Medium-sized issues?

What's coming for SUs to consider in their strategy work?

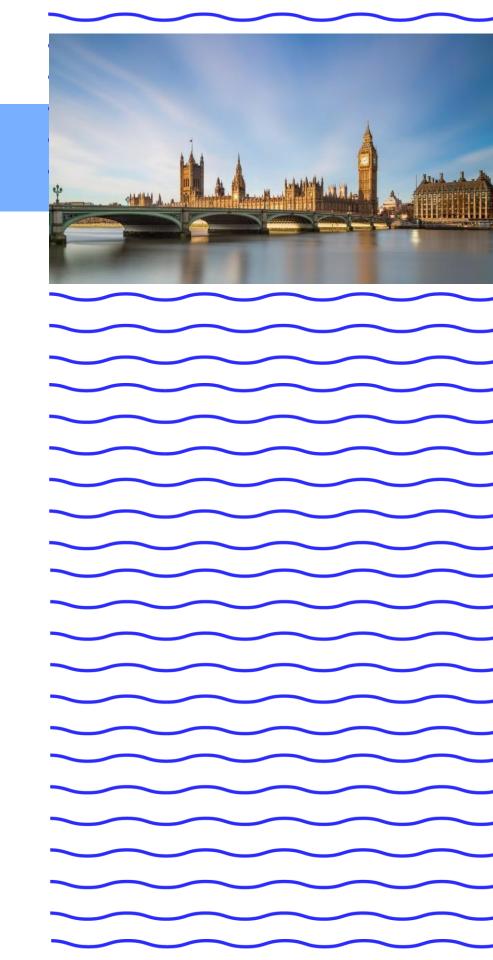
JIM DICKINSON, WONKHE SUs



Free speech bill

- Is it dead in this session?
- Will culture wars fade?
- See saw between EDI issues and free speech
- Duty of care of universities and unions re their members
- Handling complaints from students about students
- Pressure on EDI work (chilling effect)





Student financial support

- Fiscal drag and the £25,000 threshold
- Inflation (student inflation)
- Energy bills
- Rent and demand for housing
- Pressures on university hardship funding
- Worsening unit of resource in the university





This academic year

- RT to campus and "living with" Covid
- Post pandemic how blended?
- Mental health and anxiety inc hesitancy belonging
- Teaching and learning and M/H
- Assessment
- Spiking and student health
- The "market" and clustering in the RG
- Outcomes (coming up)





Minimums and maximums

- Two major (sets) of consultations
- The first concerns the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) which in England is compulsory but that Nations providers usually take part in.
- The second concerns B3: Student Outcomes which is England only (but likely to have long term implications on nations)
- Major student voice changes and implications (and opportunities) in TEF





The TEF

 "We will ensure that universities deliver the best possible value for money to students: we will introduce a framework to recognise universities offering the highest teaching quality; encourage universities to offer more two-year courses; and require more data to be openly available to potential students so that they can make decisions informed by the career paths of past graduates" (p35)



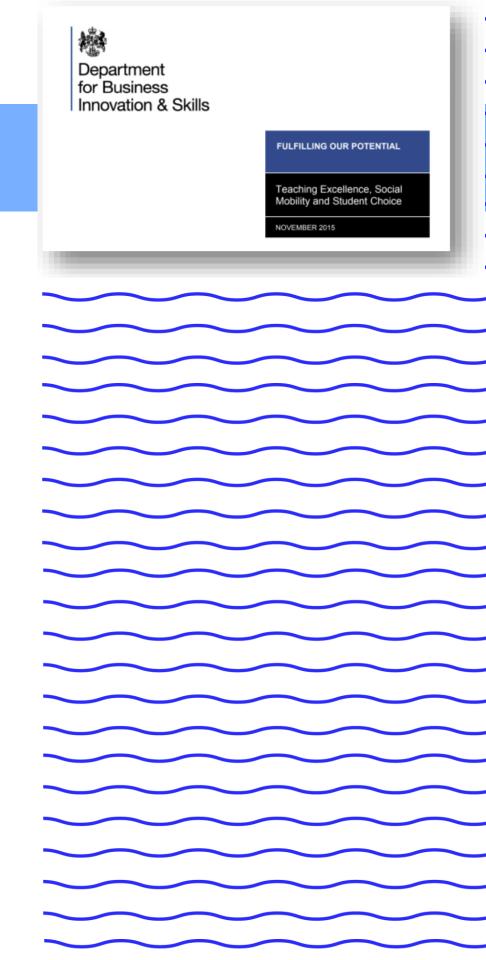
STRONG LEADERSHIP A CLEAR ECONOMIC PLAN A BRIGHTER, MORE SECURE FUTURE

Conservatives

The TEF

• "It will identify and incentivise the highest quality teaching to drive up standards in higher education, deliver better quality for students and employers and better value for taxpayers"

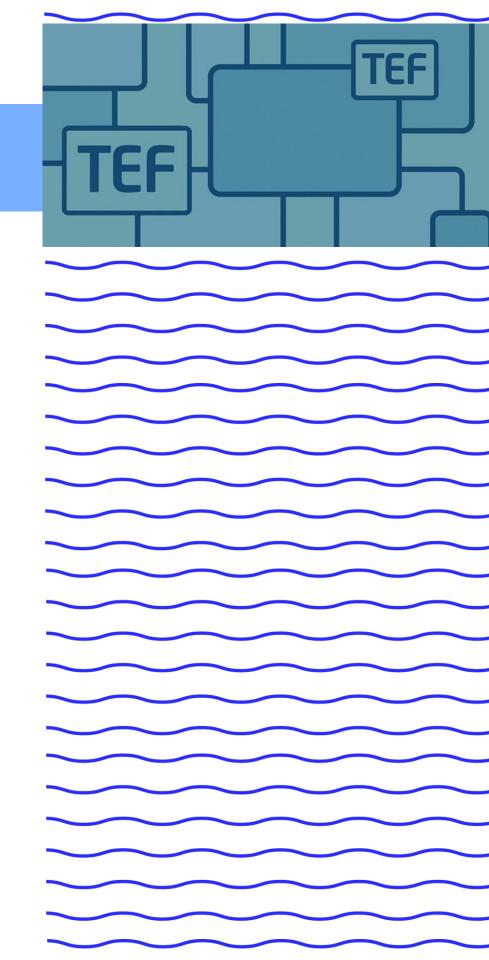




The TEF

- Taking part is a requirement in England
- It is optional (based on the permission of the Minister) in devolved nations.
- Unregistered English providers can also apply if desired.
- Doing well in it was originally linked to being able to raise fees – which generated major controversy
- (Boycott, and deprioritising of NSS in calculations)





Provider name	Higher education provider	Award year	TEF rating
	University of Abertay Dundee	June 2017	TEF Silver
Award type	Aberystwyth University	June 2018	TEF Gold
Gold 77 Silver 136	Abingdon and Witney College	June 2018	TEF Silver
Bronze 61	ACM Guildford Limited	June 2019	TEF Bronze
Provisional 16	Activate Learning	June 2017	TEF Silver
England 277	AECC University College	June 2017	TEF Silver
Wales 8 Scotland 5	ALRA	June 2019	TEF Silver
	Anglia Ruskin University Higher Education Corporation	June 2017	TEF Silver
	Arden University Limited	June 2019	TEF Provisional
TEE Gold	Arts Educational Schools(Tha)	luno 2010	TEE Cold



Award ty

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Silver	
Bronze	
Provisional	Î

