

14th July 2016

Dear Vice-Chancellor,

Re: The 2016 Higher Education Bill

In his recent statement at the Wellcome Trust, the Minister of State for Universities and Science, Jo Johnson, confirmed the Government's commitment to press on with the legislative passage of the Higher Education Bill in the next parliamentary session.

We are writing to you as University of Bristol academics and members of staff to express our concern with such undue legislative haste in light of the uncertainty in Higher Education policy caused by the Referendum result and a possible Brexit scenario.

We would ask you to make a public statement highlighting the inappropriateness of rushing through such a controversial and far-reaching piece of legislation as the Higher Education Bill in these current post-Referendum circumstances.

The statement should also stress the need for further consultation with Universities, national HE bodies and other stakeholders such as the University and College Union and the National Union of Students before the Bill receives its second reading in parliament.

With the current uncertainty around student recruitment, European Union research funding and University finances more generally, now is the moment to take stock, not rush into the most significant set of HE reforms in generations. Warwick University, for example, has made this case. Warwick Vice-Chancellor Stuart Croft has pledged to write to the Government, describing the bill as an 'intolerable burden for universities'. He '...will be writing to them [the Government] to call for a delay in the Higher Education Bill while this work is carried through'.

Even in the Bill's own terms, as set out in the White Paper, it cannot be sensible or responsible to issue in what is effectively a HE 'big bang' - the consolidation of research funding; fee volatility; a number of new HE for profit providers - at a time of already existing market volatility.

Yours,

- Jamie Melrose, SPAIS
- Cathy Hume, English

- Professor Ad Putter, Humanities/English
- Stephen James, English
- Andrew Blades, School of Humanities (English)
- John McTague, Department of English
- Professor Andrew Bennett, School of Humanities
- Kate McClune, English
- Jules Hancox, PPN
- Edward Holberton, Department of English
- Owen Cranshaw, Norah Fry Centre for Disability Studies
- Steve Fitzjohn, Physiology, Pharmacology and Neuroscience
- Dr Keith R Hallam, Interface Analysis Centre, School of Physics
- Ann Singleton, School for Policy Studies
- Maria Fannin, Geographical Sciences
- Colin Lazarus, Biological Sciences
- Blair Matthews, Centre for English Language and Foundation Studies
- Elizabeth Evans, SPAIS
- Elspeth Van Veeren, SPAIS
- Stephen Condliffe IT Services & UCU Executive Committee
- Tracey Hooper, Bristol UCU
- Helen Fulton, School of Humanities
- Suzy Cheeke, Library Services
- Tariq Modood, SPAIS
- Josie Gill, English
- Ana E. Juncos, School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies
- Andrew James, School of Physiology, Pharmacology & Neuroscience
- Professor Jutta Weldes, SPAIS
- Amy Butterworth, Student Recruitment, Access & Admissions
- Chris Metcalfe, Social & Community Medicine
- Naomi Nile, Library
- Maud Perrier, SPAIS
- Katharine Charsley, SPAIS
- Hannah Lowery, University of Bristol Library Special Collections

- Lucy Langley, Library Services
- Dr Tamsin Badcoe, Department of English
- Kurt Lampe, Department of Classics & Ancient History
- Professor David Jane, Physiology, Pharmacology & Neuroscience
- Sebastian Oltean, Physiology, Pharmacology and Neurosciences
- Hannah Parrott, SPAIS
- P Max Headley, Physiology Pharmacology & Neuroscience
- Richard Apps, PPN
- James Hodge, PPN
- Jakob Hartl, SPAIS
- Robert Yates, SPAIS
- Denny Pencheva, SPAIS
- Erika Hanna, Humanities
- James Thompson, Historical Studies
- Philippa Lewis, School of Modern Languages
- David N. Sheppard, Physiology, Pharmacology and Neuroscience
- Neema Begum, SPAIS
- Zuner A Bortolotto, Physiology, Pharmacology and Neuroscience
- Rhian Grant, Philosophy, School of Arts
- Kirsten Harris, Modern Languages
- Richard Tutin, School of Economics, Finance and Management
- Dr. Gareth Griffith, Department of English
- Kevin Doogan, School for Policy Studies
- Stephen D'Evelyn, Bristol UCU