



# The All-Party Parliamentary **University Group**



Dear Colleague,

After a brief but extremely busy General Election period, Parliament has returned for the 2017-22 session. The Queen's Speech was delivered last week with the legislative agenda focused strongly on Brexit. For higher education, science and research, three Bills will be of particular interest: the Repeal Bill, the Immigration Bill and the Space Industry Bill. In addition, the Government's non-legislative programme was also made public, which includes a Counter-Terrorism Review and Mental Health Reform.

We are waiting for clarity on the Government's plans for these Bills, but I predict that various consultations will be announced shortly. We will ensure that the forward planning of the group's programme reflects the sector's priorities and an opportunity to discuss and challenge the Government's legislative programme. Our first event will take place on Tuesday 31 October, with the topic for discussion - 'Safe Speech or Free Speech?'

The group will, as always, arrange for the Minister to attend one of our meetings. Providing some consistency for the sector, Jo Johnson MP was reappointed as the Minister for Higher Education. However, his responsibilities have been widened to include the Industrial Strategy and education exports. Issues that will be very important to the sector as the Brexit negotiations move forward.

Finally, as is required at the beginning of each new parliamentary session, the group will be holding its Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 12 July. This will take place in Room W2, Westminster Hall from 14.00-15.00. The AGM is open to MPs and Peers only, so please do encourage colleagues or your local MPs to attend.

Best wishes,

**Roberta Blackman-Woods MP**

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## **Forthcoming Business**

### **Home Office oral questions**

On Monday 3 July, the Home Secretary and ministers will answer oral and topical questions from 2.30pm. You can see the list of tabled questions on the parliament [website](#).

### **Lords oral question – Brexit**

Baroness Ludford (Lib Dem) will ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of their 2017 manifesto commitments, what are their criteria and specific objectives for Brexit; and how they intend to forge a deep and special partnership with individual European countries. From 2.30pm on Monday 3 July.

### **Commons debate – Brexit**

On Thursday 6 July, the whole House will debate exiting the European Union and global trade. Following the business statement at 10.30am.

### **Lords oral question – curriculum fund**

Also on Thursday 6 July Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall (Labour) will ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to bring forward proposals to establish a curriculum fund for Britain's leading cultural and scientific institutions, as outlined in their 2017 manifesto. From 11am.

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## **Select Committee allocations**

On Friday 30 June parliament released the allocation of select committee chairs by party. The election of chairs will take place before Tuesday 18 July.

Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy	Labour
Communities and Local Government	Labour
Culture, Media and Sport	Conservative
Defence	Conservative
Education	Conservative
Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	Conservative
Foreign Affairs	Conservative
Health	Conservative
Home Affairs	Labour
International Development	Labour
International Trade	Scottish National Party
Justice	Conservative
Northern Ireland Affairs	Conservative
Science and Technology	Liberal Democrat
Scottish Affairs	Scottish National Party

Transport	Labour
Treasury	Conservative
Welsh Affairs	Conservative
Women and Equalities	Conservative
Work and Pensions	Labour
Environmental Audit	Labour
Exiting the European Union	Labour
Petitions	Labour
Procedure	Conservative
Public Accounts	Labour
Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs	Conservative
Standards	Labour

The Lords Science and Technology Committee also confirmed their membership this week. New appointments are in bold:

<b>Lord Patel (Chairman)</b>	<b>Crossbench</b>
Lord Borwick	Conservative
Lord Fox	Liberal Democrat
Lord Hunt of Chesterton	Labour
<b>Lord Kakkar</b>	<b>Crossbench</b>
Lord Mair	Crossbench
Lord Maxton	Labour
Baroness Morgan of Huyton	Labour
Baroness Neville-Jones	Conservative
Lord Oxburgh	Crossbench
<b>Lord Renfrew of Kaimsthorn</b>	<b>Conservative</b>
Lord Vallance of Tummel	Liberal Democrat
Baroness Young of Old Scone	Labour

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### Parliamentary Private Secretary appointments

This week the Government announced the Parliamentary Private Secretary (PPS) appointments. A PPS is appointed by a minister to be his or her assistant, they support the minister during parliamentary questions and debates.

