



The All-Party Parliamentary **University Group**



Dear Colleague,

I imagine it has been and incredibly busy last few months for our university members as they produce the many hundreds of graduation ceremonies, and after one of the more interesting periods for Parliament, we entered the Summer Recess period yesterday. The Commons is due to return for two weeks beginning Monday 5 September, before breaking again for Party Conference season.

Our Annual General Meeting took place last week and I'm happy to announce that I remain as the group's Chair. I also wanted to welcome some of many new parliamentary members including new officers Daniel Zeichner, MP for Cambridge and Rupa Huq, MP for Ealing Central and Acton.

For many in universities and in Parliament the Summer period will be spent looking at the detail of the Repeal Bill and trying to understand where the legislation may affect their institution or interests. You can read the Bill and supporting documents on the [parliament website](#).

To note we have confirmed dates for our Autumn meetings, these are:

Financial sustainability of the university sector

Tuesday 31 October 2017

18.00-19.30, Committee Room 4, followed by dinner

Higher education as an export

Tuesday 28 November 2017

18.00-19.30, Committee Room 4, followed by dinner

Degree apprenticeships

Tuesday 12 December 2017

8.30-10.00, Dining Room B

Finally, our Secretariat, Kate Jackson will be moving on from her position at the end of the month, the details of her replacement to be announced shortly. Universities UK continue to provide support for the group and any queries sent to appug@universitiesuk.ac.uk will be promptly responded to.

I hope all members have the opportunity for a restful Summer break and I look forward to seeing you at our first meeting back on Tuesday 31 October.

Roberta Blackman-Woods

Chair, All-Party Parliamentary University Group

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Forthcoming Business

Parliamentary recess

On Thursday 20 July both Houses entered parliamentary recess, returning on Tuesday 5 September 2017. Parliamentarians will then only be in Westminster briefly, with conference recess starting the next week on 14 September 2017.

Lords debate – EU Committee report on UK-EU freedom of movement

On Monday 17 July, the House of Lords held a debate on the EU Committee report into UK-EU freedom of movement, which was published before the general election. You can read the debate in full [here](#) and the report which was being discussed [here](#). Some relevant contributions are below:

Baroness Prashar (CB): Just as worrying is that these different measures and definitions can render migration statistics misleading when used in public debate. Who is counted in the Government's net migration statistics is not always well understood by the public. For example, short-term migrants, defined as those staying in the UK for less than 12 months— that is, agricultural workers—are not included in net migration statistics. By contrast, both EU and non-EU students are counted in those statistics if they enrol for courses which last for more than 12 months.

Lord Trees (CB): This dependence on imported professionals has been slowly developing for some years—Brexit has not created it—but the ability to import the highly trained professionals we need has concealed the inadequacy of our indigenous supply. We have papered over the cracks of our undersupply by importation. The inadequacy of our native supply is a product of a number of things—partly underproduction of graduates in our veterinary schools, which is partly because a substantial minority of our undergraduates are overseas students, destined not to contribute to the UK workforce. There has also been a recent worrying downwards trend in the number of applications by UK students. The problem is exacerbated by an increasing drop-out rate of graduates, which is disturbing and ill understood, but which the profession is now examining. Those factors I call “disemployment”, by which I mean there are a lot of job vacancies that we need filled in the UK which British nationals, for one reason or another, do not want to do. That means that 40% of clinical veterinary practices took over three months to fill a vacancy—over three times the national average of 29 days. This phenomenon is widespread across a plethora of science, engineering, technical and medical jobs, but Brexit now exposes and exacerbates the problem. We face a perfect storm of underproduction, increasing postgraduate attrition and the probability of a reduction in imported personnel. This is certainly a crisis for the veterinary profession but I suggest that it is a major challenge to many other science-based professions.

...What are the solutions? Some of the issues to which I have referred, such as expanding indigenous veterinary graduate numbers and reducing postgraduate attrition, can be solved only in the long term. They are being addressed, particularly by the British Veterinary Association and the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. Some solutions may be achieved by the profession working alone, but some may require government intervention and facilitation. However, far and away the most

pressing need is to retain the non-UK EU nationals currently working here. I ask the Government, and the Minister, to give assurances that non-UK EU nationals currently working in vital sectors such as veterinary science will be given the same rights in the future, mirroring those that would have applied if we remained in the EU.

