



Chief Executive's Report

Issue

1. To provide an update on work undertaken and issues that have arisen since the date of the last board meeting on 6 December 2018, to the extent that they are not covered in other board papers.

Recommendations

2. The board is invited to:
 - a. Note the updates contained in the paper.
 - b. Agree proposed changes to the scheme of delegation in Annex A.

Further information

3. Available from Nicola Dandridge (nicola.dandridge@officeforstudents.org.uk).

Executive summary

4. Calendar year 2019 will see a shift in OfS' operations away from a focus on set-up, to implementation. The initial registration process should be largely complete by the end of February 2019, with fresh applications continuing to be received by providers as part of the steady-state registration process. Currently about 300 providers are now on or about to go on the register, with approximately 100 still being processed.
5. As providers become registered, many with monitoring conditions imposed on them, the rhythm of monitoring and interventions will start to unfold in part in response to flags imposed through the initial registration process, and in part due to separate developments – for instance reports from providers themselves or from whistle-blowers. Whilst already dealing with some interventions, we are at the same time setting up our systems and processes to ensure robust consistency and resilience in those interventions.
6. There continues to be media interest in the financial solvency of providers, though it should be noted that providers who have successfully applied to the OfS register will by definition have been able to demonstrate a three/five year horizon of viability and sustainability. For some, enhanced monitoring or other conditions will have been imposed on them in response to heightened risks of breach, not least due to concerns about ambitious student recruitment forecasts.
7. Exempt from publication.
8. Exempt from publication.
9. Annex A sets out proposed amendments and additions to the scheme of delegation for decisions in the following areas:
 - Monitoring, intervention and sanctions – this replaces the interim delegations agreed by the board in this area in July 2018
 - Entry and search powers – this is an addition to the scheme of delegation
 - Authorisation of degree awarding powers – this is the addition of preliminary decisions relating to Full DAPs to the delegations agreed by the board for New DAPs in July 2018

Recommendation: The board is invited to approve the proposed amendments to the scheme of delegation set out in Annex A.

Strategic objective – participation

10. In December we published our response to the access and participation consultation, which reflected the board's decisions to reform the access and participation plans and the national collaborative outreach programme, together with the KPMs in this area. We are now working towards publishing guidance to higher education providers by the end of February 2019, engaging with providers during March and April, with a particular focus on those where we have identified a higher level of risk, and submission of the first new plans by the end of May 2019. We are also designing a new approach to monitoring and intervention, which will be critical in ensuring progress within the new 5-year cycle of plans.
11. The launch of our new approach to access and participation regulation, the subject of extensive discussion at the last board meeting, was well covered by the media. The Guardian, BBC News and Independent all mentioned the results of the consultation, including new targets around narrowing access and participation gaps. In the trade press,

Chris Millward was interviewed by THE and Wonkhe and quoted in reports from TES and Research Professional. Some examples of press coverage are included in Annex F.

12. Parliamentary briefings: We have been running a series of parliamentary briefings for MPs and Peers focusing on higher education in specific regions with an emphasis on access and participation. So far we have run sessions on the East Midlands (sponsored by Nicky Morgan MP), London (sponsored by David Lammy MP), Yorkshire and Humber (sponsored by Paul Blomfield MP), and the North East (sponsored by Roberta Blackman-Woods). More briefings are being organised for the coming months.

Strategic objective – experience

13. EU Exit: We are closely monitoring developments relating to the UK's exit from the EU and the potential impact on students and higher education providers in England. A summary of the key issues for higher education can be found in Annex B.

14. Exempt from publication.

15. Innovation Challenge fund competitions: We published our first two Challenge Competitions in the autumn; industrial strategy and skills - support for local students and graduates, and achieving a step change in mental health outcomes for all students. Both competitions have received an excellent response from providers.

