

Session Title:	Higher Education Policy
Speaker(s):	David Kernohan
Chair:	Raffaella Cuccia
Reporter:	Ashleigh Hope

Speaker/Institution Bio/Information:	David Kernohan - WonkHE
Overview/Aim of session:	Higher education policy - what is it, where does it come from, and what does it mean for you?
Workshop Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is important for us to engage with policy and offer feedback/contributions to it, no matter our grade – we are all impacted by policy. If you have any chance to feed into policy you should do it to the best of your ability because you can influence it – key takeaway. Look at OfS consultations etc. ● Policy tends to happen well in advance, we usually know when it is coming. ● LLE policy is going to have a big impact on our institutions – e.g. people coming to do a module for six months for credits. Potential for new models of higher education – more flexible delivery. Consultations on technical detail this year – how it will work at SLC – opportunity to get involved coming. LLE platform is a corporate risk for SLC. Due to be implemented by 2025. General election in 2024 will also impact what happens, a new political party could make updates. ● Typology: Politics → strategy → policy → process (all influenced by data and people) ● Policy is the project plan for how you will achieve a strategy. ● What’s happened to all the posh kids (slide)? The biggest decrease in entry rates has been for POLAR4 Q5. ● Decline in admissions and applications which was not expected, but apparent across all demographics – bounce back from peak lockdown? Or linked to cost of living? Top tariff squeeze?

<p>Case Studies/Examples:</p>	<p>Slide: A typology (3) – international student recruitment strategy and policy given as an example.</p>
<p>Scenarios/Roundtable discussions:</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Questions and Answers:</p>	<p>What do you think will become an issue for HE in this general election? Would be surprised if HE featured in any of the main party campaigns – divisive issue without any real answers. What would a different party do for HE if elected? Probably not very much, as there is no money. Government loses money on every home student, as it costs more to borrow the money to give the loans than they recoup. Potential changes to the way OfS works in England (hint from Matt Western, shadow education sec)</p> <p>How can people in the room understand policy in a more digestible way if they are new to it? Read WonkHE as they try to condense very large documents into an article, talk to the policy people in your institutions. If responding to a policy consultation, make sure you actually answer the questions, focus on the principles section which is the strategy as opposed to the policy. Remember that policy consultations are usually written by someone who isn't the expert in HE – we are the experts in what we do and our voice matters. Being a part of networks such as HELOA means we are well connected and not working in an echo chamber – we can consult with colleagues elsewhere to feed into university strategy.</p> <p>Is there anything in the broader education picture that might be coming? Advanced British Standard – PM proposal to scrap T-Levels and A-Levels and combine them, and make sure everyone does English and Maths to the age of 18. Not necessarily thinking about the way in which people are using level 3 qualifications. FE tends to focus more on tertiary education progression than HE.</p> <p>Will LLE actually mean that universities offer modular qualifications? There was a short courses trial that offered credit bearing qualifications. Only 17 courses ran, 125 applied, only 41 took out the loan. Article to read on WonkHE about this. Nobody knows what the demand for LLE actually is. Potentially going to negatively impact on the postgraduate market. Degrees that are three years might move to four years, due to the funding available. Formulated by people who do not really work in HE. Universities already offer a lot of short courses that are currently likely to be funded by employers, which might be impacted by this, as employers may push staff to take out the loans to do credited modules instead.</p>

	<p>Is the perceived decrease in humanities degree backed up by data? Is it actually happening? UCAS data shows a slight shift away from arts, humanities and social sciences, and more towards STEM and subjects allied to medicine. Massive move away from education degrees (e.g. teaching) which is having a huge impact on levels of teachers. Also a move away from languages as a single hons degree.</p> <p>Is there an increase in students leaving the UK to study instead which explains a decline in Q5 students? Potentially some online courses. Only data that might exist would be migration figures – HE data (e.g. UCAS) would not capture this information. University Guys data might be a useful source.</p> <p>When we talk about higher, medium, lower tariff unis, are we talking about grades they want or grades they actually accept (e.g. through clearing)? UCAS base this on the actual offer made, not necessarily what is accepted. Linked to tariff points. But unis with medical schools will skew their data, as they will always be considered high tariff because of the grades required, even if other courses there accept lower grades. Frustration of WonkHE.</p>
<p>SummaryKey takeaways:</p>	<p>*All* HELOA members have the experience and knowledge to engage with policy, whether through reading sector updates on WonkHE, having chats with those closely engaged with policy in their institution or contributing to sector-wide consultations that are used to shape policy.</p>