

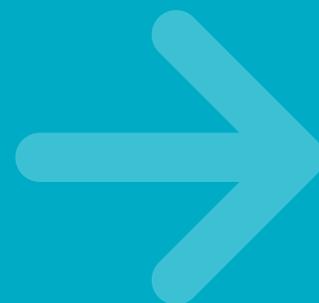
million



leading the
university agenda

THE UNIVERSITY THINK-TANK

ANNUAL REPORT 2009/2010





**Professor
Les Ebdon CBE**
Chair



Pam Tatlow
Chief Executive

“The Coalition Government and Members of Parliament elected in May 2010 will need the analysis undertaken by million+ if they want to promote innovation, social mobility and the international higher education partnerships which are an integral part of the activities of UK universities.”

Introduction

In the last year the profile of million+ as a university think-tank has been cemented by the publication of influential reports, papers and policy briefings. This research and our events and appearances in the media have demonstrated beyond doubt that million+ is a force to be reckoned with by anyone who wants cutting edge analysis of the role and impact of universities which are making Britain a fairer, more cohesive and more innovative society.

million+ has used this research to raise key questions about the impact of funding regimes and has worked on a cross-party basis to ensure that Ministers, Opposition Spokespersons, Backbenchers and members of the House of Lords are fully informed about the policies required to ensure that people from all backgrounds can benefit from access to universities that are well-funded for teaching, research and the knowledge exchange which are vital for the economy and society.

All parliamentary candidates received a million+ higher education ‘scorecard’ during the 2010 General Election campaign. The Coalition Government and Members of Parliament elected in May 2010 will need our

analysis if they want to promote innovation, social mobility and the international higher education partnerships which are an integral part of the activities of UK universities.

The advocacy of million+ has influenced Government policy, particularly in the provision of additional student numbers and in the acknowledgement that Lord Browne’s Review of fees and funding must consider the disadvantages currently faced by undergraduates who study for a degree on a part-time basis. Our research and the economic modelling tool which we have developed to assess future funding regimes for universities in England have informed the thinking of other stakeholders.

Our success is in no small part due to the commitment of the Vice-Chancellors and staff of those universities which affiliate to million+, our many friends and supporters and the staff of million+. It is my great pleasure to take the opportunity provided by this Annual Report to thank them all.

Professor Les Ebdon CBE
Chair

Our mission

million+ uses rigorous research and evidence based policy to solve complex problems in higher education. We publish research reports and policy papers and we submit evidence to parliamentarians, government and other agencies.

Our mission

We aim to develop and shape public policy and university and student funding regimes, on a non-party basis, so that they enable:

- > people from every walk of life to benefit from access to universities that excel in teaching, research and knowledge transfer
- > business, the NHS, the 'not for profit' sectors and government to benefit from the full potential of all universities

Our supporters are universities who share a belief in our mission and have their own diversity and specialisms.

Together they form a network of institutions that provide courses and research programmes which promote aspirations and empower and equip students, employers and the 'not for profit' sectors in the UK and in countries throughout the world. As universities, they play a vital role in supporting and developing the businesses and public services of today and tomorrow.

Our aims are to:

- > promote general policy objectives and engage in advocacy
- > influence governmental decisions through evidence based policy
- > set the agenda, mobilise change and amplify unheard voices

Review of the year

In the last 12 months million+ has firmly established its position as a leading university think-tank. We have launched policy and research reports and have campaigned on a variety of issues affecting universities and students. Speeches, parliamentary briefings, external events, comment pieces, our website and social networking all form part of this work.

Throughout the year we have consistently challenged the old presumptions and hierarchies that have led to a disparity of funding and prestige in UK higher education and that continue to undermine the social mobility to which all political parties are committed. This work has received widespread attention and accolade from government, parliamentarians and the media.



Review of the year Research reports and policy

Fair Funding For All

This research and modelling tool, developed with the international consultancy firm London Economics, assesses alternative fees and funding systems for universities in England.

The initial report, launched in the House of Commons in January 2010, highlighted the “inequality” of the treatment of part-time students in the current fees system and called for a unified system of fees and funding for full-time and part-time students.

