



Civic connections

Mapping the higher education and research policy landscape

25 September 2020

As universities grapple with their ‘civic mission’, either as part of preparing a Civic University Agreement (CUA) or through a different approach, it is worth exploring the synergies with UK government policy priorities and those of the devolved governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, which can help to re-enforce, re-energise and potentially provide resources to support their approach.

This document aims to map some of the key policy ‘hooks’ of most relevance to ‘civic’ agendas, with the dual aim of helping institutions and their localities capitalise on the available opportunities as well as identifying potential forums and debates through which the Civic University Network may seek to influence Westminster and Whitehall as well as thinking in the nations and regions of the UK to ensure they are more closely aligned and supportive of universities as civic institutions. This document builds on the previous [UPP Guide to Preparing Civic University Agreements](#).

As part of the [Civic University Network](#) – Policy Workstream, we will continue to work with policy colleagues in Higher Education and other policy areas to provide a framework of these policy areas to maximise the potential synergy.

If you have any questions, feedback or suggested items for inclusion in this mapping, please contact [Natalie Day](#) or [Lizzie Morgan](#)

Access and Participation	
Access and Participation, England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University Access and Participation plans contribute to their civic mission. There is an expectation that they will focus on people and places who are under-represented in higher education (HE), and target those most in need, including these activities in both civic university agreements and in access and participation plans, universities will be able to ensure their accountability locally and nationally is mutually supportive. • The Office for Students (OfS) launched a new approach to access and participation in March 2019. Universities submitted their first 5-year plans in May-June 2019, with these coming into force from September 2020. • Chris Milward is the Director for Fair Access and Participation at the OfS. • The OfS has set ambitious long-term targets for the sector to eliminate gaps in entry rates, non-continuation and degree outcomes. Updated data on progress towards national and institution-level targets was published in April 2020. • The OfS encourages collaborative targets set in partnership with other providers to address national, regional and local priorities. Providers must demonstrate in their plans their commitment and strategic approach to collaborative working. This may include
Access and Participation Plans, Office for Students, England	

