



House of Commons

Business, Innovation and Skills
Committee

The Teaching Excellence Framework: Assessing quality in Higher Education

Third Report of Session 2015–16



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relating to the report*

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The Business, Innovation and Skills Committee

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Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk of the Business Innovation and Skills Committee, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 5777; the Committee's email address is biscom@parliament.uk.

Contents

1	Introduction	3
	The quality of UK higher education	3
	Fulfilling our potential: the Government's Green Paper	3
	Assessing quality in higher education: our inquiry	3
2	The Teaching Excellence Framework	5
	Teaching quality in higher education institutions	5
	Metrics in the TEF	5
	Metrics and widening participation	9
	Conclusions on metrics	10
3	Timetable for introduction of the TEF and link to tuition fees	12
	The link with tuition fees	12
	Timetable	15
	Subject or institutional level?	17
4	The institutional architecture	18
5	Wider implications across the UK	20
	Quality assessment and devolution	20
	Teaching quality and research	20
6	Conclusion	22
	Conclusions and recommendations	23
	Formal Minutes	25
	Witnesses	27
	Published written evidence	28
	List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament	31

1 Introduction

The quality of UK higher education

1. The UK has a world-leading higher education sector. Thirty four of the UK's universities feature in the world's top 200 institutions and three of the world's top ten institutions are in the UK. In addition to producing skilled graduates and high quality research, the higher education sector produces a direct economic benefit to the UK. For example, in 2011 higher education made up 2.8% of UK GDP and the sector generated £10.7 billion of export earnings. The Government noted the significance of this economic role in its Productivity Plan, stating that the higher education sector "represents an important competitive advantage, as technological change continues to increase demand for higher skilled roles".

2. There are over 150 higher education institutions (HEIs) in the UK. These are diverse in history, governance and size, as well as in terms of their income streams and areas of focus for teaching or research. Yet there are common challenges facing the sector over the coming decades. These include increasing global competition, rising student expectations and the need to secure sufficient funding for excellent teaching and research. The Government has therefore stated that "reform is required to ensure the long-term sustainability of investment in universities".

Fulfilling our potential: the Government's Green Paper

3. In November 2015, the Government published its Higher Education Green Paper, *Fulfilling our potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*. This stated that its "core aims are to raise teaching standards, provide greater focus on graduate employability, widen participation in higher education, and open up the sectors to new high quality entrants". It contained proposals to:

- introduce a Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF);
- increase participation by students from disadvantaged and under-represented groups in higher education;
- introduce a single gateway for providers to enter the sector; and
- re-shape the funding and regulatory architecture for the higher education system.

4. The Green Paper has been described as "the biggest shakeup of higher education since fees were introduced nearly 20 years ago". It contains a range of measures which go beyond institutional reforms to quality assessment. These include the liberalisation of mechanisms to allocate the 'university' title and to decide who gets degree-awarding powers, and changes to the application of Freedom of Information provisions to universities.

Assessing quality in higher education: our inquiry

5. We launched our inquiry, *Assessing quality in Higher Education*, on 17 September 2015, before the Green Paper was published. We asked for evidence about the objectives of a potential Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF): the framework the Government

is proposing to monitor and assess the quality of teaching in England. We considered the merits and implementation of the new framework and how the relationship between teaching quality and tuition fees should be managed. We received over 80 submissions of written evidence and held three oral evidence sessions, during which we heard from universities, academics, student representatives, parts of the current higher education funding and regulation ecosystem and from Joseph Johnson MP, Minister for Universities and Science. We also spoke with university representatives and academics about the potential impact of the TEF during a meeting with Universities UK at City University, Birmingham. We are grateful to all those who provided evidence and who hosted our visit to Birmingham.

6. The central issue raised with us in our evidence gathering process was the development of the proposed Teaching Excellence Framework as the lens through which any other reform to quality processes would be viewed. In this Report, therefore, we focus on the introduction of the TEF but also consider the proposed link between the TEF and tuition fees. We conclude by considering proposed changes to the institutional architecture surrounding higher education.

2 The Teaching Excellence Framework

Teaching quality in higher education institutions

7. Before considering the specifics of the TEF proposals, it is important to note the high quality of teaching generally available in our higher education system at present. Surveys indicate that 86% of students studying in the UK are satisfied with the quality of their course; the UK outperforms our international competitors in 15 out of 23 International Student Barometer benchmarks. The debate around teaching excellence should therefore be viewed within the context of enhancing an already excellent system or, as the Minister for Universities and Science put it, “to continue to make a great sector greater still”. The aims of the TEF proposals are summarised in Box 1 below; the proposed development of the TEF proposals are summarised in Table 1.

Box 1: Aims of the TEF

The purposes of TEF are:

- to encourage excellent teaching for all students
- promote improvement by highlighting exemplary practice
- promote cultural change to recognise teaching as equal in status to research
- provide clear information on teaching quality to assist student choice
- provide clear information to help employers recruit students with better and known skills
- recognise and respect the diversity of provision and different types of excellence

Source: Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice, Cm 9141, November 2015, p18

8. The evidence we received indicates that the objective of ensuring consistently high teaching standards is shared by universities and students alike. There was also widespread support for the principle of the TEF as a means of achieving this and for improving the status afforded to teaching, relative to that of research.¹ The issue is how best to design the TEF so as to realise this aim. **Changing student expectations and an increasingly competitive environment for both UK and international students are key challenges for the higher education sector. In this context, we welcome and endorse the Government’s focus on teaching quality. We agree that a stronger incentive to focus on teaching quality via the Teaching Excellence Framework will help to ensure that higher education institutions meet student expectations and improve on their leading international position.**

Metrics in the TEF

9. There is no commonly agreed definition of what constitutes good teaching in higher education. In a diverse higher education environment, we heard that excellent teaching may look very different across different subjects and across different autonomous

¹ For example, University of East Anglia (QHE 12)

institutions.² In the absence of any agreed definition or recognised measures of teaching quality, the Government is proposing to use measures, or metrics, as proxies for teaching quality. Therefore the challenge is to identify those metrics which most reliably and accurately measure teaching quality, as opposed to other factors that contribute to the results achieved by students.

Table 1: TEF proposals

TEF	Timetable	Detail
TEF 1 (one level only)	Rating announced in time for 2017–18 introduction	TEF 1 will be awarded based on basis of a recent Quality Assessment review. A maximum fee cap will be set, in line with inflation. Qualifying institutions will be able to raise fees up to this amount. TEF 1 awards will last for three years.
TEF 2 (potentially up to 4 quality ratings)	Rating announced in spring 2017 in time for 2018–19 introduction	TEF 2 will have multi-level, higher awards, based upon existing metrics and additional qualitative and quantitative information (subject to current consultation).
TEF 2 refinement	Potentially subsequent years	Potential gradual introduction of more teaching and learning focussed metrics, such as on learning gain, as and when they are developed. Potential for more levels of TEF and assessment at subject/discipline levels.

