



The All-Party Parliamentary University Group



Dear Colleague,

Following the last big publication - the HE Green Paper in November - the sector and parliament alike were treated to a whole host of documents last week, including the **White Paper** "Success as a Knowledge Economy: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice", the **Teaching Excellence Framework Year 2 – Technical Consultation**, the **Accelerated Courses and Switching University or Degree – Call for Evidence**, the outcome of the **Wakeham** and **Shadbolt** reviews, and of course the **Higher Education and Research Bill**. So there is a lot to digest ahead of Second Reading (date to be confirmed), with the main areas for discussion seeming to be the case for market entry of new providers, the new Office for Students and UK Research and Innovation, Widening Participation and the TEF, including the link to fees.

Of course the sector and parliamentarians will also need to keep an eye on other legislation announced during the Queen's Speech, the **Extremism Bill** where we might see the debate on freedom of speech on campuses, 'no-platforming', safe spaces et al emerge. We will need to consider the **NHS (Overseas Visitors Charging Bill)** and how this might affect international students who wish to study here. And of course the **Neighbourhood Planning and Infrastructure Bill** and the **Local Growth and Jobs Bills**. It's not clear how skills policy fits into these two bills, but alongside the powers being devolved to elected mayors on infrastructure investment we will see some devolution of skills funding. If purse-strings are increasingly held at local or regional levels, the sector will need to make sure that it's part of the solution – fulfilling the skills needs of local economies.

And finally, with universities being among the largest producers and consumers of intellectual property, any tinkering of protection or access through the **Intellectual Property (Unjustified Threats) Bill** and a new **Digital Economy Bill** may well be deserving of attention – perhaps particularly from innovation and commercialisation departments.

There is much for members of the APPG to work together on over the next parliamentary session!

Roberta Blackman-Woods MP

Chair, All-Party Parliamentary University Group

Upcoming meetings

Tuesday 28 June

University APPG Summer Reception

7-9pm, Churchill Room

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

Parliamentary Recess

Both Houses are now in Recess until Monday 6 June.

Lords Science and Technology Committee

The Committee will be taking evidence on the future of Innovate UK from 10.30am on Tuesday 7 June. Witnesses include:

- David Eyton, Group Head of Technology, British Petroleum,
- Dr Virginia Acha, Executive Director of Research, Medical & Innovation, Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry,
- Laura Smith, Head of Construction and Manufacturing, Confederation of British Industry,
- Professor Luke Georghiou, Vice President for Research and Innovation, Manchester University, and
- Dr David Hardman MBE, Chairman, UK Science Park Association

Business, Innovation and Skills Select Committee

On Tuesday 24 May the Committee took evidence from business and industry groups on their views of the EU Referendum. The witnesses were:

- Professor Brad Mackay, University of St Andrews,
- Raoul Ruparel, Co-Director, Open Europe,
- John Springford, Senior Research Fellow, Centre for European Reform;
- Paul Nowak, Deputy General Secretary, TUC,
- Josh Hardie, Deputy-Director General, Policy and Campaigns, Confederation of British Industry,
- Mike Spicer, Director of Research, British Chambers of Commerce,
- Lee Hopley, Chief Economist, EEF, and
- Ian Cass, Director, Forum for Private Business

You can watch this session again on [Parliament TV](#).

Queen's Speech Debate on Education

On Wednesday 25 May the Commons continued its debate on the Queen's Speech, focusing on education, skills and training. This included the amendment put forward by Labour - "respectfully regret that the Gracious Speech contained proposals to enable further increases in tuition fees; believe that there should be no further increases in tuition fees; and further believe that no good or outstanding school should be forced to become an academy." The full transcript is available [here](#).

Lords Oral Question

Also on Wednesday 25 May, Lord Hunt of Kings Heath tabled the following oral question - to ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to halt plans to withdraw National Health Service bursaries. The Government responded to this, [full transcript available](#).

Written Ministerial Statement

On Thursday 26 May Jo Johnson MP laid a WMS in the house on student support for postgraduates.

"I can confirm that I am laying regulations today, which are subject to Parliamentary scrutiny, to launch a new postgraduate master's loan.

Students will be able to apply for a loan of up to £10,000 as a contribution towards the cost of an eligible postgraduate master's qualification. The loan will be available to eligible students under the age of 60 undertaking certain full or part-time master's courses in any subject from academic year 2016/17 onwards. Repayment will be on an income contingent basis to ensure the loan is affordable.

By delivering on this manifesto commitment we will be helping to remove the financial barrier faced by many wishing to study at this level and providing students with the means to invest in their futures."

Lords Question for Short Debate

On Thursday 26 May the Lords debated Lord Roberts of Llandudno's question on the EU Referendum and young voters. Several peers mentioned the introduction of individual voter registration and referred to initiatives taken by universities, sixth forms and FE colleges. The full debate can be found [here](#).

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.

Education: Muslims

[Gavin Shuker MP](#)

Universities: Anti-Semitism

[Lord Patten](#)

[Andrew Percy MP](#)

Universities: Hate crime

Lord Patten

Nurses: Training

Diana Johnson MP

Higher education: Males

Jim Shannon MP

Higher education: Private sector

Peter Kyle MP

Nurses: Debt

Jim Shannon MP

Clinical psychologists: Training

Oliver Colvile MP

Higher education: Admissions

Ben Bradshaw MP

Universities: Construction

Lord Marlesford

Higher education: White paper

Gordon Marsden MP

Gordon Marsden MP

Gordon Marsden MP

Gordon Marsden MP

Health professionals: Training

Justin Madders MP

Sector news

HEFCW: Funding for higher education in 2016/17

HEFCW will allocate £132 million of public funding to universities and other higher education providers in the next academic year.

The allocations in 2016/17 include:

- £80 million for research in universities,

- £27 million for part-time undergraduate courses,
- £15 million for higher cost full-time undergraduate courses, and
- £10 million for specific strategic investments

HEFCW's research funding allocations take account of the quality of research, and teaching funding allocations are based on: recruitment numbers; the type of course, such as full-time, part-time, undergraduate or postgraduate; priorities such as the recruitment of Welsh medium students or students from disadvantaged areas; and subject mix.

HEFCW will continue to fund additional contributions - over and above the £9,000 maximum annual fee level - towards higher-cost full-time undergraduate courses in medicine, dentistry and the performing arts

The full release can be found [here](#).

HEPI report – Free speech on campus

The Higher Education Policy Institute has released the only recent and detailed study on what UK students really think about free speech on campus, Keeping Shtum?: What students think of free speech (Wave 2 of the HEPI / YouthSight Monitor).

The findings can be accessed [here](#).

The survey of over 1,000 full-time undergraduate students at UK higher education institutions covers: free speech, No Platform, gender segregation, safe spaces, trigger warnings and even whether it is appropriate for student unions to ban the sale of tabloid newspapers.

University Alliance Report

The government's ambitions for higher education to improve life chances will only be met if university leaders make tackling inequality a core part of their mission, argues a report published by University Alliance on Tuesday 24 May. The full report can be read [here](#).