Lord Cormack (Con): Another thing that came across as we were taking evidence was the absolute fatuity of treating students as if they are immigrants. We voted on that in your Lordships' House and showed what we think about it, and I hope that we will do so again. I hope that in this new Parliament, with some slightly adjusted figures, the Prime Minister can be persuaded that her obduracy on that particular subject is not helpful to the economy or to our nation's reputation as a centre of educational excellence with some of the finest institutions in the world, welcoming, as we always should, students from all over the world, from inside and outside the EU.

Lord Judd (Lab): The noble Lord, Lord Cormack, in a typically humane, sensitive and courageous speech, made a point about the universities. We have not heard any rationale whatever as to why students are being counted as migrants. However, we know that what has been said and what has already been done has had an adverse effect on the prospects for students coming to this country. We used to be one of the key places for students to come. That is no longer true. It is also no longer true of academic staff as well. I am involved in the governance of three universities and already there are indications that people thinking of their careers, their future and their families are wondering whether it is sensible or rational to make a decision to stay in this country.

Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb (Green): The noble Lord, Lord Judd, gave us some cautionary words about evidence. I am now going to cite some facts, which many people do very selectively; I am going to do the same. A third of doctors are foreign born. There are 55,000 EU nationals in the English NHS alone. On international students, stricter rules could cost our economy £2 billion, and counting them as immigrants is absolutely wrong. These people pay a lot of money for their education and one hopes that they will always have a kind view of our country.

Lord Oates (LD): More than that, it was clear from within the coalition Government that the figure on which the Conservatives based their pledge had been plucked out of the air and had a statistical base that made absolutely no sense. As the sub-committee report notes, the statistics include overseas students on courses of over 12 months who are bringing money into our economy and who almost everyone thinks should be welcome. It excludes seasonal workers, who, in the argument of opponents of free movement, are either taking the jobs or driving down the wages of British workers.

The noble Lord, Lord Forsyth, rightly made the point that even these figures are highly questionable. They are based on a small sample and are subject to a margin of error of tens of thousands. Indeed, the point is made throughout the report that the data on migration and the evidence of its impact on the labour market that is available to the Government are extremely patchy. Yet, on this basis, the Government will have to make critical decisions about migration that will have a major impact on our economy and our country for many years ahead.

Obviously, the continued inclusion of students in the immigration statistics remains a puzzling and profoundly damaging mistake. The noble Lord, Lord Cormack, focused on the issue, and I suspect that the noble Lord, Lord Bilimoria, may do so as well. But in addition to students, at any rate until some future date when we have trained up and persuaded our own citizens to do these jobs, we need health and care workers, plumbers and builders, workers in the hospitality industry, for crop harvesting and food processing, and so on and so forth.

Lord Bilimoria (CB): EU immigration as a proportion of all immigration into the UK in 2016 was estimated at 44%. The Government want to reduce net migration to the tens of thousands. We know that the figure has been around 300,000 and that it is now about 275,000. In the year ending June 2016, some 49% of all EU immigration was made up of people from the old EU 15 member states, and by that month 72% of the EU nationals moving to the UK reported doing so in order to work. In contrast, the reason given by most non-EU nationals coming to the UK is to study, but we continue to include international students in our net migration figures. Once more, like a stuck record, I will ask the Government again: why do they not remove international students from the net migration figures? This is damaging our reputation. I am the chancellor of the University of Birmingham, a Russell Group university, one of the finest in this country and among the top 100 in the world, and I chaired the advisory board of the Cambridge Judge Business School. These institutions and everyone else are unanimous in asking, “Please take international students out of the net migration figures”. They can be counted as immigrants when we submit figures to the UN; that is fine, but take them out of these net figures. Our competitor countries, such as the United States of America, Canada and Australia, all do so.

