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Suggestions for Opposition Day debate on the future of higher education 1 December 2009

1/ What Alliance universities are doing to help graduates to find employment in a recession

A/ Developing graduate skills and entrepreneurialism

- Graduates enter the job market with world-class employability skills.
- Example: WOW (World of Work) at Liverpool John Moores University
<http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/wow/>
- Example: The University of Huddersfield's Business Mine is an on-campus facility that provides a professional environment for students and alumni to try out their business ideas with the support of a business mentor <http://www2.hud.ac.uk/about/index.php>

B/ Matching graduates to employers

- Working closely with employers, graduates and alumni to make graduate recruitment easy for employers.
- Example: Graduate Futures at the University of Hertfordshire
<http://www.herts.ac.uk/more/graduate-futures/our-services-to-you/>

C/ Internship programmes

- Graduates are offered 9 month internships, funded by the University.
- Example: Oxford Brookes University
<http://www.brookes.ac.uk/about/news/apprentices>
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/money/2009/jul/25/paid-internship-universities>

2/ What Alliance universities are doing to help businesses during a recession

A/ Helping businesses to improve performance and efficiency

- Working with businesses to find real ways in which universities can help to improve performance and efficiency during a recession.
- Example: Business Services at the University of Hertfordshire
<http://www.herts.ac.uk/business-services/>
 - Over 200 businesses and individuals were registered to attend the Positive Action event at the University of Hertfordshire on Thursday 2nd April <http://www.herts.ac.uk/business-services/recession-event.cfm>

- Example: Nottingham Trent University has developed commercial partnerships with over 6,000 companies globally and operates a unique commercial structure to look after needs of business, including contract managers
<http://www.ntu.ac.uk/international/courses/employability/placements/index.html>

B/ Developing the skills of those in employment

- Alliance universities also work with people in employment to further develop their high-level skills.
- Example: University of Bradford's Escalate programme works with business on the continuing professional development needs of those already in the workforce <http://www.brad.ac.uk/escalate/>

C/ Providing information, advice and guidance for businesses and individuals during a recession

- Example: Recession portal on the OU website which shows you how to 'outsmart' the recession and gives a wide range of advice and information <http://www.open.ac.uk/recession/>
- Example: The University of Plymouth is actively engaged within the region to help drive economic recovery. By collaboration with JobCentre Plus and pro-active professional advice and support via the bespoke 'Executive Futures' programme.
<http://www.plymouth.ac.uk/pages/dynamic.asp?page=events&eventID=4823&showEvent=1>

3/ What Alliance universities are doing to drive economic recovery

A/ Working closely with businesses to deliver the high-level skills that are needed by new industries

- Through working closely with new industries and rapid growth areas in the economy, Alliance universities are helping to deliver the high-level skills needed to drive the UK economy.
- Example: University of the West of England (UWE):
- The South West has the highest density of nanotechnology outside Silicon Valley. The Bristol Institute of Technology at UWE is continuously developing programmes in partnership with employers as well as undertaking leading research in the area. <http://www.uwe.ac.uk/cems/>
- Working in partnership with, amongst others, Airbus UK, BAE Systems, Rolls-Royce plc, Westland Helicopters, DERA, the DPA, and the MOD (including Qinetiq), UWE has developed an MSc in Aerospace Technology <http://courses.uwe.ac.uk/h40042/2010>

B/ Economic impact from research, innovation and discovery

- Because Alliance universities work closely with industry, much of the research and discovery has a direct impact on driving innovation in the UK economy.
- Example: The University of Bradford's Institute of Pharmaceutical Innovation (IPI) is a flagship research facility dedicated to supporting innovation in drug development and drug delivery. This research impacts positively on industry including large multinationals like GlaxoSmithKline, Smith & Nephew, Ford, and PZ Cussons (UK) Ltd
<http://www.brad.ac.uk/gateway/research/>
- Example: Bournemouth University's National Centre for Computer Animation (NCCA) is working with the University of Bath to create the first Industrial Doctoral Centre for the Computer Animation industry. With an annual turnover of approx £7 billion the computer animation industry is of increasing importance to the UK economy. The Centre aims to improve knowledge transfer between academia and industry and provide training in the technical, artistic, research and management skills needed by the next generation of industry leaders. <http://ncca.bournemouth.ac.uk/>

4/ What Alliance universities are doing to increase social mobility

Alliance universities are key deliverers of social mobility in the higher education sector. These universities take a diverse range of students, offer them a research-informed and highly focussed learning experience, enhance their employability skills and, as a result, Alliance graduates have some of the highest rates of graduate-level employment. Through taking a diverse range of students and delivering high rates of graduate employment, it is these universities that are really adding value and delivering social mobility.

- We know the UK has the lowest rate of social mobility across the major OECD countries, except for the US.
- We know that there continues to be a stubborn correlation between social class and attainment at 16 and 18.

A/ Taking a diverse range of students

- Alliance universities take a diverse range of students. For example, at the University of Bradford (sector average in brackets):
 - 50% of students from minority ethnic groups (10%)
 - 52% from low socio economic groups (29.5%)
 - 76% on low income with bursaries (42%)
 - 47% of first years living at home with their parents

Whilst delivering qualifications that will enhance employment prospects:

- 70% of undergraduate provision is professionally accredited
- Over 50% of the University curriculum is STEM focused

B/ Delivering access to graduate-level employment

- Going to university is not an end in itself and it is essential that graduates have access to graduate-level employment. Alliance universities have some of the highest rates of graduate level employment:
 - 91% of graduates from the University of Northumbria are in graduate-level employment after 3 years with less than 1% unemployed.
 - In 2005 The University of Bradford was ranked 7th, for graduate placement, by The Times Good University Guide; with a number of ancillary medical courses placing 100% of their students, within 6 months of graduation.

C / Delivering access to the professions

- Alliance universities are also major deliverers of postgraduate and professional education delivering much broader access to the professions.
 - Northumbria is the largest PG provider in the North East
 - UWE is the largest PG provider in the South West
 - Alliance universities have close links to the professions and are major providers of graduates and post-graduates into law, engineering, teaching and health professions.
 - For example, 70% of undergraduate provision at the University of Bradford is professionally accredited.