

# Respected but not respectable

The role and value of  
students' unions in 2022

JIM DICKINSON, WONKHE



**WONKHE**

David versus Goliath:  
The past, present and future  
of students' unions in the UK  
Mike Day and Jim Dickinson

HEPI Report 111

With a Foreword  
by Douglas Blackstock

WONKHE

ABOUT US · EVENTS · LATEST · JOBS · SUBSCRIPTION · SUs ·

Happy 100th birthday to the National Union of Students

As national student representation enters its centenary year, Jim Dickinson tells a tale of tensions in NUS' formation

COMMENT | 10/02/22

**Jim Dickinson**  
Jim is an Associate Editor at Wonkhe.

Tags: **STUDENTS**

There's an old and quite dark joke that accompanies the story of how the National Union of Students came into being on February 10th, 1922.

The story goes that students, fresh from the horrors of the first world war and keen to contribute to avoiding a second, resolved that a national body should participate in international cooperation events – all with a view to securing lasting peace.

And it's been pursuing unrealistic lost causes ever since.

**English exceptionalism**

Back in 1919, French students had organised a "student congress" in Strasbourg to celebrate the reopening of the university there – and delegates present had got talking about the way in which students might forge international alliances.

Scotland, which had long been ahead of England on student representation, sent a delegation from the Federation of Scottish students – but England could only send a handful of individuals attending *per cap*.

That setting of Strasbourg had a mild irony to it. The English delegates will not have realised, but it was a visit some forty years prior to Strasbourg by an Edinburgh student called Robert Fitzroy Bell that had sparked the formation of the first incarnation of what we would today regard as a students union in the UK. His friend Otto Schulp later recalled:

“ We inspected the new university buildings, and outside the door of one of them he noticed a placard relating to the "Studenten Ausschuss". "What is

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RICHARD BRABNER | COMMENT | 11/06/21

Students will build back community better – if we support them to do so

How should we encourage and strengthen students' contribution to their own and their wider communities? Patrick O'Donnell, Richard Brabner and Jim Dickinson look to the future.

**Richard Brabner**  
Richard is Director of the UPP Foundation.

**Patrick O'Donnell**  
Patrick O'Donnell is Union President at York University Students' Union

**Jim Dickinson**  
Jim is an Associate Editor at Wonkhe

If we think about all of the Pathe newsreels that we've seen that feature students, two things spring to mind.

The first is an image of students as a kind of **homogenous social elite** – othered away into universities to be trained in how to run government and industry. The second is the image of student fundraising – the **annual RAG parade** weaving its way through the city, combining student high jinks with giving something back to the area.

Sadly, the contemporary framing of the contribution of students to their community this past year has been more about an unfounded assumption that they "caused" the winter lockdown – when the data tells us that their real civic contribution has been to stick to the rules to protect the vulnerable at the expense of their own education, experience and mental health.

Does this matter? Almost certainly. "Place" is increasingly important in a way that spans left and right, academic and vocational and the whole of the higher education sector. So over the next two years Wonkhe SUs and the UPP Foundation are working on a partnership programme to consider the role that extra-curricular involvement plays in the sector – in the education and development experienced by students, in the sector's standing and reputation, and in the contribution it makes to places – campuses, local communities and the country.

As part of that work as we emerge out of lockdown, we recently held a round table to consider the issues at stake and the way in which the sector might work to address and strengthen these aspects of student community and citizenship.

Civic students

The idea that students can and should be a part of, and make a contribution to, the place where their university is is one that predates students' unions and civic university agreements. If you've never seen it, we can't recommend enough **Georgina Brewis' Social History of Student Volunteering**.

In it she sets in an international and comparative context a one-hundred year history of student voluntarism and social action at UK colleges and universities, including such causes as relief for victims of fascism in the 1930s and international development in the 1960s.

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NEW NEW RULES

8 March 2022 • 8 March 2022

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# Role and value of SUs

- A little context and history
- The contemporary student condition
- The historic and developing role of SUs
- The opportunities presented by assertive partnership between students and their universities

Participants  
can join at  
[slido.com](https://slido.com/join/022190)  
**#022190**

**WONKHE**

# slido



**Input three words that spring to mind when you think about students' unions (and be honest!)**



# Change

- Change is in the air
- The role of the state is being radically transformed.
- Society is changing.
- There are ever widening generational differences
- Students, Students' Unions and Education are all going through rapid change
- Higher Education appears to be actually going through change for a change (for a change)
- We ought to be interested in change (but not for its own sake)



# Change Trends

- Revolution in information and communication technology
- Internationalisation and globalisation of higher education
- Wider social and economic trends
- Market based reforms and the drift to consumerism and copayment
- Citizens as consumers v Citizens as coproducers



# Everything's Changing

- Science and technology
- Values
- Demography
- Environment
- Geography
- Social structures

# Everything is getting worse

- Environment degrading
- Morals in disarray
- Family collapsing
- Culture dumbing down
- Politics by media sound bite
- Democracy corrupted
- War always on the horizon
- Globalisation = a gale of disorder

# Daily Mail Islander

Island Newspaper of the Year 4 Pebbles

The greedy foreign ducks  
who make a mockery of  
our unselfish nature

A Daily Mail Islander investigation page 4



15-year-old Sarah guilty of horrifying masturbatory act

## DEPRAVED BEYOND BELIEF

By **John Upward**  
Chief Crime Correspondent

A **TEENAGE** Daily Mail Island girl has been found guilty of touching her own genitals in a bid to achieve orgasm. Cheers of "justice has been done" filled the courtroom as the foreman delivered the verdict on

15-year-old Sarah Galoshes, whose mother caught her abasing her own dignity ten days ago at the family home. As Galoshes wept in the dock, Judge Stephen Hawchurch condemned her as "a selfish, misguided young lady who callously manipulated her own genitalia without mercy or compunction".

Continued on Page 2



**Face of the monster**

15-year-old Sarah acted "without mercy or compunction".

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SUs



# Everything is getting better

- People living much longer lives
- Democratic cultures spread by media, Internet
- World more interconnected
- Education spreading
- Position of women improving, somewhat
- Technological innovation critical to environment
- Asia: tens of millions lifted from poverty every year



# Change

- Private optimism, about our lives, families
- Public pessimism about the state of the world
- The two come together in organisations and institutions
- Organisations provide people with a sense of private identity
- But critical to how we cope with the world together



# Responding to change

	Confrontation	Retreat
Radical	Anti Globalisation Students, ethnic minorities Left populism	New age Downshifting
Reactionary	Rural protests Right national populism: Europe	Melancholy Nostalgia



# Responding to change

	Confrontation	Retreat
Radical	Adapt entrepreneurially Create new delivery models Abandon things Very risky Ask lots of questions	As long as what I do doesn't change I don't mind what is going on around me Comfortable (y numb) Support and praise
Reactionary	Get back to basics but with a vengeance, cut costs, streamline Very tough Take charge, slash and burn	Do you remember the old days when things were so much better? Miserable Moan and comfort

# Educational Change

- Massification
- Time demands
- The way “learning” is done
- Social organisation
- Technology
- SSR
- Contact hours
- Competition
- Regulation
- Metrics

# Universities as organisations of change

- Adaptive, nimble, agile organisations able to learn fast about environment around them, sense opportunities and mobilise resources to exploit them
- But organisations that just do that would be in perpetual turmoil, constantly reinventing themselves
- So as well as being adaptive, nimble and agile organisations need to have a sense of stability, continuity and purpose, but a sense of stability that does not inhibit ability to adapt
- Universities are a curious mix of the radical and conservative
- What does an optimum mix of stability and flux come from?
- It comes from challenging conventional wisdom, speaking truth to power and asking tough questions



# Where do SUs fit?

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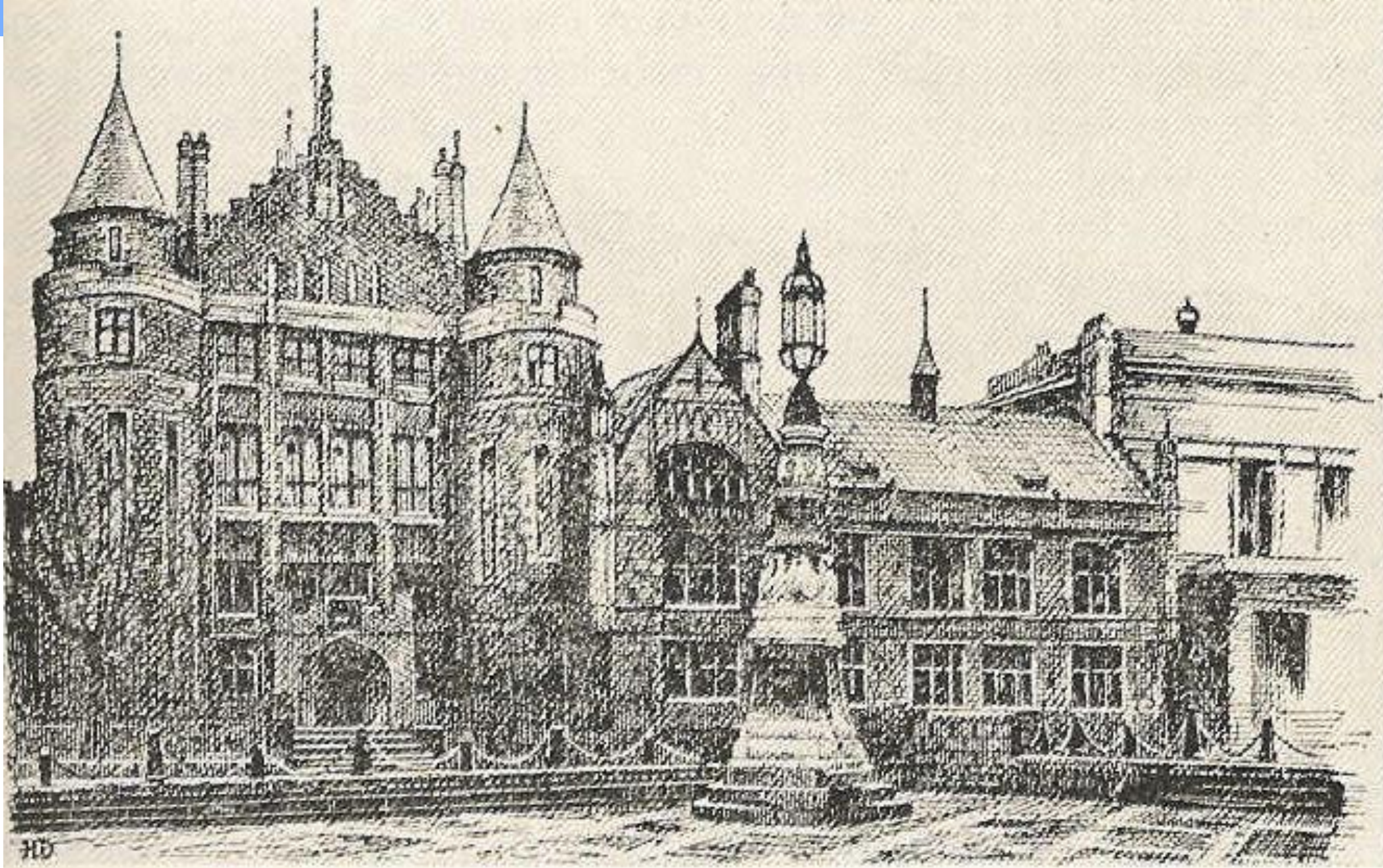
# Italy v France