Source: Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*, Cm 9141, November 2015, pp24–5

10. The Green Paper proposes that TEF assessments be based on three metrics, on which there is data already available: employment/graduate destination, retention and student satisfaction.³ While there was broad support from universities for the principles of the TEF, there were widespread concerns about how well these metrics might work in practice. These concerns, summarised in Table 2, centred on the extent to which the measures proposed so far could be considered an effective proxy for teaching quality. For example, we heard that there was a difference between students who were generally satisfied with their course, as measured by the National Student Survey (NSS), and those that were well-taught. With reference to the retention metric, it was suggested that improved scores could be achieved by making university courses less demanding or reducing the intake of students who were less likely to succeed. On the graduate destination metric, we heard that this tended to be more influenced by social or economic factors than by teaching quality and that it might work against the objective of widening participation.⁴

11. It should be noted that the Government's proposals to use these metrics are still in draft. The Government plans to begin a technical consultation shortly on the detail of the metrics and how they will operate, building on the feedback from its initial consultation. It then expects that the metrics used will develop over time, as "greater evidence and understanding of what constitutes excellent teaching develops."⁵ In addition—and in

² For example, Oxford University (QHE 27)

³ Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*, Cm 9141, November 2015, pp33–4

⁴ Q11, OFFA (QHE 42)

⁵ Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*, Cm 9141, November 2015, p23

recognition of the “issues around how robust”⁶ the existing metrics are—the Government is proposing that the quantitative element of the TEF be supplemented by qualitative assessment, carried out by expert panels, considering additional information provided by universities on their individual circumstances and objectives. This process can be used to take account of the use of different teaching methods, including peer-to-peer teaching, which may be difficult to capture in metrics. It should also allow there to be proper consideration to be given to the full diversity of the sector, which includes a large number of part-time students and those enjoying the benefits of distance learning.⁷ The interaction between the qualitative and quantitative forms of assessment is still in the policy development process and will be vital in achieving confidence in the metrics.

Table 2: Concerns about the metrics proposed as part of the Teaching Excellence Framework

Metric	Comments
Employment / destination	<p>There is no evidence that graduate destinations or salary levels are good proxies for teaching quality.^A In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women, BME students and those from disadvantaged backgrounds tend to earn less;^B - Privately educated students are more likely to get a “good degree” than state educated students or those from disadvantaged backgrounds and earn more three years after leaving university;^C - Graduate destination can be affected by the regional economy; - Graduate destinations are influenced by subject more than teaching quality; - Some jobs are not classified as ‘graduate’, despite requiring higher level qualifications.^D
Retention	Retention rates are affected more by other factors relating to the university experience than by teaching quality (eg student intake) ^E
Satisfaction	<p>The National Student Survey is currently being revised, with some changes to the questions expected to be introduced in 2017. Concerns about the limited use of the NSS included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Satisfaction is not the same as teaching quality;^F - There is no indication of “why” a course is rated as it is or commentary on what matters to students;^G - Results tend to vary by discipline; - NSS is open to gaming and does not demonstrate quality
A	Q81
B	Q63
C	Q83
D	Q204
E	Q13; Association of National Teaching Fellows (QHE 63)
F	Q34
G	Q84, Q86, Q92 [Megan Dunn], Q86 [Sally Hunt]

⁶ Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*, Cm 9141, November 2015, p34

⁷ Russell Group (QHE 85)

12. Alongside these doubts about the extent to which the Government's proposals would provide a really meaningful assessment of teaching quality, we also heard concerns about a range of potential consequences which could arise from the adoption of these particular metrics. These risks, or unintended consequences, are summarised in Table 3, below. Where there is funding at stake, it is only natural for institutions to adapt their behaviour in order to seek to increase funding. It is important that full consideration is given to mitigating the risks of unwelcome or counter-productive types of behaviour being inadvertently encouraged.

Table 3: Suggested unintended consequences of elements of the TEF proposals.

Element of proposal	Associated risk or unintended consequence
Using retention as one of the three metrics for the TEF.	Institutions wishing to improve retention can make courses less demanding, undermining efforts to improve quality.
Using the National Student Survey's measure of satisfaction as one of the three metrics for the TEF.	Students can undermine the validity or 'game' the NSS by reporting high/low scores with different aims in mind.
Using graduate destination as one of the three metrics for the TEF.	This may favour institutions specialising in disciplines that tend to lead to higher salaries or encourage them to change student recruitment profile (eg taking fewer women, BME students and those from disadvantaged backgrounds).
Use of metrics.	Time lag between experiences of those who feed into metrics and students applying to university mean that the indicators lose meaning.
Increasing tuition fees.	Raising fees at an institutional level fails to recognise varying performance between departments.
Courses or institutions without good TEF scores are unable to increase fees.	Depriving courses which do not receive higher TEF ratings from income (by not allowing fee increases) prevents improvements being made and drives course closures. ^H
Allocating low TEF scores.	Adverse impact on UK's international brand and the ability to recruit students, in the absence of similar information being published by our competitors. ^I
H National Union of Students (QHE 41) I University of East Anglia (QHE 12)	

13. In considering potential metrics, the Government does not have the benefit of a repository of international experience on measuring teaching quality on which to draw. Whilst we heard that there was some relevant experience in the US and Australia, the UK was at the leading edge of developing these measures, and other countries were watching closely.⁸ "Learning gain" or "value added" has been suggested as an alternative, perhaps better, measure of teaching quality and is being explored in other countries. This measure, at a basic level, looks at the relationship between the qualifications and level of skills that a student has when starting their degree programme, compared to when they finish.⁹ This

⁸ Q155, Q92

⁹ Q36

may seem a more direct way of measuring teaching quality, although we heard doubts expressed about the sophistication of the available metrics and concerns about the impact of this measure on institutions with very high entry requirements.¹⁰

14. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) is currently carrying out pilot studies to look at how added value metrics might work in universities and we were told that it may be “two or three years” before something “a bit more robust and consensual” emerged.”¹¹ We heard more support for the development of measures, such as learning gain or value added, as part of assessment mechanisms for the TEF, but there appears to be limited appetite for their speedy development. Universities have been diligent in identifying reasonable concerns with the impact of any chosen metric, but we found they were less likely to propose viable alternatives. **We urge universities to engage constructively on the technical consultation to ensure that the metrics chosen for the TEF are as robust and reliable as possible. In particular, we recommend that priority is given by everybody involved to the speedy establishment of potentially viable metrics relating to learning gain.**