Nation

England	
Wales	
Scotland	





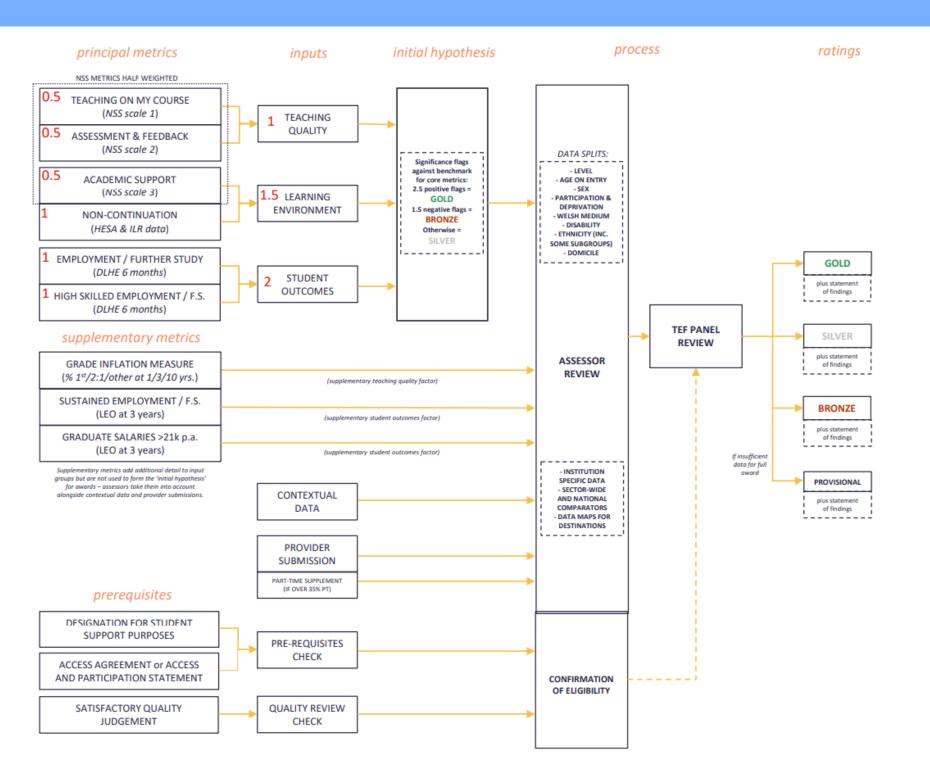




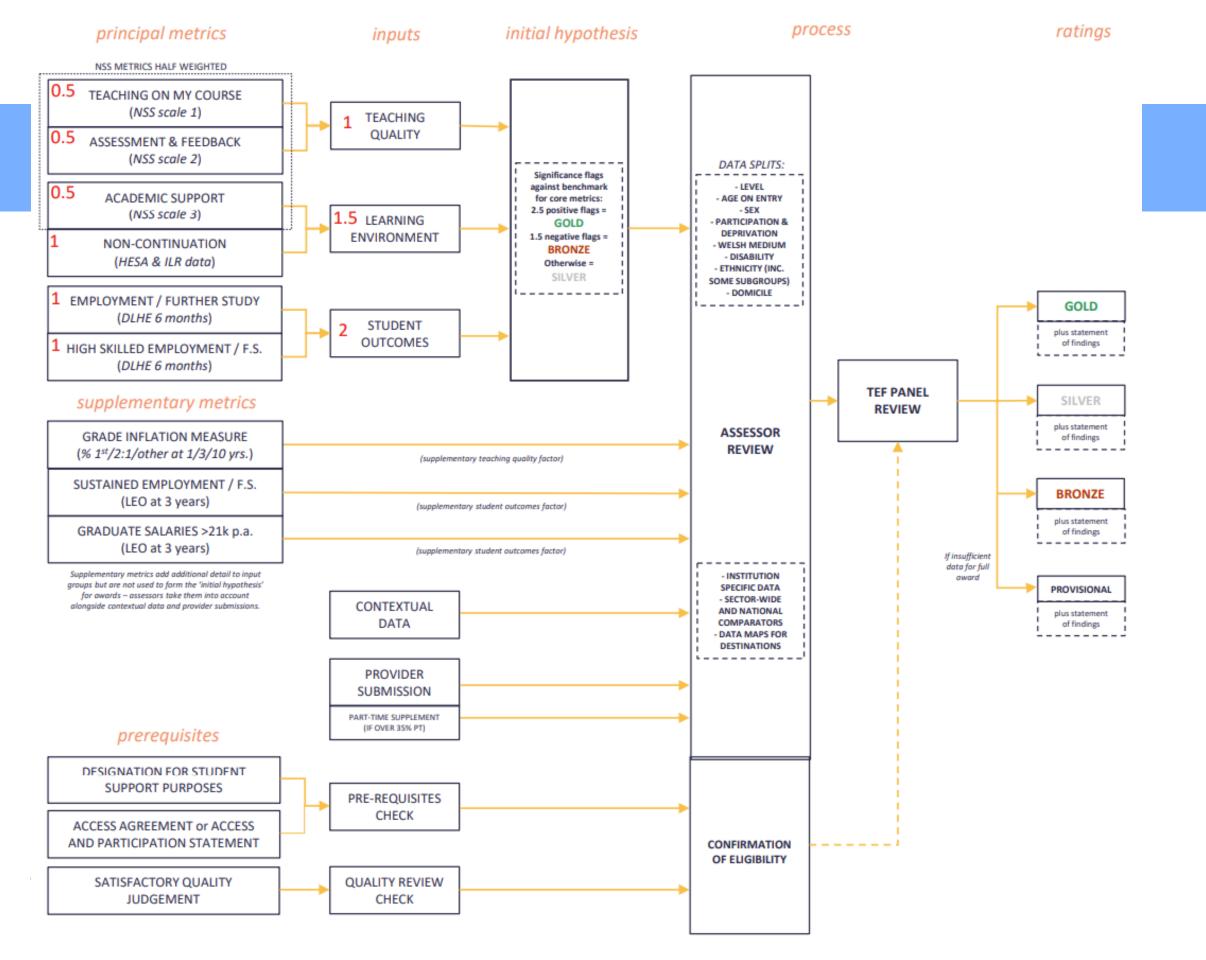




The machine





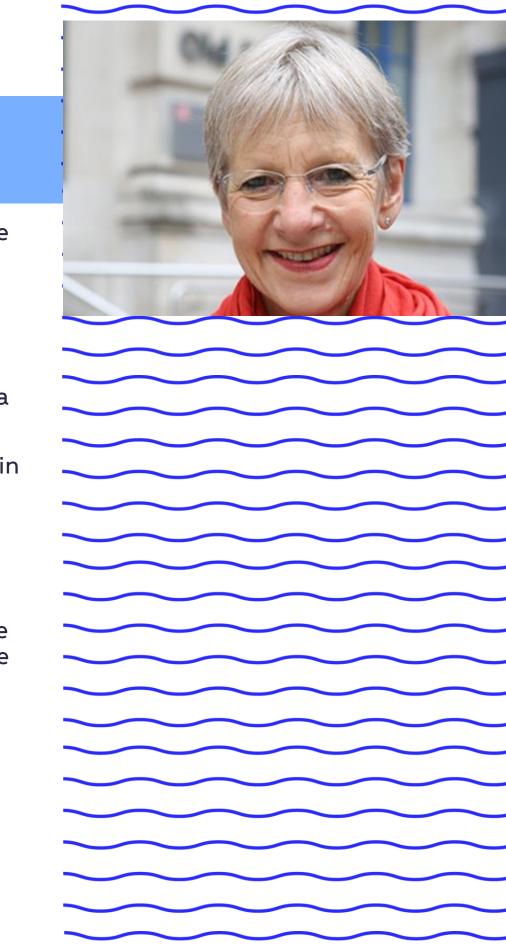




Review!

- During the passage of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (HERA2017) members of the House of Lords were particularly concerned about the TEF as – effectively – a government mandated ranking.
- There were worries about linking it to fee levels. The statutory review was added to the Bill in order to placate the Lords.
- Section 26 provided for an independent review of a "section 25" scheme (basically TEF) within a year of the Act becoming Law.
- Dame Shirley Pearce was the reviewer, her report was submitted in August 2019 and published in January 2021.
- It's a fantastic report. It convinced the government not to continue with plans to run TEF at subject level – changed the frequency that TEF will run to every 4-5 years, ditched the award names.
- Though she found that neither employers nor students/applicants take any notice of ratings, the government is still committed to these use cases. Pearce recommended that TEF should become a means to identify, celebrate, and learn from high quality teaching.
- She also sought to see TEF make more use of qualitative data alongside metrics, noting the statistical weakness of TEF (there's a parallel, and also excellent, ONS review that informed the report





Scales in use

- a. The teaching on my course.
- b. Assessment and feedback.
- c. Academic support.
- d. Learning resources.
- e. Student voice.