- a. Industrial strategy and skills – support for local students and graduates:
We received a total of 78 bids requesting over £26 million, involving combinations of providers, employers, LEPs, local authorities and other key stakeholders. These are currently being assessed internally. A panel of external experts will meet on 26 February to make recommendations for funding to the chief executive. The panel will be chaired by the Director for fair access and participation. Final decisions and announcements are due to be made in March, and funded projects should commence in April.
- b. Achieving a step change in mental health outcomes for all students:
We are running this competition in two stages, requesting expressions of interest (EoIs) in the first instance as we wanted bidders to provide evidence of and commitment to existing strategic approaches to mental health support for their students. We received 63 expressions of interest involving over 200 providers and partners. Following an initial assessment, 51 bidders were invited to a workshop held on 11 December, where the selected teams, mental health experts, student representatives and sector organisations discussed the development of the proposals. The feedback received from participants has been very positive. Final bids are due to be received by 1 March. These will be assessed internally, with a panel of external experts to meet in April to make recommendations for funding to the chief executive. This panel will be chaired by the Director of teaching excellence and student experience. Final decisions and announcements are due to be made in April or May, and the funded projects should commence their initial activities in the late spring or early summer.

Further information can be provided upon request, and we will keep the board updated on the progress of both competitions.

16. Teaching Excellence Framework updates: The independent review of the TEF launched on 18 January, with Dame Shirley Pearce issuing a call for views. It seeks responses from the sector, students, employers and the general public about the purpose, process and impact of the TEF. The deadline for responses is 1 March. The review will be supported by an advisory group and will involve a number of listening sessions, an independent report on

the statistical information used in TEF, evidence about applicant use of the TEF, and international impact. The review is expected to conclude in summer 2019. Further details are at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/teaching-excellence-framework-independent-review>.

17. Our second pilot of subject-level TEF is underway and will conclude at a similar time to the independent review, both of which will inform final decisions about the shape of subject-level TEF. The board will be invited to consider the findings from these two exercises this summer.
18. 148 panellists have been appointed to serve on the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) subject pilot in 2018-19. 119 of these panellists are continuing in post from last year's pilot and 29 are new, as the subject panels have been restructured for this year's pilot. To strengthen student representation within the pilot, a student deputy chair of the pilot main panel, Josh Gulrajani, has been appointed for the first time this year, and three additional student members have been appointed to the main panel as well. In addition to the pilot panellists, all 41 panellists and assessors from last year's provider-level TEF exercise will remain in post for another year. Professor Sir Chris Husbands will continue in post as chair of the provider-level exercise while Professor Janice Kay will continue as deputy chair of the provider-level exercise and chair of the subject pilot. Full lists of TEF panellists and assessors in both exercises are published on our website here (TEF year 4) and here (TEF subject-level pilot).
19. The deadline for submissions to Year Four (provider-level) TEF passed on 17 January. 72 providers submitted a full application, and a further 27 opted in for a provisional award. Results will be published in June.

Strategic objective – outcomes

20. Since the date of the last board meeting, the OfS's report on grade inflation was published on 19 December 2018. The report described the scale of unexplained increases in top degrees, and called on the sector to address the issue. If it is not addressed, the OfS has powers under HERA to intervene. There was considerable media interest in the story. I was interviewed on the Today Programme and for the BBC News Channel, and the story was also extensively covered across various national and regional BBC radio bulletins. There was also significant print coverage, including front page stories in The Daily Telegraph and The Guardian with prominent print coverage also in the Daily Mail, I, Times and Sun. The Times, The Sun and Telegraph carried leading articles on the report. Online, the story was covered by The Independent, BBC News, THE, Financial Times, HuffPost and Wonkhe. Some examples of press coverage are included in Annex F.

Strategic objective – value for money

21. Approach to funding for 2019-2020: We expect 2019-20 to be a further transitional year, in which we fund eligible higher education providers largely according to existing methods, as previously set out in 'Funding for academic year 2019-20: Approach and data collection', OfS 2018.31 (<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/funding-for-academic-year-2019-20-approach-and-data-collection/>), albeit that eligible providers will be those registered in the Approved (fee cap) category, rather than those previously funded by HEFCE. At its meeting in March the board will be asked to make decisions on recurrent and capital budgets for 2019-20, in the light of the forthcoming strategic guidance letter from the DfE, which we expect will set out the funding available to us for the 2019-20 financial year and provide an update on the government's priorities. These decisions will enable us to announce funding to providers as usual in the spring.