No 10

- PPS to the Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and Minister for the Civil Service – George Hollingbery MP and Seema Kennedy MP

#### Cabinet Office

- PPS to First Secretary of State and Minister for the Cabinet Office – James Morris MP
- PPS to Ministerial team – Will Quince MP

#### HM Treasury

- PPS to Chancellor of the Exchequer – Kwasi Kwarteng MP
- PPS to Ministerial team – Suella Fernandes MP and Chris Philp MP

#### Home Office

- PPS to Secretary of State for the Home Department – Robert Jenrick MP
- PPS to Minister of State Rt Hon Brandon Lewis MP - James Cleverly MP
- PPS to Ministerial team – Nusrat Ghani MP and Simon Hoare MP

#### Department for Education

- PPS to Secretary of State for Education, and Minister for Women and Equalities –Helen Whatley MP
- PPS to Ministerial team – Luke Hall MP

#### Department for Exiting the European Union

- PPS to Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union –Gareth Johnson MP
- PPS to Ministerial team – Jeremy Quin MP

#### Department for International Trade

- PPS to Secretary of State for International Trade, and President of the Board of Trade – Tom Pursglove MP
- PPS to Ministerial team - Mike Wood MP

#### Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

- PPS to Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy – Kelly Tolhurst MP
- PPS to Ministerial team – Rishi Sunak MP

#### Department of Health

- PPS to Secretary of State for Health - Jo Churchill MP
- PPS to Ministerial team – James Cartlidge MP

#### Scotland Office

- PPS to Secretary of State for Scotland –Alberto Costa MP

#### Wales Office

- PPS to Secretary of State for Wales - Glyn Davies MP

#### Northern Ireland Office

PPS to Secretary of State for Northern Ireland – David Morris MP

## Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy questions

On Tuesday 27 June, BEIS ministers responded to oral questions. Chris Green MP raised the Conservative 2017 manifesto commitment on R&D spending. Jo Johnson's full response is below, and you can read the other contributions [here](#).

**Chris Green MP (Conservative):** Our emerging technology and universities sectors welcomed our manifesto commitment to increase R and D spending from 1.7% to 2.4% of GDP, but it was not in the Queen's Speech, so what has happened to that commitment?

**Jo Johnson MP:** Fear not, Mr Speaker, legislation is not required to deliver on that commitment. It remains a priority for the Government and for the delivery of our industrial strategy. We want to get to 2.4% of GDP for our R and D spend, and we have a longer-term ambition of 3% after that.

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## Prime Minister's Questions

During PMQ's there was an exchange, detailed below, on anti-Semitism on university campuses.

**Anne Main MP (Conservative):** Today is the festival saint's day of St Alban, and his pilgrimage was celebrated on Saturday. What more can be done to protect all persons of faith who are being persecuted for their faith, particularly our students on campuses who are suffering large amounts of anti-Semitism?

**The Prime Minister:** I am happy to recognise St Alban's day, as my hon. Friend has. She is absolutely right that this is important. Sometimes we talk a lot about people who are being persecuted for their faith in countries abroad, but actually we need to be very clear that, sadly, we do see people here suffering attacks, particularly anti-Semitic ones, on campuses. The Community Security Trust does a lot of work with students to provide support, and I am happy that the Government are supporting them. We are also supporting Muslim communities that are suffering from Islamophobia. There is no place for such hate in our society, and we must all work to stamp it out.

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## Lords oral question – Industrial Strategy

On Wednesday 28 June, Lord Haskel asked Her Majesty's Government when they will introduce their industrial strategy. The question and answer focused around skills, science and innovation.

**Lord Prior of Brampton:** My Lords, our industrial strategy Green Paper was launched on 23 January. Following extensive consultation, we intend to publish a White Paper in the autumn.

**Lord Haskel (Labour):** I thank the Minister for that Answer. At least we have taken a first step away from austerity. Perhaps I may ask him the question everybody else out there would like to have answered: will he confirm that the funding laid out in the Autumn Statement 2016 will be made available in full, plus the substantial increase in grant funding to be awarded through UKRI, which was also promised in the Autumn Statement, so that money for innovation will not be spread too thinly?

**Lord Prior of Brampton:** I am very happy to give that assurance. As the noble Lord will know, UKRI will receive an additional £4.9 billion over the period to 2021. Much of that resource will go through UK Innovate into a number of productivity schemes. I hope that will be, as he says, a creative alternative to austerity.

