

IHE Annual Conference 2024 Agenda

Tuesday 26 November 2024 | One Great George Street

TIME	AGENDA
09:00 – 10:00	Registration, refreshments and exhibition
10:00 – 10:05	<p>Welcome</p> <p><i>James Pitman, Chair of the Board, Independent Higher Education</i></p>
10:05 – 10:15	<p>Chief Executive's address</p> <p><i>Alex Proudfoot, Chief Executive, Independent Higher Education</i></p>
10:15 – 10:30	<p>Ministerial speech</p> <p><i>Rt Hon Baroness Jacqui Smith, Minister for Skills (pre-recorded)</i></p>
10:30 – 11:30	<p>The skills solution: a strategy for people, place and productivity</p> <p>The new Government has set out its vision for a modern industrial strategy to harness the growth of high-potential sectors to drive a decade of economic renewal. The road to this promised renewal begins with a more strategic approach to education and skills. The new guiding mind of Skills England will assess national priorities as well as local opportunities, working with regional leaders, business, and the Migration Advisory Committee to respond with agility and coherence to emerging labour market needs. Our panel of experts will speak from key vantage points in the new landscape on how a more coherent skills strategy might unlock growth in the economy across the regions and nations.</p> <p>Chair: Rachel Nicholson, Head of Institution, Academy of Live Technology, and IHE Board Member</p> <p><i>Professor Sir Chris Husbands, Director, Higher Futures</i></p> <p><i>Madeleine Sumption, Director of the Migration Observatory, University of Oxford</i></p> <p><i>Sarah Howard, Chair, British Chambers of Commerce</i></p> <p><i>Lewis Cooper, Director of Public Affairs and Campaigns, Association of Colleges</i></p> <p><i>Patrick Curry, Director of Higher Education Oversight, Department for Education</i></p>

11:30 – 12:00

Refreshments, networking and exhibition

12:00 – 13:00

Fit for an uncertain future: reimagining regulation

The appointment of Sir David Behan as interim Chair of the Office for Students (OfS) was a clear statement of support from the new Government for the recommendations made in the public bodies review that he led. These 'back to basics' proposals may have been written into a new OfS business plan focused on financial sustainability as the sector's most pressing priority, but far greater challenges still lie ahead.

Across the UK, emerging strategies to bridge the skills gap through local, regional and national reforms have created new regulators and posed new questions for education sector leaders. The role of employers may gain new prominence as funding streams start to flow through industry and as students under pressure look for careers which can offset the increasing costs of their education. How can regulation adapt to and support new models of delivery, involving more funders and actors than ever before? How might planned changes like the Lifelong Learning Entitlement (LLE) and unplanned changes like AI drive behaviour in an emerging tertiary system? Our panel will consider the role of regulation in times of financial pressure and transformation and seek solutions from models across the UK and beyond.

Speaker: *Philippa Pickford, Director of Regulation, Office for Students*

Followed by:

Chair: Professor Phil Deans, President and Vice Chancellor, Richmond American University London, and Vice Chair of the IHE Board

Vivienne Stern, Chief Executive, Universities UK

Alex Proudfoot, Chief Executive, Independent Higher Education

Professor Ewart Keep, Emeritus Professor of Education, Training and Skills, University of Oxford

Professor Nic Beech, Chair, Quality Council for UK Higher Education, and Vice-Chancellor, University of Salford

13:00 – 14:00

Lunch, networking and exhibition

14:00 – 14:50

Breakout session 1

1A – What do we need to consider when student data is driving our analytics and AI strategy?

Our sector is turning collectively towards the opportunities afforded by analytics and AI as solutions to our challenges. Utilising your student data can give insights into areas such as

engagement and wellbeing, and using these emerging digital tools should save resource while improving the student experience. Our panel will give examples of how this is already being done, and what tools are available for those who are considering their options. Particular consideration will be given to ethics and governance. What capabilities do our staff and leaders need when harnessing student data in this way?

Chair: Rachel Nicholson, Head of Institution, Academy of Live Technology, and IHE Board Member

Nuala Polo, AI Assurance Lead, Department for Science, Innovation and Technology

Rob Summers, Research Programmes Manager, TASO

Professor Dr Thorsten Fröhlich, SME IT and Technology Programs, LIBF

Sean Ruane, Founder and CEO, Mind Data

1B – Student of 2030

As we reach 2030, we are told to expect record numbers of students entering higher education. This session will consider what that might look like, for students and for the professionals preparing to help them succeed on their journeys through study. What will the student experience, and expectations, look like in 2030? Will the relationship between students and their provider change, and what do providers need to consider now to prepare for this?

Chair: Jake Howarth, Student, Dyson Institute of Engineering and Technology, and Vice Chair of the IHE Student Advisory Board

Josh Freeman, Policy Manager, HEPI

Guy Michelmore, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Thinkspace Education

Dr Michelle Morgan, Dean of Students, University of East London

Jack Medlin, Associate Consultant, Coole Insight, and PhD candidate in Higher Education Policy, Keele University

1C – Graduates for growth

The Government has placed employers and business at the front of their growth strategy, with skills and education underpinning this. There is potential for IHE members to be central to this mission: one of our distinctive strengths is close collaboration with industry. These partnerships create graduates who are both ready for employment and ready to be entrepreneurs, with the skills to support companies to grow and to develop the new businesses that industry and the economy needs. Changes in funding – from the Lifelong Learning Entitlement (LLE) to the growth and skills levy – could either help realise this potential or create barriers for

employers, providers and students. This panel will consider the opportunities and challenges, and share perspectives on how we can create an environment where education supports skills for employment and entrepreneurship to deliver the growth Government needs.