	<p>relationships with other HE providers, with employers and third sector bodies, relationships as part of formal networks and strategic relationships with schools, colleges and other education providers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The OfS have identified the following areas of overlap with the civic agenda:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Work with schools to improve understanding and expectations about progression into HE, and ultimately to raise attainment.</i> ○ <i>Work with FE colleges to create diverse pathways into HE, including for people in work or with caring responsibilities.</i> ○ <i>Work with employers and local agencies to improve graduate employability and the take-up of graduate skills, and to meet the skills needs of business and public services.</i> ○ <i>Gathering and sharing of evidence on ‘what works’ for different groups of students in different places and at different points in the lifecycle.</i>
<p>Outcome Agreements, Scottish Funding Council, Scotland</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome Agreements are published by Scottish universities in partnership with the Scottish Funding Council and set out how a University contributes towards the delivery of Scottish Govt priorities. Outcome Agreements were introduced in 12/13 and link in with the National Performance Framework, which benchmarks progress against expected outcomes across the full range of gov't policy. • Universities are asked to report on progress against a set of national policy priorities set out in the First Minister's November 2014 statement, which set a target that 20% of HE entrants should reside in SIMD20 postcode areas by 2030. Additional requirements have been added via annual reviews e.g. reporting on progress in implementing Mental Health strategies, outlining a set of gender related outcomes and providing support for survivors of gender-based violence.
<p>Widening access, Scotland</p>	<p>There is an expectation that widening access (WA) recruitment efforts will focus most on people and places who are under-represented in HE, targeting those most in need. Institutional accountabilities are managed via outcome agreements. In Scotland criteria on access are linked to the those used in identifying SIMD areas, a high proportion of which (68% of SIMD20 postcodes) are in the Glasgow city region. The University of Glasgow has a strategy of linking outreach pre-entry programmes in schools and colleges with contextualised admissions to equalise offer-making for all, directly linking local accountability to local authority and school partners with meeting national targets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A Commission on Widening Access (CoWA) was created in 2015 with membership at a senior level from across the education sector, coupled with several working groups which met throughout 2015.</i> • <i>The CoWA Final Report, ‘A Blueprint for Fairness’, was published in 2016. All 34 recommendations were accepted by Scot Govt.</i> • <i>Recommendation 1 saw the appointment of the Fair Access Commissioner for Scotland, Professor Sir Peter Scott in December 2016. The Commissioner has produced three annual reports and several discussion papers, setting widening access policy direction, refining recommendations as speed of progress dictates and reacting to new developments, latterly C-19.</i> • <i>Recommendation 2 saw the creation of a Fair Access Framework, which provides guidance on conducting evaluation of WA initiatives, with the intent of creating an evidence base of what works in Scotland. An online toolkit has been created, as has SCAPP (Scotland's Community of Access and Participation Practitioners), the latter aiming to provide a practitioners' network to support the development of a strong WA and participation community in Scotland and embed, enhance and support effective practice in Scotland.</i> • <i>Targets or narrative relating to the other major CoWA recommendations are picked up in University Outcome Agreements.</i> • <i>SIMD20 and SIMD40 remain the only reportable targets in terms of entrants and student retention. However, throughout 2018, an Access Data Working Group met to consider all possible targets related to socio-economic deprivation, recommending that SIMD20, Free School Meals and a measure for adult learners should form the basis of a broader set of measures. These recommendations were accepted by Scot Govt, but progress has been slow, with problems on provision of data for HEIs.</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The majority of areas covered by CoWA and subsequent reports concern the civic agenda in terms of improving the prospects and life chances of those living in more deprived areas. Recommendations 4 and 7 demanding increased cross-sector collaboration, explicitly relate to civic engagement. Two working groups: the Access Programmes Steering Group and the Bridging Programmes Advisory Group have been meeting since 2018, examining how the different education sectors could work jointly to create a pipeline of provision across the country for those from more deprived areas. Progress has been delayed by C-19.
Fee and Access Plans, Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HE (Wales) Act 2015 requires universities to apply for a fee and access plan if the institutions wish for its qualifying courses to be automatically designated for Welsh Govt students support. On application an institution is required to provide information relating to its financial viability, the arrangements for the organisation and management of its financial affairs, and the quality of education it provides or is provided on its behalf. A fee and access plan must set out the objectives of an institution as they relate to equality of opportunity and the promotion of HE.
Collaborative outreach including Uni Connect (formerly National Collaborative Outreach programme, (NCOP), England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universities are expected to approach access through place-based partnerships. The OfS funds partnerships of universities and colleges to work together in ‘outreach hubs’ to deliver outreach in a joined-up and efficient way. This includes securing resources and expertise that can be used by different providers and giving schools and colleges a clear point of contact for advice about HE. Phase one started in January 2017 and ran until July 2019. Phase 2 started on August 2019 and is due to finish in July 2021. NCOP was relaunched by the OfS as Uni Connect. The UPP Foundation’s report for the Civic Universities Commission includes four key relevant points on effective collaborative outreach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding local populations and asking them what they want. Analysis of their place and people's priorities are essential. Understanding themselves and what they are able to offer. Working with other local anchor institutions, businesses and community organisations to agree where the short, medium and long-term opportunities and problems lie for communities. Linking with local authorities and other local plans, such as the local industrial strategy, is particularly important. A clear set of priorities. A process of agreeing clear priorities will therefore be necessary and, again, this is where collaboration and aligning resources with local authorities, LEPs (Local Economic Partnerships), NHS bodies etc can help to identify the live issues that universities can most usefully help with. <p><i>The Office for Students have confirmed funding for NCOP for 2020/21.</i></p>
Teaching and learning	
Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) was introduced in 2016. The third set of institutional results (for TEF year 4) were published in June 2019. Gavin Williamson asked for subject level TEF results to be published in 2021. Contextual submissions by universities form part of the TEF provide an opportunity for universities to foreground their commitment to the Civic Agreement process, and to demonstrate a strategic approach to local and regional skills needs <i>The Pearce Independent Review of the TEF was first expected to be published in Summer 2019 and has since been delayed. The Review outcomes are still pending. Following the publication of the Pearce Review, a consultation on the future of the TEF was due to take place during the first half of 2020 and is also still pending.</i> <i>The publication of subject-level TEF results by the OfS has been delayed by C-19. Final date depends on attempts to avoid clash with REF.</i> <i>The TEF is not mandatory in Scotland. In practice, five Scottish universities have chosen to participate: St Andrews, RGU, Dundee, Abertay and Heriot-Watt.</i>

Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework (SQEF), Scotland	<p>There are five elements to the SQEF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancement-led Institutional Review – five-yearly exercises. All credit-rated L&T provision forms the subject-matter, together with the effectiveness of institutions’ engagement with the other four elements (noted below) • Internally-led Reviews – all subject areas and student-facing services are reviewed over a six-year cycle • Student engagement – the way the university systematically engages with the student body, including the involvement of students in quality management processes • Enhancement themes – the established pattern is that the sector, in consultation with SFC and other stakeholders, identifies a theme of common current interest in HE to explore over a three-year period and for which the Scottish universities (are required to) participate in developing associated resources, both collaboratively and independently. • Public information – its currency and accuracy
Research and Innovation	
Knowledge Exchange Framework (including HEIF)	<p>The UK Govt set out plans for a Knowledge Exchange Framework in 2014, with further recommendations published in September 2016. The KEF will be led by Research England who ran a pilot during 2019 and published details of the first iteration in January 2020. The Knowledge Exchange Concordat (KEC) was published in April 2020 by Universities UK and GuildHE. The KE concordat high level implementation plan was published in September 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In England, HE providers will be invited to participate in the development year and to commit to self-evaluation and the production of a three-to five-year action plan.</i> • <i>In Scotland, the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) expect to encourage higher education providers to commit to the principles of the KE concordat. The SFC will use the development year to decide what formal arrangements it may wish to put in place for subsequent years.</i> • <i>In Wales, HE providers will be asked to confirm commitment to the principles of the KE concordat through their Research Wales Innovation Funding (RWIF) strategies. Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) will implement a development year in 2020–21 so that during this period a Welsh model for engagement with the concordat can be finalised. The RWIF strategy process allows for HE providers to update strategies annually as part of the monitoring procedures. This process will be used for any subsequent amendments required to align strategies to the KE concordat. RWIF strategies will be published and considered for additional inclusion on the KE concordat portal.</i> • <i>In Northern Ireland, HE providers will be required to commit to the principles of the KE concordat through their KE strategies, the next of which is due for submission to the Department for the Economy (Northern Ireland) in September 2020. The detailed outworking of the KE concordat in Northern Ireland will be considered by the Department, in consultation with higher education providers, as part of a wider process of reviewing KE funding in 2020.</i> • The KEF consultation included 7 perspectives, several of which are highly relevant to Civic Agreements, including one focused on Local Growth and Regeneration and another on Public and Community Engagement. • <i>Engagement with the KE Concordat using data analysis from the KEF will ultimately be integrated into the process for HE Innovation Funding in England.</i> • <i>20/21 will be a development year for KEC, during which HEIs in England will carry out self-evaluation, submitting in May – July 21.</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providers will need to submit KEF narrative in October 2020 and results will be published in December 2020, drawing on the 2018/19 HE-BCi survey results. There are plans to link KEF to funding longer-term. • HESA are undertaking a major review of the HE-BCi survey with outcomes expected by the end of 2019/20. Due to Covid-19 the review is on pause and timescales are subject to change. • The OfS have noted that CU Agreements could provide a platform to identify and develop student engagement with KE, with benefits to the student experience and student outcomes beyond graduation, as well as the places in which they study and work.
Research Excellence Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next exercise of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) will be conducted in 2021. It first took place in 2014. The was put on hold in March 2020 for four months but recommenced on 31 July 2020. • The REF is conducted jointly by Research England, Scottish Funding Council, Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, and the Department for the Economy (Northern Ireland). • The Research Excellence Framework (REF) and UKRI’s long standing commitment to ‘excellence with impact’ is seeing increasing expectation on HEIs to contribute social and economic impact through their research. • REF submission deadlines have been delayed (originally set as November 2020); with a revised deadline of March 2021.
Strength in Places Fund (SIPF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strength in Places Fund (SIPF), led by UK Research and Innovation was announced in the Industrial Strategy White Paper published in November 2017. SIPF is a competitive funding scheme that takes a place-based approach to research and innovation funding. The aim of the fund is for supporting promising research and innovation projects that will bring in local economic growth. So far, £236 million have been allocated to UKRI for SIPF for waves 1 and 2. To date, £186m of funding has been allocated. • In Wave 1, 23 bids were awarded seed corn funding. In Wave 2, 17 projects were awarded seed corn funding (worth a total of £821,000). In May 2020, seven projects were awarded full stage funding from wave 1 of SIPF.
“Levelling up”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ‘Place’ dimension of the Industrial accounted for only 10% of the Industrial Strategy document, down from some 15% in the earlier Green Paper. Since then, the enormous regional inequalities within the UK have become a core political and economic issue. The UK govt made a flagship election pledge to “level up” the UK’s underperforming regions ahead of the December 2020 elections, boosting economic growth, living standards and productivity. Levelling up has also referenced by the UK Govt in response to recent protests about racial inequality. • “But this isn’t just about the money, or how it is spent. Where we choose to invest is of equal, critical importance. The Prime Minister has declared that this is a ‘One Nation’ govt, committed to ‘levelling up’, so that every corner of the UK can benefit from its determination to share our future prosperity.” Skidmore, Chris, Levelling up research and innovation right across the United Kingdom. • <i>Given the likelihood of Covid-19 and Brexit reinforcing and potentially increasing regional inequalities, the levelling up agenda will remain a key focus. This should present opportunities for universities to demonstrate and seek support for their role in delivering on this.</i> • <i>In a speech to UUK in September 2020, Gavin Williamson said that “it is the diversity of our sector which will drive the levelling up agenda that is central to everything this Government does... jobs, industry and regional growth must be at the heart of our education strategy – and universities must be a key part of that.”</i>
Connecting Capabilities Fund, England	<p>The Connecting Capability Fund (CCF) complements Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF) by supporting HEI collaboration in commercialisation through competitive projects and formula funds. There are currently 18 projects funded by CCF. Overall, these projects involve 60 HEPs collaborating with each other and 128 individual businesses and investors, as well as wider business investor networks.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the 2016 Autumn Statement, the Govt allocated additional funding for science and research of £100 million over 17-18 to 20-21 to incentivise universities to collaborate in commercialisation. This funding was allocated to complement and build on established HEIF mechanisms. £15 million of the CCF was allocated by formula in 2017-18, through a 10% addition to main HEIF institutional allocations. • The CCF funding for 18-19 to 20-21 has been allocated through competitive project funding, with projects beginning from April 2018. • Research England have been guided by the UK gov't to set in motion wave 2 of CCF funding, including follow-on funding for existing projects. In July 2020 existing universities leading on CCF projects were invited to apply for follow-on funding. • <i>Bids for wave 2 awards will open early 2021.</i>
UKRI Strategy	<p>After one year of operation, UK Research and Innovation signalled its intention to look afresh at questions of prioritisation and balance across the system. Whilst there have been some attempts to address the geographic spread of research investment, programmes with a regional or place-focus are small within an overarching budget of £7 billion. As UKRI continues to review its strategy, it is important to continue to stress the importance of funds such as Strength in Places.</p> <p>Such funding streams enable universities, who are already significant drivers of economic growth and investment, to play a lead role in stimulating new partnerships and projects for their regions with local industries, in priority areas and sectors, working with gov't.</p>
Research and Development Roadmap	<p>On 2 July 2020, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) published the UK Research and Development Roadmap, setting out the direction of travel for research, development and innovation. The roadmap is intended to start the conversation to identify the strengths and challenges facing the sector, the issues that need to be addressed and how to work with universities, business, the third sector and across gov't to cement the UK's reputation as a science super power</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levelling up: "It is time to take steps to rebalance and level up." Intention to engage with people and places across country. • Decision making: Place-based outcomes to be given greater focus in decision making. A UK R&D Place Strategy is to be developed over the summer. This was due to be published in the autumn after the Spending Review. Intention is to include more direct local influence over national economic decisions. • Leadership: Ministerial R&D Place Advisory Group to be established. • Collaboration: Heavy emphasis on collaboration and involving local civic and business leaders in delivering initiatives. • Funding: May build on Strength in Places fund, and plan to do more to support impact-focused activities. Looking at how local economic impact might be factored into future infrastructure investment decisions and joined up local and devolved growth funding. • People: Embedding levelling up into approach to R&D talent, looking closely at building regional capacity to make decisions on talent schemes – including doctoral training, and vocational and further education provision. How research culture might differ across places, and where differences help or hamper levelling up outcomes. • Infrastructure: Encouraging creation of new innovation zones and clusters of innovative firms <p>A consultation ran over Summer 2020. A UK R&D Place Strategy is to be developed over the summer. This was due to be published in the autumn after the Spending Review. Intention is to include more direct local influence over national economic decisions.</p> <p>The Civic University Network, drawing on the input and experiences of the membership, responded to the Consultation, reflecting on the specific elements of the roadmap related to place and civic engagement: CUN R&D Roadmap Consultation response.</p>