Metrics and widening participation

15. The Minister has commented that widening participation will be “intimately linked to the TEF”.¹² Entry rates for young people from disadvantaged areas has been increasing in recent years.¹³ Yet a 2015 report indicated that “pupils from the highest socio-economic quintile group are around 40 percentage points more likely to go to university than those in the lowest socio-economic quintile group”.¹⁴ Research by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills summarised differences in university participation as follows:

Ethnic minorities and those from the highest socio-economic backgrounds are substantially more likely to go to university than White British pupils and those from the lowest socio-economic backgrounds. Girls are slightly more likely to go to university than boys.¹⁵

The Prime Minister has challenged the university sector to do more to improve ethnic minority representation. He has set an aim to double the proportion of people from disadvantaged backgrounds entering higher education by the end of the current Parliament from the 2009 levels and committed to increasing the number of BME students going into higher education by 20% by 2020.¹⁶ He has also announced plans to introduce legislation requiring universities to publish more detail on the ethnic and socio-economic background of applicants.¹⁷

16. In support of efforts to widen participation in higher education, the Green Paper highlights the establishment by Universities UK (UUK) of a social mobility advisory group to build upon good practice and, together with the Department for Education, to

¹⁰ Q14, Q36

¹¹ Q33

¹² “Cameron’s access goals ‘key factor’ in Green Paper, Times Higher Education, 15 October 2015

¹³ Tuition fee statistics, House of Commons Library briefing paper no. 917, 5 October 2015, p15

¹⁴ BIS research Paper No 186, *Socio-economic, ethnic and gender differences in HE participation*, November 2015, p9

¹⁵ BIS research Paper No 186, *Socio-economic, ethnic and gender differences in HE participation*, November 2015, p7

¹⁶ Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*, Cm 9141, November 2015 p36

¹⁷ The Sunday Times, David Cameron: Stand by, universities; I’m bringing the fight for equality in Britain to you, 31 January 2016

raise aspirations and attitudes in under-represented groups.¹⁸ This is expected to report this year. The Green Paper proposes that TEF metrics, when reported, would be broken down according to social background of students, and information relating to widening participation can be included in the qualitative evidence submitted within the TEF.¹⁹

17. We welcome the Government's commitment—and personal support of the Prime Minister—to widening participation in higher education and believe that this objective should be pursued by using strong incentives. In principle, we are in favour of the use of suitable metrics governing widening participation to be used, in addition to those in the TEF relating more directly to teaching quality. ***We recommend that the Government consults on suitable metrics on widening participation, to be used by the Office for Fair Access as part of its process for approving access agreements with institutions, which are a pre-requisite for any increase in tuition fees.***

Conclusions on metrics

18. The Green Paper sets out clear criteria which should be used to select effective metrics for measuring teaching quality. These include a test of 'validity': whether the metric is a useable measure or proxy for teaching quality—as well as a requirement that metrics are robust, credible, and current. As part of our inquiry, we have heard about a range of risks or unintended consequences which could arise from elements of the TEF, as currently envisaged. These are summarised in Table 3. We share some of the concerns of universities about the accuracy of the metrics and potential unintended consequences. For example, there are so many factors affecting future employment it seems to us difficult if not impossible to make a meaningful linkage to teaching quality. There may well be a closer link between teaching and retention rates, and we support the involvement of students in assessing teaching performance. But more work on the detail is required. ***We agree with the Government's approach of properly testing and consulting on potential metrics. To this end, we recommend that Government includes in its further consultation on metrics:***

- ***an assessment of the evidence that any proposed metric is linked to teaching quality; and***
- ***an assessment of the potential unintended consequences which could arise from an institution seeking to optimise its score on each metric, with proposals on how these risks can best be mitigated.***

We would also urge the University sector to engage fully with the technical consultation in order to develop a set of appropriate metrics.

19. Given that the metrics are still being refined, we welcome the increasing emphasis by the Minister on narrative reporting, via the qualitative element of the TEF. This will allow universities to supplement statistical analysis with an explanation of the context and overall mission of the institution. This will enable them to add depth to any assessment of teaching quality, which will be considered in the round by expert panels, alongside the metrics. It should also enable there to be a focus on providing consumer-orientated

¹⁸ Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*, Cm 9141, November 2015 pp38-9

¹⁹ Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*, Cm 9141, November 2015 p22 and p34

information in a way that is genuinely helpful to prospective students. In the early stages of the TEF, whilst the metrics are still being refined, a greater emphasis on this narrative evidence seems the best way forward, provided that there is sufficient consistency of approach, limited bureaucracy and clarity around the weighting given to each element of the TEF. ***We recommend that the Government provides further detail on the balance between qualitative and quantitative assessment as part of its forthcoming technical consultation and seeks views on its proposals.***

20. We recognise that universities are increasingly prioritising teaching excellence and are already taking steps to improve teaching quality. The establishment of the National Student Survey has provided a welcome source of feedback for students and universities alike and has no doubt sharpened the focus on teaching quality. We agree that a properly-working TEF can further incentivise the delivery of consistently high teaching quality and help to hold universities to account for teaching as well as research. It should also be centred on the interests of the student, by assisting student choice rather than adding unhelpful complexity. We welcome the Government's consultative approach in producing a Green Paper before more detailed proposals are published. We urge the Government to set out in detail its response to the concerns that have been raised about the suitability of the proposed metrics.

3 Timetable for introduction of the TEF and link to tuition fees

The link with tuition fees

21. In 2012, the cap on fees for new undergraduate students in England was increased to £9,000 a year. In the first year of the new fee regime, the average fee was around £8,400. Since then the headline fee has since increased each year to approximately £8,900 in 2015–16.²⁰ Of the 183 institutions with 2016–17 access agreements, 139 (76%) charge the maximum headline fee of £9,000. The majority of institutions with fees lower than the cap of £9,000 were further education colleges; only one institution with a fee of below £9,000 was a university.²¹

22. The 2012 increase in the tuition fee cap to £9,000 coincided with a cut to most of the ongoing direct public funding for tuition in England. As a result, the overall balance of higher education funding moved away from the taxpayer and towards the student.²²

23. Since the 2012 increase, the UK is estimated to have the highest average fee levels of any ‘public’ universities in the world and the second highest average fees levels across all types of universities, behind the US.²³ There was a 6.6% fall in the total number of applicants to UK universities in 2012, when the higher fees were introduced, compared to 2011. Whilst the number of applications has since increased, the 2014 number remained below the 2011 high.²⁴

24. Under the proposals set out in the Green Paper, in year one of the TEF, providers who have successfully completed a quality assessment review will be awarded the first level of TEF and will be able to raise their fees in line with inflation, up to a maximum fee cap, from the 2017–18 academic year.²⁵ The level one award will last for three years.²⁶ It is expected that most institutions would qualify for level one TEF in its first year.²⁷ In year two, institutions will be able to apply for higher levels of TEF in order to take advantage of financial incentives (higher tuition fee caps). These will be differentiated according to the level of TEF achieved and will apply from the academic year 2018–19. Again, the awards would last for three years.