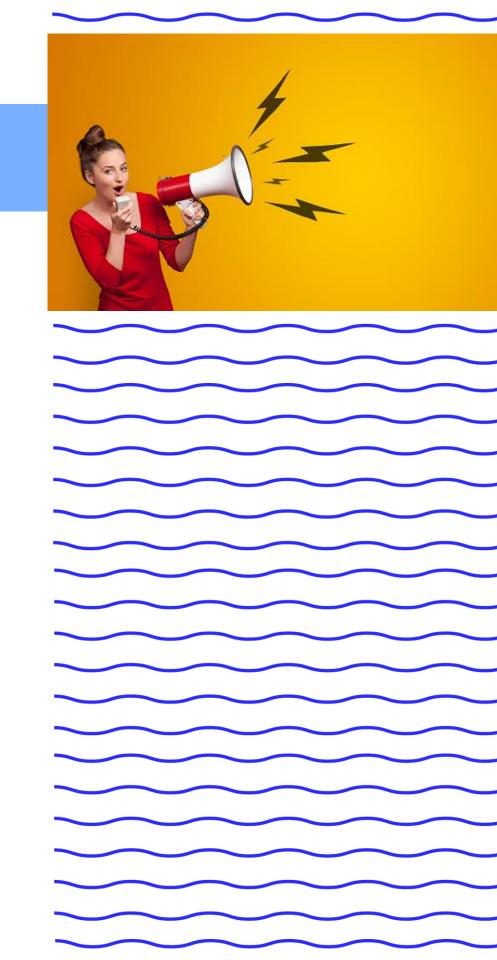




Student voice

- Student members of TEF panels
- Student input into the narrative submission
- Use of student opinion in the NSS

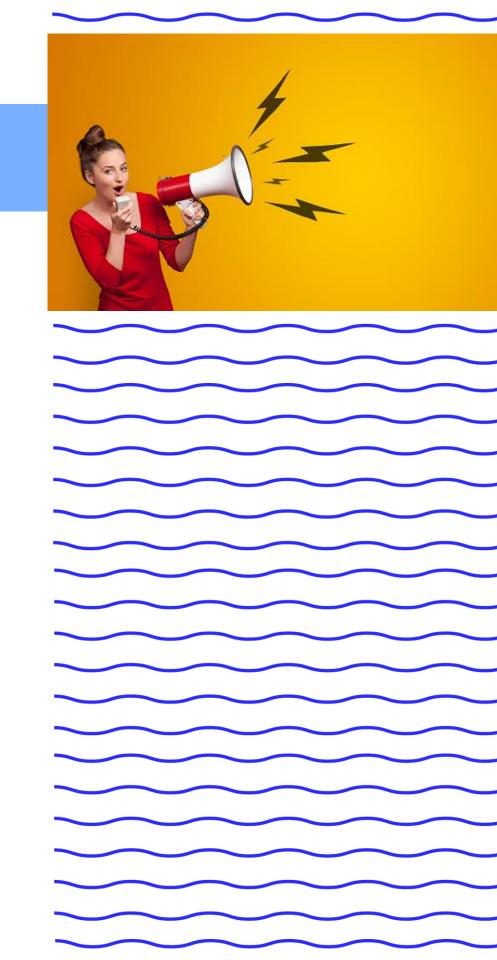




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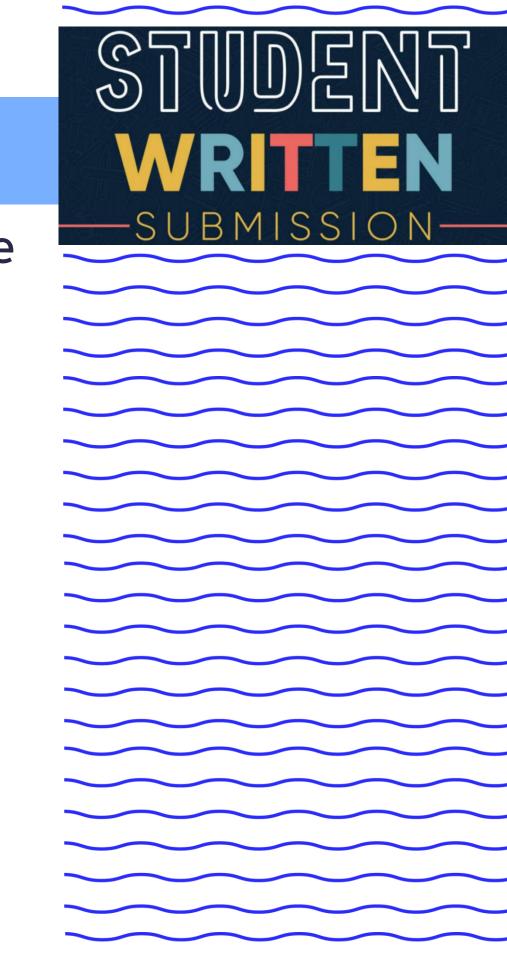




The student submission

- In QAA processes of old (England) and to some extent now (elsewhere) opportunities to submit separate and independent submission
 - Leverage over process of making that a good process
 - Leverage over issues raised in that report
- See also student submissions into Access and Participation evaluation



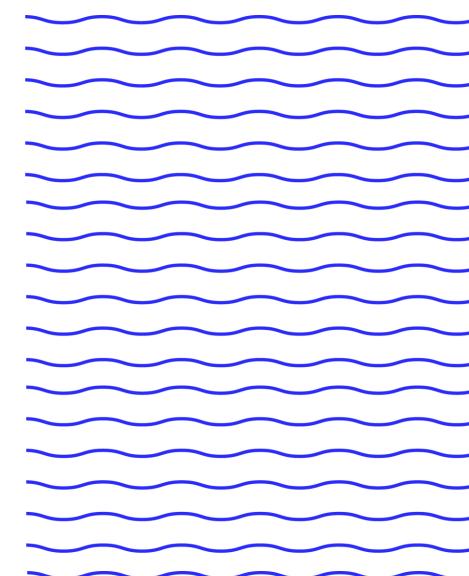


Great news!

- Students contributing evidence to the panel directly
- Process that OfS says should strengthen voice locally and internally
- Recognition that views of students may differ from those of provider so leverages honesty
- The evidence may also be more contemporary than lagged indiactors







How it will work

- One submission per university
- One "TEF student contact"
- Template and guide will be issued
- The latter has to have experience of representing students...
- Subtle warnings against ending without a submission

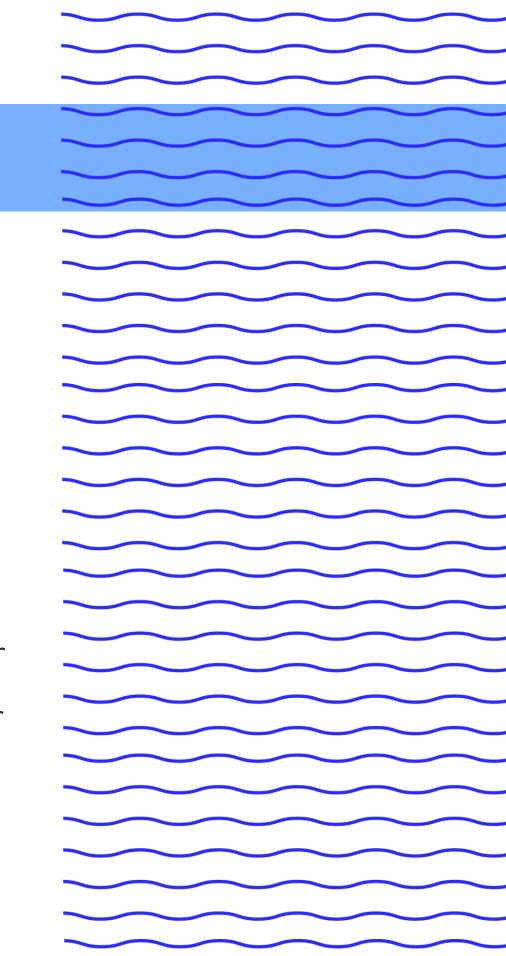




The SWS

- 1. How students' views and other evidence presented in the submission were gathered, whether through existing student representation processes, or any additional evidence gathering activity, or both.
 - This should indicate the range of students the evidence applies to and how far the evidence is representative of the whole undergraduate student population.
 - The implication is that to be impressive and helpful, this will need to have been resourced properly via the block grant discussion including things like research capacity if the SU doesn't currently have it.
- 2. Evidence and feedback addressing the features related to the student experience and student outcomes, as determined by students as relevant to their own context.
 - submissions to be based primarily on evidence and feedback gathered directly from students (although it could also reference other evidence, such as the TEF indicators or evidence referred to in the provider submission).
 - OfS says it wants evidence gathered directly from students to supplement the provider submission and the NSS data by providing important additional insights into students' views.





