

WHAT NEXT FOR LEARNING GAIN? – THE BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE

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WHAT IS THE CBI?

The CBI is the UK's premier business organisation with the goal of creating a more prosperous society.

- With over 50 years of experience, we are the UK's most effective and influential business organisation.
- The CBI speaks on behalf of 190,000 businesses of all sizes and sectors. Together they employ nearly 7 million people, about one third of the private sector-employed workforce.
- Included with that membership are many universities and colleges – recognising the importance of education and skills to our future prosperity.
- We employ over 100 economic and policy specialists to support members who provide influence, insight and access.

WHY IS BUSINESS INTERESTED IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

Demand for skills at all levels is growing – but more acutely at the higher end

- More than three-quarters (79%) of businesses expect to increase the number of higher-skilled roles over the coming years.
- Yet two-thirds (66%) fear that there will be a lack of sufficiently skilled people to fill these vacancies.
- That means demand for graduates remains strong – almost 9 in 10 (87%) businesses that employ graduates have either maintained or increased their levels of graduate recruitment over the last year.

(Source: [CBI Education and Skills Survey 2018](#))



WHY LEARNING GAIN?

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT NOW?

'It's time to bring back the polytechnics'

With the need to boost technical education more pressing than ever, a revival of polytechnics could be the answer, says Tom Bewick

'Less than half' of tuition fees spent on teaching at English universities

Large proportion of students' £9k fees used to fund libraries and support services - report

School sixth form and college funding most severely squeezed, new report

Review to back student loans for further education in England

Move intended to encourage people to go to university

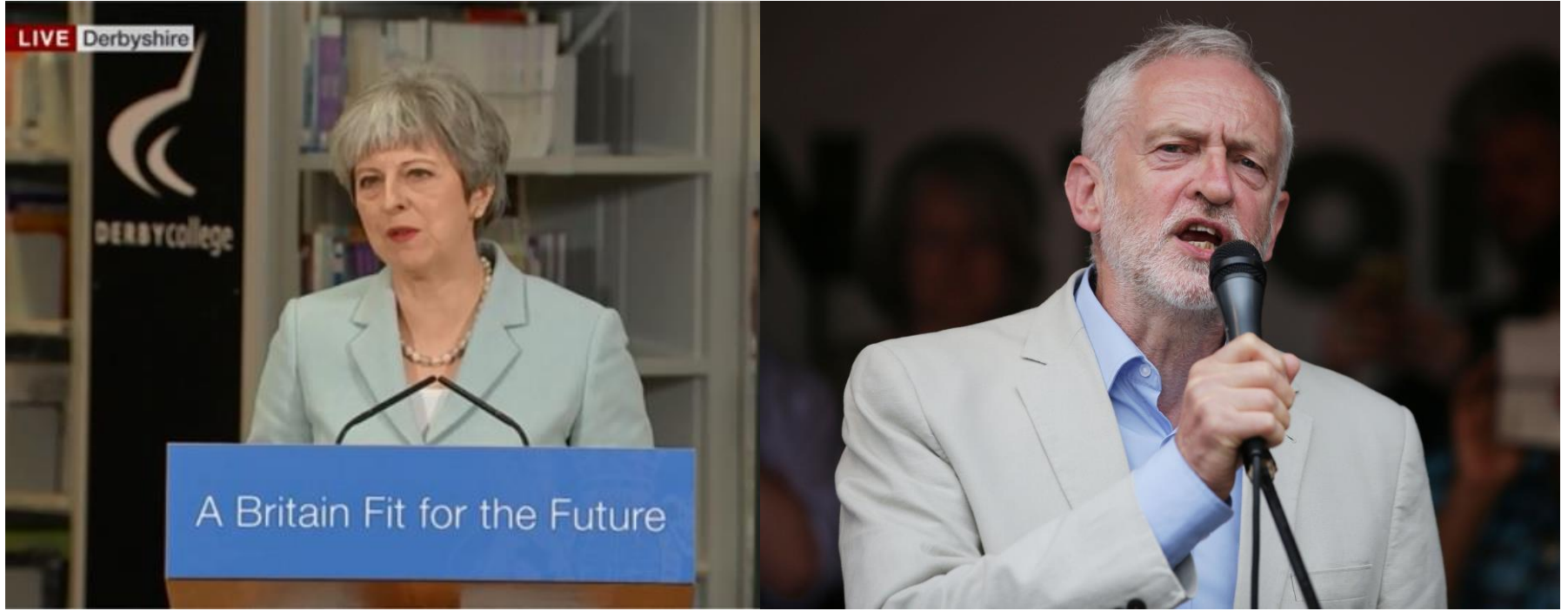
Less than three Ds at A-level? Then no student loan