- Bologna University
- Frederick Barbarossa
- Paris University
- Oxford and Cambridge
- Scottish Universities
- Rectors





# The First SRC's





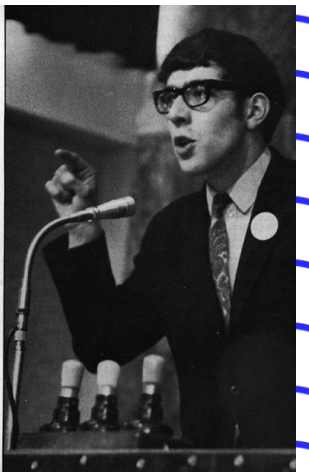
# Exporting the Idea

- Oxford and Cambridge Unions
- Manchester Men's Union 1864
- Liverpool Guild and Ramsay Muir
- UCL achieves recognition 1893
- Birmingham Guild in 1900
- Services, Activities (Skills and Community), Representation

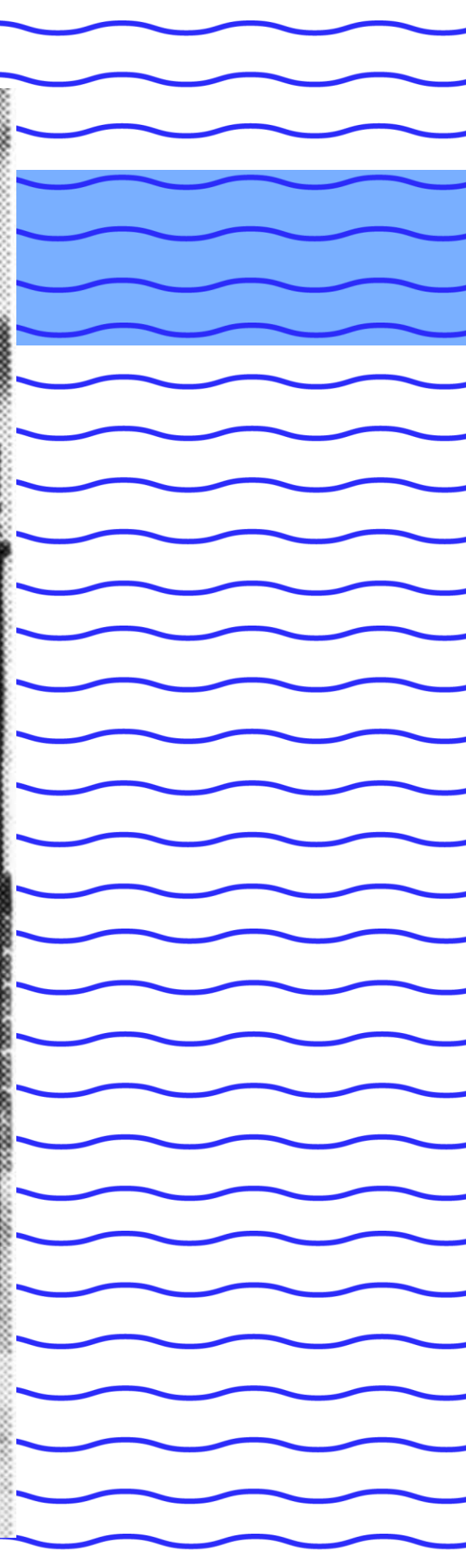


# Student unrest

- Events in Paris and beyond
- Cycle of protest
- CVCP agreement
- Vietnam war
- Changing perceptions of students
- Radical student groups and leadership change
- Mass Movement







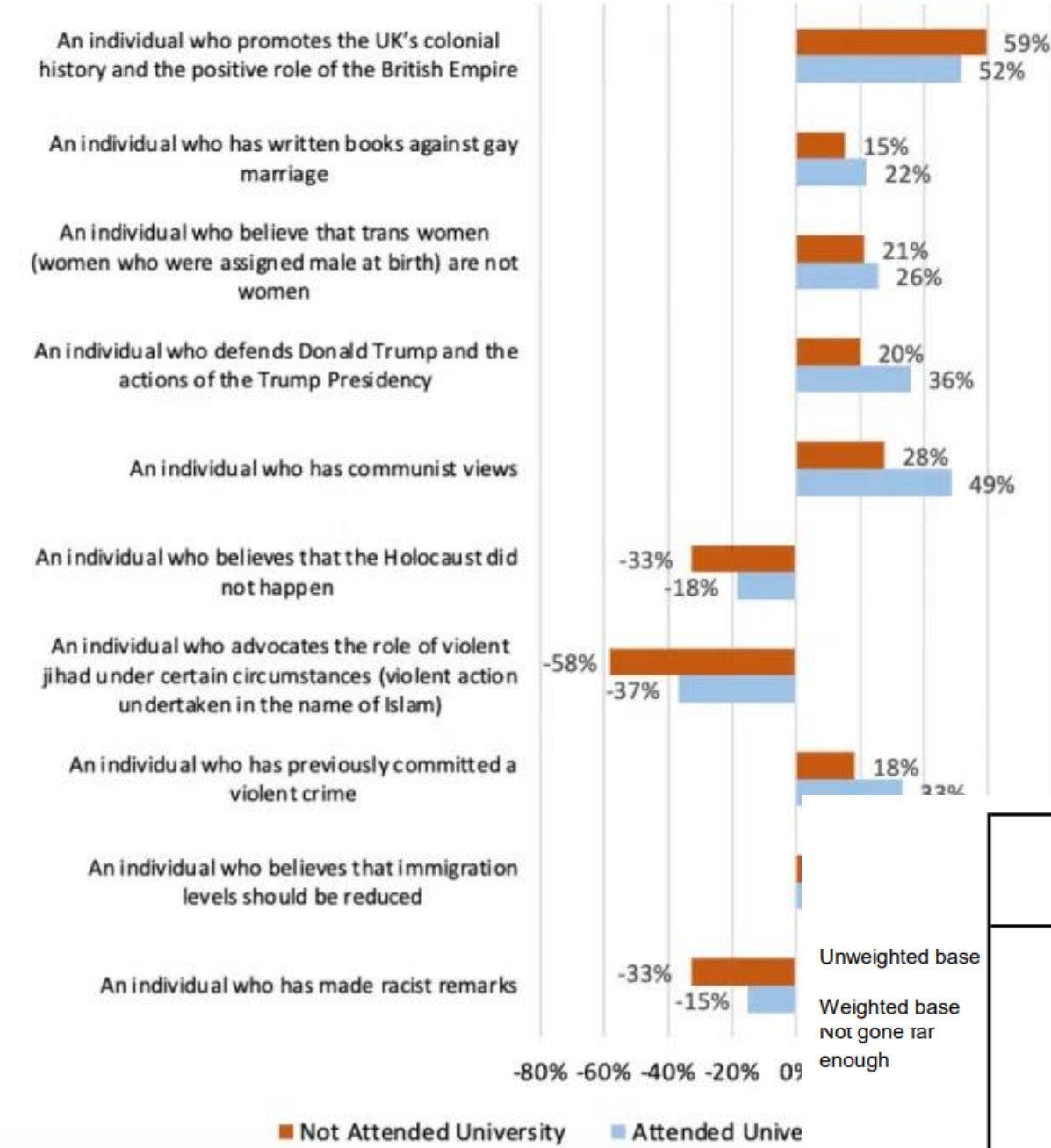


# Students emerging...

- Anxiety – individual and collective
- Preparedness – adult env “on a plate”
- Values – generational differences and “meaning” of terms
- Hesitancy – stepping forward and leading others
- Diversity – first not band aids
- Individuality – hustles and gigs
- Money – inflation and labour/Brexit
- Conduct – behaviour bursts