Here we are with our international student intake either flat or declining while the number of international students from countries such as India is rising at a rate of 8% a year. The United States has seen an increase of 25% in the number of Indian international students while the number coming here has halved over the past five years. Wow, we are doing really well in this global race. International students bring £25 billion to the economy of this country. As the president of the UK Council for International Student Affairs—which represents the 450,000 international students in this country, of whom 130,000 come from the European Union—has said, they are a very valuable source of export income and they enrich the experience of our domestic students as well as the collaborations that are built up with foreign academics, many of whom are from the EU.

This is a point I have made time and again. We are worried about losing university research funding from the European Union, but we are more worried about losing our collaborations. When two universities collaborate anywhere in the world, the weighted impact of their research is three times higher than when they work on their own. Why do the Government not understand all this?

When we talk about weaknesses in the migration statistics, let us look at the International Passenger Survey. It is a joke. I have seen it. I have seen Jo Johnson, the Universities Minister, who I accompanied on a visit to India when the Prime Minister was there in November, being stopped and asked the International Passenger Survey. We started laughing.

Baroness Williams of Trafford (Home Office Minister): The Committee’s report made a number of points about the robustness of migration statistics. Migration statistics are published by the Office

for National Statistics—the ONS—and it has confirmed that the International Passenger Survey continues to be the best source of information to measure long-term international migration. The noble Baroness, Lady Prashar, mentioned the inclusion of students in migration figures. The internationally accepted definition of migration includes all those who move for more than 12 months, including students. My noble friend Lord Cormack referred to this.

...I am running out of time, but I would like to make this last point. The noble Lords, Lord Judd and Lord Bilimoria, and the noble Baroness, Lady Jones of Moulsecoomb, made the point that we are not a popular destination for international students. We are the second most popular destination for international students, behind only the USA. There are over 400,000 international students in the UK, and in answer to the point made by the noble Lord, Lord Oates, about them being welcome, there is no limit on the number of students coming here and we do not intend to impose one. Visa applications sponsored by universities are 17% higher than they were in 2010, while visa applications to Russell Group universities are 48% higher than in 2010. Around 99% of student entry clearance visas are decided within 15 days, and the number of tier 4 students from China has risen year on year.

Lords debate – EU Committee report on Brexit: trade in goods

On Tuesday 19 July, another EU Committee publication was discussed, this time its report on trade in goods and Brexit (see full report [here](#)). While higher education exports are classed as services – and therefore were not the main focus of the debate – there were a few relevant contributions. You can read the debate in full [here](#).

Lord Marland (Con): But let us not end on a good old moan. The opportunities for the United Kingdom are phenomenal and we have the building blocks in place. We have an education system that we may criticise, but the outside world is deeply envious of it. We have four of the top 10 universities in the world and we have educated countless foreign students, all of whom remain loyal and well disposed towards us.

Lord Bilimoria: The noble Lord, Lord Marland, referred to our world-class universities, the best in the world along with those of the United States of America. UUK illustrates this with an example: we are less than 1% of the world's population, yet the UK produces 16% of the world's most highly cited articles. The UK also ranks first in the world by field-weighted citation impact. What is the danger of leaving the EU? It is not just losing the funding that our universities rely on—the Government can say, “We'll give you that funding”—but, more important and more worrying, it is losing the collaborations that exist. I saw this when I went to India with Jo Johnson, the Universities Minister, as chancellor of the University of Birmingham and wearing my hat as chair of the advisory board of the Cambridge Judge Business School. In India, we demonstrated the collaboration between the University of the Punjab and the University of Birmingham. Our field-weighted impact result is about 1.8; that of the University of the Punjab is 1.3; combined, it is 5.3. When we research with Harvard, which has a field-weighted average of 2.3, the combined result is 5.4. That is the power of collaborative research; that is what we would possibly be losing.

...And then our great International Trade Secretary, Liam Fox, goes to India and says, “I’m going to open up a free trade deal with India”. I have shared a platform with the Indian high commissioner, a seasoned diplomat, who says that we are welcome to do a free trade deal with India—“Please, do come along, but also remember that a free trade deal with India also means looking at movement of people”. It is not just goods and tariffs; it is services, it is movement of people and it is students.

