

You can read the [UUK evidence](#) to the Business, Innovation and Skills Committee inquiry into industrial strategy. This highlights the role of universities in:

- making long-term, sustainable contributions to productivity and growth,
- creating the best possible environment for businesses to thrive
- sustaining the world-class excellence of the UK's research base to attract businesses from all over the world to locate and invest in the UK
- meeting the demands of business through a strong supply of higher-level skills

The report recommends that:

- *Good practice and lessons learned around forming strong regional links should be recognised as part of an industrial strategy. This includes long standing university engagement with Local Enterprise Partnerships and Combined Authorities, support for locally-driven strategic planning and investment, and funding support (such as currently provided through European Structural and Investment Funds and the Local Growth Fund) that encourage universities, businesses and local authorities to work together and unlock further investment.*
- *Additional public investment in the Higher Education Innovation Fund in England could be directed towards universities building on the existing work they do with their local employers, businesses and the community, and ensure a greater balance of growth across local areas in England. A focus of the investment could be on ensuring employers in all areas are able to access and employ the graduates they need, and building local collaborations between businesses.]*
- *Sustaining government funding relating to support of widening participation activities and high cost subjects is essential to ensure that the labour market continues to be supplied with the high-level skills needed for the UK to compete internationally, and to ensure that the benefits are reaped as widely across social groups as possible.*
- *Addressing the immediate uncertainties associated with Brexit to protect and encourage continued recruitment from EU countries, as well as avoiding the administrative burdens currently associated with international student recruitment, should be a fundamental pillar of any initiative to attract talent to UK HE and ensure the associated benefits to British society and the economy.*

Research Professionals [have highlighted](#) a sharp drop in H2020 participation from members that are not full or associate members – “Only 11.7 per cent of Horizon 2020 grant agreements were found to include a partner who was not an EU member or Horizon 2020 associated country, the report said. Under Framework 7, 20.5 per cent of agreements included at least one non-European country.”

The Higher Education and Research Bill has finished its Commons committee stage and the [amended legislation has now been returned](#) to the Commons. A date for its third reading, when MPs will vote upon whether to pass the amended legislation, has yet to be set. Jo Johnson, the universities and science minister, [batted away all opposition amendments](#) at the final committee meeting on 18 October, which examined the bill's research provisions. The opposition amendments sought to provide additional protections for the existing research councils and to ensure a closer relationship between research and teaching, which Johnson said were “unnecessary” since such powers will be developed in the framework documents, and would jeopardise the flexibility he wants for the legislation. He also confirmed that if the bill is passed into law in its present form, ministers would have powers to change the names and functions of the research councils without consulting the academic community. Meanwhile, peers are holding informal conversations about how to approach the bill when it enters the Lords.

Brexit speculation continues – this week there was a rumour that students would be excluded from immigration figures after all, squashed quickly by No 10:

"The Government objective is to reduce annual net migration to the tens of thousands, and in order to deliver this we are keeping all visa routes are under review.

"Our position on who is included in the figures has not changed, and we are categorically not reviewing whether or not students are included."

A UUK task force has been looking at violence against women, harassment and hate crime affecting university students and has now reported. See the [UUK press release](#), you can [download the report](#), [Research Professional](#) have written about it as have [the BBC](#), Jim Dickinson of UCEA has [written on WonkHE](#), there was some coverage recently in [the Guardian](#).

"The evidence showed that while many universities have already taken positive steps to address these issues, university responses are not always as joined-up as they could be. There is more work that can be done to share effective practice across the sector.

The taskforce report recommends that:

Universities, working with students' unions, should take an institution-wide approach to tackling violence against women, harassment and hate crime and carry out a regular impact assessment of their approach

Universities should embed a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence, harassment and hate crime, highlighting up-front the behaviours that are expected from all students, as well as ensuring staff understand the importance of fostering a zero-tolerance culture

Universities should develop a clear and accessible response procedure and centralised reporting system for dealing with incidents of violence, harassment or hate crime, working with relevant external agencies where appropriate

Universities develop and maintain partnership working as a fundamental component of preventing and responding to violence against women, harassment and hate crime. Partners – including the police, community leaders and specialist services – can be vital in supporting students, ensuring staff are well-trained and assessing the nature and scale of the issues affecting students at a given time

Universities UK should hold an annual national conference for the next three years to facilitate the sharing of good practice on matters related to the work of the taskforce

Universities UK should work with relevant bodies such as the NUS, JISC and Reclaim the Internet to assess what further support may be needed to tackle the growing prevalence of online harassment and hate crime

On Monday, HESA published a [report on the DLHE consultation](#) - this is not the outcome of the consultation, just an analysis by HESA of the responses, but it gives a sense of direction. **HESA will publish a proposal based on this feedback and run a second consultation on it towards the end of the year.** Respondents agreed that:

- *HESA should use linked data so as not to have to ask graduates for data available elsewhere – but a survey is still important to give context for the raw data (such as salaries)*
- *Areas such as activity, employment and study, professions, and preparedness for the future were supported. Proposals for NPS and skills had mixed responses*
- *Respondents were generally in favour of one survey point, however just over a third of respondents indicated that they would prefer multiple surveys.*
- *The majority of responses were in favour of moving away from the current six-month survey point, to somewhere between 12 and 18 months, in order to allow graduates time to enter or progress in their career path*

- *Marginally more respondents were in favour of moving to a central system rather than the current system when HEIs run their own surveys*

Two research reports were also published - these were commissioned by HESA to support the review.

- CFE Research's report on '[What do good outcomes from HE look like](#)' considers what good outcomes are for a range of groups, including students and graduates, higher education providers, employers and society/the state.
- Warwick Institute for Employment Research's report on '[Richer information on student views](#)'. This notes, among other things:
 - *"Students were much more likely than in previous years to use university rankings and online sources of information in their decisions about which course and which university to choose. However, there was some uncertainty about the reliability and validity of such online sources"*
 - *"Participants were generally very positive in their reflections about choosing to go to university. Almost all said that they would choose to go to university again, although many felt that there was an advantage in taking some time out of full-time education and gaining some work experience. Some students may have chosen a different university or course if they had been more informed about teaching quality and the number of contact hours"*

Coming up next week:

Lords Science and Technology Committee - On Tuesday 25 October Jo Johnson MP gives evidence to the Committee on their inquiry into EU membership and UK science. In Committee Room 4a from 10am.

Science and Technology Committee - The Commons hear from witnesses on the topic of Leaving the EU: Implications and opportunities for science and research on Wednesday 26 October from 1.45pm, including:

- Robin Walker MP, Department for Exiting the European Union
- Jo Johnson MP, Minister for Universities and Science

European Scrutiny Committee - Also on Wednesday another Commons committee hears from Rt Hon David Jones MP, Department for Exiting the European Union on EU-UK relations in preparation for Brexit. In Committee Room 8 from 2.15pm.

Lords Debates:

- On Thursday 27 October Lord Holmes of Richmond (Conservative) has called for a debate on the floor of the House, on the Government's plans to promote social mobility and build a society that works for everyone, following oral questions which begin at 11am.
- Also on Thursday 27 October in the Grand Committee, Baroness Deech has called a Question for short debate on steps to combat anti-Semitism, in particular in universities. This debate is time limited at one hour.

And a reminder to engage in [the "Schools that work for everyone" consultation](#) – workshops on 4th and 17th November.