Chair: Professor Phil Deans, President and Vice Chancellor, Richmond American University London, and Vice Chair of the IHE Board

Dr Kieran Reeves, Director of Motorsport, National Motorsport Academy

Allan Rankin, Founder and Managing Director, Target3D

Matt Dowling, Founder, Freelancer Club

Dr Mandy Crawford-Lee, Chief Executive, University Vocational Awards Council

1D – Creating our future leaders

IHE members are staffed by innovative, driven and practical teams who are committed to their students and industries. Many are at the foundational stage of creating their people, culture and research strategies as they move towards degree awarding powers; they are perfectly poised to embed visible leadership approaches which will reflect their organisational ethos. This session will offer insights into how to take advantage of existing talent to build high performing leadership across a provider, with a commitment to EDI principles and ongoing learning and development.

Chair: Marion Lowe, Chief Operating Officer at SP Jain London School of Management, and IHE Board Member

Jules Brookes, Head of Provider, Point Blank Music School

Christie Jay Beauchamp, Registrar, Point Blank Music School

Colin Ferguson, Executive Director, Association of Higher Education Professionals

Professor Will Foster, Senior Consultant Leadership, Organisational Development and Research, Advance HE

15:00 – 15:30	Refreshments, networking and exhibition
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15:30 – 16:20	Breakout session 2
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2A – Building financially sustainable higher education through innovation

The financial challenges facing the higher education sector mean that doing things the way we always have done may no longer be an option. Innovation and change are two solutions to securing a

sustainable future. In this session, our panel will consider the possibilities for change and the implications for students, providers and the industries who need our graduates. What does innovation look like in a climate of increased financial pressure? How can institutions be proactive to secure long-term sustainability, and growth? What will the risks be and how can these be managed? What support do institutions need? Our panel will reflect on these questions, and more.

Chair: Colin Castelino, Honorary Treasurer, IHE Board, and Chair of the IHE Finance and Resources Committee

Charlotte Corrish, Head of Public Policy, Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education

Jess Lister, Associate Director (Education), Public First

Julie Mercer, Principal and Nous UK Office Lead

Maria Dunbar, Director of Education, Leiths Education

2B – Student visas: reflections and next steps

How should the sector respond to changes in international student recruitment and visas? Staff from UK Visas and Immigration will share their lessons from the 2024 recruitment cycles and look ahead to plans for 2025. Our expert partners Eversheds will reflect on what providers can do to support a low risk 2025 recruitment cycle. Anne-Marie Graham, Chief Executive of the UK Council for International Student Affairs, will chair our session and take questions from members.

Chair: Anne-Marie Graham, Chief Executive, UK Council for International Student Affairs

Josh Rainsford, Assistant Director for Study Services, UK Visas and Immigration, Home Office

Esyllt Martin, Senior Associate (Employment & Global Mobility), Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP

2C – Equality of opportunity for the student of 2025

Current strategies for social mobility aren't working. We hear from the media that students increasingly want to earn while they learn, reverse the brain drain to urban centres, and study in more flexible ways. This panel will explore how we can reach underrepresented groups by meeting their needs rather than expecting them to adapt to a traditional model of higher education. Skills education, Level 4 and 5 provision, apprenticeships and the Lifelong Learning Entitlement (LLE) all have a potential role to play in shaping this change. Our panel will consider the opportunities and barriers in each of these models and discuss how we can deliver higher education that meets the needs of all students in 2025, and beyond.

Chair: Dr Chris Hayne, IHE Consultant, and Head of Widening Participation, pointblank Music School

Brian Pepin, Principal Policy Adviser, UCAS

Jake Howarth, Student, Dyson Institute of Engineering and Technology, and Vice Chair of the IHE Student Advisory Board

Naomi Clayton, Director of Policy and Research, Learning and Work Institute

2D – Governing in the student interest

What does it look like to govern in the student interest? How can governing bodies keep focus in times of turbulence or change? With pressures from regulators, partners, Government and funders, what role does governance play in keeping the focus on core missions, visions and values?

Chair: Kelly Coate, Provost, Richmond American University London

Dr Debbie McVitty, Editor, Wonkhe

Mary Curnock Cook CBE, Chair, The Dyson Institute of Engineering and Technology

James Coe, Senior Partner and Director, Counterculture

16:30 – 17:25

Global strategies to drive local growth: building new links between education and trade

The Government is considering a refreshed International Education Strategy, which will sit alongside a new Industrial Strategy and a cross-departmental Mission for Growth. What are the opportunities for education and training to work in partnership with other growth-driving sectors such as the creative industries to make the UK a one-stop-shop for global talent and innovation? How can local leaders, providers and policy makers strengthen the link between domestic priorities and international markets by meeting the global demand for education and skills? Our expert speakers from education, Government and industry will chart the way forward.

Speaker: *Professor Sir Steve Smith, UK Government International Education Champion (pre-recorded)*

Followed by:

Chair: Steffan Davies, Chief Executive Officer, AD Education UK, and IHE Board Member

Rupert Daniels, Director for Creative, Consumer, Sport and Education, Department for Business and Trade

Jane Rexworthy, Chair, UK Skills Partnership, and Executive Director, People 1st International

Lara Carmona, Director of Policy and Engagement, Creative UK
Joy Elliott-Bowman, Director of Policy and Development,
Independent Higher Education

17:25 - 17:30 **Closing remarks**
James Pitman, Chair of the Board, Independent Higher Education

17:30 - 20:00 **Drinks reception**
IHE Awards 2024

The programme is correct at the time of publishing and subject to change.

Visit the [IHE Annual Conference 2024](#) web page for further details.