

The Scale-Up Institute
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14th January 2016

Alison Haines
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Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
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Dear Ms Haines,

Fulfilling our potential: teaching excellence, social mobility and student choice

The Scale-Up Institute was delighted to take part in the Government's recent roundtable to discuss the Green Paper on '*Fulfilling our Potential: teaching excellence, social mobility and student choice*' and to follow up with this written submission which is such an important subject to scaling businesses in the UK.

The Scale-Up Institute, borne out of the Government commissioned Scale-Up Report, is a private sector led organisation, whose focus is on supporting the needs of the UK's established high growth firms that are growing on average at 20% per annum, in employees or revenue, over a 3 year period. Such firms view access to the right talent and skills from Universities as key to their future and ongoing success and represent the engines to economic growth, productivity and jobs, as highlighted in the recent Octopus 'High Growth Small Business Report 2015'. This report found that in the UK, high growth businesses created the equivalent of approx. 4,500 new jobs every week, 3 times as many new jobs as the FTSE 100.

The Institute is therefore very supportive of the Government reviewing the current practices to assess Graduate teaching to ensure students attain optimum choice as well as skills that support employability, mobility and rounded skills sets. The Scale-Up Report issued in 2014 emphasised that young people should be made aware of the skills they need for the jobs that will be available to them when they are finished with full-time formal education. For example, The Royal Society has predicted that the UK will need one million new science, engineering and technical professionals by 2020. In our recent YouGov Survey, taken by CEOs of over 350 high growth firms across sectors, nearly 80% felt they would be able to grow their company faster if University graduates had the skills needed to meet their customer demand.

As highlighted at the recent roundtable, it is therefore essential that the important work the Government is now undertaking to set a new Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) recognises that it is such high growth firms, not simply large corporates, that need critical access to the UK Graduate pool. It will therefore be important that the views of such firms are taken into account in the proposed revised Framework and sit on the new Governance structure to be deployed.

The TEF should be useful for scaling businesses that are recruiting, as well as for students to make informed selection of Universities. However to make it as effective as possible it must ultimately become an all encompassing framework both geographically and in University and College coverage. This means that it will likely need to be an overarching Framework that absorbs or works closely with existing schemes such as the Higher Education Academy (HEA).

It will also be more effective as a measurement tool if it is made compulsory for all Universities and Colleges, either through legislation or alternatively through formal objectives being set for the University/College leadership team.

Whilst current league tables are helpful, and will no doubt continue, for employers and students it is better if they can have from the Government one single source of comprehensive data. We therefore fully agree that TEF should be available online in keeping with the Government's Digital strategy drive. For optimal use it should not only include the academic TEF results but also highlight employment options for students. The online environment should link in with entities providing employment opportunities including high growth firms and the various programmes that can support this, such as those highlighted below.

As for the key principles for metrics and institutional evidence, whilst we agree with the common metrics set out in the Green paper, we consider that these need to go further and should also include key measurements on how the University engages directly with the business community and specifically high growth firms. There are various online tools and programmes that can help Universities and Colleges identify such firms such as NACUE, NCUB, Founders4Schools and Code Club which could be embedded to any online TEF gateway. The Small Business Charter should also be leveraged. An employability metric should be included with a measurement that assesses the inclusion within any University course syllabus of key business, digital, and financial skills. Arguably, every University course syllabus should include practical management skills.

As the TEF develops, it must allow a level playing field and if it is to help encourage student social mobility then it needs to engage with relevant diverse networks and it must be careful to ensure the measurement processes do not inadvertently lead to 'exclusivity' or elitism.

In conclusion, the Scale-Up Institute supports the Government in taking these important next steps in enabling better teaching excellence, social mobility and student choice and we hope the above reflections are helpful in your considerations. It is vital that in developing TEF and the employability of graduates that the needs of high growth firms are taken into consideration and their views be part of the evolving Governance structure. We welcome the opportunity to provide input through the recent roundtable and this submission and are happy to assist in next steps. Should you require any further immediate information or discussion then please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours sincerely,

Irene Graham
CEO
The Scale-Up Institute