	<p>UUK published analysis on universities and colleges impact on the Industrial Strategy and knowledge exchange, research and skills in September 2020. The work, commissioned by the Industrial Strategy Council, found some strikingly uneven distributions across the UK of research and innovation funding and outcomes includes a series of interactive maps of the UK in which data sets can be amalgamated or interrogated by year, by place, by subject area.</p>
Innovation Scotland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation is one of the four key strands - along with investment, inclusive growth and internationalisation – that seek to contribute to “competitiveness” and “tackling inequality” in the Scottish Govt’s 2015 economic strategy. Indeed, the Scottish Govt’s vision is for “an economy where growth is based on innovation, change and openness to new ways of doing things”. • The following statement from the economic strategy points to some of the core characteristics sought for the innovation system: <i>“To foster a culture of innovation we will: Support the development of highly innovative businesses across the Scottish economy; Encourage more of Scotland’s diverse business base to engage in innovation and research and development ...; Continue to support the high-impact, world-class research of Scotland’s Universities and improve levels of commercialisation of academic research; Develop with key partners, such as business organisations and trade unions, innovative approaches to developing progressive workplace practices ...”</i> (Scottish Govt, 2015: 9). • Though fairly standard sentiments, the text in italics, above, points to an accommodation for a different normative perspective on what innovation systems are for and should do compared to equivalent UK gov’t policy documents. • Both the Scotland CAN DO innovation forum – Action Plan and the Enterprise and Skills review phase 2 focus on the role of public services in supporting business. The Scotland CAN DO innovation forum – Action Plan sets out priorities around the support for business innovation across sectors and places through, where possible, the use and exploitation of university knowledge. The Enterprise and Skills review – Phase 2 report on innovation, which is based on a review of the innovation ecosystem, notes, meanwhile, that improvements to the innovation support system may be warranted, and that a “streamlined” service is needed.
Health and Wellbeing	
Well-being of future generations (Wales) Act 2015, Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change. It came into force in April 2016. • It has identified a set of national indicators and has required the establishment of Public Service Boards. The Boards are expected to assess the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in their area before setting objectives to maximise their local contribution.
NHS England Long-term plan, England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NHS Long Term plan was published in January 2019, alongside an Implementation Framework. • To support Long Term Plan, Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs) and Integrated Care Systems (ICSs), which are groups of local NHS organisations working together with each other, local councils and other partners, published local five-year strategies. • NHS England’s Long-Term plan identifies a host of areas which overlap with Civic Agreements, including an increasing focus on more integrated local services to address population health, workforce development, and innovation in use of data and digital technology. There is great scope for alignment between local NHS plans and Civic Agreements.