Prime Minister’s Questions

Prime Minister’s Questions focused on a range of issues – including public sector pay, lowering the voting age, counter-extremism, faith schools, mental health and social inequality – and there was one specific question by Bob Blackman about access to university copied below. You can read the full transcript of PMQs [here](#).

Bob Blackman: In Harrow and up and down the country, young people will be eagerly anticipating their A-level results to see if they will qualify for a university education. Could my Right Honorable friend confirm the dramatic increase of people from disadvantaged backgrounds going to universities, and can she think of anyone that should apologise for misleading the British public?

Theresa May: Well I think it’s very important as people are thinking about going to university that they are not misled in any way: it is the case that more disadvantaged eighteen-year-olds are now applying to university than ever before. I believe the Right Honorable gentleman, the Leader of the Opposition, said exactly the opposite and I think he should apologise for having said that. But I think actually the Labour Party should go further: at the election the Leader of the Opposition vowed to deal with student debt – Labour were going to abolish debt – now they say it wasn’t a promise at all. Students know Labour can’t be trusted on student fees.

Emergency debate on tuition fees

On Wednesday 19 July, an emergency debate was granted on two statutory instruments related to tuition fee limits which went through parliament before the general election in the 2016/17 legislative session.

The two statutory instruments are the [Higher Education \(Basic Amount\) \(England\) Regulations 2016](#), which increased the basic tuition fee limit from £6,000 to £6,165, and the [Higher Education \(Higher Amount\) \(England\) Regulations 2016](#) which increased the higher limit from £9,000 to £9,250 for the 2017/18 academic year.

The debate was well attended. Debt, maintenance grants, social mobility, the level of interest rates on student loans and vice-chancellor pay were all discussed. Among the MPs contributing, new members with universities in their constituencies that spoke were Karen Lee (Lincoln), Layle Moran

(Oxford West and Abington) and Alex Sobel (Leeds North West). Robert Halfon, the new Chair of the Education Select Committee, also contributed.

Read the debate and all the contributions in full [here](#).

Lords Economic Affairs Committee report

This morning the Economic Affairs Committee published its report '[Brexiteer and the Labour Market](#)'. The Committee concluded that the Government will struggle to take control of immigration post-Brexit unless major improvements are made to the quality of migration data upon which it currently relies.

The report criticised the reliability of the International Passenger Survey and one of the recommendations (number 14, in full below), suggested that students should be excluded from short-term net migration.

We recommend that the Government expedites measures to accurately assess the number of students who leave the UK at the end of their university education. To monitor the impact on local housing, the Government should also ask universities to provide information on the accommodation provided to international students. Once this information is available students should not be included in any short-term net migration figures for public policy purposes.

Written answers

Universities: fee levels

Lord Adonis: Whether, in the past 12 months, they, or their agencies, have advised any university, or universities, that proposed fee levels were unacceptably high; and if so, what that advice was.

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The government does not assess the fees of individual institutions. It sets maximum fees for eligible students in legislation. Only those institutions with an access agreement in place for widening participation with the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) can charge fees up to a highest cap.

Universities: vice-chancellor pay

Lord Adonis: What advice they, or their agencies, give to universities on the appropriate remuneration of vice-chancellors.

Viscount Younger of Leckie: Universities are autonomous bodies and it is for them to determine pay arrangements for their staff. However, the Government, in the 2017/18 Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) grant letter stated:

“The Government is clear that efficiency includes demonstrating restraint in senior pay and remains concerned about the substantial upwards drift in salaries of some top management. We would like to see senior leaders in the sector exercise more pay restraint.”

Jo Johnson, the Minister for Universities and Science, has continued to call on the sector to show restraint in Vice Chancellors' pay and for the sector to demonstrate more leadership especially at a time when students are concerned about value for money.

European Observatory on the Supply of Medical Radioisotopes

Hilary Benn: To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether it is the Government's policy to remain part of the European Observatory on the supply of medical radioisotopes.

