

HOUSE OF COMMONS EDUCATION COMMITTEE INQUIRY EVIDENCE FROM THE PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

Introduction

1. The Publishers Association welcomes the opportunity to submit written evidence to the Education Committee's inquiry into the impact of exiting the European Union on higher education.
2. The Publishers Association is the leading trade organisation serving book, journal, audio and electronic publishers in the UK. Our members represent over 80% of the UK publishing industry and include academic journal publishers such as Elsevier, Wiley, society publishers and University presses as well as leading textbook publishers for students at all levels.
3. Although the scope of this inquiry does not include the impact of Brexit on university research, any impact of the UK exiting the EU on students and staff will have a knock on effect on academic research. Equally any impact from Brexit on research will have an effect on the reputation of the UK's universities and their ability to attract the best students and staff. Therefore our submission does make reference to the impact Brexit might have on research as well, specifically in relation to the importance of research in ensuring UK universities remain competitive in future.

Higher education and academic journal publishing

4. The UK punches above its weight in the production of world-class research. Despite making up less than 1% of the world's population and 4.1% of researchers, [UK research accounts for](#) 9.5% of downloads, 11.6% of citations and produces 15.9% of the world's most cited journal articles, more than any other country after the US.
5. The academic journal market is worth £1.1bn, making a significant contribution to the UK economy. Approximately 90-95% of this revenue comes from exports. The UK journal publishing industry is also a world-leader in itself, with UK publishers responsible for five thousand journal titles and a fifth of the articles published globally each year. In addition, academic publishing plays an important role in investing in innovation, helping academics build on and scrutinise the work of others and helping them share and refine their own work.
6. Meanwhile the academic and professional book market is worth £1bn, with 25% of its revenues coming from digital sales. These resources are sought after globally, with over half of the total revenues (54%) for this sector coming from exports. Higher education books play a vital role in reducing teacher workload and in improving standards and student outcomes.

The impact of Brexit on students

7. The flow of international students is crucial in helping to fund higher education. International students [make up 19%](#) of all students studying in the UK and contribute around one-eighth of universities income and around £7 billion a year to the economy. Any fall in their number could reduce overall funding for higher education and led to a reduction how much money could be invested in research.

8. Already the number of students coming to the UK to study from outside the EU is falling. According to the Office for National Statistics, the number of international students dropped by 15% last year compared to the previous year. This has been partially attributed to restrictions on the ability for international students to stay and work after university.
9. Since then the Government has announced plans to introduce further restrictions on international students studying in the UK, which could risk damaging higher education funding and give the impression that the UK is unwelcoming to international students, potentially making it more difficult for universities to attract the best international students and academics. Additionally if the UK no longer provides easy access to Europe it could be perceived as a less attractive place to study, leading to a reduction in the number of international students.
10. There is also a risk that the number of EU students could fall after Brexit. Currently students from the EU are entitled to pay the same fees and have the same access to loans as students in the UK. This year there has already been a 9% fall in the number of EU students applying for courses with an early October deadline, partly due uncertainty over whether applicants would be eligible for loans and grants in the future. Although we are pleased that the Government has now confirmed that students applying for courses this year will have access to loans and funding for the duration of their degrees, if this situation changes for future applicants this could reduce the number of EU students opting to study in the UK.

Impact of Brexit on staff and researchers

11. According to the Royal Society, 28% of the researchers working in the UK are from overseas, with researchers from the EU making up 16% of the total. In some institutions the figure is much higher: for example, 55% of the [Postgraduate research staff](#) at the prestigious new Francis Crick Institute are from other EU countries*. This flow of researchers is hugely important for research quality and university funding. UK universities often attract many of the brightest and best academics, which helps make the UK successful when bidding for grants from international funding sources. This in turn bolsters university finances, drives research output and supports the UK publishing industry.
12. Being part of the EU has also fostered collaboration between UK researchers and partners with the EU. The need for this was highlighted in a post-Brexit [survey by the Biochemical Society](#), where 35% of respondents said they had co-authored with non-UK EU based scientists on at least half of the papers they published the past five years.
13. Restrictions on skilled migration from the EU and onerous visa requirements could make it more difficult for universities to hire talented staff and could deprive researchers of the opportunities afforded by easy mobility for work and study which comes through freedom of movement. If research is restricted along national lines, it will inevitably become narrow and parochial, harming the UK's global research profile and reputation for innovation.

Competitiveness of UK Universities

14. As previously highlighted, the UK punches above its weight in terms of academic research, producing the second largest number of the world's most cited journal articles after the US. If anything impacts on international collaboration or the ability for universities to attract and retain the best researchers this could hurt academic research, thereby damaging the UK's reputation as a place with world leading universities.
15. Additionally the UK has benefited from EU funding in order to produce this world class research. According to figures from the [Royal Society](#), in total the UK received £8.8bn of funding for research from the EU between 2007 and 2013, making it the second largest recipient of EU funds. To put this into context, the [UK spent](#) £4.6 billion on research and science in 2012/13, meaning EU funds make up a substantial percentage of the overall funding on the sector.
16. If such funding is lost without being replaced this would have a damaging effect on science and research in general, which would most likely trickle down to academic publishers, for example in the number of articles produced and journals published.
17. Access to funding, including that provided by the Horizon 2020 project, is one of the major concerns academic publishers have following the vote to leave the European Union. In a survey of our members 53% of academic publishers said that reduced funding for research and higher education institutions was the main challenge to scholarly research and the UK's place within it posed by Brexit.
18. The quality of research is one of the top reasons why the UK is such an attractive place for students and staff to opt to work and study. Therefore the Government should ensure that Brexit does not negatively impact research if it wants UK universities to remain competitive.
19. The quality of teaching in UK universities is another reason why the UK is seen as an attractive destination for international students. According to Government, 88% of international students were satisfied with their learning experience, while a survey from the [Higher Education Academy](#) showed that 82% of postgraduate students rate the UK's quality of teaching positively. This again highlights the importance for the UK being able to continue to attract the best staff to its academic institutions in order to sustain its reputation for international excellence.

Priorities for Government

20. The Education Select Committee should ensure that the Government provides certainty as soon as possible about the status of EU citizens currently working and studying at higher education institutes in the UK, and gives clarity about the migration policy they intend to implement once the UK leaves the EU.
21. The committee should also recommend that the Government does not include students in its net migration target and ensure that the Government does not pursue policies that will restrict the free movement of skilled workers.
22. We welcome the Government's commitment to safeguard the EU's Horizon 2020 grant and would urge the Government to develop new strategies for domestic investment and negotiate

access to the successor funding package to Horizon 2020 in order to give UK research the funding and support it needs to remain a world leader.