Examples of evidence...

- Summaries of evidence gathered through existing student representation arrangements
- Analysis of bespoke student feedback gathered via surveys, focus groups or workshops
- Where relevant, the submission should refer to the size of the samples and the categories of students involved in feedback gathering activities
- Quotes, but only where they illustrate points that are supported by a wider evidence base
- OfS will even set out expectations that a provider has to work with the TEF student contact to provide access to any other relevant information required to complete the student submission.

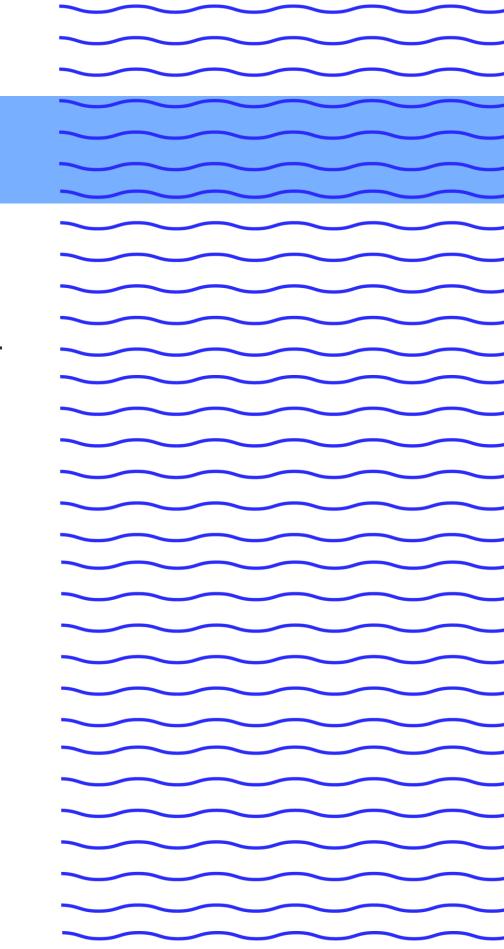


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Also to note

- No word yet on overlap with wither QA or QE processes in nations
- OfS is proposing that a "feature of excellence" when making a TEF award will be "The provider effectively engages with its students, leading to improvements to the experiences and outcomes of its students". SUs may want to feed back on the need in that description to differentiate between surveying students and having students as representatives or partners.
- Panel guidance: "Evidence would be more compelling, and greater weight placed on it, where it clearly articulates the views of students, and is broadly representative of all student groups and courses within the scope of the TEF assessment.



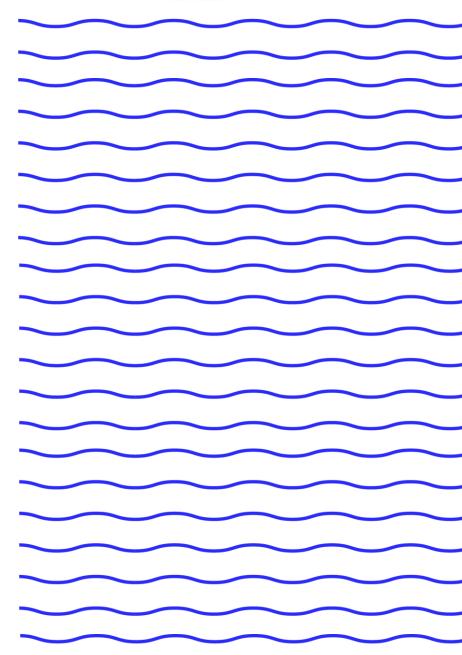


Next steps

- There's an official chance for SUs to respond to these proposals until 17 March 2022.
- From there in theory the timeline is as follows:
 - August 2022: OfS appoints TEF panel
 - Early September 2022: The provider and student submission window opens: OfS publishes guidance on submissions and assessment; OfS publishes TEF indicators
 - Mid November 2022: Submission window closes
 - Late November 2022 to March 2023: TEF panel carries out the assessments
 - April to May 2023: Providers notified of the panel's provisional decisions about their ratings; Opportunity for providers to make representations
 - May 2023: Outcomes published for providers that do not make representations









'Mickey Mouse' university courses could have student loans removed

Programmes with high drop-out rates and low levels of graduate employment will be under scrutiny

By Camilla Turner, EDUCATION EDITOR 15 January 2022 • 8:08pm

Universities are facing a crackdown on "Mickey Mouse" degrees as the watchdog threatens to withdraw student loan funding from low-quality courses.

Vice-chancellors will be warned by the Office for Students (OfS) that they risk being hit with sanctions - including financial penalties - if their degrees fail to deliver for students.

The higher education regulator had pledged to take a more "robust" approach to quality assurance, which will include launching investigations where bad practice is reported.

Degrees with high drop-out rates and low rates of graduate employment will be targeted by the OfS for scrutiny.

The regulator will publish proposals this week which set out the series of "minimum requirements" they expect degree courses to meet in terms of student outcomes.

If courses are deemed to consistently fall below these they could be barred from receiving student loan funding which would most likely render them financially unviable.

WONKHE



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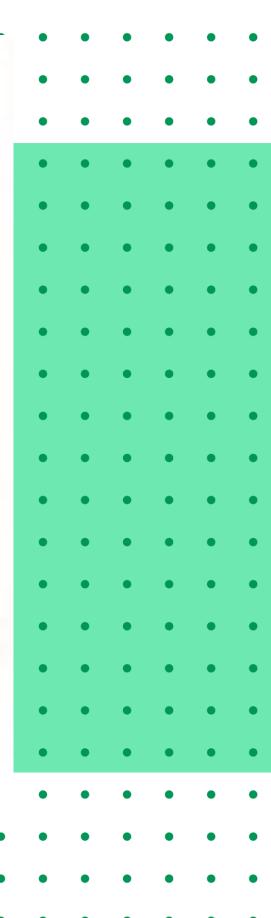
If courses are deemed to consistently fall below these they could be barred from receiving student loan funding which would most likely render them financially unviable.

NEWS.

£500,000 fines for 'Mickey Mouse' courses

Universities that run "Mickey Mouse" degree courses face being fined up to £500,000, under plans by the watchdog to "stamp out" bad practice. The Office for Students is to crack down on degrees with high student dropout and low graduate employment rates, as well as those with significant grade inflation. Under proposed reforms, the OfS could investigate university departments and faculties if there is evidence that individual courses are not up to scratch. Page 4

WONKHE



We will get baselines

- Continuation rates help it understand whether a provider is recruiting students able to succeed through the early stages of its courses, with the appropriateness of recruitment and student support under the spotlight;
- It says **completion** is similar and provides a look over the whole student lifecycle. This difference in focus means that there will not be a direct, linear, relationship between a provider's continuation rate and its completion rate.
- Meanwhile progression tells OfS whether a provider's students have successful student outcomes beyond graduation.