25. The Green Paper states that the Secretary of State will have “a power to set tuition fee caps and require [the Office for Students] to monitor all registered providers to ensure they are complying with the tuition fee caps—this is essential to limit the financial exposure

20 Tuition fee statistics, House of Commons Library briefing paper no. 917, 5 October 2015, p3

21 Tuition fee statistics, House of Commons Library briefing paper no. 917, 5 October 2015, p9

22 HE in England from 2012: Funding and finance, House of Commons Library briefing paper no. 6206, 17 August 2015, p3

23 This estimate included private institutions in the US. Changes to higher education funding and student support in England from 2012/13, House of Commons Library briefing paper no. 5753, February 2012, p9

24 Tuition fee statistics, House of Commons Library briefing paper no. 917, 5 October 2015, p15

25 See Table 1

26 Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*, Cm 9141, November 2015, p22

27 Higher Education Green Paper Fulfilling Our Potential, House of Commons Library briefing no. 7399, 10 November 2015, p9

of taxpayers”.²⁸ The Government anticipates a maximum fee cap will correspond to each of the proposed four TEF award levels. Fee caps would apply regardless of an institution’s performance in previous TEF cycles, so they will not be able to ‘bank’ increases gained if they performed better on the TEF in previous years. Fees charged to students are not expected by the Government to vary during a single course.²⁹

26. There are undoubtedly financial pressures on Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) which could be eased by the ability to increase tuition fees, at least in line with inflation. HEFCE explained that, in the medium term, the financial situations of institutions meant that they were heavily dependent on international student recruitment for income.³⁰ Universities UK highlighted the pressures which incentivised universities to focus on the most financially viable courses, against the wider national and student interests.³¹ From a student perspective, the NUS referred to an expectation from students that increased funding via tuition fees in 2012 would lead to higher quality teaching, but that had not happened because tuition fees were replacing rather than supplementing public money.³²

27. In order to continue to thrive in a competitive environment, universities will need to raise funds from a variety of sources, potentially including tuition fees. Views on whether increased tuition fees are the solution to current financial concerns vary and are inevitably drawn into the wider debate about university funding. Debate about the principle of increasing fees was not part of our inquiry; we focused solely on the proposed link between the TEF and the ability to increase fees. Nor did we look at the wider but important link between teaching quality and casualised labour.³³ That said, students are entitled to expect high quality teaching, given the costs they are incurring; the Government should be sensitive to the perception that it is students who are having to fund an increase in teaching quality.

28. The weight of evidence we heard in this inquiry from the universities sector was against creating a link between TEF and tuition fees. Whilst there was acceptance of and support for a requirement to demonstrate a minimal teaching standard before increasing fees—such as that envisaged under TEF 1—there was widespread concern about applying TEF to a more sophisticated, differentiated set of fee levels based upon teaching quality. The arguments against this link included:

- a financial incentive could heighten the likelihood of institutions seeking to manipulate or “game” the TEF, rather than working meaningfully within it;
- an increase was already necessary to fill holes in existing finances;
- the reputational benefits, rather than financial incentives, would be sufficient to ensure TEF was taken seriously; financial incentives were limited at a time of low inflation;³⁴

28 Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*, Cm 9141 p64. The financial exposure to the taxpayer arises because only a proportion of student loans are repaid; the rest of the cost is borne by the taxpayer.

29 Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*, Cm 9141, p30

30 Q146 [Professor Atkins]

31 Q23

32 Q86

33 Q71 [Megan Dunn]; the term “casualised labour” refers to those teachers, particularly post-graduates who are employed on short term contracts or paid on an hourly basis

34 Cambridge University (QHE 60)

also, with inflation rates subject to variation, fee increases may reflect economic conditions more than teaching quality;³⁵

- Other incentives to improve teacher quality—such as the feedback in the National Student Survey or a greater focus on teaching for career progression purposes—might have a bigger and more rapid effect than a TEF rating that lasts for at least three years;³⁶
- The rate of inflation at the time of the increase would have a disproportionate impact on funding for the following few years;
- A financial link—especially one that could be set for a five year period—would reward the high performing institutions but not provide the resources necessary for others to invest in improving teaching quality.

29. In response, the Government’s Green Paper argues that the reputational advantages from TEF in helping to recruit students will “take time to develop and mature” and therefore additional incentives are required to drive up teaching quality.³⁷ The example of the Research Excellence Framework is cited to demonstrate that it is financial incentives that are needed to drive institutional behaviour, and the incentives for high quality should be as enticing for teaching as they are for research.³⁸ The Minister argued that such a link would enable universities that offered high quality teaching to invest more in teaching and those that were not able to obtain additional funding would be incentivised to refocus their efforts on improving teaching quality.³⁹

30. It is unlikely that there will be a taxpayer-funded increase in university funding in this Parliament. The alternative to the link between the TEF and tuition fees would be for the Government to raise the tuition fee cap, whether in line with inflation or not, and to make the arguments on the basis of funding requirements. A further alternative would be for the link to be retained for TEF 1—to guarantee minimum standards—but not be extended to the more differentiated levels, either at all, or until the metrics used to underpin the different awards proved to be sufficiently robust.

31. We have carefully considered the arguments for and against the linking of the TEF to increases in tuition fees. **We agree with the Government that no university should be allowed to increase its tuition fees without being able to demonstrate that the quality of its teaching meets minimum standards. The proposals for TEF 1 should meet this objective and we support its implementation along the lines outlined in the Green Paper.**

32. **In terms of further development, we support the principle of a more sophisticated link (using differentiated levels) between teaching quality and fee level, provided that the metrics used to measure teaching quality can command sufficient confidence of both students and universities. This will better enable students and taxpayers to hold universities to account for the service they provide. A multi-tiered TEF should only**

35 National Union of Students (QHE 41); Q96 [Megan Dunn]

36 Q73 [Sally Hunt]

37 Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*, Cm 9141 p29

38 Q104

39 Q174

be introduced once Government can demonstrate its metrics have the confidence of students and universities. Achieving the necessary degree of confidence is in part dependent on the timetable for full introduction.

Timetable

33. Table 4 shows the Government's proposed timetable for setting up and introducing the TEF. By this timescale, decisions about whether HEIs had achieved TEF 1 status, meaning success in a Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) assessment, would be announced in April 2016. The metrics for further iterations of the TEF would be developed via consultations in 2016, with the results of the next phase of TEF announced in April 2017 and used to inform decisions relating to 2018–19.

