

theguardian

# The future of higher education

**11-12 March 2010**

America Square Conference Centre, London

**Stimulating debate and shaping strategic thinking on rising to the challenges facing higher education leaders**

Join us at the Guardian's fourth annual higher education summit.

**Speakers include:**

**Lord Browne**

Chair, Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance

**Prof Steve Smith**

Vice-chancellor, University of Exeter, and president, UUK

**Sam Laidlaw**

CEO, Centrica, and chair, CBI higher education taskforce

**Prof Sir Adam Roberts**

President, British Academy, and emeritus professor of international relations, University of Oxford

**David Willetts MP**

Shadow secretary of state for universities

**Prof Donald Heller**

Director, Center for the Study of Higher Education, Pennsylvania State University

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# Programme

## Day 1

09.00

### Registration

09.30

### Chair's opening remarks and welcome

**Mike Baker**, journalist and broadcaster

09.40

### Opening keynote address

**Sam Laidlaw**, CEO, Centrica, and chair, CBI higher education taskforce

10.10

### What is higher education for?

How do we ensure that, as a sector, higher education is playing its part in delivering on core national priorities while maintaining the tradition of university as an intellectual experience in its own right?

10.40

### Coffee break

11.10

### Panel discussion

#### Widening participation: social mobility and access to higher education

Social mobility, social justice and access to higher education.

- What strategies can promote wider access while ensuring the quality of student experience is protected?
- How can higher education institutions adapt their offering to attract a greater diversity of students?
- What changes in culture are necessary in order to provide a greater diversity of learning models that are attractive to a wider range of students?
- Would a raised student contribution have a negative impact on participation rates?
- How can fair access be actively supported via different fee regimes?

**Geoff Hall**, principal and chief executive, New College Nottingham

**David Johnston**, chief executive, Social Mobility Foundation

**Wes Streeting**, president, NUS

**Dr Tessa Stone**, chief executive, BrightsideUNIAID

**Prof Dianne Willcocks**, vice-chancellor, York St John University

12.00

### Questions and discussion

12.10

### Breakout sessions

Delegates choose to attend breakout 1, 2 or 3

#### 1 Engaging business

- How can universities and business work together to shape provision that develops the skills that make graduates ready for the world of work?
- How can university-business interaction be fostered and developed through the recession?

**David Doherty**, chief executive, Council for Industry and Higher Education

**Facilitator: David Sweeney**, director of research, innovation and skills, Hefce

#### 2 Student experience

- How can institutions protect the quality of their students' experience in light of significant budget constraints?
- How does increased focus on quality and student experience interplay with the marketisation of the sector?
- How will outcomes be affected if the disparity between student experience in different institutions widens?

**Anthony McLaren**, CEO, QAA

**Prof Paul O'Prey**, vice-chancellor, Roehampton University

**Facilitator: Anna Fazackerley**, head of education, Policy Exchange

#### 3 Excellence in teaching

- In light of significant fiscal constraint, how can teaching excellence be maintained?
- What does good teaching constitute in the context of higher education?
- How can excellence in teaching be incentivised?

**Prof Edward Acton**, vice-chancellor, University of East Anglia

**Heather Fry**, director of education and participation, Hefce

**Dr Matthew Pearson**, further and higher education consultant, Steljes

**Facilitator: Prof Michael Kenny**, visiting research fellow, IPPR

13.00

### Lunch

14.00

### In conversation with ...

**Lord Browne**, chair, Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance

**David Willetts MP**, shadow secretary of state for universities

14.40

### Questions and discussion

14.50

### International perspectives on funding structures

UK HE occupies an unquestionably strong position in the global higher education market. However, as the sector faces unprecedented challenges, we look outwards for inspiration and learning from the models employed beyond our shores.

**Prof Donald Heller**, director, Center for the Study of Higher Education, professor of education and senior scientist, Pennsylvania State University

15.20

### Coffee break

15.50

### Panel discussion

#### Securing funding for the future

With student demand changing in the context of the recession and increasing constraint on public spending, higher education institutions will need to seek ever more innovative approaches to maintain and grow their provision.