22. Exempt from publication.

23. Teachers' Pension Scheme: As expected, the DfE issued a consultation on 15 January about their proposal to support certain education institutions with the increase to employer contributions to the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) in 2019-20. The Department has agreed with HM Treasury that the employer contribution rate increases will be implemented from 1 September 2019 rather than 1 April 2019. Whilst this gives employers more time to plan for the contribution change, there is an offset in that it will create a small deficit in the first year. In order to recover this deficit an amendment to the contribution rate, to take account of the fact that it will not be paid for the full valuation period, will be made resulting in an employer contribution rate of 23.6% from 1 September 2019 to 31 March 2023. The current employer contribution rate is 16.48%, and we estimate that the additional cost to English higher education providers (excluding further education colleges) will be around £120m per year. This is significantly lower than the impact on schools. The DfE consultation seeks views on the proposal to provide funding to support schools, FE colleges and other public-funded training organisations, to cover the increase in employer contributions in financial year 2019-20, and to better understand the impact on the HE sector and independent schools, for whom it is proposed that funding support will not be provided.

24. The OfS published its response to the Education Committee report on value for money in higher education on 10 January, 2019 here.

25. Implementation of OfS registration fees: From August 2019 it is expected that the OfS will charge a registration fee for registered providers. The registration fee will provide most of the funding required to run the OfS, with government providing some specific initiative funding (e.g. TEF). DfE are preparing secondary legislation which is due to be laid before Parliament by 28 February 2019 to enable the OfS to charge fees. We are working closely with DfE to establish contingency plans should there be delays in laying legislation by 28 February 2019 due to constraints or pressures on Parliamentary time.

26. The principles of the registration fee have been previously consulted on by DfE¹, and these have been retained with providers being put in bands based on the full time equivalent student numbers (FTEs) registered at the provider, and fees set for each band accordingly. DfE and HM Treasury will agree the fee level for each band which will be set out in the legislation. In addition, the legislation will set out details for two types of subsidy for specific providers; these being for 'Micro Providers' at 100% of fees and 'New Providers' which starts at 75% of total fee in year one of registration and tapers to zero over 3 years. Previous consultations by DfE on fees had given an indication of the expected fee levels. Due to changes in some of the assumptions made, the final fee levels are likely to be higher than providers had anticipated. [Exempt from publication.] Whilst the OfS has no decision making role in the fee levels there is a risk of a negative reaction from providers on this issue once known at the end of February.

27. Each provider will be formally advised of their actual fee payable at least 30 days ahead of the beginning of the academic year by OfS issuing an appropriate invoice, although providers will be able to work out their likely fee once the secondary legislation has been approved. In order to minimize administration burdens on both providers and OfS, it is

¹https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683764/OfS_registration_fees_govt_response_final_version.pdf

planned that the majority of fees will be collected in a single annual direct debit payment early in August, although payment will be permitted through quarterly payments on request. Full details of the operational procedures relating to fees will be set out in guidance to be prepared by OfS and made available to providers in Spring 2019.

28. It is recognised that there will be greater scrutiny (from providers and others) on the efficiency and effectiveness of the OfS under the new fee regime. We are starting a detailed programme of work to look at our cost effectiveness across the organisation, including increasing the transparency of our operational costs.

Strategic objective – efficient and effective regulator

29. Exempt from publication.

30. Exempt from publication.

31. Organisational design: The main phase of the OfS's organisational restructure was completed by 21 December 2018, and the new structure (as reported to the December board) came into effect on 1 January 2018. The position has been complicated however by the need for external recruitment to fill around 90 vacancies (out of a total planned complement of 391). Whilst in some areas we are covering vacancies with agency or contract staff, we have required a small number of staff to temporarily support priority areas before their final transfers to their permanent roles. We are now focussing significant energy in to getting strong pools of diverse applicants for the vacant roles. This includes arranging open evenings and more targeted advertising.