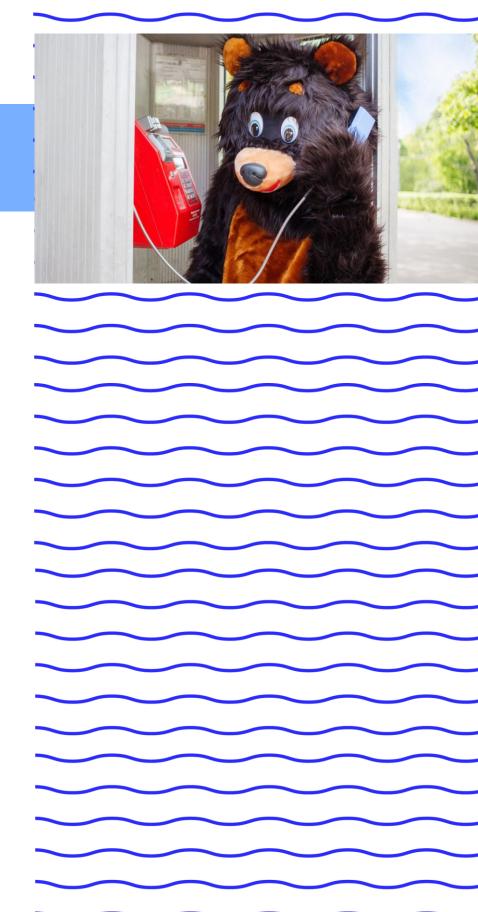
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How?

- Performance "in aggregate", over a "time series" (for the number of years up to a five year period for which indicators could be derived from available)
- Across splits for different demographic groups

 broken down by mode (full or part-time) and level of study (for example "other undergraduate", first degree), as well as by age, participation of local areas (POLAR), English indices of multiple deprivation (IMD), ethnicity, disability, sex and domicile.



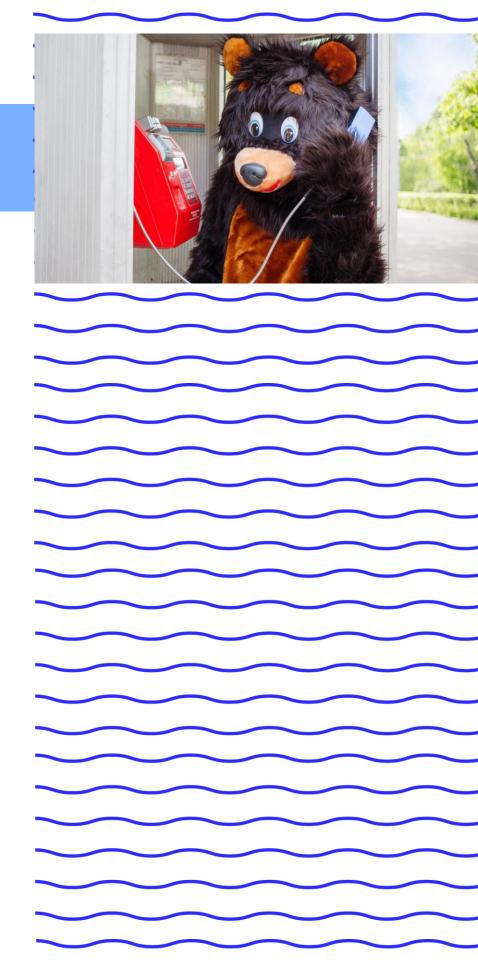




Splits by

- Subject level (level 2 of the Common Aggregation Hierarchy is proposed)
- Course type
- Views of a provider's student population
 - Franchise? Awarding?





Blame it on the baseline

• Baseline for each indicator (in each mode and level of study that the provider delivers) and published stats.

Table 1: Summary of proposed numerical threshold levels

Level and mode of study	Continuation	Completion (cohort tracking)	Completion (composite indicator)	Progression
FT Other UG	75%	65%	65%	45%
FT First Degree	80%	75%	75%	60%
FT UG / PG border	85%	85%	80%	80%
FT PGCE	85%	85%	85%	85%
FT PG Taught Masters	80%	80%	80%	70%
FT PG Other	80%	80%	80%	85%
FT PG Research (PhD)	90%	75%	75%	85%
PT Other UG	55%	55%	55%	65%
PT First Degree	60%	55%	55%	75%
PT UG / PG border	60%	60%	60%	80%
PT PGCE	75%	75%	75%	85%
PT PG Taught Masters	65%	65%	65%	85%
PT PG Other	65%	60%	65%	85%
PT PG Research (PhD)	70%	60%	60%	85%
Apprenticeship – UG	70%	55%	55%	75%
Apprenticeship – PG	80%	80%	80%	80%

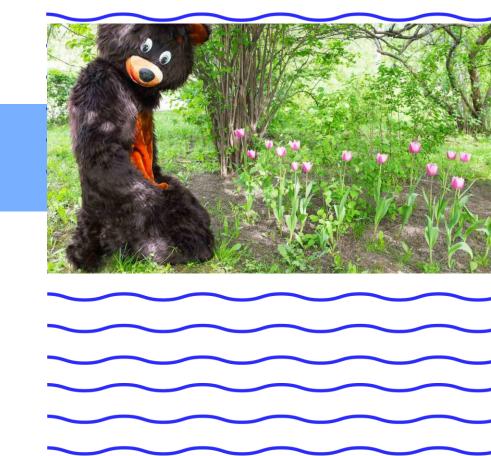
Figure F1: Examples of assessing indicators and split indicators

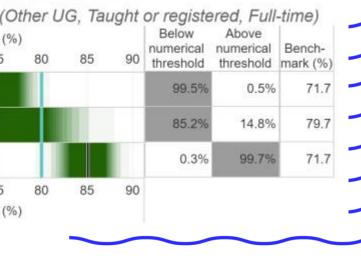
Student and study characteristic split indicators: Continuation (Other UG, Taught or registered, Full-time)
IndicIndicator (%)
Below Above

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Split indicator	inator	(%)	60	65	70	75
Year 1 (earliest)	440	75.0				
Year 2	70	75.0				
Year 3	440	85.0				
			60	65	70	75
					India	cator (
	Year 1 (earliest) Year 2	Split indicatorDenominatorYear 1 (earliest)440Year 270	Split indicatorDenom- inatorator (%)Year 1 (earliest)44075.0Year 27075.0	Split indicatorDenom- inatorator (%)60Year 1 (earliest)44075.0Year 27075.0Year 344085.0	Split indicator inator (%) 60 65 Year 1 (earliest) 440 75.0 Year 2 70 75.0 Year 3 440 85.0	Denom- inator ator (%) 60 65 70 Year 1 (earliest) 440 75.0 1 1 Year 2 70 75.0 1 1 Year 3 440 85.0 1 1 60 65 70 1 1

Note: 'FT' = 'full-time'; 'PT' = 'part-time'; 'UG' = 'undergraduate'; 'PG' = 'postgraduate'.







Blam Table 1: Summary of proposed numerical threshold levels

Baseline level of publishe

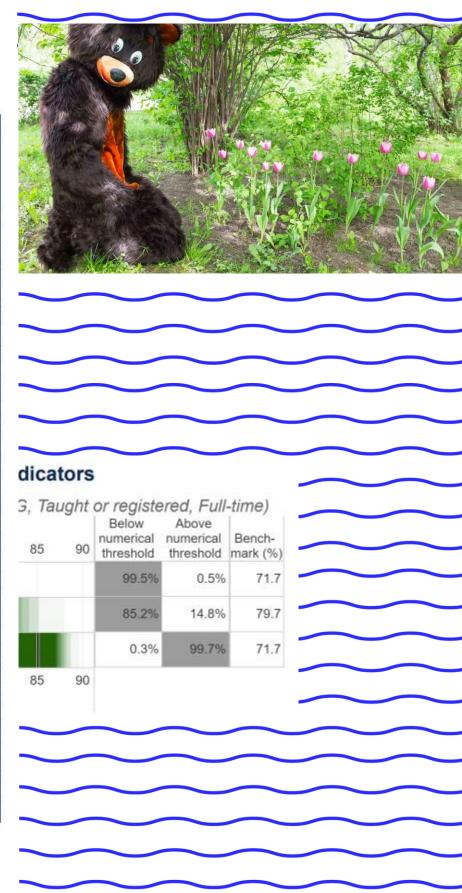
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PT PG Taught Masters	65%	65%	65%	1
PT PG Other	65%	60%	65%	
PT PG Research (PhD)	70%	60%	60%	1
Apprenticeship – UG	70%	55%	55%	10
Apprenticeship – PG	80%	80%	80%	1

Note: 'FT' = 'full-time'; 'PT' = 'part-time'; 'UG' = 'undergraduate'; 'PG' = 'postgraduate'.