**Lord Mendelsohn (Labour):** My Lords, I am sure the Minister is aware of the Social Mobility Commission's *Time for Change* report, which urges the Government to commit to speedy reform to avoid unsustainable social division, particularly with the regions being left behind with very uneven pay and skill levels, employment rates, job quality and access to high-level qualifications. Will the Government accept the commission's call to use the industrial strategy to address this imbalance, which will, of course, show a more committed effort towards the regions than the fact that there have been three northern powerhouse Ministers in four years?

**Lord Prior of Brampton:** My Lords, I would say that probably the single most important objective of the industrial strategy is to address some of the regional imbalances that the noble Lord refers to. We have seen London and the south-east do extremely well over the last few years, and we will carry on supporting London and the south-east to continue doing well, but there is no doubt that many parts of the country have been left behind, with many people on stagnant and falling earnings. That is absolutely a key priority for the strategy.

**Lord Fox (Lib Dem):** My Lords, the Minister is very well aware of the importance of catapult centres in the industrial strategy. Will he now say what his plans are for maintaining funding for the current level of catapult centres and for opening new centres?

**Lord Prior of Brampton:** My Lords, the catapult programme has, on the whole, been a huge success, but not all catapults are performing as well as others, so we are now undertaking a review of the catapults to identify those that have been performing well and those that have not. There is no intention that I am aware of to reduce the funding of all the catapults.

**Lord Lansley (Conservative):** My Lords, will my noble friend confirm that it continues to be the Government's intention to publish sector strategies following up the consultation to which he referred? Is he able to say whether an early sector strategy will relate to life sciences? In doing so, will the Government also be able to bring forward relatively speedily a positive response to the accelerated access review?

**Lord Prior of Brampton:** My Lords, the sector strategies will be an important part of the industrial strategy and the life science strategy is probably one of the furthest forward. It will, I assure my noble friend, include proposals to improve access to the NHS.

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## Lords oral question – TEF

On Thursday 28 June, the Duke of Wellington asked Her Majesty's Government, following the publication of the Teaching Excellence Framework outcomes, whether they will review the metrics employed.

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** My Lords, the metrics used in the teaching excellence framework have been thoroughly reviewed and will continue to be carefully scrutinised as the TEF develops. During the passage of the Higher Education and Research Act, the Government committed to undertake a lessons learned review to consider how the metrics were applied and interpreted in the trial year and to commission a future, independent review of the TEF.

**The Duke of Wellington:** I thank the Minister for confirming that the teaching excellence framework and indeed the metrics will be reviewed, but I wonder whether he would agree with me that a system that classifies the London School of Economics and the University of Southampton as third class, and University College London and the University of Manchester as second class, must surely be using metrics which are not suitable for properly assessing teaching quality?

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** My noble friend will not expect me to agree with him. I believe that the results show that every single participating provider has met very demanding national requirements that ensure a high-quality academic experience, delivery of positive student outcomes and the protection of the student interest. I would say also that providers awarded bronze or silver still deliver outcomes that fully meet or exceed the existing high bar for quality and standards in UK higher education. As Chris Husbands, the chief executive for the TEF said, "seams of gold" can be found in many silver and bronze providers.

**Baroness Garden of Frognal (Lib Dem):** My Lords, can the Minister name any other country which has set up a dubious system of metrics which needlessly damages the reputation of its highly-regarded universities? If not, does he not think it would more effectively raise teaching standards if, instead of publicly branding universities as third class, they were all encouraged to train their teaching staff in teaching skills, which are after all very different from the skills required to get a good degree or a doctorate?

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** I do not share the noble Baroness's pessimism on this. We believe that the test can be used to enhance the UK's international reputation and will support our universities to recruit more students by sending a clear message to the world that we take teaching seriously. For example, Coventry has recently used its additional TEF accolade to market itself effectively in China.

**Lord Laming (Crossbench):** My Lords, is it not a good reminder to us all that the success of a university is to be judged against not the number of students it recruits—in particular, the number of students from overseas that it recruits—but more the contact that takes place between the



students and their tutors, in particular the support that students get in the early years as they move into university life?

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** The noble Lord is absolutely correct. He will know that the process is an iterative one, which we believe is becoming more robust. For example, the assessment process takes account of diverse forms of teaching, the level of academic support and the learning experience—everyone knows about the NSS—and also looks at outcomes and where students end up. Each application for this particular trial also included a 15-page submission from the providers, so it was very much qualitative as well as quantitative.