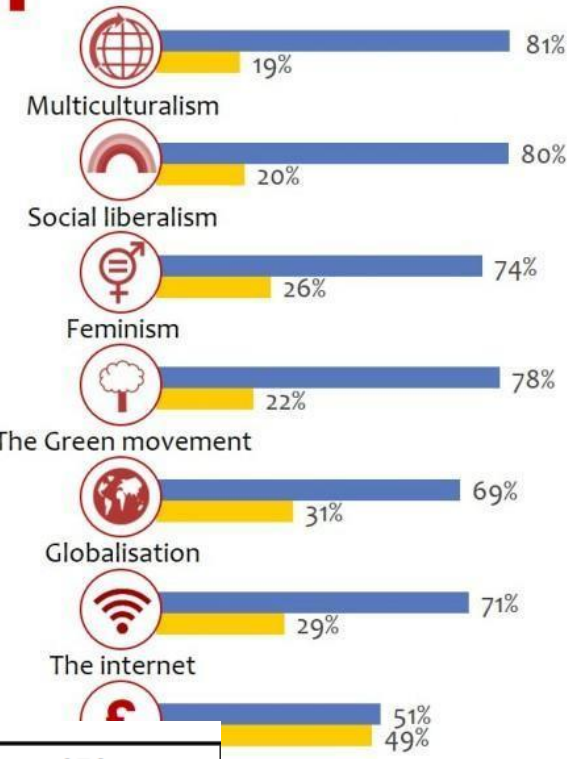
Chart 7: Who should be allowed to speak on university campuses – by graduate status



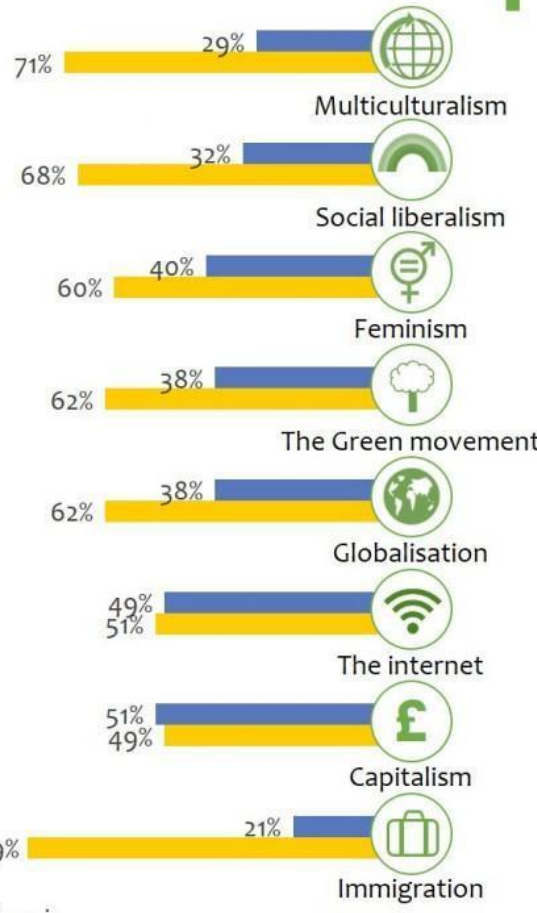
	Total	Gender		Age						SEG			
		Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	AB	C1	C2	DE
	2069	1028	1039	220	350	338	371	316	474	532	583	440	512
	2069	1007	1060	240	358	340	369	298	464	556	556	451	504
	210	89	120	44	48	29	30	21	38	54	63	46	48
	10%	9%	11%	19%	13%	9%	8%	7%	8%	10%	11%	10%	10%
About right	441	205	235	79	91	101	64	45	61	146	106	82	108
	21%	20%	22%	33%	25%	30%	17%	15%	13%	26%	19%	18%	21%
Has gone too far	1245	647	598	81	167	184	242	222	349	321	344	281	297
	60%	64%	56%	34%	47%	54%	66%	74%	75%	58%	62%	62%	59%
Don't know	172	65	107	35	53	25	33	11	15	36	43	42	51
	8%	6%	10%	15%	15%	7%	9%	4%	3%	6%	8%	9%	10%

Do you think of each of the following as being a force for good, a force for ill, or a mixed-blessing?

How did the people who thought the following were a **force for ill** vote?



How did the people who thought the following were a **force for good** vote?



Leave Remain

Lord Ashcroft Polls  
@lordashcroft

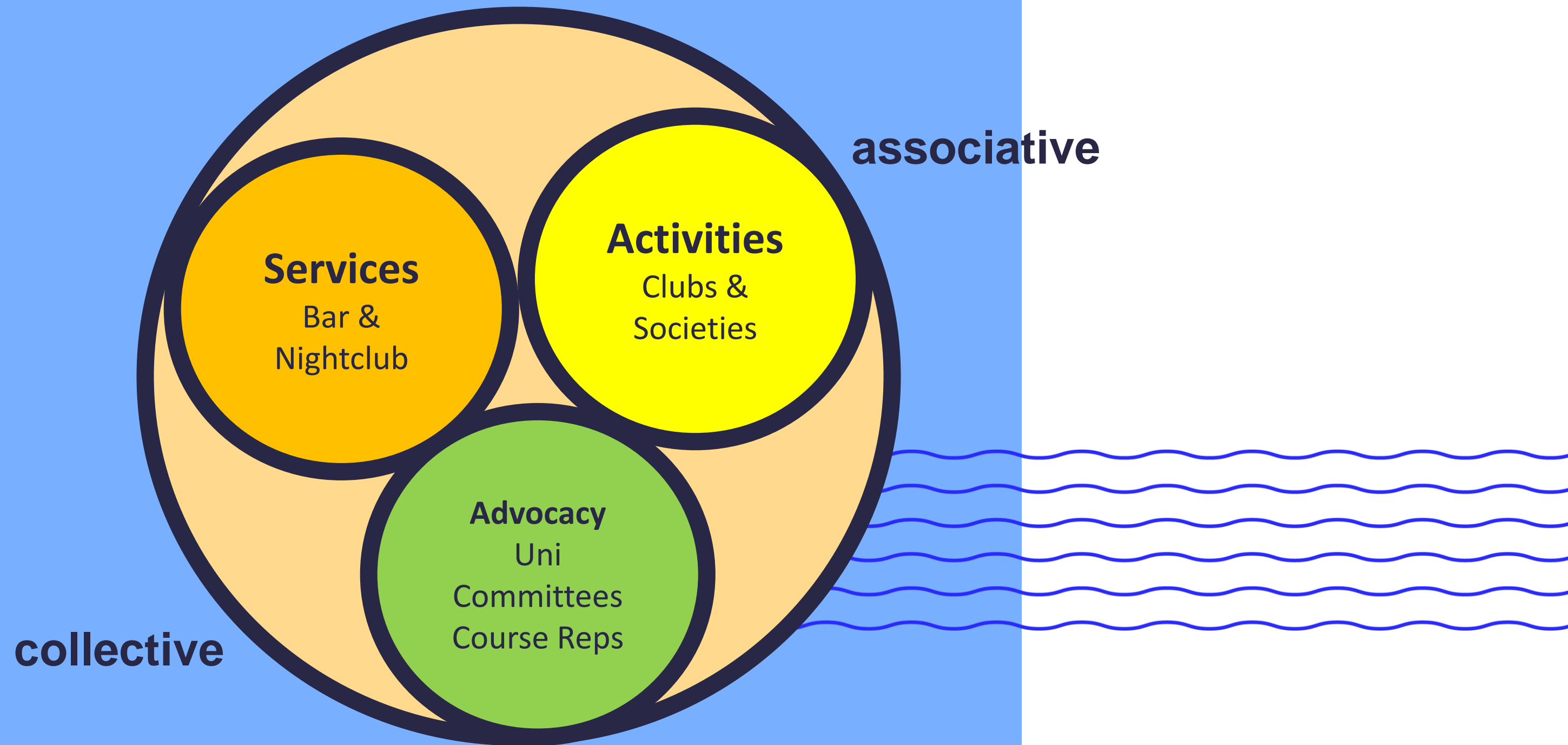
Which party do you think is most likely to agree?		WHO BACKS THESE 'WOKE' IDEAS?	Do YOU support or oppose these ideas?	
Labour	Conservative		Support	Oppose
56%	10%	Statues of historical figures being taken down	18%	59%
43%	9%	Men being allowed to redefine themselves as women and access women-only facilities	19%	48%
31%	12%	Breastfeeding being renamed 'chestfeeding'	5%	68%
36%	8%	Children being allowed to use puberty blockers and hormone therapy to change their gender	13%	61%
52%	10%	The idea that Britain is a systemically or institutionally racist country	29%	39%
29%	24%	People face losing their jobs for writing or liking politically incorrect posts on social media	21%	40%
41%	14%	Environmental protest groups causing damage to property & disrupting city centres		
52%	6%	Negative attitudes towards the Royal Family		
47%	13%	Shorter sentences for criminals		
		'Don't knows' and 'I don't knows'		

Net support amongst age groups for "wokery"	18-34	35-54	55+
Statues of historical figures being taken down	29%	3%	-32%
Men being allowed to redefine themselves as women and access women-only facilities	31%	1%	-32%
Breastfeeding being renamed 'chestfeeding'	42%	-3%	-39%
Children being allowed to take puberty blockers and have hormone therapy to change gender	43%	-6%	-37%
The idea that Britain is a systemically or institutionally racist country	21%	-4%	-24%
People facing disciplinary action or losing their jobs for writing or liking politically incorrect posts on social media	7%	-1%	-5%
Environmental protest groups causing damage to property & disrupting city centres	24%	-4%	-29%
Negative attitudes towards the Royal Family	24%	-5%	-28%
Shorter sentences for criminals	27%	-2%	-25%

# Students emerging...

- Anxiety – individual and collective
- Preparedness – adult env “on a plate”
- Values – generational differences and “meaning” of terms
- Hesitancy – stepping forward and leading others
- Diversity – first not band aids
- Individuality – hustles and gigs
- Money – inflation
- Conduct – behaviour bursts





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# What are SUs?

