A black and white photograph of a modern university building's interior. The building has multiple levels with glass railings and large windows. A prominent feature is a large, rounded, metallic-looking structure supported by several thick columns. People are visible on various levels, and the overall atmosphere is bright and open.

HIGHER EDUCATION 2022

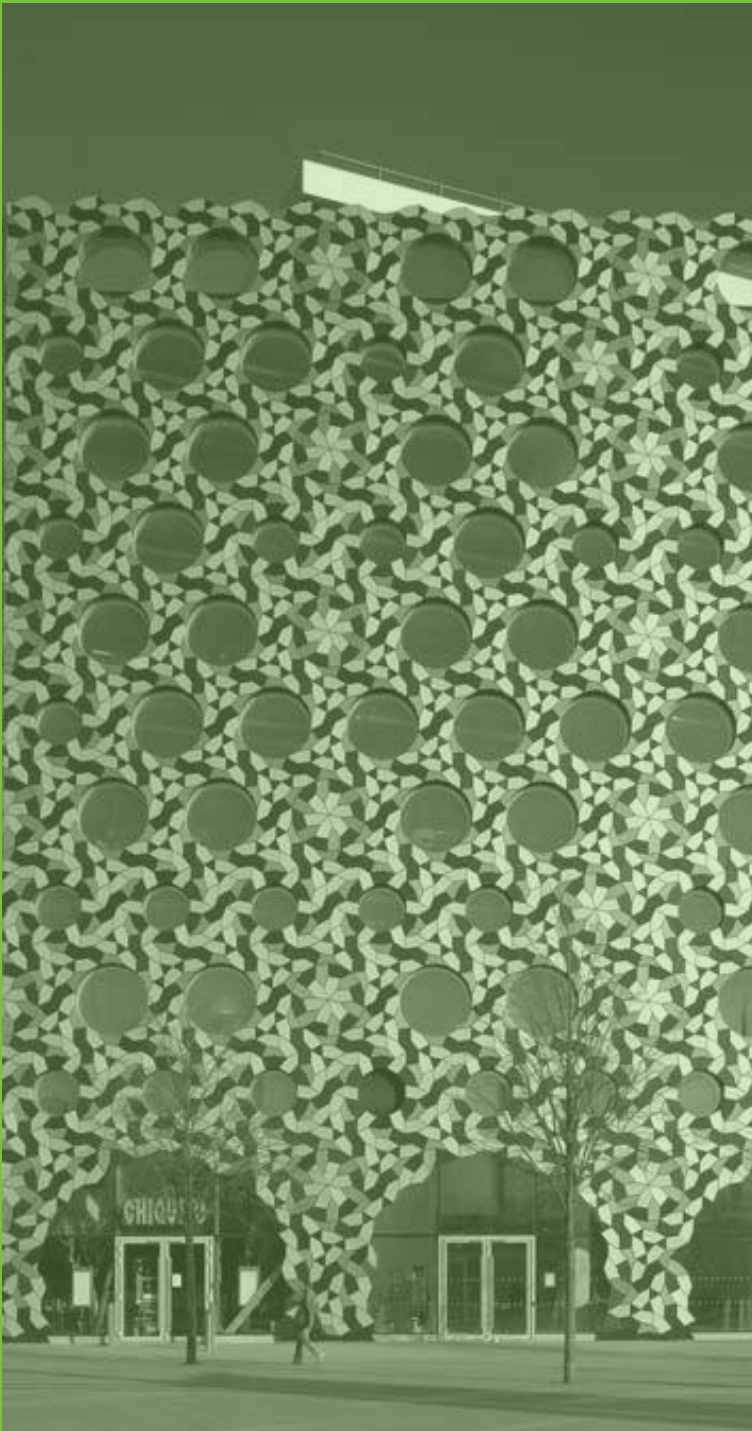
PRIORITIES FOR GOVERNMENT

OUR BELIEFS

People are rightly seen as the most important resource we have in the UK. Higher Education plays an essential role in developing people equipping them with knowledge, skills, curiosity and creativity and preparing them for work but also as a force for social mobility.