32. Transformation programme: Over the course of the summer, a significant programme of staff engagement was rolled out, across both the Bristol and London offices, giving the opportunity for all staff to feed into the development of the OfS's values and behaviours. This work drew on the initial discussions and meetings that board members had in 2017. The outputs of this staff engagement were analysed and discussed by the directors and a final set of organisational values have now been agreed (Annex C). These values will be launched at an OfS all-staff conference on 6 February 2019, where the focus will move to implementation and developing an action plan for embedding the values.

33. We will be using the values to spearhead the OfS's transformation programme. This programme of work is wide-ranging and already includes work on: equality, diversity and inclusion; stakeholder engagement; knowledge and information sharing; and behaviours. Further strands of work will be incorporated in the programme over the coming weeks and months, and will involve a significant amount of staff engagement.

34. Government finance function award: I am delighted to report that the OfS Finance Team has been selected as the winner for the Government Finance Function's 'Team of the Year' Award. This is a fantastic achievement, particularly given these awards cover all government departments, agencies and arm's-length bodies. The team will be receiving their award at annual Government Finance Function Event in Liverpool on Tuesday 22 and Wednesday 23 January 2019. The award is in recognition of the team's role in setting up the OfS and Research England, the closure of HEFCE & OFFA, working with the HR and IT teams to deliver the implementation of a new finance system and laying the annual accounts before Parliament within six weeks of year end (the quickest in the public sector). Despite all of the change the team ensured they kept to day-to-day show on the road. They would be the first to acknowledge that they could not have achieved this award without the

support of all parts of the organisation and the close and effective collaboration with DfE and BEIS.

35. Business planning: The directors' group have begun to develop the business plan for 2019-2020, which will set out the areas of work (both ongoing operations and projects) that we intend to undertake over the next 12 months. The process will develop an ambitious plan, focused towards our strategic outcomes. It will be structured to allow for flexibility to adapt through the year to currently uncertain events - maintaining focus on our core strategic outcomes even as the environment changes. The development process will balance the importance of strong and coherent vision with the value of engagement with staff. Workshops will take place throughout February, before a final version is presented to the board for information on 26 March 2019, and published during April.
36. Our website continues to draw significant traffic, with over 200,000 page views since the board last met. Our advice and guidance pages account for 37% of the traffic on our website. Other significant sections are data and analysis (17% of total traffic), publications (13%) and news and blog (8%). We are also active on Twitter, with our tweets around our approach to access and participation seeing significant engagement. At the time of writing, we have 8,000 followers and will be launching further social media channels shortly, in order to better engage with both students and providers. We have also launched a monthly OfS e-newsletter, which is designed to summarise the month's most important developments in an engaging and informative way.
37. Likely future board business is listed in Annex E.

Annex A: Amendments and additions to the scheme of delegation

Monitoring, intervention and sanctions

The paper on monitoring, intervention and sanctions for registered providers on the board's agenda (paper 4.1(a)) sets out proposals for the scheme of delegation for these areas as should be read in conjunction with the proposed delegations below.

The Monitoring and Intervention Team will assess all evidence and make recommendations on the following matters for each registered provider:

- a. whether the provider remains eligible for registration (that is, whether the provider is a provider of higher education in England)
- b. whether the provider continues to satisfy each of its ongoing conditions of registration
- c. the risk of a future breach of each ongoing condition of registration
- d. actions (if any) that are necessary to mitigate areas of increased risk of a future breach
- e. actions (if any) that are necessary to rectify any breach and/or to mitigate the impact of any breach?
- f. whether a formal sanction is necessary

Any decision for a case set out below may be referred to a more senior authority (a more senior authority may be the director of competition and registration, chief executive, the PRC, or the board), in which case the more senior authority will make a decision in that case.

Where a decision about suspension or deregistration is listed to be taken by the board or by the PRC in the table below titled: "Decision about changes to risk category and consequent regulatory action", a "gateway decision" will be taken by the chair, the chair of the PRC, the chief executive and the director of competition and registration to determine whether the decision for an individual provider should be taken by the board or by the PRC.