Bearing in mind the impact on students, graduates, universities and the Exchequer and the need for any fees and funding system to be sustainable, affordable and accessible to students, the report identified the following key principles as being fundamental to a fair funding system for students, universities and government:

- > Universities should be free at the point of study to all undergraduate students (full-time and part-time)
- > A unified system of support and funding is required to create a level playing field and remove barriers and disincentives to part-time and flexible patterns of study

- > There should be a right to study at university – meaning that governments need to commit to sufficient funding so that all those who are qualified and can benefit from higher education, have the right to study at universities which are well-resourced whichever course they choose to study, at which ever university they study
- > Fees and funding policies need to continue to encourage people of all ages to aim for the highest level of education possible and should support participation and flexible options to study
- > Graduates should contribute, through a graduate contribution scheme, to the costs of their higher education and repay maintenance and fee loans made available by government to help support them while they are students
- > Non-repayable maintenance grants related to residual household income should be retained and available to students

These principles are likely to deliver the aspirations identified by the Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties in the higher education section of the coalition agreement which underwrote their decision to form a government in May 2010.



This coalition agreement explicitly states that a future fees and funding system should increase social mobility, take account of the impact on student debt, ensure a properly funded university sector, improve the quality of teaching, advance scholarship and attract a higher proportion of students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Many of these goals – including those relating to social mobility – reflect those of the previous Labour Government.

An updated report *Fair Funding for All – An analysis of the relationship between student support, graduate contribution and the funding of universities in England: scenarios for the future* was submitted to Lord Browne’s Review in May 2010. The full modelling tool has also been made available to the Review team, the Treasury, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and MPs.

A Postgraduate Strategy for Britain: Expanding Excellence, Innovation and Opportunity

Launched at a House of Commons with a keynote speech given by David Willetts MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Universities and Skills (now Minister of State for Universities and Science), this report sets out the million+ proposals for the future of postgraduate study in Britain.

The research, undertaken in partnership with Coventry University, showed that modern universities deliver 37% of all postgraduate provision in the UK and support 76% of all postgraduate students considered as mature (25 or over). Modern universities also supported almost half (48%) of the total part-time postgraduate student population and attracted 40.6% of all new UK-domiciled minority ethnic students from 2007-2009.

The report argues that concentrating research funding and doctoral students in just a handful of universities will damage both the UK university sector and the economy as a whole. Once the lower levels of research funding received by modern universities are taken into account, pound for pound these universities are more productive in their delivery of postgraduate provision which has always been reliant on the quality of teaching and supervision rather than on intensity or critical mass of research funding.

“Excellence, innovation, opportunity and fairness should be the cornerstones of future postgraduate taught and doctoral provision in the UK’s universities. A Postgraduate Strategy for Britain sets out recommendations which... would deliver these principles and the expansion of postgraduate provision which the UK needs.”

Professor Les Ebdon
March 2010

Review of the year Research reports and policy

Recommendations from the report include:

- > The policy of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills which requires funding councils to support greater levels of concentration in high-level STEM from 2010-11 should be set aside
- > Research councils should adopt positive policies to promote professionally focused and employer focused postgraduate provision
- > A fairer share of postgraduate funding should be used to support innovation in postgraduate provision in new subject areas and emerging markets
- > Part-time, flexible and accessible postgraduate provision should be incentivised by research and funding councils
- > Targets should be set to increase the number and diversity of UK-domiciled postgraduate students

The report serves as a response to the review commissioned by Lord Mandelson, then Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, in 2009 into the future of postgraduate provision in the UK.

From inputs to impact: a study of the impact of JISC funding on universities

This research showed the impact of funding to support advances in the application of digital technologies in UK universities.

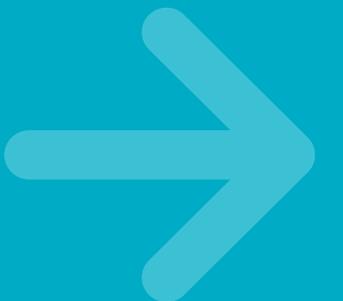
This report confirms the value of funding projects to advance the innovative application of digital technologies in UK universities. The application of technology to enhance learning and wider university activities has been a source of interest not only to universities, their staff and the Funding Councils but also to Ministers and Government Departments. Technological innovation in universities is supported by project funding from the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) of the UK's Higher Education Funding Councils.