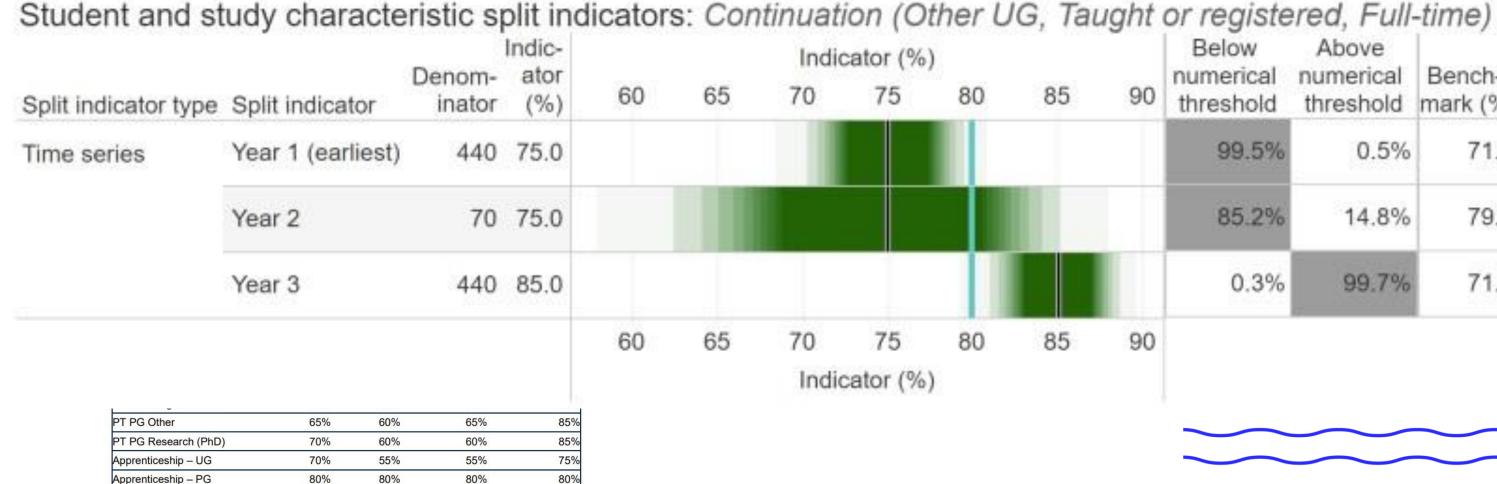
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Blame it on the baseline

Figure F1: Examples of assessing indicators and split indicators



Note: 'FT' = 'full-time'; 'PT' = 'part-time'; 'UG' = 'undergraduate'; 'PG' = 'postgraduate'.





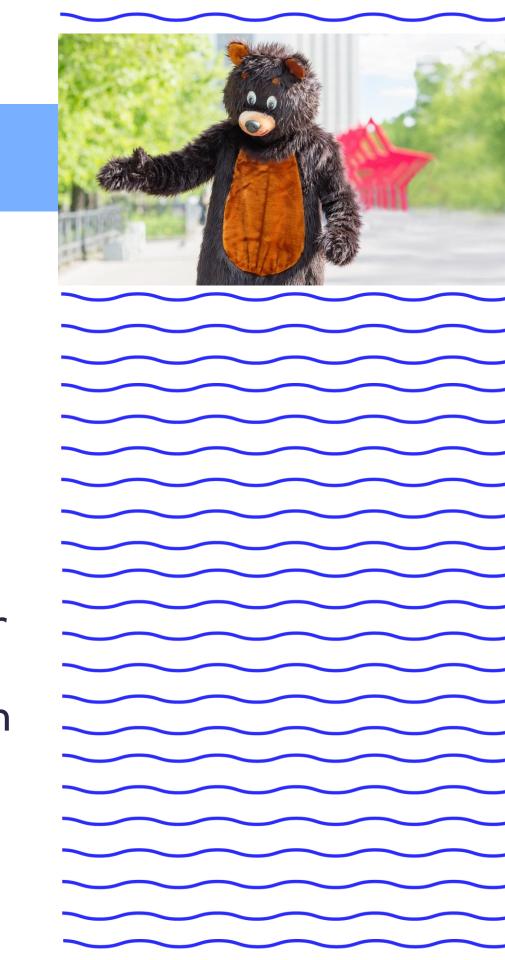
90

90	Below numerical threshold	Above numerical threshold	Bench- mark (%)
	99.5%	0.5%	71.7
	85.2%	14.8%	79.7
	0.3%	99.7%	71.7

Then...

- Publish the information via a dashboard on the website
- Explore the possibility of linking the information directly to an individual provider's entry on the register
- Publish sector-wide data analysis on the website, and even
- Consider how to link to the information from Discover Uni to provide a route for interested students to understand the performance of individual providers in more depth.





Looks at data and then

- Contextual factors
- Historical (pandemic or course features See Norland)
- Future (we've already started to do something) about this)
- then Regulation letters, conditions, fines, exclusion from register







What do you do?

- You can **ignore** it because you reckon you can front out contextual reasons or because it's an outlier that might not be in a big theme this year
- You work to actually **improve** the continuation, completion or progression scores, although there's necessarily a long lead time on making a difference
- You change the students you recruit by taking fewer risks on otherwise contextually talented students - focussing on the social backgrounds more likely to stay the course and have the family connections to get a graduate job
- You slowly, quietly, carefully **exit** this provision. "It's not one of our strengths" or whatever, and anyway the costs are high and recruitment is poor and...

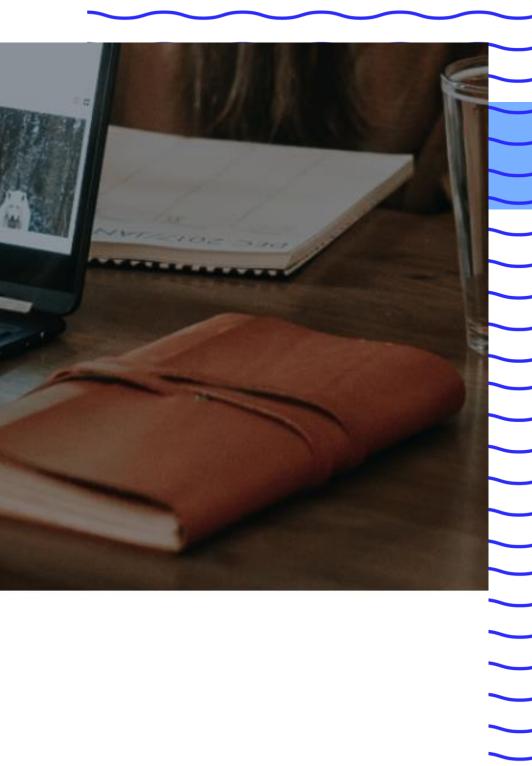


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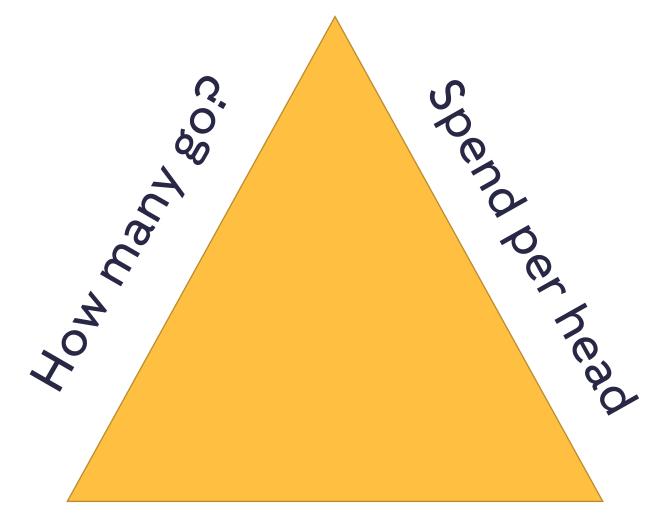
The UPP Foundation Student Futures Commission