- There are a range of options and all are fiercely contested. What are the viable scenarios and what impact would each have on income, participation and quality?
- To what extent will institutions need to tap into a wider range of funding streams?
- How can universities adapt and rise to the challenge of delivering more for less?

**Prof Claire Callender**, professor of higher education, Birkbeck

**Prof Tony Downes**, deputy vice-chancellor, University of Reading

**Prof Les Ebdon**, vice-chancellor, University of Bedfordshire  
**Prof Malcolm Grant**, president and provost, UCL  
**Paulina Lubacz**, treasurer, University of Durham  
**Sean O'Shea**, chief executive, University Partnerships Programme

16.40

### Questions and discussion

16.50

### Closing keynote address

**Sir Alan Langlands**, chief executive, Hefce

17.20

### Chair's closing remarks

17.30

### Close of day one

## Day 2

08.30

### Registration

09.00

### Chair's opening remarks and welcome

09.10

#### The informed student

As higher education institutions seek to diversify intake and students become increasingly conscious of the personal investment they make in higher education, the sector is under increasing pressure to provide more transparent information that enables students to make more informed decisions about what, where and how they study.

- What do institutions need to do collectively to enable potential students to navigate the sector effectively?
- How can students from all backgrounds be enabled to make educated decisions about what they want from university?
- What kind of information is needed to make higher education more accessible to domestic, international and professional pools of potential students?

09.40

### Panel discussion

#### The debate: A market for higher education

The sector is already subject to significant marketisation. With the diversification of delivery models and students becoming increasingly demanding as consumers, the shape and structure of the sector faces significant change.

- How might the higher education market evolve and what does an increasingly demand-driven system mean for institutions?
- How would concepts of value for money, transparency and quality interplay in a system led by demand?
- How would increased marketisation impact on the widening participation agenda?
- What effect would a rise or removal of the fee cap have on the strategic positioning of individual institutions?

**Prof Glynis Breakwell**, vice-chancellor, University of Bath  
**Anna Fazackerley**, head of education, Policy Exchange  
**Prof Malcolm McVicar**, vice-chancellor, University of Central Lancashire  
**Prof Mike Thorne**, vice-chancellor, Anglia Ruskin University

10.30

### Questions and discussion

10.40

### Coffee break

11.10

### Panel discussion

#### World-class research

- How can the capacity of universities to deliver world-class research be strengthened?
- In light of significant fiscal constraint, how can research excellence be maintained?
- What will the impact of increased requirement to demonstrate economic outcomes of research be?

**Prof Michael Arthur**, vice-chancellor, University of Leeds  
**Prof Sir Adam Roberts**, president, British Academy, and emeritus professor of international relations, University of Oxford  
**Dr Malcolm Read**, executive secretary, JISC  
**Prof Adrian Smith**, director general for science and research, BIS

12.00

### Questions and discussion

12.10

#### UK HE v The rest of the world

The sector is part of an increasingly globalised sphere. With provision being franchised and the international education market diversifying, what can UK higher education institutions do to remain competitive?

- How are students orientating themselves in a global education marketplace?
- How can we protect the elements that make our universities attractive to the international student market?
- What strategies for cross-border partnerships will bring the most strategic benefits to UK institutions?

**Dr Dirk Van Damme**, head of the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI), OECD

12.50

### Closing keynote address

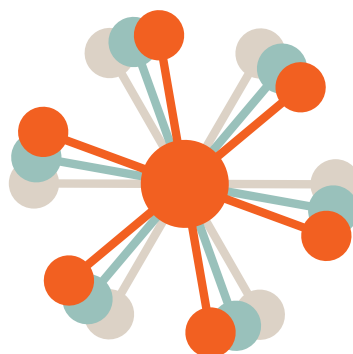
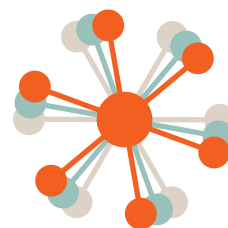
**Prof Steve Smith**, vice-chancellor, University of Exeter, and president, UUK

13.20

### Chair's closing remarks

13.30

### Lunch and close of conference





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