Robin Walker: As part of the exit negotiations, the Government will discuss with the EU and Member States how best to continue cooperation in the work of the European Observatory on the supply of medical radioisotopes in the best interests of both the UK and the EU.

It is notable that Euratom places no restrictions on the export of medical radioisotopes to countries outside the EU - they are not subject to Euratom Supply Agency contracts or to Euratom safeguards.

As we set out in our White paper, ‘The United Kingdom’s exit from and new partnership with the European Union’, we would welcome agreement to continue to collaborate with our European partners on major science, research, and technology initiatives.

Voting behaviour

Michael Fabricant: To ask the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, if she will conduct a national audit to determine how many (a) students and (b) other registered voters voted in more than one parliamentary constituency in the General Election 2017.

Bridget Phillipson: The UK's electoral registers are maintained by individual Electoral Registration Officers appointed by each local authority in Great Britain and by the Chief Electoral Officer in Northern Ireland. This means that it would not be feasible to identify duplicate entries between registers without considerable additional financial and operational resources. Providing a mechanism for EROs to compare information about electoral register entries more automatically across all 381 registers could help to further improve the accuracy and completeness of electoral registers and could also help to address the risk of voting more than once at a relevant election.

It is an offence under Section 61(2)(a) of the Representation of the People Act 1983, for an elector to cast more than one vote on their own behalf in a UK Parliamentary general election or at a

referendum. This offence carries a fine which is unlimited in England and Wales, or a fine not exceeding £5,000 in Scotland.

Investigations into possible criminal offences are a matter for the relevant police forces. The Electoral Commission has provided advice and guidance to UK police forces about how to investigate allegations that an individual may have voted twice, including obtaining from the relevant Returning Officers the marked copy of the register.

Health: heart diseases

Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of trends in the level of funding for research into heart disease.

Jackie Doyle-Price: Expenditure by the Department's National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) on cardiovascular disease research, including research into heart disease, has increased by 60% from £31.6 million in 2009/10 to £50.6 million in 2015/16 (the latest available figure).

The NIHR welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health, including heart disease. These applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition, with awards being made on the basis of the importance of the topic to patients and health and care services, value for money and scientific quality. In all disease areas, the amount of NIHR funding depends on the volume and quality of scientific activity.

Health: HIV infection

Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of trends in the level of funding for research into HIV.

Jackie Doyle-Price: Expenditure by the Department's National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) on infection research, including research into HIV, has more than doubled from £15.9 million in 2009/10 to £35.0 million in 2015/16 (the latest available figure).

The NIHR welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health, including HIV. These applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition, with awards being made on the basis of the importance of the topic to patients and health and care services, value for money and scientific quality. In all disease areas, the amount of NIHR funding depends on the volume and quality of scientific activity.

Higher education: staff

Thangam Debbonaire: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment has been made of the effect of changes in immigration policy on levels of university recruitment.

Jo Johnson: Numbers of international students studying at UK universities are at record highs - over 170,000 entrants to UK higher education institutions for the sixth year running. The latest Home

Office visa data also shows that, since 2011, university-sponsored visa applications have risen by around 11 per cent.

The Government fully recognises the important contribution that international students make to the UK's higher education sector, both economically and culturally. There remains no limit to the number of international students who can come to the UK to study.

Students: loans

Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of student loans have been repaid in full (a) since the new system was introduced and (b) from the establishment of the original scheme.

Jo Johnson: Statistics covering English student loans are published annually by the Student Loans Company (SLC) in the Statistical First Release (SFR) 'Student Loans in England'.

<http://www.slc.co.uk/official-statistics/full-catalogue-of-official-statistics/student-loans-debt-and-repayment.aspx>

The number and proportion of higher education income contingent repayment (ICR) student loan borrowers who have fully repaid their loan as at April 2017 can be found in table 3A of the SFR. These statistics are available by year of entry into repayment, rather than by type of loan.

Student loan borrowers typically enter repayment in the April after they leave their course, however borrowers with loans under the post-2012 student loan arrangements only started to enter repayment in 2016. At this point in time, post-2012 loan borrowers are at a very early stage of repayment, and so a direct comparison with pre-2012 loan borrowers is not possible.

