POLICY ISSUES IN UK RESEARCH AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher Education has undergone major change in recent years. Shifting most of the cost of higher education to the graduate (through an income-contingent repayment system) has proved controversial, although it has been described by the OECD as the most sustainable HE funding system in the world.

Despite the global financial crisis, investment in research has been maintained and the role of universities in knowledge exchange and growth has been endorsed. Research assessment and funding now takes account of impact and remains explicitly performance-driven for both block grant and project funding. The Government, while fully backing public access to publicly funded research, has adopted the ‘Gold’ approach to open access publishing arousing significant discussion and controversy, both in the UK and globally.

On Thursday the 12th of December David Sweeney will provide an overview of these issues followed by an opportunity for comment and debate.

David Sweeney has been Director (Research, Innovation and Skills) since 2008. In this role he is responsible for developing policy on Research (including the Research Excellence Framework), Business and Community, and Employer Engagement. He is also responsible for the Strategic Development Fund.

A statistician, David worked at two Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council research institutes before joining Royal Holloway, University of London where he was Vice-Principal (Communications, Enterprise and Research). David is a fellow of the Royal Statistical Society.