About the Commission



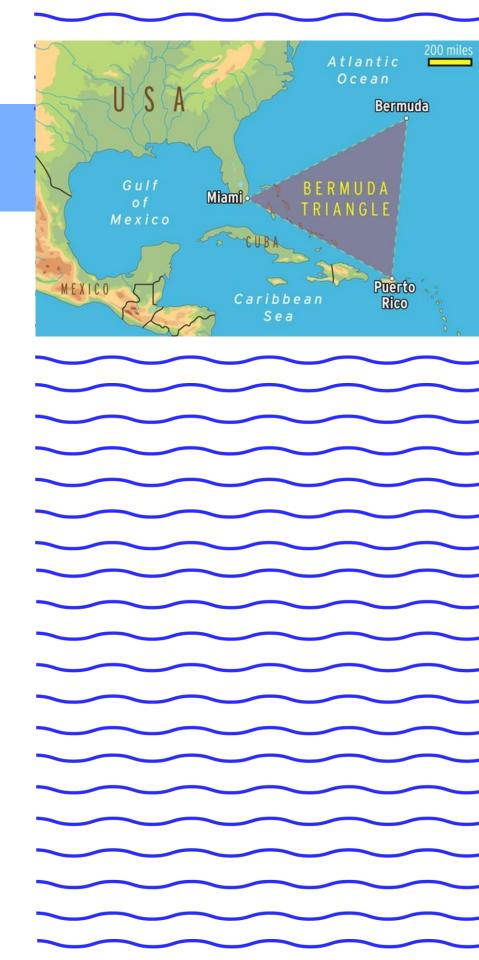


The Bermuda Triangle



The subsidy level





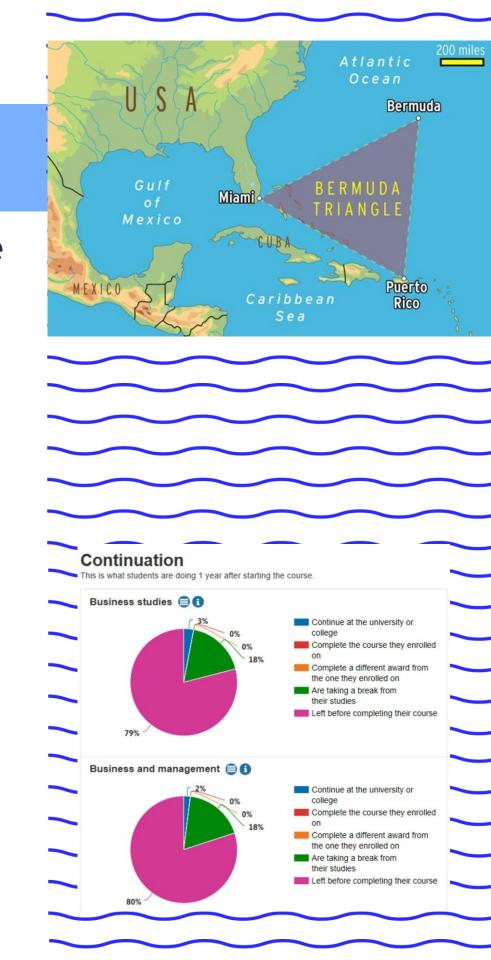
How many go?

- See FE 2000s framing about "best courses for them" (and the economy)
- Surely some provision is a problem?

Three big options:

- Restrict by entry criteria (Level 3 or even 2)
- Restrict by exit outcome
- Restrict by subject nationally
- Is everyone recruited benefitting?
- Are some students being mis-sold?



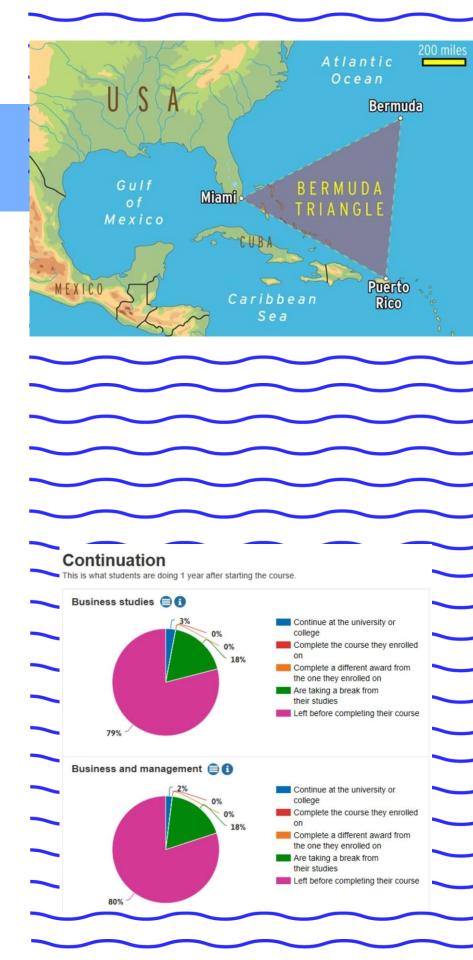


How many go?

Proposals

- Restrict by entry criteria (A-C GCSE Maths/Eng mature exempt)
- Restrict by exit outcome SNCs on Proceed below 50%
- Is everyone recruited benefitting?
- Are some students being mis-sold?





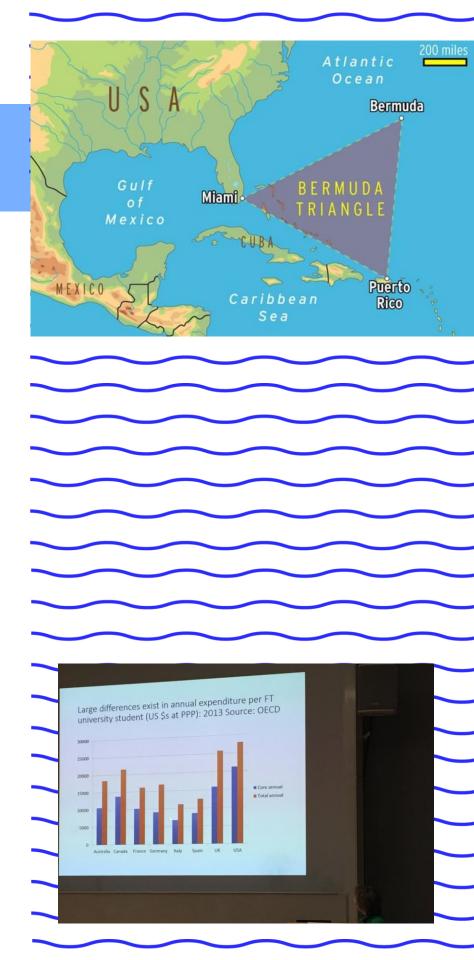
Spend per head

- We are more expensive
- What have the incentives done to supply?

Two big options (not mutually exclusive):

- Across the board restrictions (freeze?)
- Pricing and subsidy (although beware counterintuitive incentives)
 - You could charge more "realistic" fees
 - Or you could change value of voucher to uni



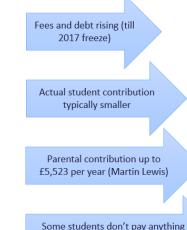


Grads pay more

 The scheme was supposed costs 33p in the pound but now costs around 54p in the pound

Two big options (not mutually exclusive):

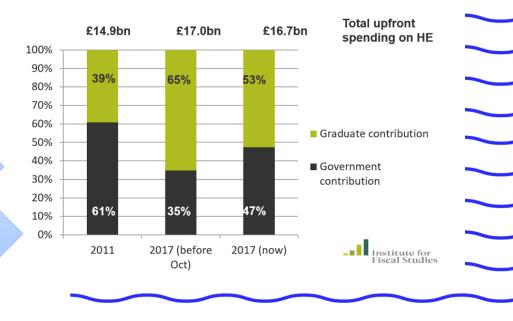
- Graduates pay more in their 50s (repayment term)
- Graduates pay more in their 20s (repayment threshold)
- Both regressive.



