

Westminster Higher Education Forum Keynote Seminar: Next steps for Post-18 education - tuition fees, value for money, broadening student choice and meeting the skills gap

Timing: Morning, Tuesday, 26th March 2019

Venue: The Caledonian Club, 9 Halkin Street, London SW1X 7DR

Agenda subject to change



**WESTMINSTER
HIGHER EDUCATION
FORUM**

- 8.30 - 9.00 Registration and coffee
- 9.00 - 9.05 **Chair's opening remarks**
Rt Hon the Lord Blunkett, former Secretary of State for Education and Employment
- 9.05 - 9.30 **Post-18 options and choices - increasing awareness and improving communication to students**
Helen Thorne, Director of External Relations, UCAS
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.30 - 10.30 **Broadening student choice and meeting the skills gap**
How can the delivery of useful data, including graduate earnings, course costs, teaching standards and student satisfaction, be improved to enable students to make informed choices? In what ways can providers overcome the key barriers to increasing the number of high-quality technical and vocational courses on offer, including funding and staff training provision; how can access to these courses be widened whilst also moving towards achieving parity of esteem with academic courses? What should be the key priorities for the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education in establishing national standards for higher technical qualifications and ensuring consistent, high-quality delivery of technical programmes? What more can be done by employers, universities and colleges to collaborate in creating courses that provide students with skills sets to meet the current skills gaps in addition to preparing the workforce for future skills challenges and to fulfil the challenges set out in Government's Industrial Strategy? What should be the role of universities in promoting and increasing provision of non-traditional degree routes, such as higher apprenticeships, accelerated degrees and shorter modular courses, as meaningful higher education options?
Bill Rammell, Vice-Chancellor, University of Bedfordshire and former Minister, Further and Higher Education, Department for Education (2005-08)
Shakira Martin, President, NUS
Harry Anderson, Senior Policy Advisor, Further and Higher Education, CBI
Dr Joy Kettle, Principal and Chief Executive, Waltham Forest College, London
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.30 - 10.50 **The role of the higher education system in improving social mobility**
Ali Jaffer, Head of Policy and Innovation, Education, Social Mobility Commission
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.50 - 10.55 **Chair's closing remarks**
Rt Hon the Lord Blunkett, former Secretary of State for Education and Employment
- 10.55 - 11.20 Coffee
- 11.20 - 11.25 **Chair's opening remarks**
Rt Hon David Davis MP, former Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union
- 11.25 - 11.45 **Rationale for the change in the accounting of student loans**
David Bailey, Deputy Director, Public Sector Division, National Accounts & Economic Statistics, Office for National Statistics
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.45 - 11.55 **University spending - how can HEIs improve transparency on the distribution of funding between teaching, student services and university administration**
Nick Hillman, Director, Higher Education Policy Institute
- 11.55 - 12.55 **Key issues for funding Post-18 education - the future of tuition fees and the student loans system, sources of university and college finance, and distribution of university funding**
With reports indicating that the Review of Post-18 Education and Funding is considering potential changes to tuition fees, what options should be considered to ensure value for money for students, taking into account course delivery costs, TEF scores at both provider and subject level, and employability data? What reforms should be considered, such as the re-introduction of maintenance grants, revision of the loan repayment system and adjustment of the means-test maintenance loan, to better support students from low-income households? Given the high rate of student loan non-repayment, how can it be ensured that universities represent value for money for taxpayers, for example by ensuring that universities contribute significantly to local economies, without compromising university freedom? What are the funding priorities for ensuring that colleges have the resources to provide high-quality technical and vocational qualifications, which are meaningful alternatives to academic courses and achieve parity of esteem with academic qualifications? What are the prospects for the continuing contribution of international students making up funding gaps in universities, given the Migration Advisory Committee recently recommending that international students should not be removed from migration targets and that post-study work visas should not be reinstated?
Evie Aspinall, President, Cambridge University Students' Union
Julian Gravatt, Deputy Chief Executive, Association of Colleges
Professor Margaret House, Vice Chancellor, Leeds Trinity University
Sarah Stevens, Head of Policy, The Russell Group
Questions and comments from the floor with **Nick Hillman**, Director, Higher Education Policy Institute
- 12.55 - 13.00 **Chair's and Westminster Higher Education Forum closing remarks**
Rt Hon David Davis MP, former Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union
Michael Ryan, Deputy Editor, Westminster Higher Education Forum