- Popular culture – protest, alcohol, banning things
- Representative bodies – democratic, voice, platform for less powerful, truth to power, agitative
- Mutual – students doing things for each other
- Educational – processes and outcomes



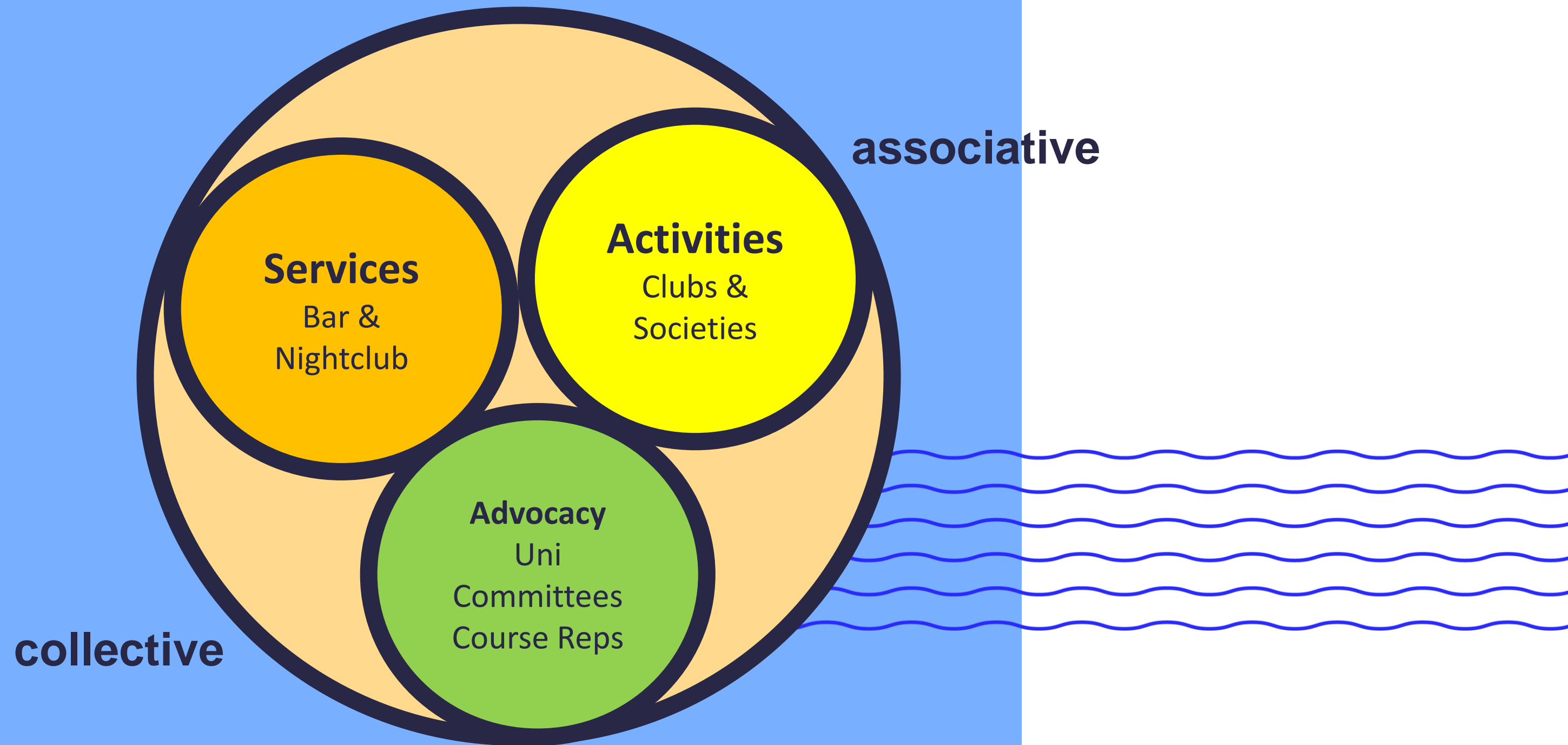
# UK HE Students' Unions

Five “tree rings” of purpose:

- Activist politics and resolutions (70s)
- Advice and Alcohol (80s)
- Student Development (skills acquisition) (90s)
- Education & Representation (00s)
- Hyper Diversity & Assertive Partnership (10s)
- Social capital, belonging and mental health (20s)

HEI actors *tend* to judge on their UC ring. This affects underpinning assumptions, funding model, reputation and mode of interaction.

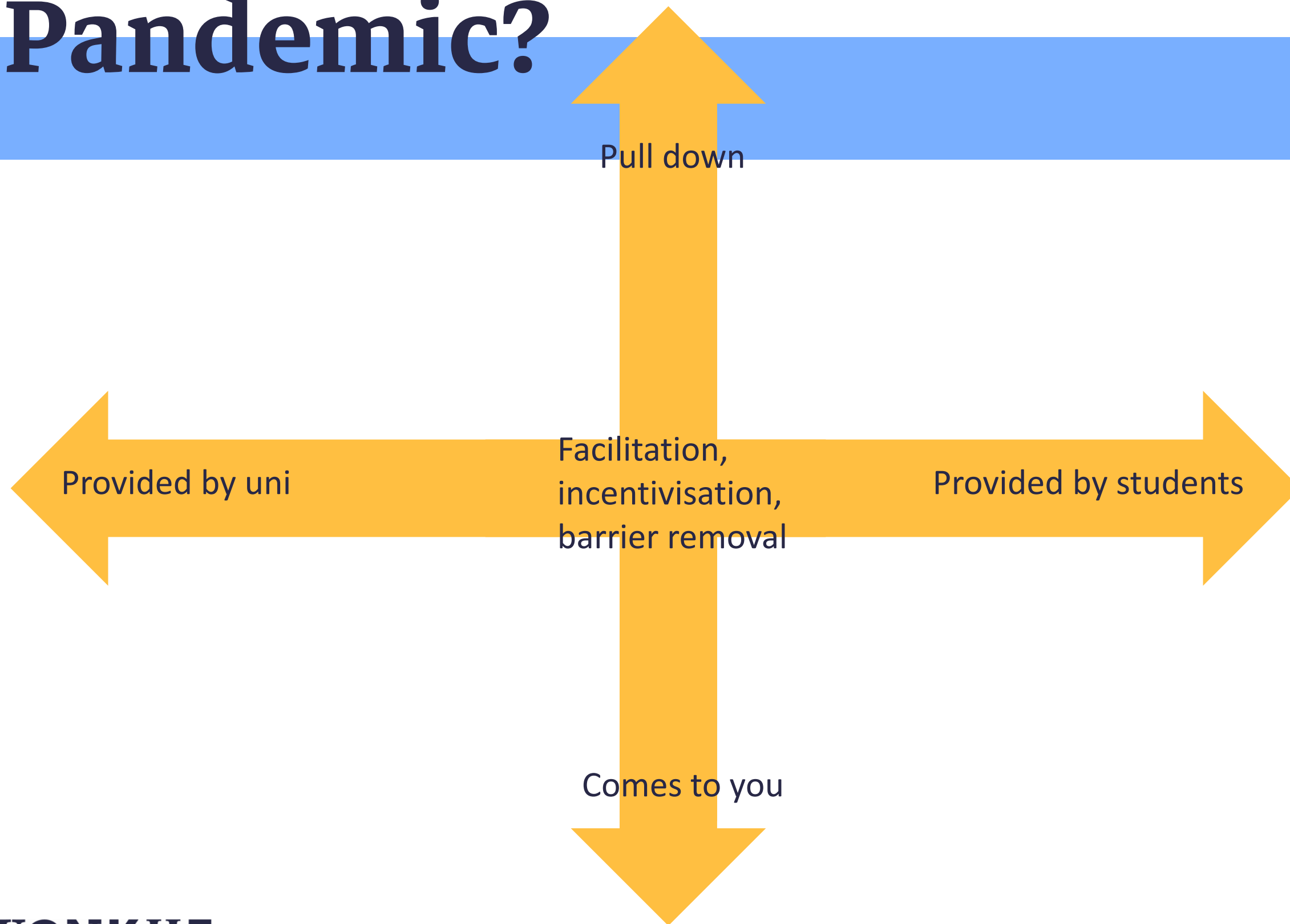




**associative**

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# Pandemic?



