Higher Education Funding Council for England
Funding and the voice of the student: Higher Education in England

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Main events in 2010-11

- Publication of the Independent Review of HE funding and student finance by Lord Browne (October)
- Comprehensive Spending Review (October)
- Willetts’ statement on HE (November)
- Tuition fee vote in Parliament and House of Lords (December)
- HEFCE Grant letter for 2011-12 (December)
- White Paper on future strategy of HE (Spring 2011)
- New funding regime in place for academic year 2012-13
Shape of T-funding 2012-13 onwards

Highly controlled market ➔ Open market with student choice as main driver?

HEFCE as main funder ➔ Student as main funder

Tuition fees of £3,290 ➔ Most tuition fees between £6,000 and £9,000?

£4.7bn teaching funding ➔ Less in 2012-13, and then further reductions

Broad-brush block grant ➔ Targeted funding

HEIs/ private providers ➔ Level playing field
HEFCE grant letter for 2011-12

2011-12

• 6% reduction in teaching funding (to £4.6bn)

• Controlling the number of entrants into the system remains a priority

• Widening participation, retention and fair access and provision for Strategically Important and Vulnerable subjects remain policy priorities

2012-13

• Greater emphasis on student choice

• New cohort brings funding directly with them

• May be new providers accessing public funding

• Potential for greater diversity of providers, but similar student numbers
How might student attitudes change?

• Fee paying environment – HE a significant investment and debt
• Greater expectations: for information, for quality, for outcomes, for employment
• More market-oriented emphasis– students acting like consumers
• Will HE become a less attractive option, differentially?
• How will international students react to these changes?
• Impact on attitudes to PG study

How will institutions position themselves, and what will they offer for higher fees?
Student-facing national policy emphasises in a new environment

- Information for prospective students
- ‘Employability’ as a major factor
- Flexibility and portability of provision
- Greater collaboration and engagement with students
- Investment in enhancing learning and teaching
Improving information to support study decisions

Priority area for HEFCE, high Ministerial interest

• HEFCE, UUK & GuildHE consultation on information:
  — Key Information Set – providing information prospective students find useful, in places where they look for it and at course level where possible

• Broader information set to be made more accessible by institutions

• National QAA quality review arrangements will include a judgement / assessment of information from AY2012-13
Employability

• Longstanding support for employability e.g. CETLs

• Information: Employment data; development of salary indicator six months after graduation; professional accreditation of courses, employability statements by all institutions

• Curriculum and attitudinal change in HEIs towards knowledge and skills that contribute to employability

• Possible shift in student choice of courses – e.g. vocational
Flexibility and transferability

Government interest in encouraging new forms of provision in recognition of a more diverse student body and changing needs and costs. Main elements:

- Flexible and innovative modes of study, including better use of learning technology
- Credit accumulation and transfer
- Improved recording, and recognition of, student achievement (Higher Education Achievement Report)
- Mobility and the Bologna Process: recognition of qualifications
Student Engagement

Working through the National Union of Students and HE Academy HEFCE aims to:

• Encourage participation and effectiveness of student engagement inside HEIs.

• Support institutions and students’ unions to better engage students in shaping their learning experiences.

• Access diverse sections of the HE community.
Investment in enhancing learning and teaching

- 2005-2010 – Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (£315m)
- 2009-10 – Curriculum innovation at King’s and Warwick (£544,000)
- 2009-11 – Development of open educational resources (up to £15m)
- 2010-11 – Online Learning Task Force
- 2005-2010 – Support for the HEAR (£800,000)
- 2005-2010 – Flexible learning pathfinders (£2.6m)
- Higher Education Academy (£14m for 2010-11)
- NTFS - approximately £600K per annum
National Challenges

- Matching less money to priorities
- Smoothing transition to a different world
- Suitable national quality assurance and standards arrangements
- Balance between regulation and market/competition
- Ensuring WP and fair access are addressed
- Promoting policy objectives with reduced central funding
- Policy around possible institutional failures
- Possible changes to various national bodies, including HEFCE
- ‘Level playing field’ for new providers
Challenges for the sector

• New approach to funding teaching
• Uncertainty and volatility over market responses and decisions e.g. fee levels, student demand
• Responding to the student voice
• Continuing with the legacy and achievements of recent years – students will expect at least what they have had
• Considering interaction with private providers and further education colleges
• Maintaining and extending reputation globally
• Maintaining and growing curriculum innovation and teaching excellence