Where a decision to deregister a provider is taken by the board or by the PRC: a majority of the members of the board or the PRC will not take part in reaching a proposed decision, but will then rejoin the decision-making process as any representations from the provider are considered and a final decision is reached.

Subject to the conditions in paragraph [7] below, any member of staff at pay band 8 or above ("relevant member of staff") has delegated to authority to exercise the following types of function or power in connection with any matter relating to monitoring, intervention and sanctions ("relevant functions"):

- g. To compel the production of documents and information in accordance with any registration condition or statutory provision (excluding section 61 of HERA).
- h. To impose, or amend, a specific condition of registration.
- i. To disclose information externally in accordance with section 63 of HERA.

- j. To assist, in the manner described in paragraph 4(4) of schedule 5 to HERA, authorised persons with the exercise of powers under a search warrant obtained under section 61 of HERA.
- k. To do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to [6. a. to d].

The conditions are that:

- l. The relevant functions are only being exercised in relation to a matter for which the chief executive or director of competition and registration has delegated authority for, in accordance with the table below titled: “Decision about changes to risk category and consequent regulatory action”.
- m. The chief executive or director of competition and registration has given written authorisation (in any form or medium) to the relevant member of staff in respect of all or any relevant functions (which may be on a specific occasion or on a time-limited or enduring basis).
- n. The chief executive or director of competition and registration is satisfied that the relevant member of staff has appropriate skills and experience.
- o. The relevant member of staff operates in accordance with any general or specific instructions or strategic steer provided by the chief executive or director of competition and registration.
- p. The relevant member of staff obtains and has regard to legal advice.
- q. The relevant member of staff does not further delegate the exercise of the relevant function to another member of OfS staff who does not have delegated authority under this part of the scheme of delegation.

Decision about changes to risk category and consequent regulatory action

Change to risk category	Direction of travel	New risk category recommended	Regulatory action recommended (to include addition, amendment or removal of an action)	Delegated authority
No	↔	Any	No action required Formal communication Enhanced monitoring	Director of competition and registration
No	↔	Any (all conditions except D and E2 if the risk category is red for	Specific condition – to include the replacement of an existing specific condition with enhanced	Chief executive

		one of these two conditions)	monitoring or formal communication	
No	↔	Conditions D and E2 if the risk category is red for one of these two conditions	Specific condition – to include the replacement of an existing specific condition with enhanced monitoring or formal communication	PRC
Yes	↓	Green, Yellow (all conditions) Amber (all conditions except B3, C3, D, E2)	No action required Formal communication Enhanced monitoring	Director of competition and registration
Yes	↓	Amber (conditions B3, C3, D, E2)	No action required Formal communication Enhanced monitoring	Chief executive
Yes	↑	Yellow (all conditions) Amber (all conditions except B3, C3, D, E2)	No action required Formal communication Enhanced monitoring	Director of competition and registration
Yes	↑	Amber (conditions B3, C3, D, E2) Red (all conditions)	No action required Formal communication Enhanced monitoring	Chief executive
Yes	Any	Any (all conditions except D and E2 if the risk category is red for one of these two conditions)	Specific condition – to include the replacement of an existing specific condition with enhanced monitoring or formal communication	Chief executive
Yes	Any	Conditions D and E2 if the risk category is red for one of these two conditions	Specific condition – to include the replacement of an existing specific condition with enhanced monitoring or formal communication	PRC

Yes	N/A	Breach	Suspension of registration under sections 16 and 17 of HERA	The board or the PRC, with a “gateway decision” as set out in paragraph 4 above In urgent cases, the group taking the “gateway decision” may also reach the final decision about suspension for an individual provider
Yes	N/A	Breach	Deregistration under sections 18-20 of HERA	The board or the PRC, with a “gateway decision” as set out in paragraph 4 above
Yes	N/A	Breach of conditions C3, D and E2	Initiation of interventions to prevent disorderly exit	The group taking the “gateway decision” for deregistration as set out in paragraph 4 above

[Additional matters related to the OfS’s entry and search powers](#)

At its meeting in December 2018, the board agreed delegations for legal functions and, as set out in paragraph [18] of this scheme of delegation, this includes delegated authority for the Head of Legal and other legal staff/contractors to act as authorised persons in connection with both applications for, and the exercise of, search warrants under section 61 of HERA.