Culture	
Cultural cities inquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cultural cities inquiry was launched in April 2018 with a final report published in February 2019. Policy document released in May 2020 including plan to release further proposals for govt to support core cities to return from lockdown. The report identified the value of culture to civic life. A key recommendation was that cities should establish ‘Cultural City Compacts’ to provide strategic cross-sectoral local leadership, drawing together partners from city govt, culture, business, higher education and LEPs.
Arts Council England 10-year strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10-year strategy launched in January 2020. The strategy sets out a ‘route-map’ for 2020 – 2030. A draft strategy was published in Summer 2019 as part of a year-long consultation. Strategy Outcomes: Creative people: Everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their life. Cultural communities: Villages, towns and cities thrive through a collaborative approach to culture. A creative and cultural country: England’s cultural sector is innovative, collaborative and international. 5 long-term goals: Goal 1: Talent and artistic excellence are thriving and celebrated. Goal 2: More people experience and are inspired by the arts. Goal 3: The arts are sustainable, resilient and innovative. Goal 4: The arts leadership and workforce are diverse and highly skilled. Goal 5: Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts. Emergency response funds for coronavirus launched at end of March 2020. A total of £64.8m was awarded to 9,666 individuals and organisations. £13.1m was allocated to Black and minority ethnic-led organisations and individuals. £8.5m was allocated to disabled-led organisations and individuals. Bids for a Cultural Recovery Fund for existing grant holders closed September 2020 with a total of £55m for capital expenditure. <p><i>A Delivery Plan to accompany the 10-year strategy was due to be published in April 2020.</i></p> <p><i>The Council puts an emphasis in the strategy on partnership working “We will seek out partners who share our vision and who want to work with us to strengthen creative and cultural opportunities in cities, towns and villages across the country. These partners will come from across local govt and from The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, from further and higher education and schools, and from inside and outside the cultural sector.”</i></p>
Arts and cultural strategy, Scotland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scottish Govt cultural strategy was published February 2020, with three aims: strengthening, transforming though, and empowering through culture. The Scottish Govt has express its intention to place culture as a central consideration across all policy areas including: health and wellbeing, economy, education, reducing inequality and realising a greener and more innovative future’. A policy statement for the creative industries was published in October 2019.
Local economic development	
Local industrial strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local industrial strategies (LIS) will establish news ways of working between national and economic govt and the public and private sectors. It will promote the coordination of local economic policy and national funding streams and will be aligned to the national Industrial Strategy. In Dec 2018 the UK Govt announced that the entire country would have Local Industrial Strategies, with the rest of the LEPs forming the third wave. The first Local Industrial strategies were published in March 2019. A second wave were published by March 2020.

