



# The All-Party Parliamentary University Group



Dear Colleague,

The Higher Education and Research Bill is about to finish its passage through the House of Lords, with Third Reading taking place on Tuesday 4 April. There have been a number of amendments to the Bill in the Lords and so it will need to return to the Commons for approval. To note it is expected that this won't take place until the Commons returns from Recess on Tuesday 18 April but we will update you as soon as the date is confirmed.

The last couple of months have been busy for the sector with the Bill coming into the final stages, but despite this the group has continued its good work - work which is supported so well by all our members. For those of you that may have missed some of our recent outputs I've listed a few below that you may like to read or share with colleagues:

- a meeting note from our **discussion on the Industrial Strategy**,
- an excellent **blog on the TEF** by Professor Mark Smith,
- a note of our most recent **meeting on social mobility**,
- a **blog from Baroness Tyler of Enfield** about getting disadvantaged students into the top professions, and
- reports shared by our speaker Nik Miller, Director of the Bridge Group on **employability** and **diversity in the civil service fast-stream**.

I'm also happy to share that today the group has published its second issue paper, "**The Higher Education Sector and Brexit**", this time hearing from three political parties on three important issues – student recruitment, staff recruitment and research - for higher education following the Prime Minister's triggering of Article 50 on Wednesday. The paper was written by myself, Alison Thewliss, Scottish National Party MP for Glasgow Central, and Flick Drummond, Conservative MP for Portsmouth South. I hope that our parliamentary members will use this as a short briefing in upcoming debates and discussions as it covers some of the important issues that will be of concern to our universities throughout the negotiation period.

Our next meeting is taking place on Wednesday 10 May and will look at degree apprenticeships and future skills, this will be following a visit, open to all parliamentary members of the group, to London South Bank University to discuss their degree apprenticeships programme first hand. I do hope that many of you will be able to join us.

**Roberta Blackman-Woods MP**, Chair, All-Party Parliamentary University Group

All-Party Parliamentary University Group  
c/o Kate Jackson, Universities UK, Woburn House, 20 Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9HQ  
Tel: 020 7419 5621 [appug@universitiesuk.ac.uk](mailto:appug@universitiesuk.ac.uk)

## **Upcoming meetings**

### **Tuesday 9 May 2017**

Visit to London South Bank University for APPG parliamentary members  
10-11am

### **Wednesday 10 May 2017**

Degree Apprenticeships and Future Skills

8.30-10am, Dining Room B

Professor Iain Martin, Vice-Chancellor, Anglia Ruskin University and Seamus Nevin, Head of Employment and Skills Policy, Institute of Directors

### **Tuesday 20 June 2017**

Higher education policy – updates from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

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

Kirsty Williams AM, Cabinet Secretary for Education (tbc) and Professor Paddy Nixon, Vice-Chancellor, Ulster University

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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**

### **Higher Education and Research Bill**

The Bill concludes its Lords stages with Third Reading rescheduled for Tuesday 4 April. The Bill will return to the Commons following the Easter Recess.

### **Science and Technology Committee**

On Tuesday 4 April, the Committee discusses the Industrial Strategy hearing from Nick Hurd MP, Minister of State for Climate Change and Industry, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, from 10.30am.

### **Lords Motion**

On Wednesday 5 April Lord Stevenson of Balmacara (Labour) will move that the House of Lords regrets that the [Higher Education \(Basic Amount\) \(England\) Regulations 2016](#) and the [Higher Education \(Higher Amount\) \(England\) Regulations 2016](#) together with retrospectively changed loan conditions for existing students are further incremental burdens on students that risk worsening the opportunities for young people from low-income backgrounds, mature students and those undertaking part-time courses; and calls on Her Majesty's Government to report annually to Parliament on the impact on the economy of the increasing quantum of graduate debt, estimates of payback rates, and the estimate of the annual cost to the Exchequer of the present system.

A motion like this offers an opportunity for critical views to appear on Parliament's order paper, therefore an invitation to the House to put on record a particular point of view. The motion will be debated in the Commons following Recess.

### **Parliamentary Recess**

The Commons entered Recess on Friday 31 March and the Lords follow on Friday 7 April.

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## **Great Repeal Bill White Paper**

On Wednesday 29 March the Prime Minister triggered Article 50, following this on Thursday morning the Brexit Secretary published the Great Repeal Bill White Paper.

The White Paper sets out the government's proposals for ensuring a functioning statute book once the UK has left the European Union. It provides the detail about:

- the repeal of the European Communities Act 1972
- how EU law will be converted into UK law
- how corrections will be made to the statute book, to ensure the law continues to function once we have left the EU

Below are links to various speeches and statements from Ministers and to the paper itself:

- [Prime Minister's statement to the Commons](#)
- [Rt Hon David Davis MP statement](#)

- [Great Repeal Bill White Paper](#)
- [Universities UK statement](#)

This morning it was also confirmed that a new Cabinet Committee has been established – the European Union Exit and Trade (Negotiations) Sub-Committee. Membership of the Committee is limited to the Prime Minister, the Chancellor, the Home Secretary, the Foreign Secretary and the Brexit Secretary.

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## **Lords Question for Short Debate – Medical Research**

On Tuesday 28 March Lord Sharkey (Liberal Democrat) asked Her Majesty’s Government what plans they have to help maintain the United Kingdom’s position in medical research. You can read the transcript at: <https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2017-03-28/debates/56D4E574-0641-4358-A69D-69B99F7DA30D/MedicalResearch>

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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.

### **Overseas students**

[Tulip Siddiq MP](#)

[Anne Main MP](#)

[Louise Haigh MP](#)

[Louise Haigh MP](#)

[Baroness Deech](#)

### **Students: Grants and loans**

[Tracy Brabin MP](#)

[Tracy Brabin MP](#)

### **Under-representation of women in senior positions**

[Sarah Champion MP](#)

### **Educational institutions: Mental Health Services**

[Grahame Morris MP](#)

### **Social mobility**

[Angela Rayner MP](#)

## **Teacher training**

Grahame Morris MP

Louise Haigh MP

## **Higher education admissions**

Lord Storey

## **Higher Education and Research Bill**

Lord Triesman

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## **Sector News**

### **Department for Education reports**

This week the Department for Education have released three reports on the higher education sector which may be of interest:

- 'Encouraging people into university: Research report' -  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/603737/Encouraging\\_people\\_into\\_university.pdf?mc\\_cid=e3311f6187&mc\\_eid=af76b896a2](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/603737/Encouraging_people_into_university.pdf?mc_cid=e3311f6187&mc_eid=af76b896a2)
- 'Understanding the changing gaps in higher education participation in different regions of England' -  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/604393/Higher\\_education\\_understanding\\_participation\\_gaps.pdf?mc\\_cid=74be5f564d&mc\\_eid=af76b896a2](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/604393/Higher_education_understanding_participation_gaps.pdf?mc_cid=74be5f564d&mc_eid=af76b896a2)
- 'Planning for success: Graduate's career planning and its effect on graduate outcomes' -  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/604170/Graduates\\_career\\_planning\\_and\\_its\\_effect\\_on\\_their\\_outcomes.pdf?mc\\_cid=74be5f564d&mc\\_eid=af76b896a2](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/604170/Graduates_career_planning_and_its_effect_on_their_outcomes.pdf?mc_cid=74be5f564d&mc_eid=af76b896a2)

### **Education Secretary speech to the Social Mobility Commission**

On Thursday 30 March, Rt Hon Justine Greening MP gave a speech on transforming social mobility. You can read the full text at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/justine-greening-unlocking-the-potential-of-a-new-generation>.