Table 4: Timeline for introduction of the TEF.

Date	Activity
15 January 2016	Green Paper consultation closes
January to March 2016	TEF level 1 decisions made but not announced (status of QA reviews and fee uplift)
Spring 2016	Government response to Green Paper consultation
Spring 2016	TEF technical consultation
Spring 2016	TEF level 1 decisions announced
September 2016	Response to technical consultation
October 2016	Publish technical guidance for providers and panel members
October to December 2016	Providers apply
January to February 2017	Panels undertake assessments
March 2017	Moderation
April 2017	Results to providers and published, to inform decisions relating to 2018–19

Source: Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

34. With regards to TEF 1, we heard that the timescale did not necessarily pose a particular pressure, as QAA assessments could be applied to decisions about fee levels in 2017–18.⁴⁰ We heard general agreement that this was a reasonable approach. There was less faith that further iterations of the TEF would be developed in the timescale proposed. The main concerns were:

- the admission process for 2017 starts in mid-2016, when decisions on fee levels are needed;
- there was potential duplication of effort involved in the QAA assessments and TEF 2;⁴¹
- there would be unintended consequences, for example around widening participation of students;⁴²

⁴⁰ Q15, Q38

⁴¹ Universities UK (QHE 56)

⁴² Q38 [Professor Tynan]

- metrics for teaching quality needed to be tested or piloted before being fully implemented, not least to see how they would affect institutions' behaviour;⁴³
- the quality of data available in the early stages would not be sufficient to provide meaningful assessments of teaching quality;⁴⁴
- the new arrangements would be highly bureaucratic and not necessarily provide meaningful information for students.⁴⁵

35. The Minister was at pains to stress that the TEF is being introduced “very, very gradually”⁴⁶ and that the timescale was achievable. He explained

For the first year, in 2017–18, the process is looking at the baseline review of quality assurance as the threshold for an institution being eligible to increase its fees in line with inflation. In 2018–19 and thereafter, we will be using the TEF framework to be the basis on which we make these judgments. For the moment, until we have the learning gain pilots—and they will not be ready for some years yet—we are proposing to use the metrics that we are consulting on in the Green Paper, supplemented by any qualitative information that institutions themselves want to put forward. All this information—quantitative and qualitative—will be assessed in the round by a panel of expert reviewers, so that they can take an informed, nuanced judgment. We are not basing it just on metrics, nor are we basing it just on what institutions supply—it is a blend of the two assessed by the panel.⁴⁷

36. It is clear that there are widespread concerns within the sector about whether the Government will be able to introduce more sophisticated iterations of the TEF within its proposed timeframe in a meaningful way. We recognise these concerns, although also appreciate the ambition of the Minister to drive progress, and we welcome his acknowledgement of the need for an iterative approach. However, we are conscious that the Government is seeking to experiment in an area of national strength. It is important that the Government does not take undue risks: it is more important to get this right than to get there quickly. Equally, it is up to the universities to assist the Government in developing more sophisticated metrics as early as possible. Implementation of further iterations of TEF should progress at a speed which allows for the ability to apply greater differentiation to be based upon more sophisticated metrics that can command the confidence of both staff and students. ***We recommend that the universities sector engages with the Government to provide evidence as necessary to help develop more sophisticated metrics as early as possible. We further recommend that the Government sets out how it will collate the evidence that will inform future iterations of the TEF and provide an indicative timescale for its development.***

43 Q38 [Professor Ward]; Q92 [Megan Dunn] Q100 [Professor Wilsdon]

44 Q118 [Professor Wilsdon], Q118 [Matt Hiely-Rayner]

45 Universities UK response to Green Paper *Fulfilling our potential: teaching excellence, social mobility and student choice*, 15 January 2016

46 Q179

47 Q179

Subject or institutional level?

37. In its early stages, the Green Paper envisages that the TEF will operate at an institutional level. That is, HEIs will be awarded a TEF score, rather than each individual subject within those. In time—the Green Paper proposes “as soon as is practicable”⁴⁸—it is expected that the TEF will move towards being awarded at a subject level, with those assessments being aggregated to produce an overall institutional award.⁴⁹ Most of the evidence we heard was supportive of the arguments in favour of a subject-level TEF, mainly on the grounds that this would be of most assistance to students in making their choices.⁵⁰ It would also make it more difficult for weaker subjects to be hidden within an otherwise high scoring institution.

38. Developing a TEF at subject level is not, however, without difficulty. We heard that at a subject level there is more scope for gaming of the system, with subjects being badged on a tactical basis (by changing subject codes) in order to hide any poor provision.⁵¹ Careful benchmarking would therefore be required in order to make this level of assessment effective and to minimise the scope for playing the system. A subject level TEF would, we heard, also impose some additional bureaucratic burdens on institutions.⁵² In addition, we were told that “some things are at an institutional level”, including: “the learning environment; the way in which a university supports those who teach; the whole framework of continuing professional development; and the academic vision of the university”.⁵³

39. We agree that a rounded assessment of teaching quality should include consideration of the wider aspects of teaching as well as the merits of those doing the teaching. This should be the goal. We recognise that a subject level TEF may be less comfortable and straightforward for universities but it will have the most direct impact on teaching quality. For students making choices about where to study, the TEF at an institutional level provides little useful information. ***We therefore welcome the Government’s direction of travel to a subject-level TEF. We recommend that it sets out the timescale for this objective, taking into account the need to avoid establishing a complex and expensive bureaucratic administrative system.*** In the longer term, in the context of a working link between TEF score and tuition fee, there is a logic to tuition fees operating at a subject level in accordance with the relevant TEF score. However, we recognise that there are considerable practical issues around the operation of such a system to be resolved before it could be implemented.

