

## Westminster Higher Education Forum policy conference

### Priorities for supporting disabled students in HE - student experience, academic attainment, preparation for the labour market, and the impact of COVID-19

Timing: Morning, Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020

\*\*\*Taking Place Online\*\*\*

Draft agenda subject to change



**WESTMINSTER  
HIGHER EDUCATION  
FORUM**

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**  
**Lord Blunkett**, former Secretary of State for Education and Employment and Co-Chair, Higher Education Commission Disabled Students Inquiry  
**Lord Norton of Louth**, Co-Chair, Higher Education Commission Disabled Students Inquiry
- 9.05 **Supporting disabled students - the current state of play and initial insights from the Disabled Students Commission**  
**Professor Geoff Layer**, Chair, Disabled Students' Commission and Vice-Chancellor, University of Wolverhampton  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.30 **The experiences of disabled students in higher education**  
**Megan Hector**, Senior Researcher, Policy Connect  
**Professor Kathryn Mitchell**, Vice-Chancellor, University of Derby and Co-Chair, Higher Education Commission Disabled Students Inquiry  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.50 Break
- 9.55 **Welcoming disabled students to university - inclusion and accessibility, improving awareness of support services and the DSA, and arrangements in a socially-distanced campus**  
**Professor Sarah Sharples**, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, University of Nottingham  
**Rhys Brown**, Disabled Students' Officer, Birkbeck Students' Union  
**Leanne Thompson**, Head, Disability and Inclusion Services, Lancaster University  
**Sean Cullen**, Student Voice Commissioner, Disabled Students' Commission and previous Disabled Students Officer, Brunel University  
**Martin McLean**, Lead: Post-14 Policy and Practice, The National Deaf Children's Society  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.45 **Chair's closing remarks**  
**Lord Blunkett**, former Secretary of State for Education and Employment and Co-Chair, Higher Education Commission Disabled Students Inquiry  
**Lord Norton of Louth**, Co-Chair, Higher Education Commission Disabled Students Inquiry
- 10.50 Break
- 11.00 **Chair's opening remarks**  
**Lord Kevin Shinkwin**, Vice Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group for Disability
- 11.05 **Improving educational attainment for disabled students - inclusivity in blended learning, use of assistive technologies, and provision of alternative assessment**  
**Dr Nasser Siabi**, Chief Executive Officer, Microlink PC  
**Professor Annalu Waller**, Chair of Human Communication Technologies, School of Science and Engineering and Programme Director, MSc in Educational Assistive Technology, University of Dundee  
**Kate Lister**, Lecturer in Inclusive Education, Faculty of Wellbeing, Education and Language Studies, The Open University  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.40 Break
- 11.45 **Preparing disabled graduates for the labour market - holistic approaches to career guidance, partnerships between universities and employers, and improving outcomes**  
**Tab Ahmad**, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, EmployAbility  
**Emma Pollard**, Principal Research Fellow, Institute for Employment Studies  
**Keren Coney**, Careers Advisor, Liverpool John Moores University and Co-Chair, Disability Task Group, Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services  
**Clare Caccavone**, Programme Director, Ambitious about Autism  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.30 **'Policy priorities for the Disabled Students' Allowance'**  
**Katherine Bayliss**, Student Funding Policy, Higher and Further Education Directorate, Department for Education  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 **Chair's and Westminster Higher Education Forum closing remarks**  
**Lord Kevin Shinkwin**, Vice Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group for Disability  
**Sean Cudmore**, Deputy Editor, Westminster Higher Education Forum