This part of the scheme of delegation concerns delegated authority for other OfS members of staff to act as authorised persons to exercise powers under a search warrant which has been issued.

Where a search warrant under section 61 of HERA has been issued, the chief executive and director of competition and Registration each have delegated authority to decide, with or without conditions, which additional members of OfS staff, at pay band 11 or above, will be authorised persons for the purposes of exercise powers under the issued warrant. Following such a decision, each of the members of OfS staff are to be treated as having their own delegated authority for the purposes of exercising powers under the issued warrant, subject to any conditions the chief executive or director of competition and Registration may decide to apply.

[Decisions related to the authorisation of degree awarding powers](#)

[Full DAPs](#)

For Full DAPs, OfS staff will assess all applications and make recommendations on the following matters:

- r. Whether the provider has submitted a correct application.

- s. Whether the provider is eligible for Full DAPs as set out in paragraph 247 of the regulatory framework.
- t. Whether the provider is suitable for DAPs as set out in paragraphs 256-257 of the regulatory framework.
- u. Whether the provider has provided a satisfactory progression statement as part of an application for foundation degree only authorisation.

The Director for Competition and the Register will, under delegated authority, consider and decide upon recommendations for providers where the recommendation is that:

- v. The provider is eligible for Full DAPs; and
- w. The provider may be referred to the designated quality body for an initial assessment; and
- x. The risk category for each ongoing condition of registration is no higher than yellow.

The Director for Competition and the Register may refer any case to the chief executive or to the PRC in which case the chief executive or PRC will make a decision in that case.

The chief executive will, under delegated authority, consider and decide upon recommendations for providers where the recommendation is that:

- y. The provider is eligible for Full DAPs; and
- z. The provider may be referred to the designated quality body for an initial assessment; and
- aa. The risk category for only one condition is red unless that red condition is condition D (financial viability and sustainability) or E2 (management and governance) or B1-B5 (quality and standards).

The chief executive may refer any case to the PRC in which case the PRC will make a decision in that case.

The PRC will, under delegated authority, consider and decide upon recommendations for providers where the recommendation is that:

- bb. The provider is not eligible for Full DAPs; or
- cc. The provider is eligible for Full DAPs; and
- dd. The provider may be referred to the designated quality body for an initial assessment; and
- ee. The risk category for two or more conditions is red or the risk category for condition D (financial viability and sustainability) or E2 (management and governance) or B1-B5 (quality and standards) is red.

The PRC, or the chair of the PRC, may refer any case to the board in which case the board will make a decision in that case.

Annex B: Britain's exit from the EU and higher education: summary of issues

EU students studying in England

The UK welcomed 134,835 EU students in 2016-17, comprising both undergraduate and postgraduate students, with 104,875 of those students studying in England. In December UCAS reported that in 2018/19, applicants from the EU increased by 3.8% in 2018/19 to 52,560, recovering from a drop of 4.4% the previous year. More recently the Russell Group reported a 3% drop in enrolments at their universities from EU countries, and a significant 9% decline in postgraduate EU students. This has been linked to uncertainty in research funding following a possible no-deal exit from the EU.

The Government has confirmed there will be no change to the immigration status of EU students already here or who arrive before the end of the Brexit implementation period on 31 December 2020. EU nationals who currently live in the UK will be able to apply for settled status to allow them to live, work and study in the UK, but the immigration status of EU citizens arriving in the UK after the transition period will depend on government withdrawal agreement with the EU and the resulting migration system.

