Universities UK update September 2016

- **Meeting with Prime Minister’s policy advisers**
  UUK met with the Prime Minister’s policy advisers for education, research and innovation. UUK stressed the need for urgent action on fees and student finance for EU students applying for 2017/18 (and 18/19) entry, to provide transitional stability. They discussed the measures the Government should take to best support universities to thrive post-exit, e.g. support international research collaboration, provide stable investment and make the UK an attractive destination for EU and international staff and students.

- **Meeting with the Department for Education / collating evidence on value of ESIF**
  UUK met with the team at DfE responsible for Brexit and immigration policy issues. There is a strong recognition within DfE (including at ministerial level) of the need for urgent clarity on EU students’ fees and student finance for 2017/18.

  UUK also highlighted challenges with the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) programme, given that the Treasury’s financial guarantee announced in mid-August applied only to ESIF projects signed before the Autumn Statement. With this deadline now fast approaching, DfE has requested that UUK share with them its evidence on the value of the ESIF programme. UUK are also engaging with the Treasury on ESIF, who will assess whether to guarantee funding for certain ESIF projects that might be signed after the Autumn Statement.

  UUK also discussed exit negotiation priorities (research programmes, EU staff, EU students, mobility) and the measures that the Government should take to best support universities post-exit.

- **BEIS urgent call for evidence on EU research collaboration**
  The Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy are reviewing the submissions they received regarding UK universities being dropped from European-funded research consortium. They are looking to bring their findings to Jo Johnson by 28 September.

- **How can the Government best support universities to thrive post-exit?**
  A UUK paper outlines their preliminary thinking on how the Government can best support universities to thrive following the UK’s exit from the EU.

  This paper includes a number of actions that Government could deliver to ensure that universities are best placed to maximise the UK’s economic success and global influence outside the EU in five areas:

  1. Enhancing international research collaboration
  2. Making the UK an attractive destination for talented university staff
  3. Encouraging talented and entrepreneurial students from around the world to choose to study in the UK
  4. Increasing public investment in research and innovation
  5. Supporting UK students and staff to access vital global opportunities

  The paper will be developed further over the autumn and work is underway to develop more detailed policy proposals in each of these five areas.
- **HEFCE and Universities UK conference, 5 December 2016**

On 5 December 2016 UUK, in partnership with HEFCE, will be hosting an event titled *Putting universities at the heart of a thriving, global post-exit UK* that will examine the current political and policy environment and explore new models to support and enhance UK universities’ international collaborations across Europe and the wider world.

The event will bring together representatives from university leadership teams to consider how the challenges of Brexit can best be met, as well as how the sector can identify and benefit from new opportunities following the UK’s exit from the EU.

UUK hope this will provide a useful forum to share their latest thinking and hear a range of perspectives to contribute to the debate.

- **#WeAreInternational campaign, EAIE conference and international communications**

UUK are supporting the [#WeAreInternational](https://www.weareinternational.com) campaign, to promote the value of international students and staff, and the internationalism of UK universities more broadly. More information on the campaign and how universities can get involved can be found [here](https://www.weareinternational.com/).

UUK worked with the #WeAreInternational team to develop a [short film](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=example) that highlights the value of internationalism across UK universities. It features the voices of students and academics at UK universities from around the world.

This film along with a postcard was used to promote the UK as an international student destination at the EAIE conference in Liverpool from 13-16 September. The conference is Europe's largest gathering of international higher education staff.

UUK are also working in partnership with the British Council to develop a programme of activities and materials (including student-focused Q&As) to support a series of recruitment fairs for prospective EU students across Europe over the autumn. The first of these events takes place in Madrid on 19 October 2016 and each event will include a panel discussions and Q&As on the implications of Brexit for EU students.

- **Lords Science and Technology Committee inquiry**

David Greenaway, Vice-Chancellor, University of Nottingham and David Phoenix, Vice-Chancellor, London South Bank University gave evidence on 13 September at the Science and Technology Committee, which is assessing the action needed to ensure UK science continues to flourish as the UK negotiates its exit from the EU. Their evidence can be viewed [here](https://www.parliament.uk/)