Universities and colleges have a unique capacity to transform their local communities and economy as well as pushing forward the boundaries of knowledge.

By the next General Election in 2022 we want to see a sector that is more distinctive, more diverse, more inclusive and stronger as a result. A sector where regulation is based on the quality of the student experience rather than the corporate form of the provider and whether it's public or private, multi-faculty or specialist, large or small.



DIVERSITY IS THE KEY TO EXCELLENCE

The diversity of UK higher education nurtures innovation and creativity. It means more choice for students and for graduate employers and more opportunities to reach out to new learners.

It encourages fresh approaches to research and different ways of engaging with business, industries and charities. It develops new ways of enriching the social, economic and cultural prosperity of life in the UK's communities and regions.



TEACHING EXCELLENCE AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Students deserve the best possible teaching - teaching that is challenging, supportive and rewarding. Students at GuildHE institutions are more likely to be positive about the quality of teaching and feedback they receive.

We support the Teaching Excellence Framework's focus on raising the quality of teaching even further. The TEF should continue to be developed - on an evidenced basis - to ensure students are supported to achieve their potential.



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Students are partners in a higher education community and should be involved in shaping their learning experience and driving educational change. Students should be involved in shaping decisions at all levels affecting their experience from their course and institution to the national level, including engaging students in decisions relating to the TEF, and OfS.



BREXIT

Brexit provides opportunities to forge new relationships with the EU and other countries across the globe. There should be a significant period of implementation to ensure a smooth transition and minimal barriers for EU students and staff in future as part of a reformed immigration system in universities and colleges. We should build on the experiences of the Erasmus mobility programme and Horizon 2020 research funding and use these models to underpin future approaches with the EU and beyond.

The UK has one of the best higher education systems in the world, strengthened by its ability to recruit staff and students from around the world. A post-Brexit Britain will need a fair and robust immigration system that supports all universities and colleges to attract talented people.



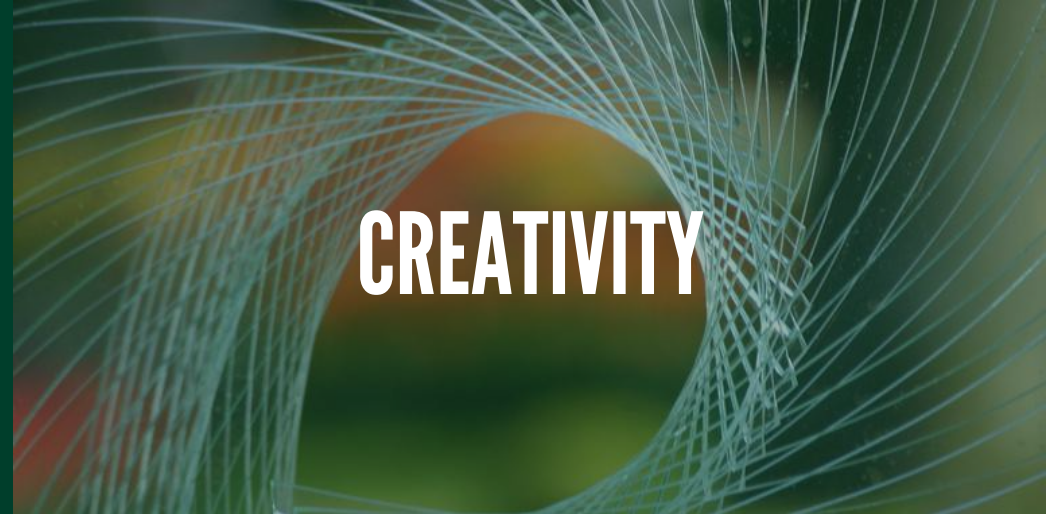
IMMIGRATION

Higher education transforms people's lives and should be accessible to all that are able to benefit from it. There is still more to do to support all to access and achieve success in higher education. This widening participation activity should be funded nationally. There should be funding by credit to encourage greater innovation and support ever more flexible approaches to learning.