European students joining in 2019-20 will continue to pay the same fees as their UK counterparts, but their long-term status remains unclear. The fees that EU students starting courses at UK universities following the agreed transition period are dependent upon UK/ EU negotiations, with the potential for EU students to be reclassified as International and pay full fees. Universities UK have suggested that a "lack of certainty around fee status of EU students from 2020 onwards may lead to decreases across the board"

EU staff working in higher education

There is also potential for disruption from any changes to the right to live and work for EU staff and their dependents following the UK's withdrawal from the EU. There are nearly 50,000 EU staff working in UK higher education providers, accounting for 17% of academic staff. In the same way as students, there will be no changes to the immigration status of EU staff who arrive before the end of the transition period (see Statement of Intent on the EU Settlement Scheme and White Paper).

Staff from the EU will be able to apply for settled status to allow them to live, work and study in the UK. EU university staff working in the UK will be prioritised in the next phase of the EU settlement scheme pilot running from 1 November to 21 December 2018. They will be able to obtain settled or pre-settled status as one of the earliest groups in the scheme.

UK students studying in the EU

There is no data that shows how many UK students are doing a full degree in other EU countries. However, 2017 data from UNESCO on global movement of university students, which includes postgraduate and exchange students and full-time undergraduates, shows that, of around 34,000 UK students who studied abroad, around 11,000 studied in other EU countries [the actual figure is thought to be around 15,000 as data for Germany and The Netherlands is missing from the UNESCO dataset].

In an evidence session on 9 January for the EU Home Affairs Committee inquiry into the future of Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020, Chris Skidmore MP advised the committee that there had been unilateral declarations from a number of member states that confirmed they would protect the rights of UK students wishing to study in those member states, with several working agreements already published.

Erasmus+ and international exchanges

According to UUK International, around 55% of international exchanges are via the EU's student exchange programme Erasmus+. The Government announced in August 2016 that it would [underwrite the payment of awards for UK applicants](#) for successful bids to EU funding that are part of the multiannual financial framework (MFF) until the end of 2020. This covers all successful bids for Erasmus+ funding that are submitted before the UK exits the EU, including under the current 2019 Call for Proposals.

On 23 August 2018 the Government published [a Technical Notice on UK participation in the Erasmus+ programme in a 'no deal' scenario](#). If there is no deal, the government will need to reach agreement with the EU Commission for UK organisations to continue participating in Erasmus+ projects and is seeking to hold these discussions with the EU. We expect the DfE to issue updated guidance in the next week to clarify the situation should an agreement not with the Commission not be made.

In May 2018 the EU Commission announced that for the funding cycle starting in 2021 any country in the world would be able to participate in the Erasmus+ programme if they met set requirements. It is possible, therefore, that in the event of no deal the UK might still be able to access the Erasmus+ programme, provided the UK meets criteria for admission to the scheme.