**Lord Watson of Invergowrie (Labour):** My Lords, when the Higher Education and Research Bill was going through your Lordships' House earlier this year, noble Lords from all sides, including the Government Benches, argued strongly against the concept of a teaching excellence framework, warning that it was a blunt instrument and ill equipped to show what actually happens within lecture rooms. Now we are where we are.

Everyone knows that the London School of Economics, the School of Oriental and African Studies, Goldsmiths, University of London, the University of Liverpool and the University of Southampton are in no sense third-rate institutions, but that is not how it looks now to potential students, particularly those from overseas. Although we accept that an independent review will be carried out—which I am sure will sweep away the nonsense of gold, silver and bronze—will the Minister say in the interim, to address the inevitable reputational damage to institutions, what support he will offer to them in that situation?

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** Again, I do not share the pessimism that has come across from the noble Lord. I was very pleased to be part of the process of the Bill. There were over 500 amendments, and I appreciated the noble Lord's contribution. I repeat that it is an iterative process. Once the TEF has been properly introduced a year or so down the line, there will be that proper independent review and, as we pledged in the process of the Act, it will look at the metrics and the definitions. We will see what happens from there.

**Lord Patel (Crossbench):** My Lords, does the Minister agree with me that a system that ends up giving a gold teaching award to his alma mater and mine, the University of St Andrews, as well as to my university, the University of Dundee, of which I am chancellor, must be the right system?

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** I can only agree with the noble Lord. In congratulating the University of St Andrews, I would like to take this opportunity, which other noble Lords have not done, to congratulate all those who have got a gold award but also those who have got silver and bronze.

**Lord Cormack (Conservative):** My Lords, what applies to St Andrews also applies to Lincoln, I am pleased to say, but does my noble friend not accept that those coming to our great universities from abroad, on whom we increasingly depend, want to have a message of clarity, not confusion? No one can begin to pretend that the LSE and UCL are not among the foremost institutions of the world, and anything that casts doubt on that is only damaging our higher education system.

**Viscount Younger of Leckie:** Let me say again that there is a strong panel that took its time and went through a process to provide the assessments. This is something that has been well thought out. My noble friend will know that some initial ratings were given and then final ones. It is a strong process. With regard to marketing abroad, the Department for Education has been working closely with the British Council and Universities UK on an international script for UK embassies to use to avoid any international misinterpretation of the award levels.

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## **Queen's Speech debates**

Parliamentary debates this week have focused on the Queen's Speech with the Government winning the vote on Thursday 29 June, with the support of DUP MPs. An agreement between the Conservative and DUP parties was settled on Monday 26 June. The Government published detail of the [confidence and supply agreement](#) and the [financial support document](#).

On Monday 26 June, the Commons focused on [Brexit and foreign affairs](#). On Tuesday 27 June, they moved to discuss [education and local services](#). On Wednesday 28 June, the Lords debated the speech with a focus on [Brexit](#) and with references from many peers in relation to [higher education](#).

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## **Written answers**

### **Education: disadvantaged**

*Chris Ruane MP (Labour):* What the (a) higher education and (b) further education participation rates for young people aged 18 to 25 are in (i) the 100 poorest Lower Super Output areas (LSOA) and (ii) the 100 richest Lower Super Output areas in England in each year for which data is available; and what the (A) town, (B) local authority area and (C) constituency was of each LSOA.

*Jo Johnson MP:* Information on higher and further education participation rates by Lower Super Output areas is not available and could only be provided at a disproportionate cost. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) [publish](#) the participation of 18 year olds who enter higher education aged 18 or 19 at ward level.

The further education (FE) and skills statistical [first release](#) (SFR) provides a range of headline figures. The FE and skills geography data tool provides data on FE and English and maths participation and achievements, and apprenticeship starts and achievements at the constituency, local education authority, local authority, and regional level. This is available [here](#).

### **Medicine: education**

*Jim Shannon MP (DUP):* What steps he is taking to increase capacity at medical schools to meet demand from applicants with high level qualifications.

*Philip Dunne MP:* On 4 October 2016, my Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health announced that the number of medical training places available to students in England each year will be expanded by 1,500 to ensure the National Health Service in England has the future supply of doctors it needs to continue to provide safe, compassionate care.

