Westminster Education Forum Keynote Seminar: The future of universities - funding and access

Date: Morning, 24th June 2010
Venue: Sixty One Whitehall, London SW1A 2ET

Draft agenda subject to change

8.45 - 9.00 Registration

9.00 - 9.05 Chairman’s opening remarks
Baroness Perry of Southwark

9.05 - 9.15 Future options for Higher Education funding
Professor Lorraine Dearden, Professor of Economics, Institute of Education, University of London and Programme Director, Institute for Fiscal Studies

9.15 - 10.00 Budgetary constraints and maintaining excellence in Higher Education
Themes: Perspectives on the 2010 Higher Education budget. Has funding been effectively distributed by the Higher Education Funding Council for England for 2010-2011? Can excellence in teaching and research be maintained in light of budgetary constraints? Should funding be targeted at ‘specific elite universities or specific subject areas’? Can possible staff redundancies and campus closures be avoided? What would be their likely impact on staff and students? Can options be made to ensure there is sufficient financial assistance so as not to deter or limit the choices of poorer students? What alternatives should be considered to a rise in tuition fees?

Mike Boxall, Leader, Higher Education Sector, PA Consulting
Chris Morecroft, Principal, Worcester College of Technology and Chair, Association of Colleges’ Higher Education in Further Education Group
Tom Wills, President, University of Sussex Students’ Union
John Rushforth, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, University of the West of England

Questions and comments from the floor with Professor Lorraine Dearden, Professor of Economics, Institute of Education, University of London and Programme Director, Institute for Fiscal Studies

10.00 - 10.30 ‘How do we keep our Higher Education system internationally competitive?’
Professor Michael Arthur, Vice-Chancellor, University of Leeds and Chair, Russell Group

Questions and comments from the floor

10.30 - 10.35 Chairman’s closing remarks
Baroness Perry of Southwark

10.35 - 10.55 Coffee

10.55 - 11.00 Chairman’s opening remarks
Baroness Sharp of Guildford

11.00 - 12.00 Funding the graduates of the future - options for policy
Themes: How would a rise in tuition fees impact on both universities and students? What changes need to be made for the funding system to take account of the increased number of part-time and mature students and rising costs? What can be done to ensure there is sufficient financial assistance so as not to deter or limit the choices of poorer students? What alternatives should be considered to a rise in tuition fees?

Professor Claire Callender, Professor of Higher Education Policy, Birkbeck, University of London
Carl Gilleard, Chief Executive, Association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR)
Aaron Porter, National President Elect, NUS
Professor Paul Wollings, Vice-Chancellor, Lancaster University and Chair, 1994 group
Pam Tatlow, Chief Executive, million+
James Groves, Head of Education Unit, Policy Exchange

Questions and comments from the floor

12.00 - 12.55 Access, participation and wider partnerships - putting universities at the centre of the community
Themes: How can wider access to university continue to be promoted whilst ensuring the quality of the student experience is protected? Will the increased number of university applications and increasing competition amongst students to gain places affect attempts to widen participation? How can universities create closer links with the communities in which they are situated? In what ways can stronger links be developed between local schools, further education colleges and universities? Are universities creating effective partnerships with business and other potential sources of private funding?

Christine Davis, Principal, Farnborough College of Technology
Dan Shaffer, Senior Project Officer, SPA (Supporting Professionalism in Admissions)
Professor Debra Humphris, Pro Vice-Chancellor Education, University of Southampton
David Johnston, Chief Executive Officer, Social Mobility Foundation
Keith Herrmann, Deputy Chief Executive, Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE)
Peter Crisp, Chief Executive and Dean, BPP Law School

Questions and comments from the floor

12.55 - 13.00 Chairman’s and Westminster Education Forum thanks and closing remarks
Baroness Sharp of Guildford
Sean Cudmore, Senior Producer, Westminster Education Forum