Students entering higher education prior to the academic year 1998/99 were eligible for mortgage style loans to cover the cost of their studies.

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath: What assessment they have made of the report of the Institute for Fiscal Studies on the public cost of student loans.

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The Government has noted the recent report by the Institute for Fiscal Studies.

The student funding system is fair and sustainable. The cost of the system is not an unintended loss, nor a waste of public money. It is the policy subsidy required to make higher education widely available, achieving the Government's objectives of increasing the skills in the economy and ensuring access to university for all with the potential to benefit.

Andreas Schleicher of the OECD said in September 2016 that "the UK has been able to meet rising demand for tertiary education with more resources...by finding effective ways to share the costs and benefits".

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath: What estimate they have made of the long-term cost of providing student loans.

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The Government's reforms to the undergraduate student finance system have ensured that it is financially sustainable for the taxpayer in the long-term, while enabling those with the talent to benefit from a higher education to be able to afford to do so.

The Resource Accounting and Budgeting (RAB) charge estimates the value of loans that will not be repaid during their 30-year term, expressed as a percentage of the loan outlay made in the relevant year. For full time tuition fee and maintenance loans and part time fee loans issued in 2016/17, we estimate the RAB charge to be around 30%.

Nurses: migrant workers

Royston Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many nurses from (a) EU, (b) non-EU and (c) commonwealth countries are employed by the NHS; and how those numbers have changed in the last seven years.

Philip Dunne: NHS Digital publishes data on the nationality of staff working in the National Health Service in England. Nationality is self-reported within the NHS human resources and payroll system, the electronic staff record.

NHS Hospital and Community Health Services: Qualified Nursing and Health Visiting Staff in NHS trusts and clinical commissioning groups as at 30 September each specified year and latest data as at 31 March 2017:

Qualified Nursing and Health Visiting Staff (headcount)	European Union nationals (including United Kingdom)	Non-EU	Commonwealth Countries (excluding UK)
2010	232,227	30,428	16,055
2011	238,459	29,030	15,360
2012	239,227	27,644	14,563
2013	248,828	26,285	13,779
2014	257,393	25,485	13,306
2015	264,938	25,032	12,750
2016	269,943	25,495	12,522
March 2017	273,120	25,882	12,609

Source: NHS Digital

Nurses: training

Royston Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what financial support is offered to nursing students.

Philip Dunne: From 1 August 2017, new pre-registration nursing, midwifery and allied health students will no longer receive National Health Service bursaries. Instead, they will have access to the same student loans system as other students.

Students studying for pre-registration level nursing, midwifery and the allied health subjects as a second degree will also be able to access the student loans system.

Under the loans system, students on pre-registration nursing, midwifery and allied health courses will receive around a 25% increase in the financial support available to them for living costs whilst at university. The precise change for individuals will be dependent on their circumstances – for example, where they study, the length of the course, income and residency.

The Government has already committed to additional funding to help support new pre-registration healthcare students. These include child dependents allowance, placement travel and accommodation expenses and hardship funding for exceptional cases. This funding will be non-repayable and is in addition to the standard student support package.

Graduates: average earnings

Royston Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what information her Department holds on the average salary for a university graduate; and what that figure is for people who did not attend university.

Jo Johnson: The Government regularly publishes information on graduate employment trends through its 'Graduate Labour Market Statistics' publication, which can be found on the gov.uk website; <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/graduate-labour-market-quarterly-statistics>.

According to the most recent publication, in 2016 the median salary for graduates was £32,000. This compares to a median salary of £22,500 for non-graduates.

Graduates: employment

Royston Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate she has made of the proportion of jobs in the UK economy that will require a degree level education in the next 10 years.

Jo Johnson: The 2016 UKCES Working Futures publication estimates that 14.9 million jobs will become vacant between 2014 and 2024, and nearly half of these (47 per cent) will be in the occupations most likely to employ graduates (SOC 1-3; Managers, professionals and associate professionals).

Graduates: average earnings

Royston Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what information her Department holds on the average salary for a graduate from a Russell group university.