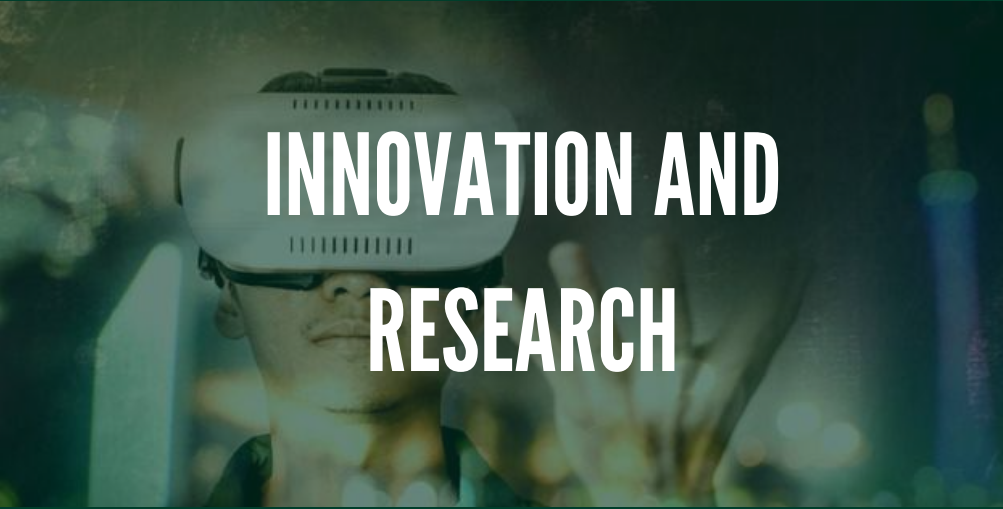


SOCIAL MOBILITY

The UK is known around the world for the strength of its creative industries - from our film to computer games industry and from music to art and fashion. However creativity needs to be fostered at an early age, embedded in the school curriculum and with a strong range of specialist higher education providers delivering a pipeline of creative graduates for the economy.



CREATIVITY



INNOVATION AND RESEARCH

Universities and colleges push forward the boundaries of knowledge. This can expand our understanding of ourselves and the world around us and can result in innovation and efficiency in business. Excellent research should be funded wherever it is found and innovation and enterprise supported whatever the scale. A greater proportion of research funding should be invested in applied and close-to-market research throughout the UK.

Universities and colleges are hubs for innovation in their local and regional economy. Higher education has long delivered technical education and government must avoid creating hard boundaries between academic, technical and professional education. There should be clear regional skills strategies linking further and higher education and apprenticeships. There should be greater alignment of the funding streams for higher education and degree apprenticeships.



INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY



REGULATION

We welcome the Higher Education and Research Act. The Act helps protect students, promotes diverse provision and protects independent quality assurance and co-regulation. While it supports high quality new providers to enter the higher education sector, regulatory anomalies such as the VAT status of private providers and differential visa regulations should be addressed.



TEACHER EDUCATION

Schools and the learning of young people will only ever be as good as the teachers in them. We need to ensure that there is a good supply of excellent teachers, well trained and given opportunities for professional development. Universities must be recognised as an essential part of this training.



SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

The benefits of higher education should be available to all. Institutions need to be funded to maintain their high quality provision and an excellent student experience. There is little evidence that young people are being put off higher education by fees and income contingent loans. Abolishing fees will tend to favour wealthier graduates. Reform of student finance and resources should focus on fairness to students by ruling out retrospective changes to loan terms and restoring the promised annual uprating of the repayment threshold; support for part time learners; and support for flexible learning.



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