Our first meeting of the year takes place on Tuesday, focusing on the Government's Industrial Strategy, incredibly timely as the Green Paper was published on Monday, so lots of quick analysis of what this might mean for the higher education sector and where parliamentarians can respond. We have two great speakers, Professor Quintin McKellar, who in addition to leading the University of Hertfordshire, also heads up Universities UK's Innovation and Growth Policy Network, and Steven Wilson, Head of Innovation at the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership, who will be speaking about the collaborative work he has seen between business and universities and how this can be emulated across the country.

Finally, if any member of the group has an opinion or particular piece of work that they would like to share I just wanted to leave you with a reminder that the group's [blog](#) is up and running and hopefully provides you with a direct opportunity to share directly with both sector and parliamentary colleagues.

Roberta Blackman-Woods MP

Chair, All-Party Parliamentary University Group

Upcoming meetings

Tuesday 31 January 2017

Industrial Strategy

6-7.30pm, Committee Room 4, followed by dinner

Professor Quintin McKellar, Vice-Chancellor, University of Hertfordshire and Steven Wilson, Head of Innovation, Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership

Tuesday 7 March 2017

Social mobility

6-7.30pm, Committee Room 4, followed by dinner

Wednesday 10 May 2017

Higher level skills

8.30-10am, Dining Room B

Tuesday 20 June 2017

Devolution

6-7.30pm, Committee Room 4, followed by dinner

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.

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Forthcoming Business

Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Oral Questions

On Monday 30 January the Business Secretary and Ministers will answer oral and topical questions, from 2.30pm.

European Union (Notification of Withdrawal) Bill

Following BEIS oral questions on Monday 30 January, the Second Reading of the Brexit Bill will take place. The debate will continue with a second session on Wednesday 1 February. You can find more information on the Bill, including explanatory notes at <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2016-17/europeanunionnotificationofwithdrawal.html>. We expect that Commons Committee Stage will take place on Monday 6 January.

Westminster hall debate – Prevent

Lucy Allan (Conservative, Telford) has tabled a debate on the implementation of the Prevent strategy. The debate takes place on Wednesday 1 February, it will last an hour and a half and begins at 2.30pm.

Higher Education and Research Bill – Lords Committee Stage

The final session of Committee Stage will be on Monday 30 January.

Home Affairs Select Committee

On Tuesday 31 January the Committee takes evidence from Rt Hon Amber Rudd MP, Home Secretary, on the ‘Implications of the UK’s exit from the European Union’.

Exiting the European Union Committee

On Wednesday 1 February from 9:15am, the Committee discuss ‘The UK’s negotiating objectives for its withdrawal from the EU’. Witnesses:

- David Goodhart, Head of the Demography, Immigration, and Integration Unit, Policy Exchange,
- Sunder Katwala, Director, British Future, and
- Jonathan Portes, Professor of Economics and Public Policy, King’s College London

European Scrutiny Committee

Also on 1 February from 10:05am, the European Scrutiny Committee hears from witnesses on ‘EU-UK relations in preparation for Brexit’. With Sir Ivan Rogers KCMG, former Permanent Representative of the UK to the European Union.

International Trade Committee

Finally, on Wednesday 1 February from 10:30am, the International Trade Committee takes evidence on ‘UK trade options beyond 2019’. Witnesses:

- Rt Hon Liam Fox MP, Secretary of State for International Trade and President of the Board of Trade; and
- Sir Martin Donnelly KCB CMG, Permanent Secretary, Department for International Trade

The Higher Education and Research Bill

On Monday 23 and Wednesday 25 January the Lords continued Committee Stage of the Higher Education and Research Bill. With the exception of the first opposition amendment passing last week, only Government amendments have been included in the Bill. Many Peers have been withdrawing their amendments with the plan to bring them back and put them to a vote at Report Stage.

The final date of Lords Committee Stage will take place on Monday 30 January.

Amendments

The latest list of marshalled amendments is available [here](#).