Jo Johnson: The Government recently published data from the Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) dataset on graduate earnings up to 5 years after graduation. The data are available for each university split by degree subject studied and can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/graduate-outcomes-for-all-subjects-by-university>.

Average earnings were not published for each institution as a whole as the overall earnings for an institution would be strongly influenced by the subject mix offered.

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) have published an estimate of earnings based on a survey of graduates three and a half years after graduation. The median salary of Russell Group leavers was £29,500. The data can be found [here](#).

Education: curriculum

Layla Moran: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions she has had with (a) cultural and (b) scientific institutions on the introduction of a new curriculum fund.

Nick Gibb: We want all children, regardless of their background, to benefit from a high quality education that provides them with the knowledge they need to succeed in modern Britain. We want to ensure that all teachers have appropriate support to help them deliver this knowledge rich curriculum. To date, the Secretary of State has not had discussions with cultural or scientific institutions about the fund. We will provide further details about the curriculum fund in due course.

European Medicines Agency

Lord Lester of Herne Hill: Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the benefits and costs to the UK of membership of the European Medicines Agency.

Lord O'Shaughnessy: We recognise the important role that the European Medicines Agency plays in the protection of human and animal health.

In the negotiations, the Government will discuss with the European Union and Member States how best to continue cooperation in the field of medicines regulation in the best interests of both the United Kingdom and the EU. As my Rt. hon. Friends the Secretaries of State for Health and Business said in their 4 July letter in the Financial Times, the UK is fully committed to continuing the close working relationship with our European partners. Our aim is to ensure that patients in the UK and across the EU continue to be able to access the best and most innovative medicines and be assured that their safety is protected through the strongest regulatory framework and sharing of data.

I underlined this message, in particular the value the UK places on ongoing co-operation, at the BioIndustry Association and Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency conference on 14 July.

Teachers: mental health

Lord Cotter: What action they are planning to deal with issues around mental health in schools.

Lord Nash: Good mental health is a priority for the Department. It can have a profound impact on the whole of a child's life, not just their attainment. Schools have an important role to play, but teachers are not mental health professionals. They need support from specialist services, which is why we are investing an additional £1.4 billion in children and young people's mental health services to 2020.

The Prime Minister announced earlier in the year that a member of staff in every secondary school in the country would be offered mental health first aid training. This training has now begun. It will equip those undertaking the training with the knowledge needed to identify and make an initial response to mental health concerns, which they can share with colleagues. The Prime Minister also announced a number of pilots to develop practice and evidence about what works in promoting good mental wellbeing, putting peer support schemes in place and developing joint working with specialist mental health services. We are procuring organisations to run these projects and will announce the results as soon as possible.

We have published a blueprint for school counselling services, which provides schools with advice on delivering high quality counselling to all pupils.

We have funded the development of MindEd, a free online resource which allows all those working with children and young people to access training and information on a range of mental health issues.

The Department has also issued advice on behaviour and mental health providing teachers with information and tools to identify pupils who need help, and to provide effective and early support.

We will be considering with the Department of Health how best to build on this work. We will include proposals in a joint children and young people's mental health green paper, to be published by the end of the year.

Universities: fee levels

Lord Adonis: What advice they, or their agencies, give to universities on the appropriate fee level to set in respect of undergraduate courses.

Viscount Younger of Leckie: Fees for English domiciled undergraduate students studying at Higher Education Institutions that are funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) are subject to maximum fees, which are set in legislation. HEFCE funded institutions that have an

access agreement in place for widening participation with the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) can charge a higher fee than those that do not. In addition, HEFCE funded institutions that have demonstrated high quality teaching by achieving a Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) rating can charge up to a higher fee than those that do not.

Immigration: EU nationals

Gordon Marsden: What discussions she has had with university representative bodies on the effect of changes to immigration rules on students from the EU studying in UK universities.

Brandon Lewis: We are working across Government to identify and develop options to shape our future immigration system. Parliament will have an important role to play in this and we will ensure universities and the higher education sector have the opportunity to contribute their views.