48 Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*, Cm 9141, p29

49 Q162 [Madeleine Atkins]; Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*, Cm 9141, p29

50 Q164. See also: Q95, Q162

51 Q114

52 Cambridge University (QHE 60)

53 Q164

4 The institutional architecture

40. The Green Paper proposes “to streamline the architecture of higher education and place the prime emphasis on championing the interests of students”.⁵⁴ In pursuit of this goal, it proposes to create a new Office for Students (OfS). This would be a new arms-length public body with a duty to promote the student interest and would have responsibility for:

- a) operating the entry gateway;
- b) assuring baseline quality;
- c) running the TEF;
- d) collecting and providing information;
- e) widening access and success for disadvantaged students;
- f) allocating grant funding;
- g) ensuring student protection;
- h) promoting the student interest;
- i) ensuring value for money for students and the taxpayer; and
- j) assuring financial sustainability, management and good governance.⁵⁵

The OfS would therefore be responsible for exercising the quality assurance function, currently carried out by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) on behalf of HEFCE, and for overseeing the TEF. In addition, the role of the Director of Fair Access and the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) would be transferred to the OfS.⁵⁶ The aim of this restructuring is to “empower students, strengthen competition, drive quality, eliminate unnecessary bureaucracy and save taxpayer money.”⁵⁷

41. Changes to the institutional architecture were not a core focus for this inquiry, but some consideration of their effects is necessary in considering the effectiveness of future approaches to quality assessment. There were questions raised in evidence about how the benefits resulting from the independence of some functions could be retained within the proposed new institutional architecture. In particular, witnesses cited the vital importance of the role of the independent QAA in providing the kitemark of quality that underpins the sector’s international competitiveness.⁵⁸ It was also argued that the strength of the voice of the OFFA should not be diluted within a broader organisation, as its single focus had so far been beneficial.⁵⁹

54 Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*, Cm 9141, p58

55 Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*, Cm 9141, p59

56 Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*, Cm 9141, p59

57 Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*, Cm 9141 p57

58 Q92

59 Q163

42. We agree with the Government's objective of simplifying the current complex and bureaucratic arrangements governing higher education, and we support the greater emphasis on the student envisaged by the establishment of the OfS. However, we are concerned to ensure that these proposals do not risk giving rise to a perception that the quality assurance arrangements—so central to the strength of the UK universities' brand—have been compromised in any way. **We believe it essential that the quality assurance of universities should remain administratively and visibly independent from Government or the new regulator. As part of its considerations of how the OfS should exercise this function in relation to other bodies, the Government should ensure that independent quality review is retained.**

43. In order to best promote widening participation, and to help the Government meet its own targets, we believe it important that the decisions of the Director for Fair Access are seen as fully independent and not subject to being overruled by any higher authority within the same organisation. **The ability for this post to report direct to the Minister and to Parliament should therefore be built into the new higher education architecture.**

5 Wider implications across the UK

Quality assessment and devolution

44. At present, there are UK-wide structures to underpin quality assessment in HEIs. These include the Quality Code, benchmarks and a qualification framework managed by the QAA.⁶⁰ Other elements of the quality system diverge. For example, HEFCE's consultation on quality assurance was jointly published by the funding bodies for England, Northern Ireland and Wales. The Scottish Funding Council was carrying out its own review.

45. Scotland operates its own system for quality assurance: a process of “enhancement-led institutional review, which is very student-focused and is not simply about checking your quality but checking whether you are continually improving your offer to the students and the quality of your education”.⁶¹ We heard that Universities Scotland believe that universities north of the border benefit from the good reputation of the UK university brand whilst retaining the ability to deliver high quality education in a slightly different way.⁶²

46. Although the Green Paper largely affects HEIs in England, we have heard about its potential to affect the higher education sector across the UK. So, while proposals for the TEF are directed at HEIs in England and, accordingly, designed with these in mind, they will have a wider impact. Despite not being directly affected by the TEF, and the potential link with fees not having the same meaning for Scottish HEIs, we heard that the HE sector in Scotland will “need to keep a close eye” on the development of the TEF.⁶³ Scottish institutions will need to find a way of communicating their quality in the international market without the benefit of a recognised TEF rating. We heard concerns that, as the system for assessing quality develops, there would be increasing complexity and divergence across Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Some stressed the importance of maintaining common UK standards and an integrated system for the benefit of students around the world.⁶⁴ UK universities outside England may turn out to provide a useful control group against which to measure the impact of the TEF. The Devolved Administrations will no doubt be taking a close interest in the developing proposals. ***We recommend that the Government continues to work with the Devolved Administrations in order to monitor the consequences of increasing divergence within the UK resulting from the TEF, both for the UK brand as a whole and for prospective students at home and abroad.***

Teaching quality and research

47. We launched our inquiry prior to the publication of the Government's Green Paper, intending to focus on changes to the quality assessment regime and the potential introduction of the TEF. Inevitably, the Green Paper comments on a much broader range of issues than teaching quality or quality assurance. We have commented on some of these issues in this Report, for example the proposed Office for Students. But we are mindful that

60 Q6

61 Q6

62 Q6

63 Q26

64 Q55; Ulster University [QHE 48]; Q6

other, potentially significant changes for the sector could be supported by the measures in the Green Paper and these will have a knock-on effect on the effectiveness of the TEF. For example, we heard that the creation of an Office for Students, coupled with reforms derived from the Nurse Review, such as the creation of Research UK, could de-couple the structures which underpin teaching and research.⁶⁵ We heard that the interdependences between teaching and research “are critical to the health of universities as institutions and indeed to the learning experience”.⁶⁶ It is a combination of high quality research and teaching that underpins the reputation of UK universities. ***In taking forward the proposals in the Green Paper, the Government should ensure that the establishment of a single body responsible for teaching quality should provide a voice that complements rather than competes with the UK’s research architecture. The Government should set out how it plans to ensure that the interdependencies between research and teaching within the higher education environment are fully respected and how it will ensure holistic oversight of, and responsibility for, universities’ performance.***

65 Q110 [Professor Wilsdon]

66 Q110 [Professor Wilsdon]

6 Conclusion

48. The UK's higher education sector has an excellent international reputation; it is second only to the US in terms of the number of universities in the top global rankings. It is this global context within which HEIs operate and expectations about excellence are set. The UK has one of the best university systems in the world, but it is an increasingly competitive market and we need to ensure this good system is getting even better.

49. Overall, we welcome the provisional nature of the Green Paper, and trust that this means Government is truly open to hearing how different elements of its proposals are viewed by the sector and by students. We share the general support for the principle of the Teaching Excellence Framework but recognise the legitimacy of concerns about the practical details of implementation, given the proposed pace of implementation. The increasing competitiveness of this sector heightens the responsibility on Government to establish new mechanisms to measure properly the level of teaching quality. There is much at stake. A poorly designed or rushed TEF will not serve students, HEIs, Government or the taxpayer and could negatively affect reputations. Equally, a well designed and implemented TEF could provide a model for other nations and enhance the UK's already strong position. The forthcoming technical consultation should therefore be an opportunity for Government to respond to the concerns raised in this inquiry, and elsewhere, with more detailed policy on assessing quality in higher education and a comprehensive road map for implementation.