Other documents

Viscount Younger of Leckie has placed several documents in the House of Lords library for Peers' information:

- [Letter to all Peers](#)
- [Introductory document](#)
- [Factsheet](#)
- [Factsheet on validation](#)

Home Office Oral Questions

On Monday 23 January, Ministers answered Home Office Questions. There was an exchange on international students (below). You can read the full transcript at:
<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-01-23/debates/F55DC7ED-417C-4D98-AEE9-FBF687B2E590/OralAnswersToQuestions>.

Christina Rees (Neath) (Lab/Co-op): What representations she has received on the economic value to the UK of international students studying at universities.

The Minister for Immigration (Mr Robert Goodwill): The Government recognise that international students make an important contribution during their time here and help to make our education system one of the best in the world. We are in regular contact with the sector, and there is no limit on the number of genuine international students who can come here to study in the UK.

Christina Rees: International students bring academic and cultural benefits to our universities, contribute billions of pounds to the economy, support the creation of tens of thousands of jobs and enable these institutions to innovate, build links with businesses and invest even more in every student in every region and country of the UK. Will the Minister assure the House that the

Government have no plans to reduce the number of international students coming to every UK university, and tell us what steps they will take to increase numbers?

Mr Goodwill: I agree with the hon. Lady absolutely. As I mentioned, there is no limit on the number of students who can come here. Since 2010, we have seen a 17% increase in the number of university applications from outside the EU, while the Russell Group has seen an amazing 47% increase.

Ms Diane Abbott (Hackney North and Stoke Newington) (Lab): The whole House knows that it is vital to maintain our global reputation as an open and fair place to study, but in mid-December last year the Home Office lost a major test case against international students. The Home Office claimed that the students had made bogus claims about English language skills. What were the total legal costs in this test case against Sharif Majumder? How many other cases were initiated and had to be dropped? What estimate has been made of the potential liability arising from students who were deported on the basis of evidence-free claims, but might now have a right to sue for wrongful deportation?

Mr Goodwill: I am slightly surprised that the hon. Lady has the brass neck to refer to bogus students in bogus colleges. We had to take away the sponsorship licence from 920 colleges that were recruiting students to take bogus courses. I will certainly get back to her in writing if I can provide some of the information she asked for specifically on that legal case.

Exiting the European Union Oral Questions

On Thursday 26 January, DExEU Ministers answered oral and topical questions. Questions were asked on the residency rights of EU nationals and the UK-EU relationship. You can read the session here - <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2017-01-26/debates/A1223D93-378D-4248-96AC-B737286BB83A/OralAnswersToQuestions>.

House of Lords Debate – Brexit

On Thursday 26 January Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town, (Lab) tabled a debate on the impact of the UK's withdrawal from the EU and potential withdrawal from the single market on the rights of EU citizens living in the UK and the UK's economic future. Several Peers mentioned the higher education sector in the debate including: The Lord Bishop of Durham, Baroness Warwick of Undercliffe, and Lord Bilimoria.

Read all the contributions to the debate at <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/2017-01-26/debates/59755AA8-ED1B-4215-B3AE-C334CCE167D0/UKWithdrawalFromTheEUAndPotentialWithdrawalFromTheSingleMarket>.

Industrial Strategy Green paper

On Monday 23 January the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy published a Green Paper on the industrial strategy. The consultation closes on 17 April 2017.

The green paper will set out ten strategic pillars to underpin the Strategy:

