

“Our university sector has a proud history and a world-class reputation, attracting students from across the world. Higher education is a successful public-private partnership: Government funding and institutional autonomy. This White Paper builds on that record, while doing more than ever to put students in the driving seat. We want to see more investment, greater diversity and less centralised control. But, in return, we want the sector to become more accountable to students, as well as to the taxpayer. The Coalition will reform the financing of higher education, promote a better student experience and foster social mobility. Our overall goal is a sector that is freed to respond in new ways to the needs of students.”

Foreword signed by **Vince Cable and David Willetts**

The Higher Education White Paper runs to 80 pages and is arranged in six chapters. This guide focuses on the policy initiatives identified in the Executive Summary but cross-references them to the paragraph in the main text. Annex A of the White Paper sets out the consultation process for the various elements of the policy.

Chapter 1: Sustainable and fair funding (page 14)

- HEFCE funding for teaching will decline while graduate contributions will increase (1.5)
- HEFCE will allocate residual teaching grant to support priorities including Medicine, Science and Engineering (1.10)
- From autumn 2012, HE will charge between £6k and £9K per year (1.8)
- There will be no up-front fees, but loans to cover course and living costs, including part-time and distance learning courses (1.7)
- Loans will be repaid on a “pay as you earn basis” (9% of an income of £21k) (1.15)
- Consultation on early repayment (1.18)
- Consult on VAT barriers that stop cost-sharing between institutions (1.20)
- Investigation of options to get early financial benefit for the taxpayer

Chapter 2: Well-informed students driving teaching excellence (page 25)

- All HEIs will provide standardised, comparable and easily accessible course information to prospective students (2.10)
- Expectations that HEIs will publish anonymised information about staff qualifications and expertise (2.11)
- HIPISG to consider whether standardised course information should be introduced for taught post graduate programmes (2.12)
- HEFCE to improve Unistats; to include graduate salary information (2.14)
- All main organisations holding student data will make their data publicly available for analysis (2.18)
- UCAS and HEIs to make available individual course data of pre-HE qualifications held by previously successful applicants (2.20)
- SLC and UCAS to simplify their student applications through a single application portal (2.22)

Chapter 3: A better student experience and better-qualified graduates (p.33)

- Publication of student charter; initially as best practice, but its mandatory extend will be reviewed in due course (3.3)
- By 2013/14 all HEIs will publish standardised summary reports of their student evaluation surveys (3.8)
- HEIs will monitored through a single risk-based quality assurance framework with indicators such as student satisfaction, and the recent track record of each HEI (3.19)
- OIA to consult the sector on ways to promote and deliver early complaints resolution (3.26)
- Wilson Review on ways to make the UK the best for HE-industry collaboration (3.29)
- Support Graduate Talent Pool throughout 2011 (3.43)
- Work with NCUE, NCGE and QAA to support HEIs in employability skills development (3.45)

Chapter 4: A diverse and responsive sector (p.46)

- Open up HE, FE and alternative providers’ market according to consumer and societal needs (4.6)
- Free up to 85,000 student numbers in 2012/13, with the unrestrained recruitment of 65,000 high achievers (AAB+ at A-Level); allowance of up to 20,000 places extra for each good quality HEI charging up to £7,500 (4.19; 4.20)
- Employers and charities to have more flexibility over funding student places outside government number restrictions (4.22; 4.23)
- Consult on changing HE access criteria and the process of degree award (4.26)

Chapter 5: Improved social mobility through fairer access (p.54)

- Establish a new, inclusive, single-point careers service in England by April 2012 (5.10)
- Establish a strong quality assurance framework for careers guidance, including a national quality standard (5.11)
- Access Agreements (AA) between the Director of Fair Access and HEIs charging over £6,000 (5.21)
- Increase capacity of OFFA by up to four times; OFFA’s current powers will be reviewed by the Director who in the autumn will also provide advice on further steps needed for the delivery of AA commitments (5.24; 5.25)
- Provide more generous support for low-income full-time students from families earning £25,000 or less (5.29)
- Establish new National Scholarship Programme which by 2014 will provide £150 million to improve disadvantaged students’ access into HE; all HEIs to participate (5.28)
- Imminent outcomes of UCAS’ review of application processes to inform whether a hybrid or other PQA model has a future in promoting access (5.44)

Chapter 6: A new, fit-for-purpose regulatory framework (p.66)

- Consultation on a single, transparent regulatory framework that covers all English HEIs (6.12)
- Legislate on enhancing HEFCE’s regulatory role to condition access to student loan funding and monitor institutions’ financial stability; HEFCE will also act as protector of students’ consumer interests (6.12; 6.13; 6.10)
- Ask HERBG to identify further areas of legislative deregulation in the interest of students and the taxpayer; explore how to reduce institutional costs in completing tax corporation returns (6.19)
- Exempt HEIs from the “accommodation offset” National Minimum Wage provisions for full time students (6.20)
- HEFCE, HESA and HERBRG to collaborate with ISB to rationalise the volume of HEI data requests (6.22)

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