

## Westminster Higher Education Forum Keynote Seminar:

### The student academic experience - expectations, engagement and complaint resolution

Timing: Morning, Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> January 2014

Venue: Sixty One Whitehall, London SW1A 2ET

Draft agenda subject to change



- 8.30 - 9.00 Registration and coffee
- 9.00 - 9.05 **Chairman's opening remarks**  
**Paul Blomfield MP**, Member, Business, Innovation and Skills Select Committee and Secretary, All-Party Parliamentary University Group
- 9.05 - 9.20 **'Student expectations and perceptions of higher education'**  
*Findings from the QAA-commissioned study; including methods of measuring student expectations.*  
**Dr Camille Kandiko**, Research Fellow, King's Learning Institute, King's College London
- 9.20 - 10.05 **Dealing with student expectations following the rise in tuition fees and introduction of Key Information Sets (KIS)**  
*How have student expectations of course quality, facilities and support services changed since the introduction of tuition fees and since the substantial rises in 2006 and 2012? Has the introduction of Key Information Sets (KIS) in September 2012 led to an increase in contact hours? Does the KIS encourage over-emphasis on contact hours; what steps could be taken to highlight other criteria students should consider - for example class sizes or level of teaching staff expertise? In response to tough labour market conditions and the introduction of KIS data on graduate employment rates and average earnings, are universities providing course curricula more closely tied with related industries, more work placements and 'sandwich' years? Should universities or Government take steps to address concerns around so-called 'hidden course costs', such as required textbooks, equipment and trips?*  
**Professor Robert J Allison**, Vice-Chancellor and President, Loughborough University  
**Gervas Huxley**, Teaching Fellow, School of Economics, Finance and Management, University of Bristol  
**David Ellis**, Editor, Student Money Saver  
Senior speaker confirmed from the **NUS**  
Questions and comments from the floor with **Dr Camille Kandiko**, Research Fellow, King's Learning Institute, King's College London
- 10.05 - 10.30 **'Students as engaged partners'**  
**Heather Fry**, Director of Participation and Education, HEFCE  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.30 - 10.35 **Chairman's closing remarks**  
**Paul Blomfield MP**, Member, Business, Innovation and Skills Select Committee and Secretary, All-Party Parliamentary University Group
- 10.35 - 10.55 Coffee
- 10.55 - 11.00 **Chairman's opening remarks**  
**Baroness Deech QC (Hon)**, Chair, Bar Standards Board
- 11.00 - 11.15 **'Student Engagement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement: Institutional and Student Body Practices'**  
*Findings from the QAA-commissioned study; including examples of best practice from around the UK.*  
**Gwen van der Velden**, Director of Learning and Teaching Enhancement, University of Bath
- 11.15 - 12.00 **Improving student engagement**  
*In what ways can the new 'student engagement unit', launched in Autumn 2013, impact and improve student engagement in UK universities? Is there a need for improved sharing of best practice regarding effective course rep systems; could the 'student engagement unit' play a role in assessing quality of course rep systems? What is the likely impact of the new Institutional Reviews, with their greater focus on gathering student perspectives? To what extent is the National Student Survey (NSS) used to its full potential by universities when seeking to improve student experience? What steps can the HE sector take to improve NSS response rates? What have been the implementation challenges and results so far of the Higher Education Academy's 'students-as-partners' programme, and should more universities be encouraged to participate?*  
**Professor Stuart Brand**, Director of Learning Experience, Birmingham City University  
**Sami Benyahia**, Higher Education Research Director, Ipsos Mori  
**Josh Hurrell**, Union President, Loughborough Students' Union  
Senior representative, student engagement programme  
Questions and comments from the floor with **Gwen van der Velden**, Director of Learning and Teaching Enhancement, University of Bath
- 12.00 - 12.10 **Effective complaints handling - mediation and early dispute resolution**  
*Challenges and opportunities arising from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator's consultation on student complaints process reform, 'Pathway 3'.*  
**Felicity Mitchell**, Deputy Adjudicator, Office of the Independent Adjudicator
- 12.10 - 12.55 **Tackling the rise in student complaints**  
*Are there identifiable trends behind the continuing year-on-year rise, across the HE sector, in the volume of student complaints, particularly the higher than average levels of complaints from post-graduate and international students? What steps can be taken to react to student complaints data to improve student experience and reduce similar complaints in future? Are student unions and student services providing adequate support during the complaints procedure as suggested in the OIA's Pathway 3 report or is there a case for introducing new approaches? Will the new OIA funding model for complaints, due to be implemented in 2014, encourage more institutions to set up ways to resolve complaints at an earlier stage?*  
**Jaswinder Gill**, Higher Education Lawyer, Royds Solicitors  
**Robin Dutton**, Director of Quality Systems, University College Birmingham  
**Sarah Lister**, Vice President, Welfare, De Montfort Students' Union  
Questions and comments from the floor with **Felicity Mitchell**, Deputy Adjudicator, Office of the Independent Adjudicator
- 12.55 - 13.00 **Chairman's and Westminster Higher Education Forum closing remarks**  
**Baroness Deech QC (Hon)**, Chair, Bar Standards Board  
**Jonny Roberts**, Associate Editor, Westminster Higher Education Forum