

Westminster Higher Education Forum Keynote Seminar: The future of degree classification and accreditation - Higher Education Achievement Reports latest and findings from the GPA pilot

Timing: Morning, Thursday, 23rd October 2014

Venue: Glaziers Hall, 9 Montague Close, London SE1 9DD



**WESTMINSTER
HIGHER EDUCATION
FORUM**

Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 - 9.00 Registration and coffee
- 9.00 - 9.05 **Chair's opening remarks**
Viscount Hanworth
- 9.05 - 9.30 **Higher Education Achievement Reports (HEAR) - impact so far and next steps**
Professor Sir Robert Burgess, former Vice-Chancellor, University of Leicester
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.30 - 10.20 **Implementing HEAR: awareness, accreditation and engaging with employers**
To what extent has the HEA's 'HEAR Academy' support scheme helped to address key organisational and financial issues of implementing the HEAR? How should the accreditation of extra-curricular activities that count towards students' degrees be regulated; is there a need for a standardised list of activities that can be included in section 6:1 of the HEAR? How has the HEAR affected student demand for Year in Industry placements, overseas study, employability modules and other such course content? Is there any evidence that the HEAR has encouraged more students to take part in extra-curricular activities; what steps can universities, students' unions and other groups take to raise awareness of the HEAR among students in order to boost participation in such activities? How can suppliers of accredited activities take advantage of the HEAR to attract more members and volunteers? What can be done to raise awareness of the HEAR amongst employers, particularly SMEs, and encourage them to utilise it as part of their recruitment process? Where graduate recruiters aren't using the HEAR, what are the reasons and how could the HEAR be changed to reflect employers' needs? How has the introduction of the HEAR affected appetite for wider reform of the classification system?
Christina Kerr, Head of Campus Front Office Recruitment, Barclays
Sara Fernandez, Executive Director, Student Hubs
Dr Sandra Mienczakowski, Deputy Director (Academic Administration), University of Nottingham
Professor Nick Petford, Vice-Chancellor, University of Northampton
Senior speaker, students' union
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.20 - 10.25 **Chair's closing remarks**
Viscount Hanworth
- 10.25 - 10.50 Coffee
- 10.50 - 10.55 **Chair's opening remarks**
Baroness Garden of Frognal, former Government Spokesperson for Higher Education and Skills
- 10.55 - 11.25 **Degree classification - where to go next?**
Professor Philippa Levy, Deputy Chief Executive (Academic), Higher Education Academy
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.25 - 12.05 **Case studies from the Grade Point Average (GPA) pilot**
Matthew Andrews, Academic Registrar, Oxford Brookes University
Professor Vivien Jones, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Education), University of Leeds
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.05 - 12.55 **The future of the degree classification system - GPA and other alternatives**
What lessons can be derived from the implementation of the HEAR for the introduction of a GPA or other alternative classification systems? Would widespread implementation of a GPA system enable the HEAR to be reduced in size, to focus more on extra-curricular activities rather than a modular breakdown of academic achievement? What are the advantages and disadvantages of the current degree honours system used in the UK; would the implementation of a GPA system address concerns about grade inflation? What are the key conclusions to be drawn from the HEA-led pilots of a GPA system; what challenges arose and how might these be addressed? Has a standard version of the GPA system emerged which could be rolled-out universally across the sector? Would universal adoption of a GPA system be appropriate for all universities courses? If an alternative classification were to be adopted, is GPA the best system to introduce; what other alternative systems exist that could be implemented?
Stephen Isherwood, Chief Executive, Association of Graduate Recruiters
Dr Kathleen Paul, Director, London Study Centre, Florida State University
Professor John Thornes, Principal Climate Change Scientist, Public Health England and Emeritus Professor of Applied Meteorology, University of Birmingham
Laura Jackson, President, York St John Students' Union and Member, Higher Education Committee, NUS
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 - 13.00 **Chair's and Westminster Higher Education Forum closing remarks**
Baroness Garden of Frognal, former Government Spokesperson for Higher Education and Skills
Jonny Roberts, Associate Editor, Westminster Higher Education Forum