

News

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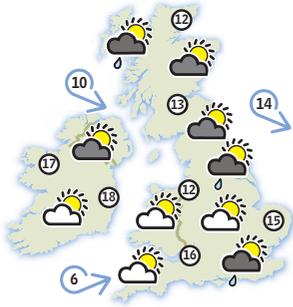


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Improve teaching if you want higher fees, universities told

Nicola Woolcock
Education Correspondent

Students will be able to switch between universities more easily and institutions will be penalised for poor teaching in a radical reform of higher education to be announced today.

Universities that score highly in assessments of their teaching will be able to raise the £9,000 annual tuition fee in line with inflation.

Today's white paper on higher education is expected to say that universities will be banded according to their teaching ability, with those in the top tier allowed to charge the highest fees. The move is intended to encourage them to concentrate on teaching rather than research.

They will also have to widen participation and tackle high drop-out rates among students from poor backgrounds. *The Times* has learnt that universities will be warned to pay more attention to boys, who are being outnumbered by girls at university.

Students and their parents have become increasingly angry about having few contact hours with academics, variable quality of teaching and a lack of comparison between universities.

The white paper will make it easier

Queen's Speech highlights

Counterextremism bill To ban organisations, gag individuals and shut premises "promoting hatred".

Modern transport bill To facilitate driverless cars, regulate drones and prepare Britain's first commercial spaceport.

Prison reform bill To give governors more freedoms and allow more services to be privatised.

Adoption and care bill To speed up the adoption process and give new powers for government to intervene when social services are failing.

for businesses and organisations to award degrees and even set up universities, in an attempt to shake up the market and drive up standards.

Jo Johnson, the higher education minister, said that the reforms would help to drive up the quality of teaching, adding that previously the "incentives in the system had focused on research — teaching in some parts of the system has been something of a poor cousin but we want to use reputational and

financial incentives to ensure excellence across the system".

The new "teaching excellence framework" will assess all universities on the basis of their teaching quality and the job prospects for undergraduates. The information will be publicly available.

A new Office for Students will be created, while universities will be forced to publish information about the ethnicity, gender and background of their students and how they progress.

Lord Patten of Barnes, the chancellor of Oxford, said that quotas would decrease standards. "I am in favour of universities recognising their responsibilities for promoting social inclusion but I don't think that if you want high-class universities you should expect them to lower their standards in order to make up for some inadequacies in our secondary education system... There are better ways of addressing social inclusion at universities," he told *The Daily Telegraph*.

Plans to open up the sector to greater competition by allowing "challenger institutions" to award degrees if they meet certain standards are also being announced. The reforms could allow employers, such as Facebook or Google, to open their own universities.
Anthony Seldon, page 24

Resignation rate highest at Treasury

Matt Chorley Red Box Editor

Staff at the Treasury are resigning at more than twice the rate of those in the rest of Whitehall.

Since George Osborne became chancellor an average of 7.7 per cent of Treasury staff have quit every year, compared with 2.9 per cent in other departments. In the run-up to the general election last year, almost one in ten workers resigned from the Treasury.

Labour said that the exodus should "raise serious questions" about Mr Osborne's ability to run a large depart-

ment. Jonathan Ashworth, a shadow minister, highlighted a recent survey that suggested that only 15 per cent of Treasury staff thought that they were paid enough and 7 per cent said they had been bullied.

"This is yet more evidence of George Osborne's inability to lead and build a team. For someone so ambitious, it's highly embarrassing that so many feel the need to desert him and his department," Mr Ashworth said.

"These figures raise serious questions about the way Osborne runs his department. They certainly do not

bode well for his future leadership ambitions."

Iain Duncan Smith, the former cabinet minister, attacked high staff turnover at the Treasury last week and called for it to be "broken up".

The Treasury suggested that the resignation rate was because its staff were in demand. A spokesman said: "Given the exceptional reputation of Treasury officials across Whitehall and outside, it is hardly surprising that they are in demand when other departments and external organisations are hiring."