A shake-up of higher education will see those who fail to get three Ds refused loans that cover the cost of their studies

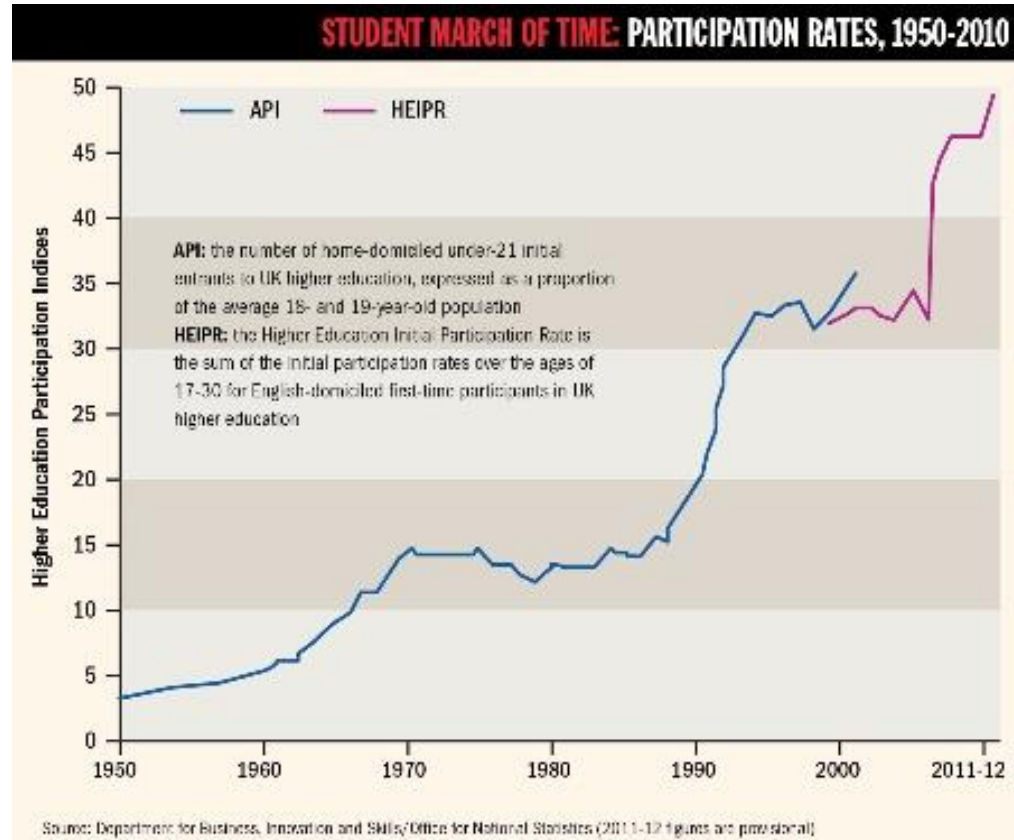
Tuition fees cut to £6,500 - science?

Student loan shake-up puts £17bn hole in public finances

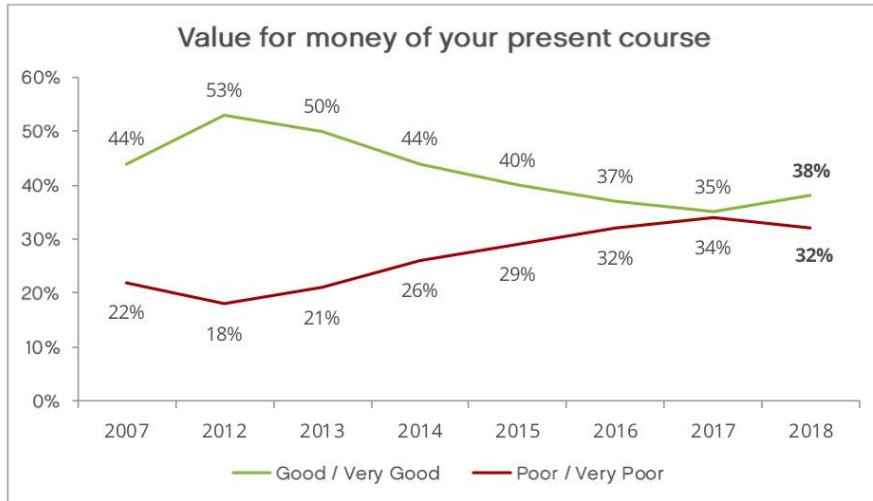
THE POST-18 EDUCATION AND FUNDING REVIEW



