

**Westminster Higher Education Forum policy conference**  
**Evidence-based policymaking and learning from the COVID-19 response - deepening and streamlining cooperation, widening the evidence base, and improving communication**

*Timing: Morning, Friday, 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021*

*\*\*\*Taking place online\*\*\**



**WESTMINSTER  
HIGHER EDUCATION  
FORUM**

*Agenda subject to change*

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**  
Senior Parliamentarian
- 9.05 **Evidence-based policy and the pandemic - what has been learned and implications for the future**  
**Dr Grant Hill-Cawthorne**, Head, Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.30 **Improving the system of evidence-based policymaking - priorities for both deepening and streamlining co-operation between policymakers, businesses and researchers**  
**Professor Matthew Flinders**, Department of Politics, University of Sheffield and Chair, Universities Policy Engagement Network  
**Dr Malcolm Skingle**, Head of Academic Liaison, GlaxoSmithKline  
Senior representative, research funder  
Commentator  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.10 Break
- Widening the evidence base behind policy decisions - drawing on key disciplines, joining up pools of expertise, improving understanding of what works, and the role of local knowledge and place-based policy**
- 10.15 *Next steps for data-informed policymaking*  
Senior representative, business
- 10.25 *Pushing forward public policy - innovative thinking, experimentation, and evaluating what works*  
**David Halpern**, Chief Executive Officer, Behavioural Insights Team
- 10.35 *'Uncertainty and the use of interdisciplinary insights in complex decision-making'*  
**Richard Bronk**, Author of *The Romantic Economist* and Co-editor, *Uncertain Futures*
- 10.45 *Harnessing local evidence bases and R&D systems for regionally-focussed policy development*  
Senior representative, local authority
- 10.55 Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.20 **Chair's closing remarks**  
Senior Parliamentarian
- 11.25 Break
- 11.35 **Chair's opening remarks**  
Senior Parliamentarian
- 11.40 **Learning from international approaches to using evidence to inform policy**  
**Tomas van den Broeke**, Unit Manager Evidence, Data & Policy, ScienceWorks
- 11.50 **Priorities for improving the acceptance of evidence-based policy - communicating scientific reasoning to the public, addressing disinformation, and the role of public engagement and citizen science**  
**Tracey Brown**, Director, Sense about Science  
**Susan Anson**, Senior Research Analyst, Trilateral Research  
Senior representative, social media
- 12.05 Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.25 Break
- 12.30 **Evidence-informed policy post-COVID-19 - lessons learned and future directions**  
**Ben Taylor**, Senior Policy Advisor, Open Innovation Team, Cabinet Office  
**Megan Lynch**, Senior Policy Advisor, Open Innovation Team, Cabinet Office  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 **Chair's and Westminster Higher Education Forum closing remarks**  
Senior Parliamentarian  
**Sean Cudmore**, Deputy Editor, Westminster Higher Education Forum