Local recovery plans	<p><i>Local govts will be forming local recovery plans in order to manage the social and economic problems in the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic. This is potentially a significant area for universities to engage, as anchor institutions in their regions, helping to shape and support the economic and social response and recovery post Covid-19.</i></p>
UK shared prosperity fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) was first announced in 2017 Conservative Manifesto. It is a replacement for structural funding from EU which amounts to £2.1 billion a year • A commitment to the SPF was included in November 2017 Industrial Strategy White Paper, with a written statement published in July 2019 setting out further details. EU structural funding will continue until the end of 2020. <p><i>Consultation pending. Final decisions on Fund's design are due to be taken during the Spending Review. The Spending Review was launched at the 2020 budget to conclude in July 2020 but has been postponed due to C-19, and currently, timings are uncertain.</i></p>
Inclusive growth, wellbeing and community wealth building, Scotland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive growth “combines increased prosperity with tackling inequality, creating opportunities for all and distributing the dividends of increased prosperity fairly”. The focus is on achieving four outcomes that allow this vision to be realised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ securing economic growth through international competitiveness; ○ all regions of Scotland contribute and benefit; ○ all in society contribute and benefit; ○ development is sustainable so that future generations are considered. <p><i>In Scotland, Civic Agreements could potentially provide concrete ways for universities to demonstrate their contribution to the key govt priority of Inclusive Growth. It also provides opportunities to respond to the Scottish Govt's Place Principle in partnership with other bodies, such as through Community Planning Partnerships. (From PM) However there have been criticisms of the elasticity of the concept of inclusive growth as deployed by the Scottish Govt https://policyscotland.gla.ac.uk/inclusive-growth-under-a-covid-19-recovery/. Civil servants produced a diagnostic against which local areas were meant to identify their own priorities, but this has not been universally seen as being effective in helping to prioritise interventions. There are two other policy priorities that have been advanced more recently, alongside inclusive growth, that could potentially overlap with inclusive growth.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In a speech in January 2020, the First Minister said “Scotland is redefining what it means to be a successful nation by focusing on the broader wellbeing of the population as well as the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) of the country. The goal and objective of all economic policy should be collective wellbeing. This broader approach is at the very heart of our economic strategy which gives equal importance to tackling inequality as economic competitiveness....Putting wellbeing at the heart of our approach means we can focus on a wider set of measures which reflect on things like the health and happiness of citizens as well as economic wealth to create a world that considers the quality of a person's life to be as precious an asset as financial success”.</i> • <i>In response to the report produced by the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery, Scottish Govt has committed to accelerating its “plans for community wealth building to retain spend within local economies to aid local job creation and drive inclusive growth, working with local partners to leverage the purchasing power, assets and recruitment practices of our ‘anchor institutions’ such as colleges, universities and healthcare facilities, for the benefit of local people and businesses. ...community wealth building is a key means to deliver many of our ambitions in Scotland in terms of strong local economies and vibrant communities.” (Scottish Govt, August 2020)</i>
Research Wales Innovation Fund, Wales	<p><i>The Research Wales Innovation Fund (RWIF) will start in 2020/21 with an agreed in principle budget of £15 million and first payments expected in October 2020. Future Research Wales Innovation Fund strategies will need to align with HEFCW's 'Vision for Research and Innovation' with a requirement to include specific reference to Civic Engagement activities. (From PM)</i></p>