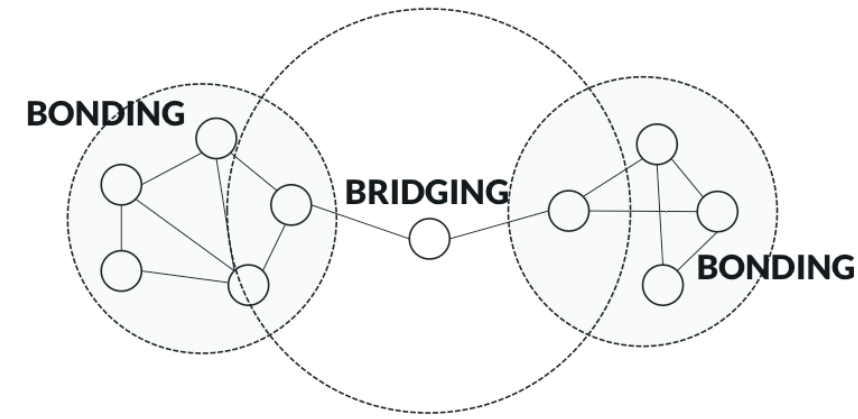
# Types of capital

1. Physical (equipment, buildings, tools)
2. Financial (money, fiscal resources)
3. Human (education, training, experience)
4. Cultural (knowledge, music, language, art)



# Types of social capital

- Bonding social capital is interaction with people similar to oneself. This is the more usual type.
- Bridging social capital is interaction with those different to yourself. This is seen as more valuable as it can potentially aid social mobility.
- Linking connects people with external institutions enhancing their capacity to gain access to resources, ideas and information from formal institutions beyond the community.
- Generally accepted that unless v confident or “in at the deep end”, people need bonding first and then able to bridge/link



# Three paradigms?

The three paradigms

	<b>'Ivory Tower' students' unions</b>	<b>'Market Forces' students' unions</b>	<b>Student Centred Unions</b>
Theory that underpins their work	'cultivated man'	Competitive individuals	Facilitates personal development
Outcomes they expect to achieve	Qualified social elite	'agents for the creation of wealth'	Democratic citizens
Model of Organisation	Private members club	Commercial organisation	Student centred
Values that inform their work	Philanthropy and self-help	Efficiency and utility	Equality and diversity
How members are involved	Rigid 'political' structures	Consumerism	Participation
Processes involved	Transmission of cultural values	'key skills' development	The promotion of understanding
Associated discourse	Participation Representation Social contacts Liberalism Elitism	Competence Employability Individual consumption	Collaboration Empowerment Democratic Flexibility Access Investment Representation Collectivism communities



A Venn diagram consisting of two overlapping circles. The left circle is labeled 'Institutional concerns' and the right circle is labeled 'SU Concerns'. The circles overlap in the center. A solid blue horizontal band is positioned above the circles, and a series of wavy blue lines are positioned to the right of the circles.

Institutional concerns

SU Concerns



# 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. Quality enhancement.
- The second concerns B3: Student Outcomes which is England only. Minimum quality assurance.
- “Consultations” but little expected to change.
- Lots of opportunities and challenges for SUs.



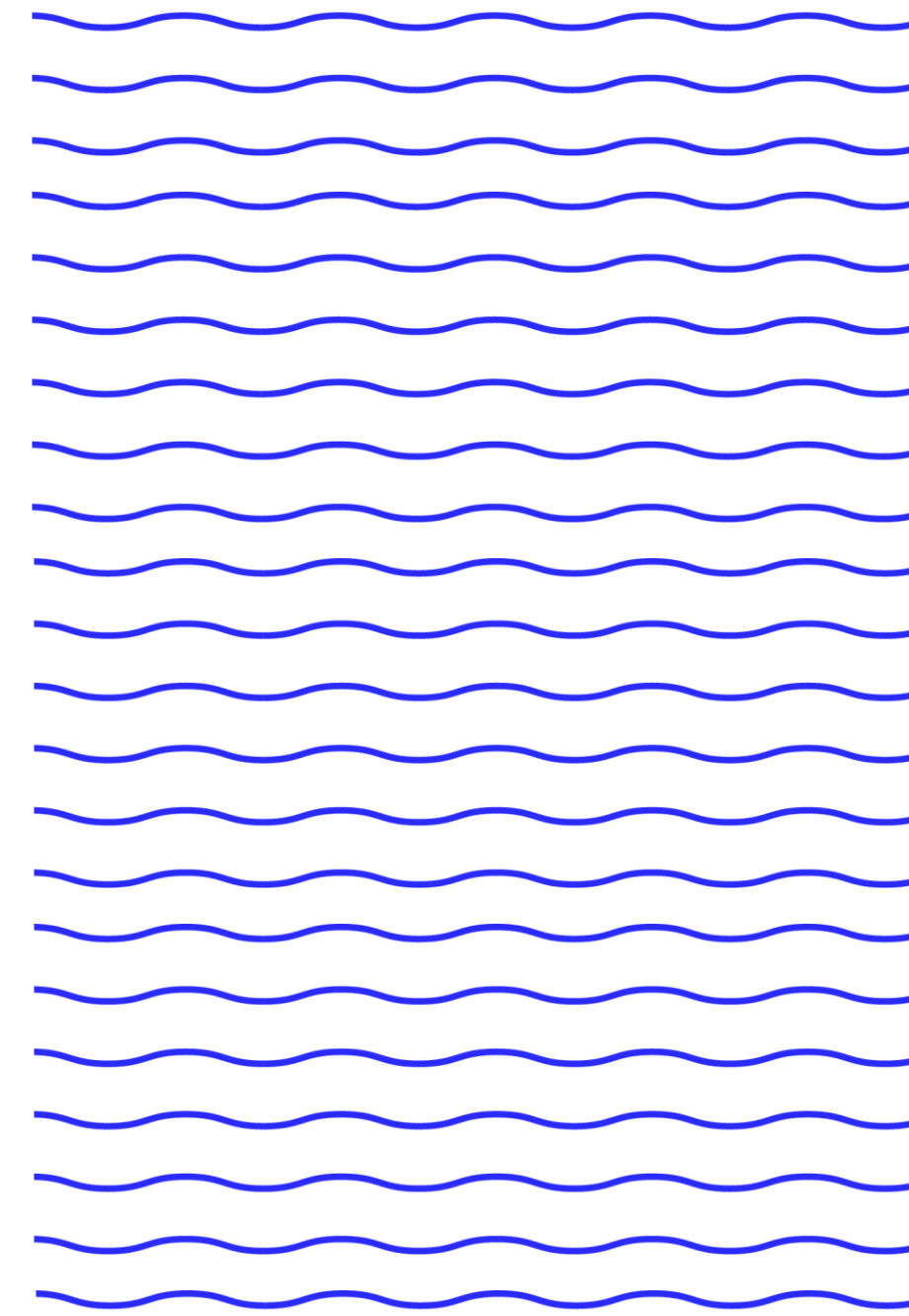
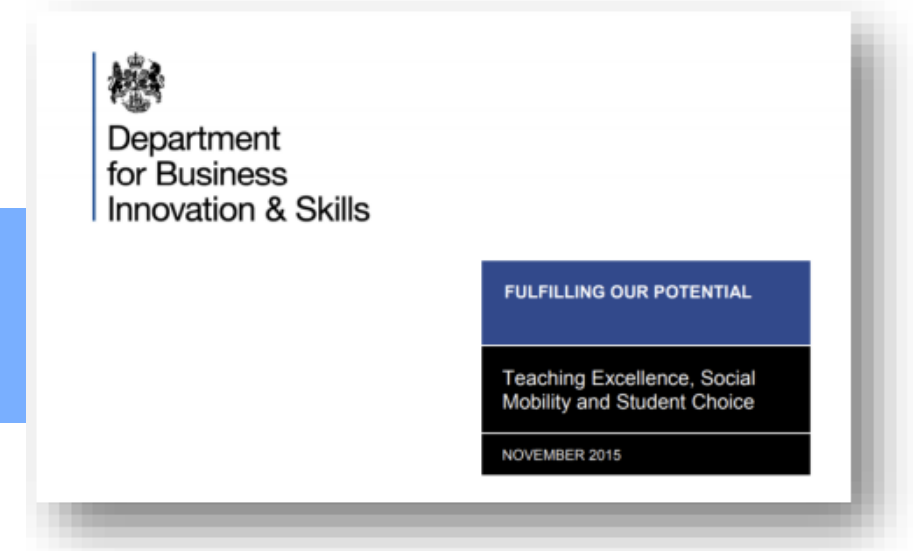
# The TEF

“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)