Conclusions and recommendations

The Teaching Excellence Framework

1. Changing student expectations and an increasingly competitive environment for both UK and international students are key challenges for the higher education sector. In this context, we welcome and endorse the Government's focus on teaching quality. We agree that a stronger incentive to focus on teaching quality via the Teaching Excellence Framework will help to ensure that higher education institutions meet student expectations and improve on their leading international position. (Paragraph 8)
2. *We recommend that the Government consults on suitable metrics on widening participation, to be used by the Office for Fair Access as part of its process for approving access agreements with institutions, which are a pre-requisite for any increase in tuition fees.* (Paragraph 17)
3. We agree with the Government's approach of properly testing and consulting on potential metrics. To this end, *we recommend that Government includes in its further consultation on metrics:*
 - *An assessment of the evidence that any proposed metric is linked to teaching quality; and*
 - *An assessment of the potential unintended consequences which could arise from an institution seeking to optimise its score on each metric, with proposals on how these risks can best be mitigated.*

We would also urge the University sector to engage fully with the technical consultation in order to develop a set of appropriate metrics. (Paragraph 18)

4. *We recommend that the Government provides further detail on the balance between qualitative and quantitative assessment as part of its forthcoming technical consultation and seeks views on its proposals.* (Paragraph 19)
5. We recognise that universities are increasingly prioritising teaching excellence and are already taking steps to improve teaching quality. The establishment of the National Student Survey has provided a welcome source of feedback for students and universities alike and has no doubt sharpened the focus on teaching quality. We agree that a properly-working TEF can further incentivise the delivery of consistently high teaching quality and help to hold universities to account for teaching as well as research. It should also be centred on the interests of the student, by assisting student choice rather than adding unhelpful complexity. We welcome the Government's consultative approach in producing a Green Paper before more detailed proposals are published. We urge the Government to set out in detail its response to the concerns that have been raised about the suitability of the proposed metrics. (Paragraph 20)

Timetable for introduction of the TED and link to tuition fees

6. We agree with the Government that no university should be allowed to increase its tuition fees without being able to demonstrate that the quality of its teaching meets minimum standards. The proposals for TEF 1 should meet this objective and we support its implementation along the lines outlined in the Green Paper. (Paragraph 31)
7. In terms of further development, we support the principle of a more sophisticated link (using differentiated levels) between teaching quality and fee level, provided that the metrics used to measure teaching quality can command sufficient confidence of both students and universities. This will better enable students and taxpayers to hold universities to account for the service they provide. A multi-tiered TEF should only be introduced once Government can demonstrate its metrics have the confidence of students and universities. Achieving the necessary degree of confidence is in part dependent on the timetable for full introduction. (Paragraph 32)
8. *We recommend that the universities sector engages with the Government to provide evidence as necessary to help develop more sophisticated metrics as early as possible. We further recommend that the Government sets out how it will collate the evidence that will inform future iterations of the TEF and provide an indicative timescale for its development.* (Paragraph 36)
9. *We therefore welcome the Government's direction of travel to a subject-level TEF. We recommend that it sets out the timescale for this objective, taking into account the need to avoid establishing a complex and expensive bureaucratic administrative system.* (Paragraph 39)

The institutional architecture

10. We believe it essential that the quality assurance of universities should remain administratively and visibly independent from Government or the new regulator. As part of its considerations of how the OfS should exercise this function in relation to other bodies, the Government should ensure that independent quality review is retained. (Paragraph 42)
11. The ability for this post to report direct to the Minister and to Parliament should therefore be built into the new higher education architecture. (Paragraph 43)
12. *We recommend that the Government continues to work with the Devolved Administrations in order to monitor the consequences of increasing divergence within the UK resulting from the TEF, both for the UK brand as a whole and for prospective students at home and abroad.* (Paragraph 46)
13. *In taking forward the proposals in the Green Paper, the Government should ensure that the establishment of a single body responsible for teaching quality should provide a voice that complements rather than competes with the UK's research architecture. The Government should set out how it plans to ensure that the interdependencies between research and teaching within the higher education environment are fully respected and how it will ensure holistic oversight of, and responsibility for, universities' performance.* (Paragraph 47)

Formal Minutes

Tuesday 23 February 2016

Members present:

Mr Iain Wright, in the Chair

Paul Blomfield

Kelly Tolhurst

Richard Fuller

Craig Tracey

Amanda Milling

Chris White

Amanda Solloway

Draft Report (*The Teaching Excellence Framework: Assessing quality in Higher Education*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 30 read and agreed to.

Paragraph 31 brought up and read, as follows:

We have carefully considered the arguments for and against the linking of the TEF to increases in tuition fees. We agree with the Government that no university should be allowed to increase its tuition fees without being able to demonstrate that the quality of its teaching meets minimum standards. The proposals for TEF 1 should meet this objective and we support its implementation along the lines outlined in the Green Paper.

Amendment proposed, to leave out sentences from “We agree with the Government...” until the end of the paragraph and insert: “We do not believe that the case for linking fees should be allowed to increase its tuition fees without being able to demonstrate that the quality of its teaching meets minimum standards. We therefore accept that achievements of TEF 1 would be a measure of this.”—(Paul Blomfield)

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 1

Noes, 6

Paul Blomfield

Richard Fuller

Amanda Milling

Amanda Solloway

Kelly Tolhurst

Craig Tracey

Chris White

Question accordingly negatived.

Paragraph agreed to.

Paragraph 32 brought up and read, as follows:

In terms of further development, we support the principle of a more sophisticated link (using differentiated levels) between teaching quality and fee level, provided that the metrics used to measure teaching quality can command sufficient confidence of both students and universities. This will better enable students and taxpayers to hold universities to account for the service they provide. A multi-tiered TEF should only be introduced once Government can demonstrate its metrics have the confidence of students and universities. Achieving the necessary degree of confidence is in part dependent on the timetable for full introduction.

Amendment proposed to delete paragraph and insert: “In terms of further development, we do not believe that a tiered link using differentiated levels) between teaching quality and fee levels is justified unless the metrics used to measure teaching quality can command sufficient confidence of both students and universities. A multi-tiered TEF should only be introduced once Government can demonstrate its metrics have the confidence of students and universities. Achieving the necessary degree of confidence is in part dependent on the timetable for full introduction.”—(Paul Blomfield)

The Committee divided.

Ayes, 1

Paul Blomfield

Noes, 6

Richard Fuller

Amanda Milling

Amanda Solloway

Kelly Tolhurst

Craig Tracey

Chris White

Question accordingly negatived.

Paragraph agreed to.

Paragraphs 33 to 49 read and agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Third Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

[Adjourned till Tuesday 1 March at 9.00 am]

Witnesses

The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the Committee's inquiry webpage.

