



# The All-Party Parliamentary University Group

## University APPG monthly update – December 2015



Dear colleague,

The group has had two successful meetings since the last monthly update. At the end of November we discussed the Government's green paper "Fulfilling Our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice". There was a large turnout for the meeting to hear from Jo Johnson MP, Iain Wright MP and Dr Steven Jones. If you've not yet had a chance to read them, the presentations by Jo Johnson MP and Dr Steven Jones are available on our website, along with the note from the meeting and an interesting [blog by Steve Jones](#). The second of our recent meetings was to discuss sexual harassment and 'lad culture' in the sector. We had four excellent presentations from Laura Bates, Susuana Amoah, Professor David Richardson and Nicola Dandridge. Presentations by [Laura Bates](#) and [Susuana Amoah](#) are online, along with a [blog by Professor David Richardson](#), the note of the meeting will be available shortly.

Parliament is now in Recess, with the Commons returning on Tuesday 5 January and the Lords returning on Monday 11 January. Looking ahead to the new year, our programme of work continues with discussions on international comparisons of funding, part time and 'earn while you learn' options and a joint meeting with the APPG on Students in the Spring. For the sector as a whole January will also see the green paper consultation deadline and the UCAS January figures.

After a busy term for parliament and the sector alike, I do hope you all have the opportunity for a relaxing break. Our weekly update will be back on Friday 8 January.

**Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods MP**

Chair, All-Party Parliamentary University Group

## Upcoming meetings

27 January 2016

### **International comparisons of funding of the higher education sector**

*6pm-7.30pm, followed by dinner*

Speakers to include Professor Sir David Greenaway, Vice-Chancellor of University of Nottingham, John O’Leary, Author, The Good University Guide and Vivienne Stern, Director, UK HE International Unit

15 March 2016

### **Flexible pathways: what universities are doing to support ‘earn while you learn’ options. Why are part-time student numbers plummeting – and what should be done to halt the decline?**

*6pm-7.30pm, followed by dinner*

Speakers to include Peter Horrocks, Vice-Chancellor, The Open 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](#), tweets regular updates of parliamentary business and sector announcements. We would encourage all members to follow the account.

Finally, I would like to encourage members who may be interested in [writing a piece for the blog](#) to please get in touch.

[Click on the items in the Table of Contents to go straight to the debates, answers, forthcoming business, etc.](#)

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## **Forthcoming Business**

Both Houses are now in Recess. The House of Commons returns on Tuesday 5 January 2016 and the House of Lords returns on Monday 11 January 2016.

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## **Select Committees**

### **Home Affairs Committee**

This morning (Friday 18 December 2015), the Home Affairs Committee released its report Immigration: Skills Shortages. The report looks at the cap on Tier 2 visas. The full report can be read [here](#) and the press release [here](#).

The transcript of the Home Affairs Committee 1 December evidence session on prevent, part of the inquiry into countering extremism, is now available to [read](#).

### **Science and Technology Committee**

On Tuesday 15 December Sir Paul Nurse gave evidence to the S&T Committee. The full transcript is not yet available but you can watch the session [here](#).

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## **Debates**

### **Finance for student nursing**

Wes Streeting MP tabled a debate on the changes to student nursing on Monday 14 December, Ben Gummer MP responded. The full transcript can be found [here](#).

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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.

### **Health professionals: Training**

[Lord Mackenzie of Cullen](#)

[Jim Cunningham MP](#)

### **Students: Loans**

[Angela Rayner MP](#)

[Baroness Burt of Solihull](#)

[Tania Mathias MP](#)

[Jim Cunningham MP](#)

## **Latin America: Foreign Students**

Graham Stuart MP

## **Higher Education: Disability**

Barry Sheerman MP

## **Higher Education: Standards**

Iain Wright MP

## **Overseas Students**

Richard Arkless MP

Lord Fearn

## **Higher Education: Admissions**

Baroness Burt of Solihull

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## **Sector news**

### **Government review to improve university research funding**

On Wednesday 16 December the Government announced a review into improving university research funding. The review will be looking at “cutting red tape so that universities can focus more on delivering the world-leading research for which the UK is renowned”. The full press release, including a list of members of the high-level steering group, can be found [here](#).

### **UCAS end of cycle report**

UCAS produced its annual end of cycle report on Thursday 17 December. This year the report included two new sections, fair access and widening participation. The report can be found [here](#).

### **Social Mobility and Child Poverty Report**

Also on Thursday 17 December, the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission published their State of the Nation report. As expected the report comments on the levels of widening participation in universities. The press release and report can be found [here](#).

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