'TOO MANY PEOPLE GOING TO UNIVERSITY...'



'DEGREES ARE NOT LONGER WORTH IT...'



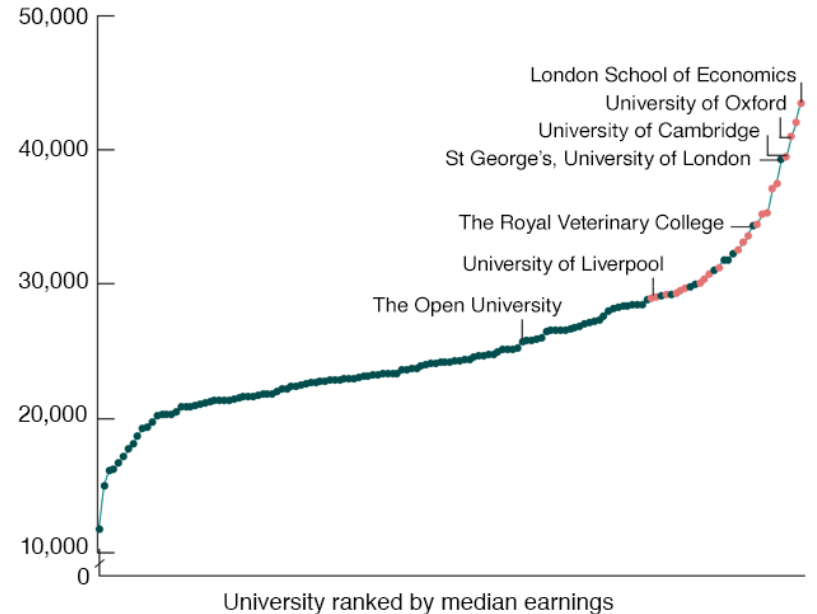
Base: All respondents. 2007 (14,859); 2012 (9,058); 2013 (17,090); 2014 (15,046); 2015 (15,129); 2016 (15,221); 2017 (14,057); 2018 (14,046). Statistically significant differences between 2017 and 2018 in bold.

Source: HEPI 2018 Student Academic Experience Survey

Graduate earnings by university

Median annual earnings, five years after graduation (£)

● Non Russell Group ● Russell Group



Source: IFS The relative labour market returns to different degrees

‘WHAT WE NEED IS MORE TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL SKILLS...’

“This idea that you just have a mass conveyor belt of people going to university was the wrong one...What we should have done is said that we need ‘skills, skills, skills’ not ‘university, university, university’.”

(Source: [Robert Halfon interview, TalkRadio](#))



WHERE ARE WE NOW?

THE ROBBINS PRINCIPLE QUESTIONED...

“Courses of higher education should be available for all those who are qualified by ability and attainment to pursue them and who wish to do so.”

(Source: Report of the Committee appointed by the Prime Minister under the Chairmanship of Lord Robbins)



KEY CHALLENGES

This is not going to be easy.

- Some of our assumptions around the inherent benefits of higher education and its growth have been challenged.
- The desire to create a high-quality technical and vocation pathway outside of university is not new, but the incentives have never been as strong.
- Learning Gain is complex and it will be hard (impossible?) to get it completely right first time.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

This is about a new way of looking at universities

- A new lens through which to view universities and another way of recognising the diversity of the sector.
- Evidence that can be used to strengthen the case for the sector in a period of uncertainty.
- Providing students with some of the answers to the questions they are asking.

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

What is the progressive solution to these challenges?

- Important to recognise that questions about quality and value for money are not going away.
- Students are wanting more information so they can make a genuine choice about where and what to study at university.
- Nobody likes metrics – but in the absence of available information, unhelpful proxies emerge.

Thanks for listening

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