The million+ research, undertaken by Leeds Metropolitan University in partnership with Middlesex University and the University of Bedfordshire, examines the outcomes of 113 JISC-funded projects in 28 universities over a six year period. The report concludes that this funding had a far ranging impact which was often not limited to the university which had won the JISC award. Many projects benefitted a wide range of learners, providers, partner organisations and the wider community.



Advocacy

Over the past year million+ has identified and raised key issues affecting students and universities with government, parliamentarians, senior civil servants and policy-makers. In addition to the major themes detailed in this section, million+ has submitted evidence to the Science and Technology Select Committee and appeared before the Committee to give oral evidence. We produce regular parliamentary briefings and have ensured that written and oral parliamentary questions were asked of government. We continue to speak out on issues of importance to universities and students in the media and have gained significant coverage throughout the year, helping to set the agenda on issues such as the shortage of funded university places.



Review of the year Advocacy

Social Mobility and Widening Participation

Modern universities make a major contribution to social mobility but this relies on an expansion of university places and a widening participation in higher education. The latter involves thinking about older, part-time and work-based students.

million+ campaigns for government to commit to the funding required to ensure that universities can offer places to all those who are qualified and would benefit from studying at university. Our advocacy is helping to change the terms of the social mobility debate so that there is less focus on ensuring a small number of poorer students secure places at Oxbridge and more focus on promoting the value of all universities.

million+ has also raised questions about employment practices, including in the professions, which discriminate against graduates from modern universities.

Innovation and Research Excellence in all Universities

74% of research funding went to just 25 UK universities in 2009-2010. In 2010-2011 there will be even more research concentration. million+ research shows that this policy of research concentration will stifle innovation and the potential of modern universities to promote research

in new subjects and emerging markets. It is also more expensive: a pound spent in a modern university is three times more productive than in universities which receive the lion's share of research funding.

million+ continues to use this evidence to campaign for the funding of research excellence wherever it is found and to make clear that only this policy will encourage the innovation which the economy needs.

Additional Student Places

Over the course of the last year million+ has consistently highlighted the mismatch between the number of funded student places and the record demand from people applying to study at university for the first time. This analysis showed that those most at risk of missing out on a university place were likely to be students from non-traditional backgrounds who often present with lower pre-entry qualifications and apply later but who, nonetheless, are likely to gain the most from being given the opportunity to study at university.

The million+ analysis culminated in the previous Government agreeing to fund an additional 10,000 places in 2009 – a decision marred by subsequent reductions in the grant made available to the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

The April 2010 figures confirm that there is at least a 16.5% increase in the number of those applying to study at university in 2010, compared to the same time last year. Thousands of students of all ages are again at risk of being left without a university place.

The previous Government provided funding for 20,000 additional student places in the April 2010 Budget. Although universities had submitted applications to the Funding Council, no additional places had been allocated by the date of the General Election. On 24 May 2010, the Coalition Government announced that only 10,000 additional places would be funded in 2010 and that the higher education budget would be cut by £82m in 2010-11.

General Election

Could do Better: The Scorecard for Higher Education

In the lead up to the General Election, million+ delivered its verdict on the main parties' higher education pledges: 'Could do better'.

This Higher Education 'Scorecard' was issued to all Parliamentary Candidates with an invitation to respond to what million+ analysed as the key policy issues for the

new government. The scorecard set out a 'Gold Standard' for higher education investment, future fees policy, research funding, social mobility, postgraduate study and Departmental responsibility for universities.

With the future of universities and students receiving little mention by any of the main political parties during the campaign, million+ successfully pressed Parliamentary Candidates to commit to promoting the million+ Gold Standards if elected.

The million+ proposals that the new government should appoint a universities spokesperson who attends cabinet and that responsibility for universities, the higher education budget and the science and innovation budget should be in one department were realised within days of the election result. David Willetts MP was appointed Minister of State for Universities and Science, uniting the Universities and Science briefs, and he will attend cabinet.

The new Government was also quick to enshrine some key principles for higher education in the coalition agreement. million+ will be working closely with Ministers to ensure that these principles are promoted and protected for the good of students, universities and the UK economy.

“There is no economic or academic case for the concentration of funding for research or doctoral students.”

Professor Les Ebdon
March 2010



“Extra places are urgently needed and could bring life-changing opportunities for students and long-term benefit not only to individuals, but also to the Exchequer.”