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Dinner tonight

Asparagus prosciutto and poached egg

Early English asparagus, now in the shops, is intensely flavoured, so fresh and tender that the spears only need the tiniest trim, unlike later in the season when they turn woody. Depending on whether you want a snack, starter or main, this combination can be altered accordingly. Salty folds of ham against hot asparagus gushing with egg yolks and swirls of sweetly punchy balsamic vinegar and your best olive oil is heaven indeed. Serve with crusty bread and butter.

Serves 2 Prep 10 min
Cook 10 min

Ingredients: 6-8 stalks English asparagus, 250g; 6 slices prosciutto; 2 eggs; 1 tbsp red wine vinegar; 1 tbsp Belazu balsamic vinegar; 2 tbsp best olive oil.

Boil the kettle. Half fill a sauté pan with boiling water. Add 1 tsp salt, return to boil and add asparagus. Cook for 4 min or until just done to the point of a knife. Scoop on to fold of kitchen paper to drain. Crack one egg in cup. Add vinegar to simmering water. Create vortex by stirring water briskly with the handle of a wooden spoon and add egg into the vortex. Crack the second egg and try to make a



second vortex; trickier but it helps make the egg white set in a globe around the yolk. Simmer for 2-3 min until the white is set, the yolk still soft. In between jobs, place unfurled ham on one side of the middle of 2 plates. Snuggle the asparagus next to the ham and carefully scoop out an egg, resting it briefly on kitchen paper to place over the asparagus. Add a swirl of balsamico and another, more generous, of oil.
Lindsey Bareham

Europe
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the EU would not send Britain to the "back of the queue" for a trade deal with the US should he become president.

Mr Johnson, who remains the most powerful advocate for the leave campaign, said that the British people could become the "heroes of Europe" by voting to leave the EU. He also referred to previous failed efforts to unite Europe under a single government.

"Napoleon, Hitler, various people tried this out, and it ends tragically," Mr Johnson told *The Sunday Telegraph*. "The EU is an attempt to do this by different methods. But fundamentally, what is lacking is the eternal problem, which is that there is no underlying loyalty to the idea of Europe. There is no single authority that anybody respects or understands. That is causing this massive democratic void."

He was supported by Mr Duncan Smith, the former work and pensions secretary, who said it was legitimate to draw "historical parallels". "It's a historical fact of life that if you go through Napoleon, Hitler, everyone else... I think the whole process of trying to drive Europe together by force or by bureaucracy ultimately makes problems," he told the BBC.

Chris Grayling, the pro-Brexit cabinet minister, said: "Boris is a historian — he was doing a piece of historical analysis." The former Conservative

chancellor Lord Lamont also said it was misleading to suggest that Mr Johnson had been making a direct comparison. "He was simply saying that historically, from the Romans, Charlemagne, Napoleon, there have been all sorts of attempts to dominate Europe," he told Sky News.

However, Lord Bramall said the comparison between Nazi Germany and the EU was absurd. "Hitler's main aim was to create an empire in the East and violently subjugate Europeans," he said. "Any connection between that and the EU is simply laughable."

Lord Ashdown of Norton-sub-Hamdon, the former Lib Dem leader, said: "People are fed up with yet another tuppenny tin-pot imitation Churchill promising to 'fight them on the beaches' while weakening our defences and wrecking our economy."

Hilary Benn, the shadow foreign secretary, accused Mr Johnson of losing his "moral compass" in his determination to see Britain leave the EU. "After the horror of the Second World War, the EU helped to bring an end to centuries of conflict in Europe and for Boris Johnson to make this comparison is both offensive and desperate," he said.

Yvette Cooper said that it was part of a "nasty game" that also included Mr Johnson's suggestion that President

Obama disliked Britain because of his "part-Kenyan" heritage.
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