Gordon Marsden: What plans her Department has to ensure that changes to immigration rules will not reduce the number of EU students able to study in UK universities.

Brandon Lewis: We are working across Government to identify and develop options to shape our future immigration system. Parliament will have an important role to play in this and we will ensure universities and the higher education sector have the opportunity to contribute their views.

Layla Moran: What discussions he has had with (a) Oxford University and (b) Oxford Brookes University on the residence status of staff and students from other EU countries at those universities when the UK leaves the EU.

Mr Robin Walker: As part of our commitment to hear from every sector and region in the UK, DExEU Ministers continue to engage closely with organisations across the higher education sector to enable us to understand key issues. The Department has engaged with both individual institutions and higher education umbrella bodies, including Universities UK, and the Russell Group, via a range of channels, including the BEIS high-level stakeholder working group on EU exit, universities, research and innovation.

The Government is already taking steps to ensure that existing EU citizens resident in the UK will, post-exit, be able to live their lives broadly as they do now. The Prime Minister announced our policy proposal on citizens' rights on Monday 26th June, setting out a fair and serious offer to EU citizens.

Details of Ministerial meetings will be published in the Department's Quarterly Transparency Returns, which will be made publicly available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) .

Higher education: part-time

Gordon Marsden: What assessment she has made of the reasons for the decline in part-time undergraduate study among (a) higher-income households and (b) lower-income households.

Joseph Johnson: Studying part-time brings enormous benefits for individuals, the economy and employers. Government regularly assesses the reasons for the decline in part-time undergraduate numbers since their peak in 2008 but does not hold data on their household income background.

We are committed to helping people from all backgrounds enter higher education in a way that suits them and we have taken action to support those who choose to study part-time. These actions include: From 2012, the offer of up-front fee loans for eligible part-time students, to level the playing field with undergraduate study; From academic year 2018/19, the introduction of undergraduate part-time maintenance loans, to bring greater parity of support between part-time and full-time; From 2015, the relaxation of Equivalent or Lower Qualification rules, so students who already hold an honours degree qualification and wish to study part-time on a second honours degree course in engineering, technology or computer science, have qualified for fee loans for their course. This is being extended for academic year 2017/18 to graduates starting a second part-time honours degree course in any STEM subject.

Higher education: care leavers

Emma Lewell-Buck: How many care leavers have (a) started a university course, (b) began an apprenticeship, (c) enrolled on a further education course and (d) gained employment in (i) full-time or (ii) part-time work in the last 12 months.

Mr Robert Goodwill: I am sorry, but the department does not collect data on the number of care leavers starting education, training or employment during the year.

The department collects data on the number of care leavers who are in higher education, other types of education, or training or employment on or around their birthday for care leavers aged 17 to 21 years old, but does not provide information on when the care leaver started the activity. Figures for the year ending 31 March 2016 can be found in tables F1a and F1c of the statistical release *Children looked after in England including adoption: 2015 to 2016*. These are available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2015-to-2016>.

Sector News

Jo Johnson speech on value for money

On Thursday 20 July, the Universities Minister delivered a [speech](#) at Reform. His speech comprised of various announcements including:

- The launch of the Office for Students is being brought forward by three months, to January 2018.
- The Office for Students will receive guidance asking it to use its powers to compel universities to justify salaries where staff are paid more than the Prime Minister.

- The announcement of student contracts which underpin students’ “rights as consumers, and ensures value for money throughout their course and during their working lives”, and
- a pilot of subject-level TEF. Run by HEFCE, a wide range of higher education providers will be encouraged to take part, whether or not they have already participated in the TEF. Universities and colleges will be able to apply, and between 30 and 40 will be selected from across the UK higher education sector. Applications will be required by Monday 25 September.

Universities UK responded to the speech by press release.

DfE has published guidance on the Teaching Excellence Framework: subject- level pilot specification. The document contains detailed information about how TEF subject-level pilots will operate, including:

- Who can participate
- What the assessment framework looks like
- Subject classification system
- Method of assessment
- Use of assessment data
- Evaluation of the pilots
- What outcomes to expect