



Universities Challenged: Is Our Higher Education Sector Fit for the Future?

A Public Policy Exchange Symposium

Tuesday 16th November 2010

10:15am – 4:30pm

Central London

Public Policy Exchange, in association with the Centre for Parliamentary Studies, holds regular interactive seminars which provide an invaluable interface for policy discussion, debate and networking. These special events offer local practitioners, civil servants and other stakeholders not only an insight into current policy thinking, but also the opportunity to feed into future development across all areas of public policy.

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Universities Challenged: Is Our Higher Education Sector Fit for the Future?

Overview

At a time of great upheaval in the UK higher education sector, universities are facing a multitude of challenges as they strive to maintain world class standards. In recent years the rapid and widening growth in university participation, fewer resources and a greater movement towards a harmonised Europe-wide higher education system have all contributed to vigorous debate about the future of higher education in this country.

Despite the rise in higher education participation, the latest OECD's annual report, *Education at a Glance* (September 2010), indicates that the UK is currently lagging behind international graduation rates, with a greater proportion of young people getting a degree in Slovakia, Poland and the Czech Republic than in the UK. The proportion of UK public spending on Higher Education has also fallen below the average of 1% to 0.7% GDP. Facing a further cut to funding of £1.4bn, the UK higher education sector must strive to achieve much more with less, with the aim of raising standards through greater accountability and more robust examination.

The increase in graduates, alongside a shrinking job market and greater global competition experienced by many employers has also placed UK universities under intense pressure to equip students with skills that exceed those currently acquired through their degree. Universities have been urged to redouble efforts to support students in developing, demonstrating and transferring the generic and knowledge based skills necessary to progress in the job market. Closer working between universities and graduate employers in the design of undergraduate courses and in facilitating invaluable structured work placements are also vital to improving student employability.

With the findings of the much anticipated *Browne Review* into higher education funding due in October 2010 and a transformative Government white paper expected to follow in 2011, this timely symposium provides an invaluable opportunity for higher education institutions, private, public and third sector employers and key stakeholders to consider how best to ensure higher education standards in the UK remain competitive globally and explore ways in which to enhance the employability of UK graduates.

“ ... The system in England for safeguarding consistent national standards in higher education institutions is out-of-date, inadequate and in urgent need of replacement. The current arrangements with each university responsible for its own standards are no longer meeting the needs of a mass system of higher education in the 21st century with two million students... We were surprised by the lack of consistency across the higher education sector. There is much good practice, indeed excellence, in the sector but it was not easy to establish whether it is consistently applied...”

- 'Students and Universities', The Innovation, Universities, Science and Skills Committee's Report, August 2009

Venue and Accommodation

Guoman Charing Cross Hotel
The Strand
London WC2N 5HX

Through our partnership with HotelMap, we are able to offer our delegates heavily discounted hotel rates at a wide range of London hotels. To view hotel availability and rates and to book online, visit www.HotelMap.com/M5NUZ/

Alternatively, if you would like to book your accommodation by phone, you can call **Daniel Spinner at HotelMap**, on **020 7292 2335** quoting **Special Reference Code M5NUZ**.



“ It is more important than ever that higher education institutions present their students with opportunities to fulfil their potential and their career aspirations. There needs to be a strategic commitment to ensuring that career education, information, advice and guidance is forward-looking, responsive and innovative to adapt to the rapidly changing employment market...”

- Chief Executive, QAA, February 2010

Why Attend?

- ✓ Examine how to raise degree standards through better regulation and assessment of universities and robust examinations
- ✓ Discuss how to maintain a competitive edge in a global market
- ✓ Explore how to work closely with employers to increase student employability
- ✓ Consider how best to equip students with transferable skills necessary for employment
- ✓ Debate, share best practice and network with colleagues from across the education and business landscape

Who Should Attend?

- Registrars and Senior University Administrators Faculty Deans
- Admissions Bodies
- Research Councils
- Schools and FE Colleges
- Careers Services and Advisers
- IAG Advisers
- Connexions Partnerships
- Key Strategic Partners (incl. HEFCE, UCAS, OFFA, BIS)
- Funding Bodies
- Local Authority Education Officers
- Representatives of Industry and Commerce
- Education Charities
- Lifelong Learning Practitioners
- Equal Opportunities Officers
- Access Officers
- Disability Practitioners
- Campaigning Organisations

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Programme

09:30	Registration and Morning Refreshments
10:15	Chair's Welcome and Introduction
10:30	Panel Session One: Degrees of Quality – Maintaining Competitiveness within the UK Higher Education System <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Achieving More With Less: Higher Education After The Browne Review- Maintaining a Competitive Edge in a Global Market: The Importance of National, European and Global University Ranking Systems- Enabling Better Regulation of Universities: Greater Accountability and Assessment, Providing Indicators of Graduate Labour Market Outcomes- Improving Workforce Standards: Attracting Talent and Building Skills
11:15	Morning Refreshments
11:30	Open Floor Discussion and Debate with Panel One
12:30	Networking Lunch
13:30	Panel Session Two: Enhancing Student Outcomes – From First Class to World Class Graduates <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Graduating to the Job Market with Greater Skills and Employability- Providing Clearer Information on the Value of HE Awards and Career Prospects- Ensuring Students Possess and Can Transfer High Level Generic and Knowledge Based Skills- Engaging and Working with Employers in Course Design and Delivery: Enabling Structured Work Experience through Placements- Responsive, Innovative and Comprehensive Career and Support Services: Sharing Best Practice
14:15	Afternoon Refreshments
14:30	Open Floor Discussion and Debate with Panel Two
15:30	Chair's Summary and Closing Comments
15:40	Networking Reception
16:30	Close

Please note that the programme is subject to change without notice



If you would like us to send you a certificate of attendance for CPD points please email your name and details of the event to info@publicpolicyexchange.co.uk

Event Details

Date: Tuesday 16th November 2010
Time: 10:15am – 4:30pm
Venue: Central London

Forthcoming Events

Shaping the Future of Schools:
Raising Standards in Every Classroom
22nd September 2010

Broken Britain? Reducing Youth Offending
through Community Intervention
23rd September 2010

Child and Adolescent Health and Well-Being:
Improving Outcomes for Looked After Children
13th October 2010

Road Safety in the 21st Century:
Striking the Balance between Education and Enforcement
14th October 2010



The Education Sector Masterclass:
Teaching and Learning in the 21st Century
11th November 2010

The Immigration and Border Control
Sector Masterclass:
Immigration Policy in the UK
17th November 2010

The Health Sector Masterclass:
Health Policy and Delivery in the 21st
Century
25th November 2010

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For further information please contact **Parvin Madahar** on 020 7840 6081 or email parvin.madahar@publicpolicyexchange.co.uk



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