(their parents pay it all)







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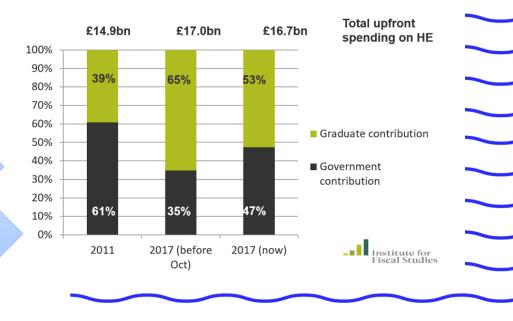
- Graduates pay more in their 50s (repayment term)
- Graduates pay more in their 20s (repayment threshold)
- Both regressive.
- £10,000 extra each?



(their parents pay it all)







In other words...

- Current student loans mainly paid between late 20s and late 50s
- Proposal would "stretch" that so that more repaid in 20s and more repaid in 50s
- But graduate jobs and housing crises...
- Plus pensions and social care crises...
- And the £10k whammy!
- "The more it becomes like a loan the less progressive it is. And what about those rich enough to escape it?"

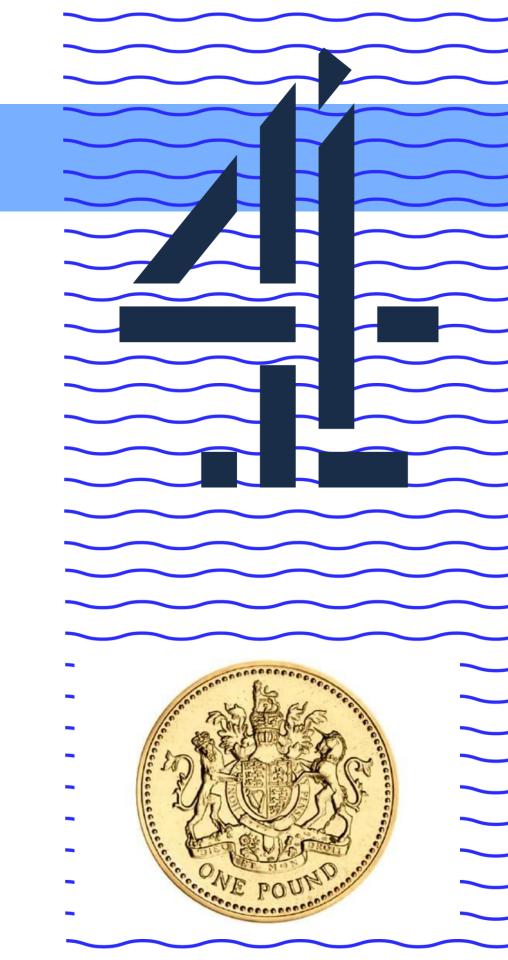




How to cope with a fees freeze?

- Charges
- Other fees
- Recruit more expensive students
- Shift recruitment to cheaper courses
- "Efficiencies" scale
- "Efficiencies" waste
- "Efficiencies" sweat / sharing
- Channel 4...





Student finance?





Blam Table 1: Summary of proposed numerical threshold levels

Baseline level of publishe

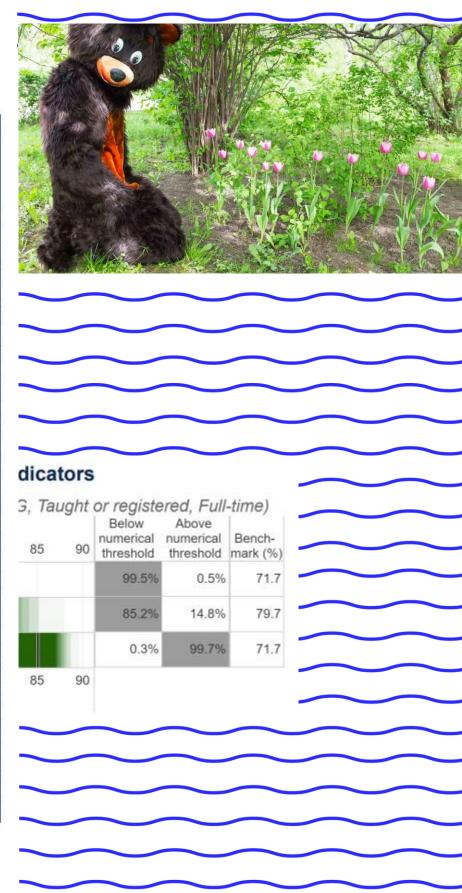
Level and mode of study	Continuation	Completion (cohort tracking)	Completion (composite indicator)	Progress
FT Other UG	75%	65%	65%	
FT First Degree	80%	75%	75%	(
FT UG / PG border	85%	85%	80%	
FT PGCE	85%	85%	85%	1
FT PG Taught Masters	80%	80%	80%	
FT PG Other	80%	80%	80%	1
FT PG Research (PhD)	90%	75%	75%	1
PT Other UG	55%	55%	55%	l
PT First Degree	60%	55%	55%	
PT UG / PG border	60%	60%	60%	1
PT PGCE	75%	75%	75%	
PT PG Taught Masters	65%	65%	65%	1
PT PG Other	65%	60%	65%	
PT PG Research (PhD)	70%	60%	60%	1
Apprenticeship – UG	70%	55%	55%	10
Apprenticeship – PG	80%	80%	80%	1

Note: 'FT' = 'full-time'; 'PT' = 'part-time'; 'UG' = 'undergraduate'; 'PG' = 'postgraduate'.



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45%
60%
80%
85%
70%
85%
85%
65%
75%
80%
85%
85%
85%
85%
75%
80%



Subject name	Projected to obtain a degree (%)	Progression rate (%)	Proceed (%)	
Medicine and dentistry	96.2	96.0	92.3	
Nursing and midwifery	83.7	94.7	79.3	
Medical sciences	77.2	82.0	63.3	
Allied health	84.1	94.8	79.7	
Biosciences	78.5	67.9	53.2	
Psychology	89.9	65.9	59.2	
Agriculture, food and related studies	-	34.7	-	
Chemistry	-	81.5	-	
Mathematical sciences	-	73.0	-	
Engineering	73.4	85.3	62.6	
Materials and technology	-	86.7	-	
Computing	63.7	90.8	57.8	
Architecture, building and planning	84.1	92.0	77.4	
Sociology, social policy and anthropology	79.6	62.7	49.9	
Economics	-	65.2	-	
Law	76.9	72.3	55.6	
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Subject name	Projected to obtain a degree (%)	Progression	Proceed (%
Business and management	80.6	70.7	57.0
English studies	-	49.1	
History and archaeology	82.4	58.3	48.0
Education and teaching	90.7	76.6	69.
Creative arts and design	85.7	62.3	53.3
Performing arts	80.5	63.6	51.2
Geography, earth and environmental studies	90.4	74.1	67.



%) 7.0 7.0 7.0 7.0 7.0

Plymouth

University of Plymouth

Sociology, social policy and anthropology	79.6	62.7
Psychology	89.9	65.9
Performing arts	80.5	63.6
Nursing and midwifery	83.7	94.7
Medicine and dentistry	96.2	96
Medical sciences	77.2	82
Law	76.9	72.3
History and archaeology	82.4	58.3
Geography, earth and environmental studi	90.4	74.1
Education and teaching	90.7	76.6
Creative arts and design	85.7	62.3
Business and management	80.6	70.7
Biosciences	78.5	67.9
Architecture, building and planning	84.1	92
Allied health	84.1	94.8
Engineering	73.4	85.3
Computing	63.7	90.8



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### **Medium-sized issues?** What's coming for SUs to consider in their strategy work?