Professor Les Ebdon
March 2010

Events

million+ has contributed to a wide range of conferences and meetings and has organised a number of million+ events to promote our thinking and launch our reports.

million+ had a strong presence during the 2009 Party Conference season, travelling to Liverpool, Bournemouth, Brighton and Manchester to host fringe meetings and engage with decision makers.

We have also held receptions and parliamentary briefings in the House of Commons.



Review of the year Events

Party Conferences 2009

Labour

Working in partnership with the National Union of Students, million+ held a successful fringe meeting on Labour's promise to students and universities. David Lammy MP (the then Minister of State for Higher Education), Wes Streeting, President of NUS, Chuka Umunna, now MP for Streatham and Professor Les Ebdon, Chair of million+ were all panellists at this very well-attended event.

Conservatives

At the Conservative Party Conference in Manchester, million+ co-hosted two fringe meetings. The first was a roundtable discussion with Reform on universities and social mobility, with input from Dr. Liam Fox (the then Shadow Secretary of State for Defence) and Pam Tatlow, Chief Executive of million+.

The second event was in partnership with NUS. Speakers included: David Evennett MP (then Shadow BIS Minister), Anna Fazackerly, Head of Education at Policy Exchange, Wes Streeting, President of NUS and Dr Malcolm McVicar, Vice Chancellor of the University of Central Lancashire.

Liberal Democrats

In Bournemouth for the Liberal Democrat Conference, million+ and NUS hosted a joint fringe meeting entitled *Higher Education: parties and promises*.

Given the announcement of Party Leader Nick Clegg that the long held policy of abolishing tuition fees might no longer be affordable, the meeting attracted huge numbers of delegates.



Review of the year Events

Speaking at the meeting were Phil Willis MP (then Chair of the Innovation, Universities, Science and Skills Select Committee) Professor Les Ebdon, Aaron Porter, NUS Vice President and Stephen Williams MP (the then Liberal Democrat Shadow Secretary of State for Universities).

Trades Union Congress

At the annual Trades Union Congress in Liverpool, million+ held a fringe meeting with the Fabian Society on the prospects for jobless young people. million+ Chief Executive Pam Tatlow spoke on the importance of both government funding for opportunities in the workplace and the need for additional student numbers.

million+ 'Fair Funding For All' report launch

million+ launched its Fair Funding For All report on Wednesday 13 January in the House of Commons. Speakers included Paul Farrelly MP, Wes Streeting, NUS President and Professor Les Ebdon.

Pam Tatlow and Gavan Conlon of London Economics gave a detailed briefing on the million+ fees and funding research. The event attracted politicians, civil servants, journalists, students and representatives from universities. A lengthy question and answer session provided an opportunity for those present to test out a variety of alternative fees and funding scenarios.

million+ 'A Postgraduate Strategy for Britain' report launch

million+ launched A Postgraduate Strategy for Britain on Tuesday 2 March in the House of Commons.

David Willetts MP (the then Shadow Secretary of State for Universities and Skills) gave the keynote speech. Other speakers included Stephen Williams MP (the then Liberal Democrat Shadow Secretary of State for Universities) and Aaron Porter, Vice-President NUS. The event was extremely well-attended with nearly 100 postgraduate students exhibiting their work and was hosted by Tim Boswell MP, now Lord Boswell.

Missed Opportunities: the crisis in funding university places

On 25 June 2009, as many MPs were preparing to head off for the parliamentary recess, million+ hosted a parliamentary briefing with Wes Streeting, President of NUS, on the emerging crisis in funded university places. The briefing made clear why parliamentarians needed to take urgent action to ensure that students did not miss out on the opportunity to go to university in 2009.



Press coverage

million+ has continued to raise its media profile. As a university think-tank, we are regularly quoted in a range of broadsheets and invited to appear on national television and radio.

The Chair and Chief Executive have appeared on Newsnight, Today, BBC Breakfast, BBC News at One, Six and Ten, BBC News 24, Sky News, Radio 4, 5 Live and many local radio stations.



“A concentration of postgraduate research funding will mean that business, the economy and participation will suffer.”

Pam Tatlow comments
on postgraduate funding
BBC News
March 2010

“It would be a sorry legacy of the current government if the lasting impact of the recession was to narrow rather than expand opportunities to study at university.”

Professor Les Ebdon
comments on the launch of the
million+ report: ‘Fair Funding For All’
The Daily Telegraph
January 2010

“transformative”

“Without this announcement, many applicants would have been left without a place and a large number would, no doubt, have been ‘widening participation’ students for whom university is proven to be a transformative experience.”