# 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”





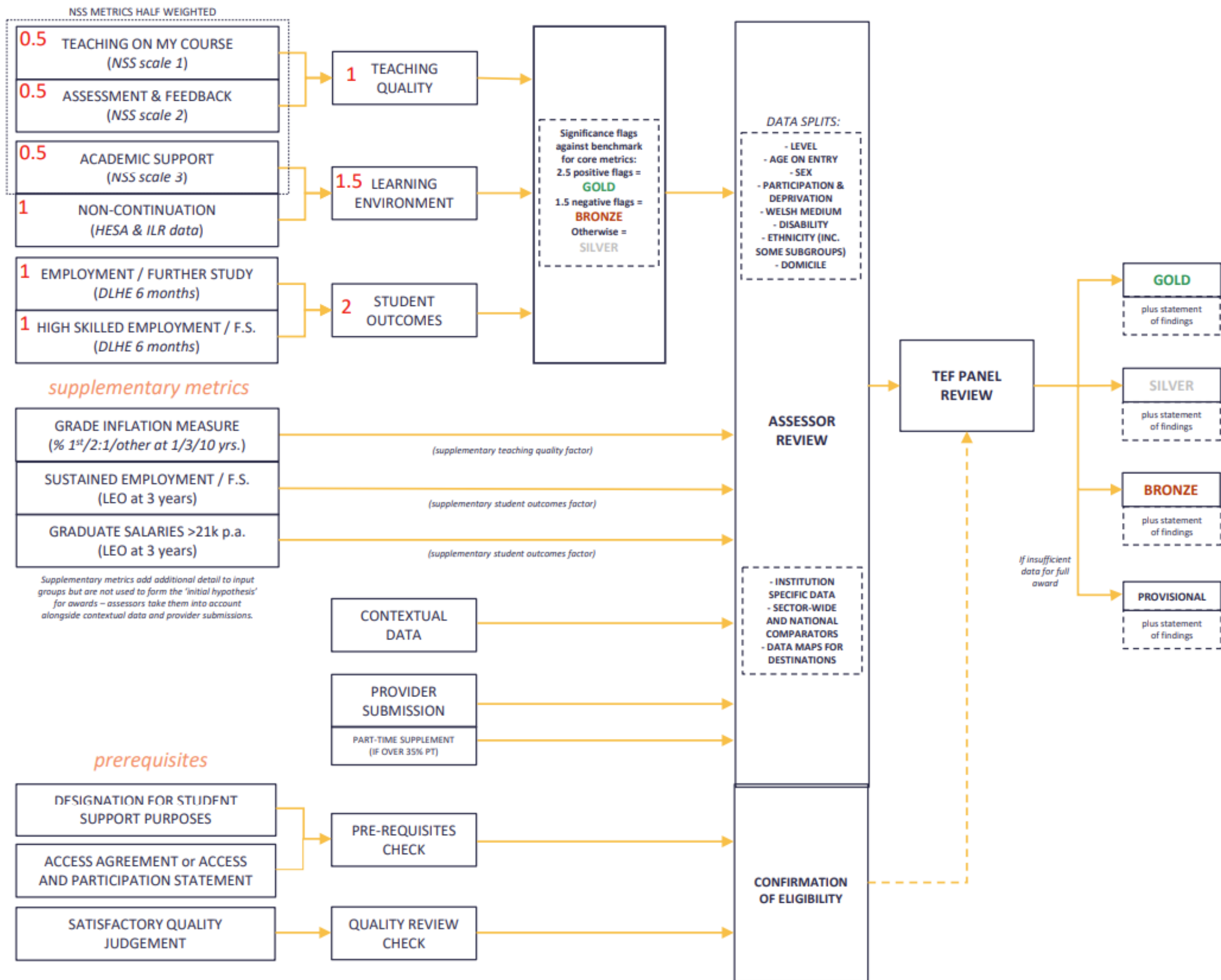
## principal metrics

## inputs

## initial hypothesis

## process

## ratings



Student experience aspect rating	Student outcomes aspect rating			
	No rating	Bronze	Silver	Gold
	Overall rating			
	No rating	No rating or Bronze		
	Bronze	Bronze	Bronze or Silver	
Silver	No rating or Bronze	Bronze or Silver	Silver	Silver or Gold
Gold			Silver or Gold	Gold



# A new model

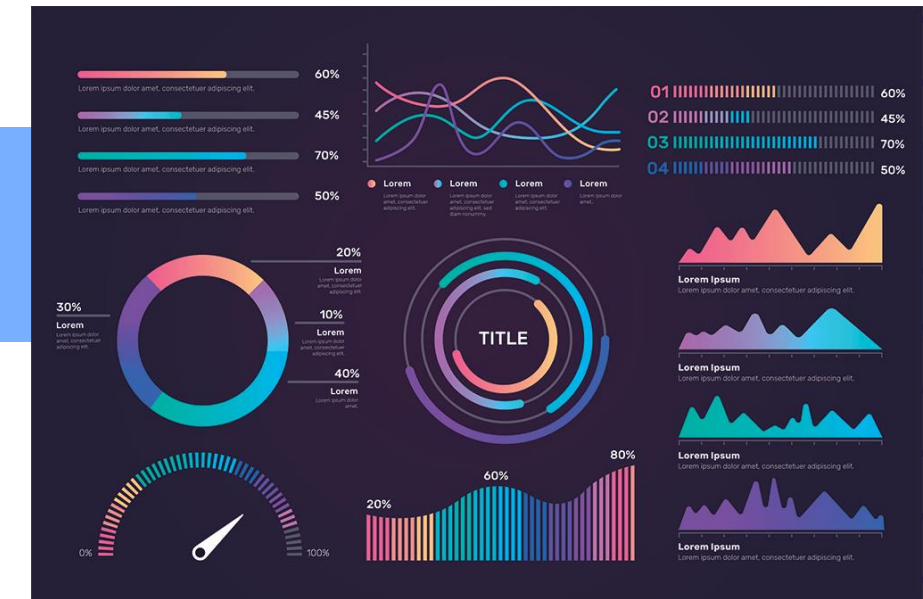
- Two areas of assessment – experience and outcomes
- In each, there is a qualitative and quantitative aspect
- The quantitative involves similar metrics to last time, benchmarked against universities whose students are like Lincoln's
  - NSS results, but over 5 categories
  - Continuation, Completion, Progression
  - Including international and franchised, only undergrads
- The qualitative involves two submissions
  - University submission, Student Submission
- New definitions of “high quality” and “outstanding”, along with a “requires improvement” rating

Student experience aspect rating	Student outcomes aspect rating			
	No rating	Bronze	Silver	Gold
	Overall rating			
	No rating	No rating or Bronze		
	Bronze	Bronze	Bronze or Silver	
Silver	No rating or Bronze	Bronze or Silver	Silver	Silver or Gold
Gold			Silver or Gold	Gold



# Three outcomes

- **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.



# Scales in use

- a. The teaching on my course.
- b. Assessment and feedback.
- c. Academic support.
- d. Learning resources.
- e. Student voice (Q24, 25, 26)

Q.21 (learning community)?



# Student voice

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









# '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

Tuesday 17 November 2020

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of the sexes  
demeans  
them  
and us

# The Daily Telegraph

## Lockdown looms over Christmas

England could remain shut beyond Dec 2 as effect on virus cases is not yet clear

By Gordon Rayner POLITICAL EDITOR

absolutely hope to be able to replace the national lockdown with a tiered system.” The Prime Minister’s spokesman earlier took a more positive stance, saying: “Those measures will be coming to an end on Dec 2. They will expire in law. We are committed to setting out next week what the replacement regime will be.” Mr Hancock refused to say whether lockdown would simply be “rebranded”. But Dr Susan Hopkins, chief medical adviser to NHS testing, said even if lockdown ended in England, a tougher tier system would be likely to replace it. She said that while Tier 3 and “Tier 3 plus” in the North West had reduced cases, Tier 2 had done “not so well” and “we saw very little effect from Tier 1.” Another 21,363 people tested positive for the virus yesterday. There were 14,915 Covid patients in hospital, up nearly 2,000 in a week, and 215 deaths were reported, taking the daily average to 413, up from 322 a week ago.

Up to 70 Tory MPs have joined the newly formed Covid Research Group to pressure the Government into finding alternatives to lockdowns to safeguard the economy. Mark Harper, chairman of the group, said: “It’s time for a new way to live with the virus.”

Although the rebels are likely to vote against extending lockdown, Labour would almost certainly support it. It came as Nicola Sturgeon confirmed she was “likely” to announce today a return to near-full lockdown for swathes of Scotland to pave the way for easing of the strict Christmas. The First Minister will this afternoon disclose which council areas will be placed for a limited period in Level 4, the highest tier of restrictions, with western Scotland expected to be targeted.

In Germany Angela Merkel was facing a coronavirus rebellion as regional leaders tore up her proposals for new lockdown restrictions. And Mr Johnson’s self-isolation meant he would be unable to hold face-to-face meetings with EU leaders as Brexit trade talks entered their most crucial phase, resorting instead to video conference calls.

### Hancock won’t rule out mandatory vaccine

By Harry Yorke and Laura Donnelly

MATT HANCOCK has refused to rule out making a coronavirus vaccine mandatory, suggesting ministers could consider it if initial take-up was lower than expected. The Health Secretary yesterday insisted the Government was not “proposing” compulsory vaccination, pointing out that a number of people would be unable to take it for medical reasons. But when asked whether he could rule it out in future, Mr Hancock said he had learnt “not to rule things out” during the pandemic, adding: “We have to watch what happens and you have to make judgments accordingly.” Asked later at a Downing Street press conference whether other candidates – including Pfizer’s – expected to be available more quickly in the UK, he said the Government had secured five million doses, enough for 2.5 million people to receive the required two doses.

enough for 2.5 million people to receive the required two doses.

Vaccines are not mandatory in the UK, with official guidance stating that individuals must be allowed to make an informed choice. However, there is concern that anti-vaxxers – who are spreading unimproved claims about the safety of Covid-19 vaccine – candidates on social media – could undermine efforts to encourage widespread inoculation. Meanwhile, research by YouGov yesterday suggested that while 67 per cent of Britons were likely to take the Pfizer vaccine, one in five respondents was unlikely to and 12 per cent were unsure. Mr Hancock also hit out at hundreds of health and care staff who had formed a group opposed to vaccinations on social media, describing it as “entirely inappropriate”.

Report Page 6

NEWS  
£500,000 fines for ‘Mickey Mouse’ courses  
Universities that run “Mickey Mouse” degree courses will be 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

Matt Hancock said at the Downing Street media briefing that lockdown might not end on Dec 2 as its effects were not clear in the data

### Bring in rapid tests to end self-isolation, ministers told

By Laura Donnelly and Gordon Rayner

SCIENTISTS and MPs are calling for urgent changes to isolation rules, saying the confinement of Boris Johnson demonstrates the folly of the UK’s testing regime.

A total of 12 MPs, including the Prime Minister, are now self-isolating after coming into contact with Lee Anderson, the Tory MP. Six of them, including Mr Johnson, came into contact with him during a meeting in Downing Street last week, and a further six came into contact with him elsewhere, including in Parliament.

Last night, scientists said the situation showed that the system was not “fit for purpose” and it would be far more sensible to offer rapid tests to those at risk of exposure.

They said Mr Johnson, who was treated for Covid-19 in hospital in April, was extremely unlikely to contract

Boris Johnson told the nation via a Twitter video that he had been instructed to self-isolate by NHS test and trace

the virus again and even less likely to transmit it. None the less, rapid tests should be used for anyone at risk, allowing the vast majority of those exposed to a positive Covid case to be freed far more quickly, they said.

They said the situation demonstrated the urgent need to introduce rapid testing for contacts of positive Covid cases. Prof Tim Peeto, professor of medicine at Oxford University, said: “There is a simple way to take a belt-and-braces approach – we should be operating a system which allows the Prime Minister to take a rapid test and be back in Parliament the next day.”

“The current system simply hasn’t adapted to the knowledge that we have got. We need to be using these tests to let people out of quarantine far more quickly.”