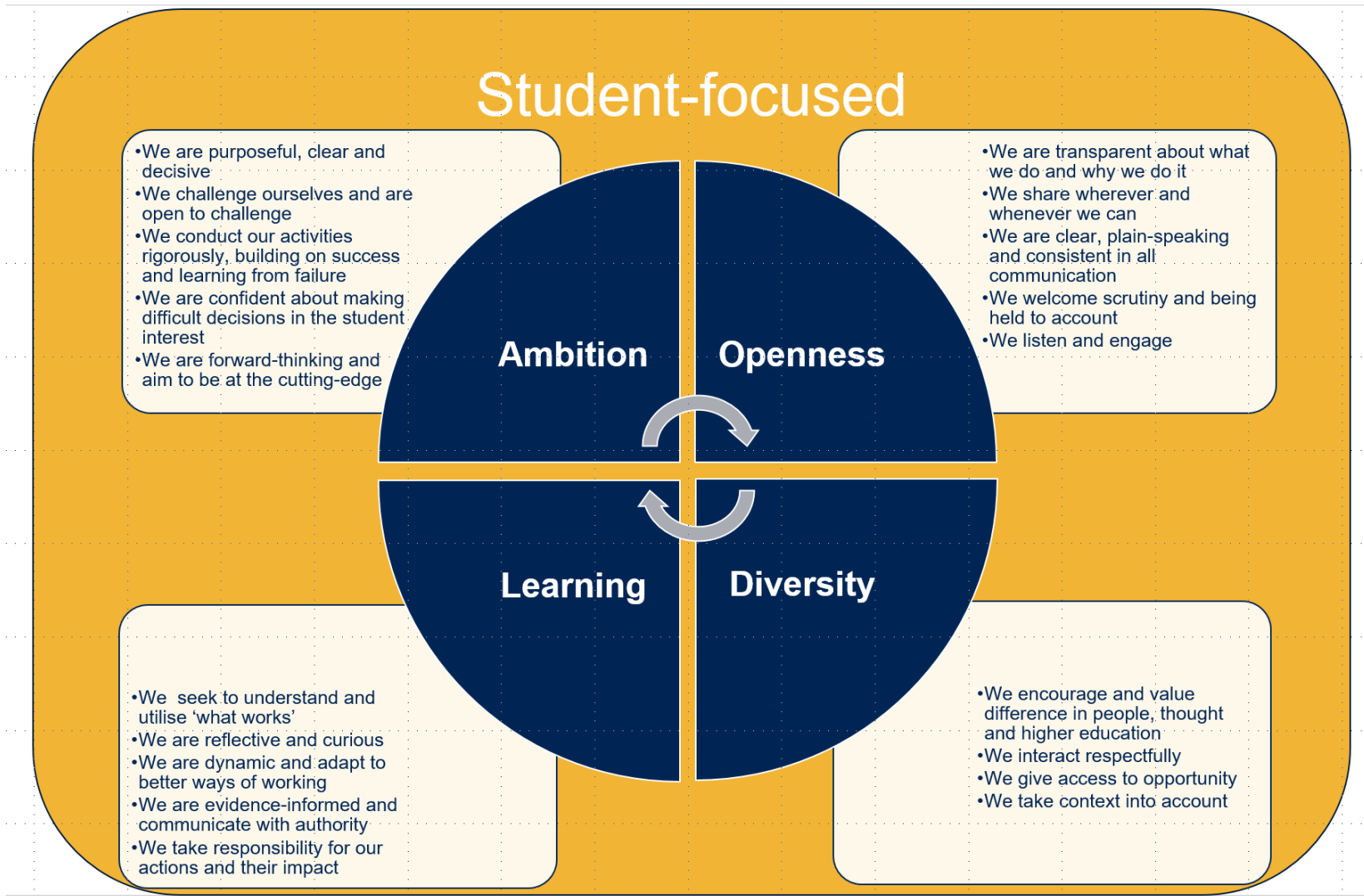
Research funding

The Government has said Britain will remain part of the €70bn (£62bn) Horizon 2020 programme, and other EU funding programmes that are part of the multiannual financial framework (MFF) until the end of 2020. The UK-EU Phase one agreement said that the UK's 'eligibility to apply to participate in EU programmes and EU funding for UK participants and projects will be unaffected by the UK's withdrawal from the EU for the entire lifetime of such projects, including those that extend beyond 2020.'

All current EU based Research funding is covered by the Government's underwriting of research grants. This includes Erasmus +, Horizon 2020, ERDS and ESF. Horizon Europe is due to start in 2021, and UK Universities hope for full association with the programme. However, in the event of a no-deal exit, it is likely institutions and students will apply through a new system, in the same way that non-EU applicants currently apply.

Questions are outstanding and reassurances sought on the position of consortia research proposals and current projects where the UK project participation in the event of a no-deal will mean the project no longer meets the 3-country requirement, and where UK Research Institutions currently lead consortia and make payments to other participating countries as the government funding is currently only stating that it is for UK use.

Annex C: OfS values



Annex D: Report to the OfS board on a provider

Exempt from publication.

Annex E: Future board business

March 2019

Learning gain

Budgets for 2019-20

Update on IAG

Report on the business plan and KPMs

CEO report

Update to the scheme of delegation

Degree awarding powers

May 2019

Validation arrangements

OfS People report

OfS accounts 2018-19

CEO report

Report from Risk and Audit Committee

Annual reports to the board from the Risk and Audit and Provider Risk Committees

Public sector equality data

Student contracts

July 2019

CEO report

Update to the scheme of delegation

Annual report to the board from the Quality Assessment Committee

Revised student engagement strategy