Professor Les Ebdon
comments on student places
The Times
March 2010

“There’s a real need for long-term strategic planning in education.”

Professor Les Ebdon comments
on university fees and funding
The Guardian
August 2009

“There is not just one route to success... apprenticeships should not be counterposed to the opportunity to study at university.”

Pam Tatlow comments on the need for university places
Newsnight
September 2009

“Make no mistake, these cuts are serious. They were also avoidable. Higher education should have been included in the Government’s stimulus package from day one.”

Professor Les Ebdon on cuts to university funding
The Independent
December 2009

“There is a real risk that the UK will lose its competitive edge in the international marketplace, with serious economic consequences for universities and the UK economy.”

Professor Les Ebdon comments on ‘A Postgraduate Strategy for Britain’
The Guardian
March 2010

“Postgraduate provision is not, and should not be, the preserve of a handful of universities.”

Les Ebdon comments on postgraduate provision in the UK
The Daily Telegraph
March 2010

“These are tough economic times, but it would be a travesty to turn away... students that the Government has tried hard to encourage.”

Professor Les Ebdon on social mobility
Times Higher Education
July 2009

“Universities and students will be looking carefully to see whether the new government meets the challenge of its commitments to social mobility and participation in higher education and continues to fund these places, or whether they will be an early victim of the coalition test.”

Pam Tatlow comments on student places and the new Coalition Government
The Guardian
May 2010

The year ahead

It is clear that the year ahead will be dominated by questions of funding, investment and, in England, by the outcomes and recommendations arising from Lord Browne's Review of fees. Decisions about the latter need to be supported by a rigorous research base. As a university think-tank million+ will make available to Members of Parliament and others our million+ / London Economics modelling tool. This allows the resource flows which arise from different fee and funding scenarios to be assessed and understood.

The UK's competitor countries are investing in universities and research as part of their response to the global downturn. This is in spite of their national deficits and as part of a strategy to ensure that their economies are not over-reliant on financial services in the future.

A degree from a UK university remains highly valued throughout the world. Universities make a net contribution to the UK's foreign exchange earnings. Graduates in England contribute financially towards their higher education when they are in employment and, over their lifetimes, pay higher tax and national insurance contributions than people without degree qualifications.

However, the public funding of universities and students is now under review. There has never been a more important time to ensure that the relationship between investment in universities, economic growth and social mobility is well-informed by analysis and evidence. As a university think-tank, million+ intends to be at the heart of the debate.



The Executive

Chair **Professor Les Ebdon CBE**,
Vice Chancellor of the University of Bedfordshire
Treasurer **Professor Michael Driscoll**,
Vice Chancellor of Middlesex University

Professor Caroline Gipps, Vice Chancellor
of the University of Wolverhampton

Professor Peter John, Vice Chancellor
of Thames Valley University

Professor Bernard King, Principal and
Vice Chancellor of the University of Abertay Dundee

Professor Paul O'Prey, Vice Chancellor
of Roehampton University

Dr George Holmes, Vice Chancellor
of the University of Bolton

Professor Graham Henderson, Vice Chancellor
of Teesside University

Professor Mike Thorne, Vice Chancellor
of Anglia Ruskin University

The Staff

Pam Tatlow, Chief Executive

Victoria Mills, Public Affairs Officer

Peter Ptashko, Policy Officer

Jane Gebbett/Jayne Franklin
PA and Office Manager

Affiliates

University of Abertay Dundee

Anglia Ruskin University

Bath Spa University

University of Bedfordshire

Birmingham City University

University of Bolton

Buckinghamshire New University

University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)

Coventry University

University of Derby

University of East London (UEL)

Edinburgh Napier University

University of Greenwich

Kingston University

Leeds Metropolitan University

London Metropolitan University

London South Bank University (LSBU)

Middlesex University

University of Northampton

Roehampton University

Southampton Solent University

Staffordshire University

University of Sunderland

Teesside University

Thames Valley University (TVU)

University of the West of Scotland

University of Wolverhampton



leading the
university agenda

million+

90 London Road
London SE1 6LN

Phone 020 7717 1655
Fax 020 7717 1658
info@millionplus.ac.uk
www.millionplus.ac.uk