Prof Peeto led trials by Oxford University and Public Health England which last week found that the instant tests known as lateral flow tests – identified more than 77 per cent of people infected with Covid. Crucially, they identified 95 per cent of those with a high viral load, meaning they were at their most infectious.

Prof Peeto said those at risk of Covid, because of close contact with an infected person, should be given the 45

Continued on Page 6

Editorial Comment Page 19

### Queen ‘didn’t mind’ Obama protocol breach

By Ben Riley-Smith US EDITOR

BARACK OBAMA has waved away an old row about whether the first lady broke royal protocol by placing a hand on the Queen’s shoulder on a state visit, writing in his new memoirs that Her Majesty “didn’t seem to mind”.

The incident took place when the Obamas visited Britain alongside other world leaders for a G20 summit in April 2009. The former US president discusses the incident in his book *A Promised Land*, which is published today.

Mr Obama, who then had only been in the White House for three months, recalls how Michelle Obama caused “her own lot of controversy” at the reception in Buckingham Palace.

“She was photographed with her hand resting on Her Majesty’s shoulder – an apparent breach of royal protocol,” he wrote. “In the end, Mrs Obama wore a cardigan over her dress,” “ending Fleet

Street into a horrified tizzy”. The exchange offers an insight into the conversations that happen when a world leader and their other half meet the Queen for the first time. They also show the raised eyebrows that were adopted by the Obamas as the media policed royal protocol.

The story is one of a number linked to Britain that Mr Obama describes in his 718-page memoir, which covers his life up to mid-2021. A second volume, which will include his 2012 election and second term, is in the works.

Throughout the book, Mr Obama gives up colourful descriptions of world leaders, including the two UK prime ministers he worked with while in office: Gordon Brown and David Cameron.

Mr Brown is described as someone who “lacked the purely political gifts of Clinton, Ford and Reagan”.

Mr Obama is described as someone who “lacked the purely political gifts of Clinton, Ford and Reagan”.

Continued on Page 4

SPORT

Stewart leads drive to knight Hamilton  
Sir Jackie Stewart last night led calls for Lewis Hamilton to be knighted after he sealed a record-equalling seventh Formula One world title. Sir Jackie told *The Daily Telegraph* there was “no question” Hamilton deserved to join him in becoming only the second world champion to receive the honour. It may require Boris Johnson to intervene, as the deadline for nominations has passed. Otherwise, Hamilton has no time to wait until next year or even until he retires.  
Sport page 1

SPORT

Timing of US job data release questioned

Moderna, the US drugmaker, released crucial data on the Covid vaccine under embargo before the results were made public, prompting calls for new rules over how trial information is announced in the market. It briefed journalists on data showing its job is almost 95 per cent effective against coronavirus, almost an hour before publishing the details – with a midday embargo meaning this lifted before US trading opened. There is no suggestion Moderna broke any rules.  
Business page 1

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‘Blue wall’ protests against petrol car ban

Voters in new Conservative “blue wall” seats think a ban on diesel and petrol cars would be unfair, according to a survey. Climate change concerns hit 88 per cent among the group with the highest proportion of northern Leave voters, and those who swung from Labour to the Tories last year. But 70 per cent said a petrol and diesel car ban would add extra cost to daily life. The Government is expected this week to bring forward the date to phase out new petrol and diesel cars to 2030.  
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# '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.

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.

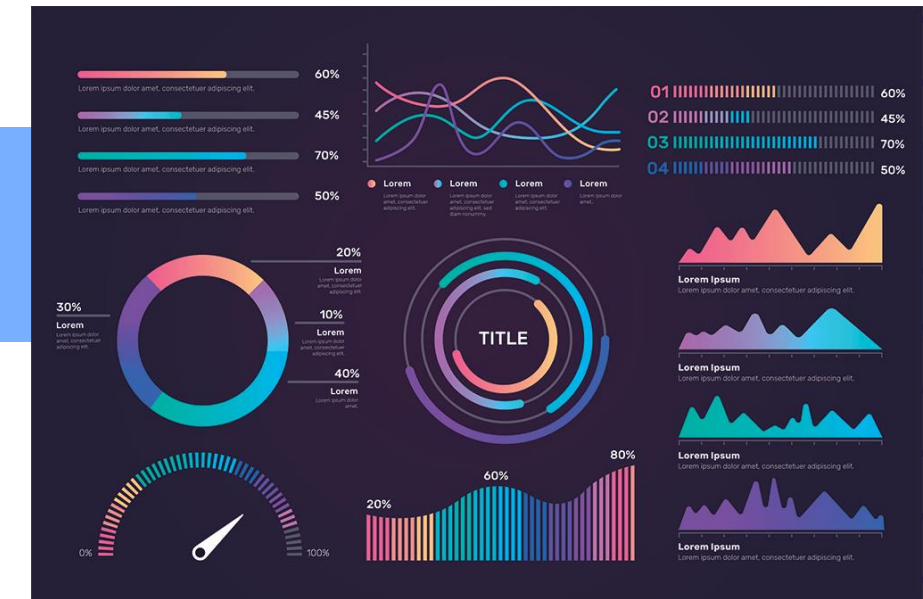
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WONKHE



# 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.
- Unlike TEF not benchmarked, includes PG and validated



# 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.



# New!

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.



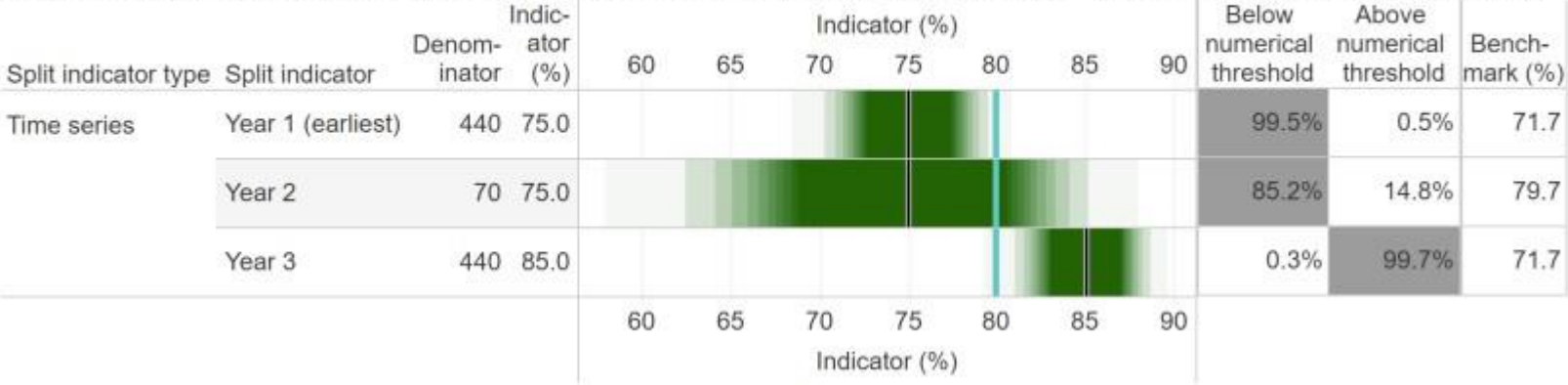
Table 1: Summary of proposed numerical threshold levels

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%

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

Figure F1: Examples of assessing indicators and split indicators

Student and study characteristic split indicators: *Continuation (Other UG, Taught or registered, Full-time)*





# Blame

- Baseline level of published

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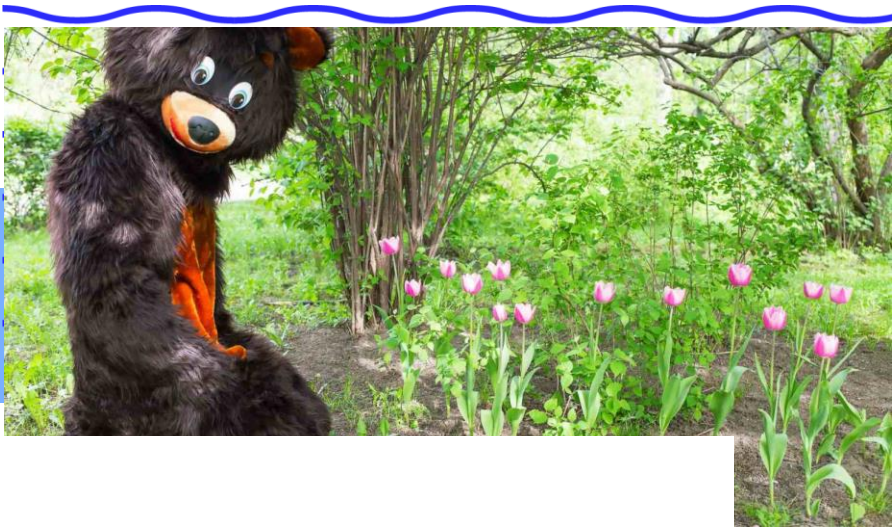
## icators

3, Taught or registered, Full-time)

85	90	Below numerical threshold	Above numerical threshold	Benchmark (%)
		99.5%	0.5%	71.7
		85.2%	14.8%	79.7
		0.3%	99.7%	71.7
85	90			