Working with local policy makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are excellent examples of HEIs working closely with local policy makers to align activity with local plans and priorities across a range of domains, including health and social care, green space, children and young people, digital, culture and sports and tourism. Mapping these local priorities is vital.
Skills	
Further education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relationship between FE and HE has been a prominent theme of the Johnson Govt, and there is likely to be further reform of the system, particularly in support of FE. As part of their civic commitments, many universities are reflecting on their relationship with FE colleges in their region. The govt pledged to introduce a new National Skills Fund worth £3 billion over 5 years from 2021/22, as a first step towards a “Right to Retrain”. The full details were due to be set out in the Spending Review. One of the key recommendations of the (“Augar”) Independent Panel Report to the Review of Post-18 Education and Funding was to create an all-age entitlement to a first full Level 2 and a first full Level 3. Estimated to cost £500m, the entitlement would represent an up-lift to the grant-based Adult Education Budget. Another important recommendation was the removal of the ELQ rule for Level 4, 5 and 6 regulated degrees. Another Institute of Technology prospectus was expected during the first half of 2020. A FE White Paper was due to be released ahead of the spending review in Autumn 2020.
Adult skills and lifelong learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The govt pledged to require significant numbers of new UK apprentices for all big new infrastructure projects. Given the economic consequences of Covid-19, and the high likelihood of large numbers of people requiring reskilling in order to re-enter a challenging economic environment, there is likely to be renewed focus on adult skills and the importance of lifelong learning. This is likely to be part of the govt’s response to the Augar review, which also highlighted the need for reform in their area. Proactive policy thinking by universities on these agendas would be very timely and welcome.
Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board, Scotland	<p>The Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board was created in November 2017 in response to the Enterprise and Skills Review. Its objective is to align and co-ordinate the activities of Scotland's enterprise and skills agencies: Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council. The Strategic Board seeks to maximise the impact of the collective investment that Scotland makes in enterprise and skills development, and to create the conditions that are conducive to delivering inclusive and sustainable growth. The aims of the Strategic Board are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> improve the overall performance of the economy by ensuring that the whole Enterprise and Skills System delivers Scotland's Economic Strategy and supporting strategies, in all parts of Scotland through collective responsibility ensure hard alignment between agencies to drive improvement in Scottish productivity and better support business and users of the skills system hold agencies to account for performance against agreed measures to actively engage with other agencies and bodies who support the economy with a view to increasing alignment and challenging others where collaboration is not happening to deliver wider collective leadership, based on common culture and values, and which inspires and empowers delivery