Tuesday 17 November 2015

Question number

Professor Simon Gaskell, Chair of Universities UK quality assessment task and finish group and Treasurer, Universities UK and **Alistair Sim**, Director, Universities Scotland Q1–29

Katie Akerman, Director of Quality and Standards, University of Chichester, **Professor Neil Ward**, Pro Vice Chancellor - Academic, University of East Anglia, **Professor Colin Riordan**, Vice Chancellor, Cardiff University, **Professor Graham Virgo**, Pro Vice Chancellor for Education, Cambridge University, **Professor Belinda Tynan**, Pro Vice Chancellor (learning and teaching), Open University and **Professor Neil Ward**, Pro Vice Chancellor-Academic, University of East Anglia Q30–63

Tuesday 1 December 2015

Megan Dunn, President, National Union of Students, **Sally Hunt**, General Secretary, University and College Union, **Professor Jon Scott**, Pro Vice Chancellor (Student Experience), University of Leicester and **Stuart Cannell**, Student reviewer with the Quality Assurance Agency QAA Q64–97

Professor James Wilsdon, University of Sussex, **Matt Hiely-Rayner**, Head of Planning, Kingston University, **John Gill**, Editor, Times Higher Education, and **Nicki Horseman**, Lead HE Data Analyst, Times Higher Education Q98–118

Professor Joy Carter, Vice Chancellor, University of Winchester and Chair of GuildHE, **Professor Dave Phoenix**, Vice Chancellor of London South Bank University and Chair of million+, **John Widdowson**, Principal of New College Durham and President of the Association of Colleges, **Professor David Maguire**, Vice Chancellor of the University of Greenwich (on behalf of University Alliance) and **Professor David Eastwood**, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Birmingham (on behalf of the Russell Group) Q119–130

Tuesday 8 December 2015

Professor Madeleine Atkins CBE, Chief Executive, Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), **Douglas Blackstock**, Chief Executive, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), **Professor Les Ebdon**, Director of Fair Access to Higher Education, **Rob Behrens**, Independent Adjudicator and Chief Executive, Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA), and **Professor Stephanie Marshall**, Chief Executive Officer, Higher Education Academy Q131–164

Jo Johnson MP, Minister for Universities and Science and **Polly Payne**, Director of Higher Education, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Q165–215

Published written evidence

The following written evidence was received and can be viewed on the Committee's inquiry webpage. QHE numbers are generated by the evidence processing system and so may not be complete.

- 1 Academic Audit Associates Ltd (QHE0059)
- 2 Alice Day (QHE0087)
- 3 Association for Learning Technology (QHE0024)
- 4 Association of Colleges (QHE0057)
- 5 Association of Law Teachers (QHE0032)
- 6 Association of National Teaching Fellows (QHE0063)
- 7 B. E. Wedge Holdings Limited (QHE0004)
- 8 Birkbeck, University of London (QHE0040)
- 9 Bournemouth University (QHE0028)
- 10 British Psychological Society (QHE0082)
- 11 Brunel University London (QHE0046)
- 12 Cambridge University Students' Union (QHE0079)
- 13 Carl Senior (QHE0031)
- 14 Chartered Association of Business Schools (QHE0038)
- 15 Coventry University (QHE0005)
- 16 Dr Joshua Forstenzer, (QHE0013)
- 17 Dr Martin Paul Eve (QHE0054)
- 18 Dr Vivien Rolfe (QHE0045)
- 19 Engineering Professors' Council (QHE0064)
- 20 General Medical Council (QHE0068)
- 21 GSM London (QHE0072)
- 22 GuildHE (QHE0033)
- 23 HESA (QHE0086)
- 24 Higher Education Funding Council for England (QHE0052)
- 25 HUCBMS (QHE0029)
- 26 Institution of Chemical Engineers (QHE0036)
- 27 Kingston University (QHE0015)
- 28 London Mathematical Society (QHE0019)
- 29 London South Bank University (QHE0021)
- 30 Medical Schools Council (QHE0010)
- 31 Middlesex University (QHE0023)
- 32 Million+ (QHE0039)
- 33 Mixed Economy Group of Colleges (QHE0069)
- 34 Mr Terry McAndrew (QHE0075)

- 35 Mr. Alex Griffiths (QHE0047)
- 36 National Union of Students (QHE0041)
- 37 Nottingham Trent University (QHE0037)
- 38 Office for Fair Access (QHE0042)
- 39 Office of The Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (QHE0062)
- 40 Pearson (QHE0076)
- 41 Political Studies Association of the UK (QHE0083)
- 42 Professor Margaret Price (QHE0026)
- 43 Professor Paul Kleiman (QHE0022)
- 44 Professor Roger Brown (QHE0003)
- 45 Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QHE0034)
- 46 Quality Strategy Network (QHE0017)
- 47 Queen Mary University of London (QHE0008)
- 48 Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance (QHE0049)
- 49 Royal Society of Biology (QHE0018)
- 50 SCONUL (QHE0044)
- 51 Staffordshire University (QHE0030)
- 52 Study UK (QHE0074)
- 53 The British Academy (QHE0077)
- 54 The Geological Society (QHE0061)
- 55 The Higher Education Academy (QHE0011)
- 56 The Open University (QHE0007)
- 57 The Physiological Society (QHE0025)
- 58 The Royal Society (QHE0078)
- 59 The Russell Group (QHE0085)
- 60 The University of Manchester (QHE0009)
- 61 The University of Sheffield (QHE0050)
- 62 Ulster University (QHE0048)
- 63 Universities Scotland (QHE0043)
- 64 Universities UK (QHE0056)
- 65 University Alliance (QHE0067)
- 66 University and College Union (QHE0006)
- 67 University of Bedfordshire (QHE0035)
- 68 University of Bolton (QHE0053)
- 69 University of Brighton (QHE0020)
- 70 University of Bristol (QHE0055)
- 71 University of Cambridge (QHE0060)
- 72 University of Chichester (QHE0016)

- 73 University of East Anglia (QHE0012)
- 74 University of East London (QHE0080)
- 75 University of Hertfordshire (QHE0070)
- 76 University of Leeds (QHE0071)
- 77 University of Lincoln (QHE0014)
- 78 University of Oxford (QHE0081)
- 79 University of Salford (QHE0051)
- 80 University of Southampton (QHE0073)
- 81 University of the Arts London (QHE0084)
- 82 University of Warwick (QHE0066)
- 83 University of York (QHE0065)

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

All publications from the Committee are available on the Committee's website at www.parliament.uk/bis.

Session 2015–16

First Report	The UK steel industry	HC 546
Second Report	The Government's Productivity Plan	HC 466
First Special Report	Competition in the postal services sector and the Universal Service Obligation: Responses to the Committee's Ninth Report of Session 2014–15	HC 447
Second Special Report/First Joint Special Report	Education, skills and productivity: commissioned research	HC 565
Third Special Report	The UK steel industry: Government Response to the crisis: Response to the Committee's First Report of Session 2015-16	HC 861