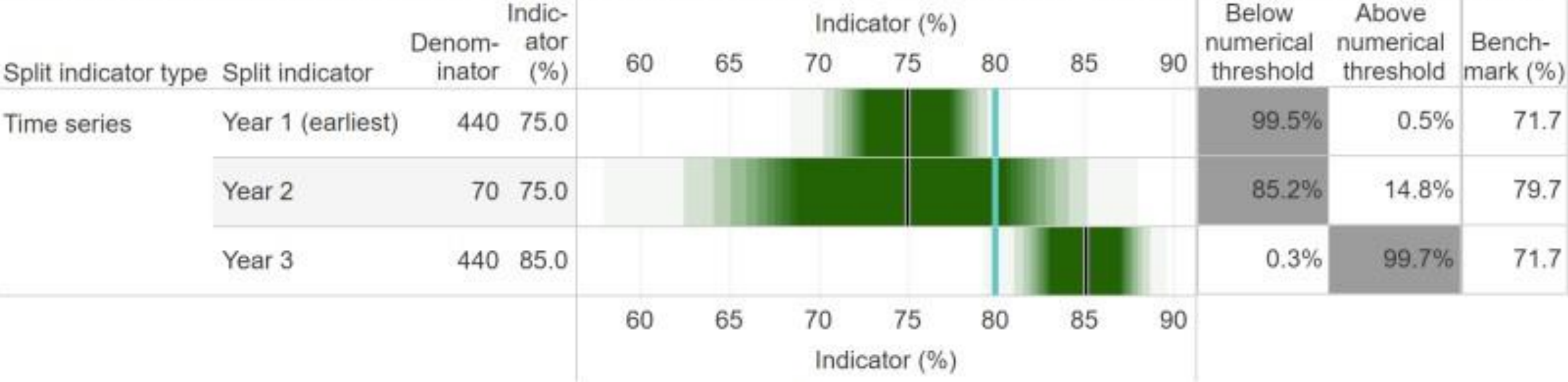


# Blame it on the baseline



- Figure F1: Examples of assessing indicators and split indicators

Student and study characteristic split indicators: *Continuation (Other UG, Taught or registered, Full-time)*



PT PG Other	65%	60%	65%	85%
PT PG Research (PhD)	70%	60%	60%	85%
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Note: 'FT' = 'full-time'; 'PT' = 'part-time'; 'UG' = 'undergraduate'; 'PG' = 'postgraduate'.



# 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

- If a “red light” and being enforced that year, 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...

# And here's the thing

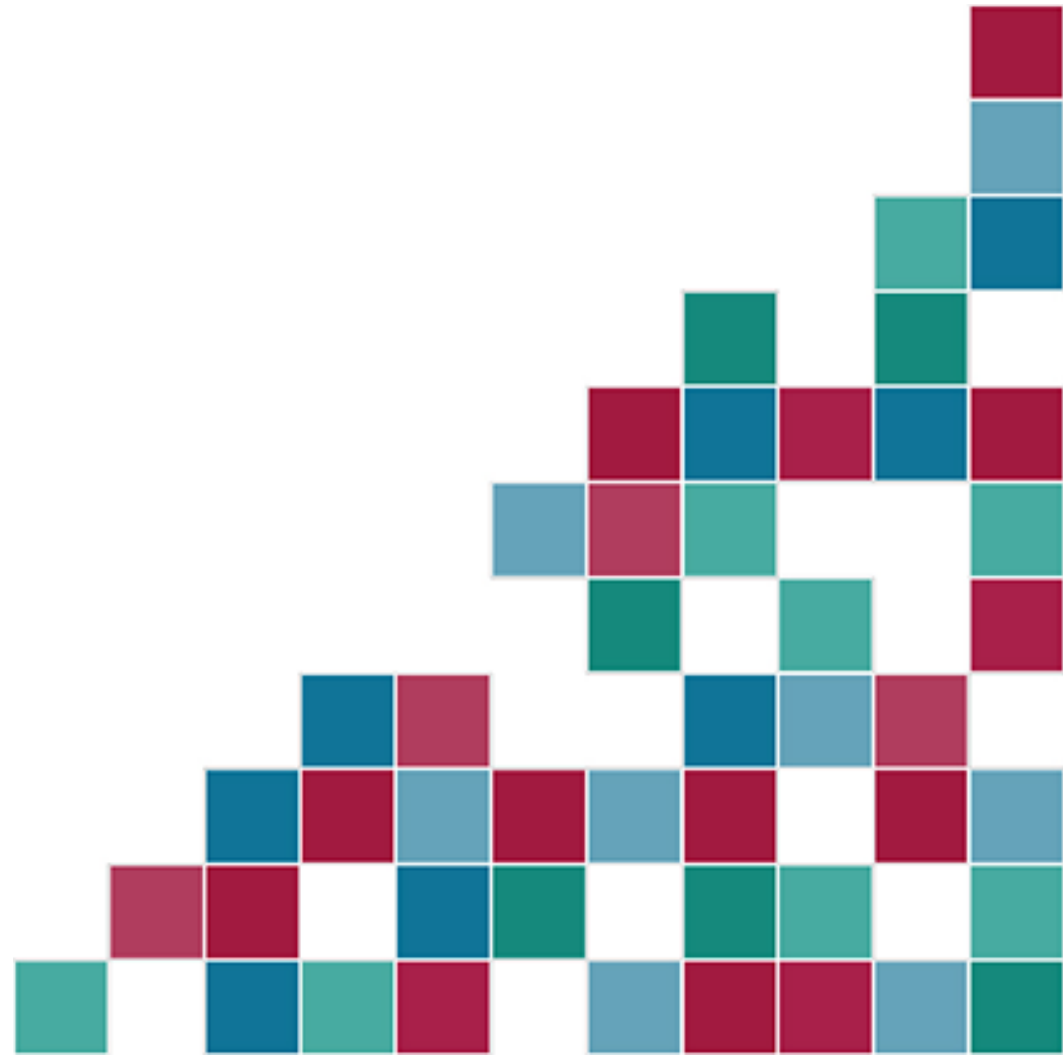
- Students want to get to their second year, complete their course and get a graduate job
- SUs can help us to understand why those things might not be happening
- SUs can help us gather evidence that outcomes are otherwise good
- SUs work on extra curricular improves belonging, confidence and skills – outcomes
- Working with the SU to move metrics in a positive direction is evidence of outstanding quality and a contextual factor

# How?

- Start by enabling each other to succeed
- Working closer together, assertively
- Displaying respective curiosity
- Becoming more targeted and evidence informed
- Involving in strategy
- Working together to reduce barriers and create entry points
- Understanding respective accountabilities and accepting public/private tensions
- Always worrying about distribution
- Execution by the whole



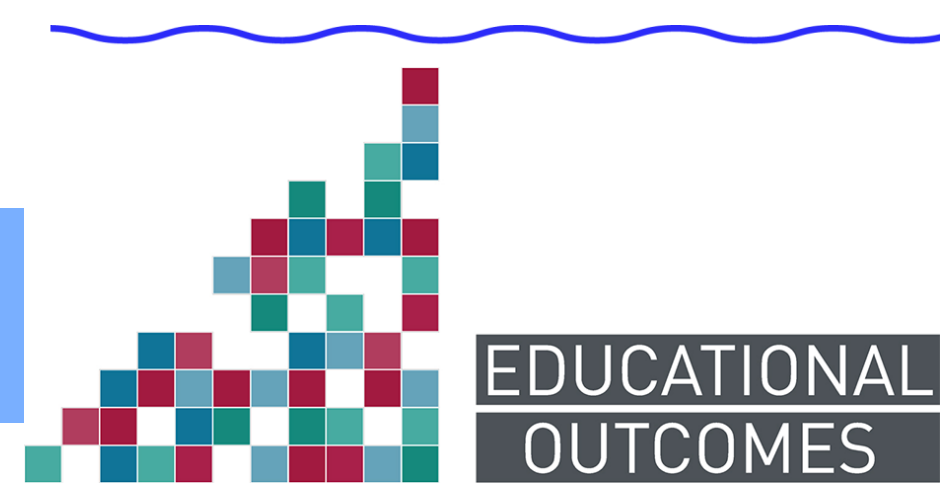
# Partnership

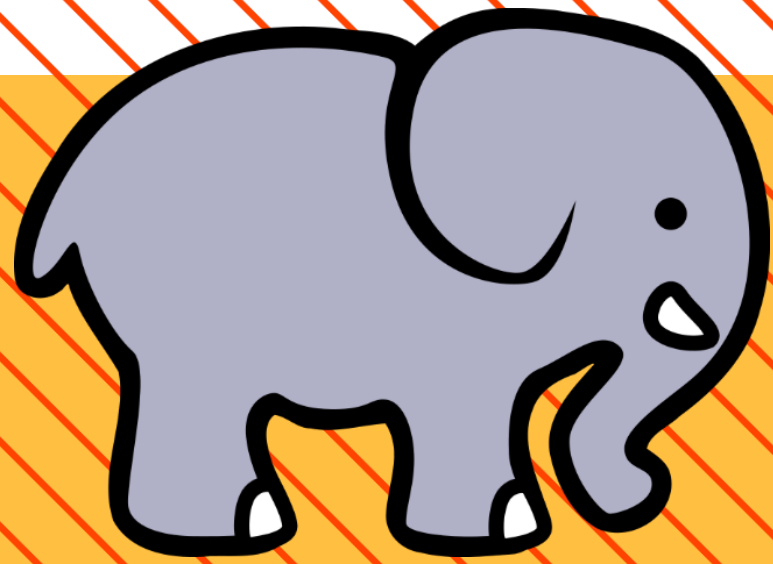


EDUCATIONAL  
OUTCOMES

# Partnership

- OfS and student engagement – listening to and getting feedback from students
- Academics and students – enabled by professionals
- Senior and junior yes, but also learn from each other
- Real partnerships matter collectively and individually





**“occasionally [...the rep] has to raise issues at a time and a pace that the institution wouldn’t have chosen, and [...they have] to say things that, given a choice the institution, wouldn’t have said out loud, and as such it is hard to envisage those things happening unless there were representatives that were in some way either democratically or culturally charged with raising things out of sync, raising the uncomfortable, and issuing challenge. All of that makes higher education better.”**