



Department
for Education



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Viscount Younger of Leckie
Lords Spokesperson (Department for
Education)
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

4 January 2017

Dear Colleagues,

Higher Education and Research Bill: Lords Committee Stage – Government Amendments

I am writing to draw your attention to Government amendments which we tabled yesterday to the Higher Education and Research Bill.

In particular I wanted to draw your attention to the two amendments below.

1. Amendments to schedule 1 to clarify the role of the Director for Fair Access and Participation (DFAP) within the Office for Students (OfS).
2. Amendments to clauses 87, 91 and 105 to make clear that funding and supporting knowledge exchange is one of the functions of UK Research & Innovation (UKRI).

Jo Johnson and I listened carefully at Second Reading, and we continue to reflect on views raised by Peers and stakeholders. We have heard concerns about the role of the Director for Fair Access and Participation (DFAP) within the OfS, and about the importance of specifying clearly that knowledge exchange will be a function of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

Lord Stevenson has tabled a similar amendment regarding the role of the DFAP. I agree that this role should be appropriately defined in legislation given the fundamental importance of improving widening access and participation in higher education. Whilst it has always been our clear intention as set out in the White Paper that the OfS would give responsibility to the DFAP for activities relating to widening access and participation, we are now tabling a number of amendments to make this clearer on the face of the Bill.

Knowledge Exchange is an essential mechanism to support universities in contributing effectively to UK growth. We have always been clear about the Government's commitment to such activities and confirmed that knowledge exchange is indeed one of the functions of UKRI as set out in the White Paper. However we recognise that not including this explicitly in the Bill is a concern to many and as such we have tabled an amendment to ensure that this is clear.

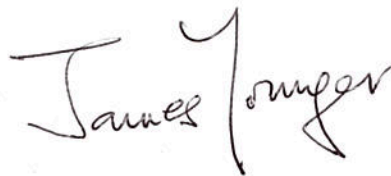
I have tabled these amendments in response to these concerns, and I hope that you will welcome these amendments. We continue to listen on the other areas of the Bill and are interested to hear views from all Peers.

I have also tabled a number of technical but essential amendments to enhance the clarity of the Bill and have attached the full set of amendments as drafted with this letter.

I look forward to further discussion on the Bill during Committee.

I am placing a copy of this letter in the House libraries.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "James Younger". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'Y' at the end.

VISCOUNT YOUNGER OF LECKIE