In September 2018, the Government will fund 500 additional student places through medical schools in England each year. A public consultation on how best to allocate a further 1,000 additional places closed on 2 June 2017. The Higher Education Funding Council for England will publish details on the allocation process over the coming months. These 1,000 places will be available to students from September 2019.

Health Education England is responsible for ensuring that there is sufficient future supply of staff to meet the workforce requirements of the English health system. Information on future supply and specialty fill rates can be found in Health Education England's Workforce Plan for England, available [here](#).

Availability of medical school places at universities in the devolved administrations is a matter for the individual Government in each administration.

### **Nurses training**

*Grahame Morris MP (Labour):* What representations he has received from Cabinet colleagues about reintroducing the student nursing bursary.

*Philip Dunne MP:* My Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State has not received any representations from Cabinet colleagues about reintroducing the National Health Service bursary for new pre-registration nursing, midwifery and allied health students from 1 August 2017.

### **Students: disadvantaged**

*Angela Rayner MP (Labour):* How many students beginning their first undergraduate degree in England in the (a) 2010-11, (b) 2011-12, (c) 2012-13, (d) 2013-14, (e) 2014-15, (f) 2015-16 and (g) 2016-17 academic years were within each decile of the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index.

*Jo Johnson MP:* The information requested is not available.

### **Teachers: loan repayments**

*Angela Rayner MP (Labour):* What estimate she has made of the cost to the public purse of debt forgiveness on student loan repayments for teachers in (a) 2017-18, (b) 2018-19, (c) 2019-20, (d) 2020-21 and (e) 2021-22.

*Nick Gibb MP:* The Government is reviewing its approach to the financing of teacher training and its relationship to wider student support. We will announce our conclusions in due course.

*Angela Rayner MP (Labour):* What her policy is on the repayment of student loans by teachers.

*Nick Gibb MP:* The Government is reviewing its approach to the financing of teacher training and its relationship to wider student support. We will announce our conclusions in due course.

*Angela Rayner MP (Labour):* What her Department's policy is on the level of debt forgiveness on student loan repayments for teachers.

*Nick Gibb MP:* The Government is reviewing its approach to the financing of teacher training and its relationship to wider student support. We will announce our conclusions in due course.

### **School sponsorship**

*Angela Rayner MP (Labour):* What her policy is on the involvement of universities in academy sponsorship, the founding of free schools and charging maximum tuition fees.

*Justine Greening MP:* I refer the hon. Member to the answers I provided on 27/06/2017 to Question number 713 and 714.

*Catherine West MP (Labour):* To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether it remains the Government's policy to allow the opening of new grammar schools.

*Justine Greening MP:* There was no education bill in the Queen's Speech, and therefore the ban on opening new grammar schools will remain in place.

*William Wragg MP (Conservative):* To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether the proposals relating to universities in the Schools that Work for Everyone consultation document will be taken forward.

*Justine Greening MP:* As part of the Government's commitment to create more good school places, last September we published the consultation document: Schools that work for everyone. This asked how we could harness the resources and expertise of those in our higher education sector to work in partnership to lift attainment across the wider school system.

The Government has welcomed the way that our world-class higher education institutions are willing to think afresh about what more they could do to raise attainment in state schools, in recognition of their responsibility to their own local communities.

Universities are currently agreeing Access Agreements with the Office for Fair Access.

Earlier this year, his strategic guidance to the sector, the Director for Fair Access set out an expectation that HEIs should set out in their access agreements how they will work with schools and colleges to raise attainment for those from disadvantaged and under-represented groups.

The Government hopes and expects more universities will come forward to be involved in school sponsorship and free schools, including more mathematics schools, although support need not be limited to those means.

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## **Sector News**

### **DHLE data**

On Thursday 29 June, HESA released the destination of leavers data, which covered leavers who obtained qualifications at higher education providers in the UK for the academic year 2015-16. Read the full release [here](#).

### **Jo Johnson's ministerial responsibilities**

The Minister's responsibilities were updated this week on the Government website with some new additions including industrial strategy and intellectual property.

The Minister is now responsible for:

- Industrial Strategy
  - Universities and higher education reform (including implementation of the Higher Education and Research Act and teaching excellence framework and quality)
  - Higher education student finance (including the Student Loans Company)
  - Widening participation and social mobility
  - Education exports (including international students, international research)
  - Science and research, including the creation and governance of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)
  - Agri-tech
  - Space
  - Innovation
  - Intellectual property
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