1. **Investing in science, research and innovation:** We must become a more innovative economy and do more to commercialise our world leading science base to drive growth across the UK.
2. **Developing skills:** We must help people and businesses to thrive by: ensuring everyone has the basic skills needed in a modern economy; building a new system of technical education to benefit the half of young people who do not go to university; boosting STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) skills, digital skills and numeracy; and by raising skill levels in lagging areas.
3. **Upgrading infrastructure:** We must upgrade our standards of performance on digital, energy, transport, water and flood defence infrastructure, and better align central government infrastructure investment with local growth priorities.
4. **Supporting businesses to start and grow:** We must ensure that businesses across the UK can access the finance and management skills they need to grow; and we must create the right conditions for companies to invest for the long term.
5. **Improving procurement:** We must use strategic government procurement to drive innovation and enable the development of UK supply chains;
6. **Encouraging trade and inward investment policy:** Government policy can help boost productivity and growth across our economy, including by increasing competition and helping to bring new ways of doing things to the UK.
7. **Delivering affordable energy and clean growth:** We need to keep costs down for businesses, and secure the economic benefits of the transition to a low-carbon economy.
8. **Cultivating world-leading sectors:** We must build on our areas of competitive advantage, and help new sectors to flourish, in many cases challenging existing institutions and incumbents;
9. **Driving growth across the whole country:** We will create a framework to build on the particular strengths of different places and address factors that hold places back – whether it is investing in

key infrastructure projects to encourage growth, increasing skill levels, or backing local innovation strengths.

10. Creating the right institutions to bring together sectors and places: We will consider the best structures to support people, industries and places. In some places and sectors there may be missing institutions which we could create, or existing ones we could strengthen, be they local civic or educational institutions, trade associations or financial networks.

- Press release - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-unveils-plans-for-a-modern-industrial-strategy-fit-for-global-britain>
 - Consultation document - <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/building-our-industrial-strategy>
 - Universities UK blog - <http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/blog/Pages/The-industrial-strategy-and-universities.aspx>
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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.

Doctors: Training

[Dr Sarah Wollaston MP](#)

Teachers: Training

[Judith Cummins MP](#)

Part-time education

[Gordon Marsden MP](#)

Psychiatry: Training

[Luciana Berger MP](#)

Horizon 2020

[Daniel Zeichner MP](#)

[Callum McCaig MP](#)

Post-Brexit: Staff recruitment

[Callum McCaig MP](#)

Post-Brexit: Academic funding

[Callum McCaig MP](#)

Universities: Anti-Semitism

Graham Evans MP

Higher education: Grants and loans

Jim Cunningham MP

Stephen Timms MP

Overseas students

Paul Blomfield MP

Universities: Radicalisation

Lord Murphy of Torfaen

Post-Brexit: EU Nationals

Callum McCaig MP

Sexual offences: Universities

Jim Shannon MP

Nurses: Training

Lord Clark of Windermere

University admissions

Ian Austin MP

OfS: Register of providers

Gordon Marsden MP

OfS: Grant letter

Gordon Marsden MP

Higher education: Regulatory framework

Gordon Marsden MP

Higher education qualifications

Gordon Marsden MP

Sector News

UCAS admissions data

On Wednesday 25 January, UCAS published its 2016 data for individual universities. These make up the final part of the UCAS End of Cycle data on admissions to full-time undergraduate higher education in the UK in 2016.

Read the data at: <https://www.ucas.com/corporate/news-and-key-documents/news/ucas-publishes-2016-data-individual-universities>

Scottish Parliament Equalities and Human Rights Commission report on Disability and Universities

On Monday 23 January the Committee published its report, you can read it in full at: [Equalities and Human Rights Committee- report](#)

The main conclusions of the report were:

- We acknowledge that delivering changes in a policy area such as widening access to university, coupled with providing the funding and resource to deliver such change, takes time. Witnesses acknowledged this fact in their evidence to us.
- In light of this, we recommend the Scottish Government and Scottish Funding Council, and the wider Scottish education sector, should take active steps to develop a more integrated approach to progress the widening access agenda in terms of eliminating inequalities and tackling prejudice. This applies not just for those from a socioeconomically disadvantaged background, but across all the protected characteristics, including those facing disabled people and BSL users.
- Such an approach should include addressing attainment gaps at second level education as well as developing and promoting pathways to third level education, especially to studying at universities. Such an integrated approach should aim to be delivered over the five-year life of the current Parliament, (Session 5 budget cycle Financial Year 2017/18 to Financial Year 2021/22).