	<p>Recently, the Strategic Board has pivoted its focus to help support the more immediate challenges the Scottish economy faces post C-19 and how the enterprise and skills agencies can support the recovery. In May 2020, the Deputy First Minister asked the Board to form a short-life working group to focus on the practical actions which can be taken forward immediately to mitigate the labour market impacts of the crisis. A sub-group was formed and, working closely with the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery has put forward a range of ideas for how best to accelerate the recovery. At the end of June 2020, the sub-group submitted a report to ministers that sets out a series of recommendations for action by gov't and its agencies and delivery partners. A key part will be to ensure the enterprise and skills system works together with business in delivering a truly integrated package of support considering the challenges the Scottish economy faces.</p>
Tertiary Education and Research Bill, Wales	<p>The Welsh Gov't launched a consultation on the draft Tertiary Education and Research Bill in July 2020 which runs until Dec 2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bill will establish a new regulatory body to oversee all tertiary education in Wales. • The intention is to develop “a more effective, more efficient, and more coherent post-compulsory education and training system”. • The Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (CTER) will have responsibility for planning, funding, and regulating universities, sixth forms, colleges, apprenticeships, adult community learning and research and innovation. • The Commission is intended to be established in 2023. • Like the Office for Students, CTER will maintain a register of providers, with conditions of registration; require the production of access and opportunity plans, as a condition of a higher fee limit; make arrangements for quality assurance provided by a designated body; and enjoy a power of entry and inspection. • There’s a definition of “civic mission” on the face of the Bill, defined as generalised “action for the purpose of promoting or improving the economic, social, environmental or cultural well-being of Wales” but it’s expected that this mission will be discharged through the normal activities of the commission, rather than coming with levers attached in its own right. • The Commission will have a duty to encourage the provision of and participation in tertiary education and training through the medium of Welsh. It will also have a duty to promote the civic mission of tertiary education institutions, defined in the Draft Bill as improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales.
Graduate retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The OfS have identified that “Nearly half of graduates choose or need to study and work in the area where they grew up, and over two-thirds take jobs in their home regions. However, opportunities in some regions are limited due to uneven regional productivity and variable local labour markets. At the same time, areas with the lowest productivity and growth are the places that most need to capitalise on graduate talent to succeed.” • Through its Challenge Competition, the OfS is funding universities and colleges across the country to find ways to remove barriers to local graduate employment, broaden choice for local graduates, and help ensure that students are getting the right skills to enter rewarding work.
Regional Skills collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The West Midlands Combined Authority published their Regional Skills Plan in June 2018, bringing together universities, colleges and other training providers with business and local gov't. The initial focus has been on four key sectors: construction, automotive, digital and business and professional services. The Plan built on the West Midlands Productivity and Skills Commission. • The Greater Manchester Combined Authority published a Work and Skills Strategy and Priorities 2016-2019. The Strategy is undergoing a refresh; a call for evidence ran until the end of January 2020.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sheffield Hallam University has initiated a regional skills council which aims to drive collaboration and connectivity across the region with key players working together to confront the significant skills challenges with ingenuity and innovation; and would promote more locally focused partnerships to navigate and address skills shortages and educational disadvantage. The Regional Post-18 Education Partnership met for the first time in July 2020 and includes representation from the two Sheffield universities, local FE colleges, the CBI and local govt. The key themes of workstreams will be: Digital Connectivity, Digital Poverty, Health and Wellbeing, and Mental Health.• Skills Development Scotland’s work on Industry and Regional Skills Assessments may provide a starting point for Scottish HEIs. |
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