

Response ID ANON-C5SE-6PVE-H

Submitted to **Accelerated Degrees: widening student choice in Higher Education**

Submitted on **2018-02-11 18:59:30**

Introduction by Jo Johnson

Introduction

1 What is your name?

Name:

London Mathematical Society

2 What is your email address?

Email:

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3 Would you like us to keep your responses confidential?

No

Reason for confidentiality:

Overview

4 Are you responding as an individual, or on behalf of an organisation? Please tick one of the following

Other (please state)

Other, please state:

Learned Society

5 Location (if not England), please state:

Note: If you are a current Higher Education student, please provide the location where you are studying.:

Background

New powers, new opportunities

New fees for accelerated degree courses

10 Are there any other technical features of accelerated degree courses that we should take into account for the purpose of new fee arrangements?

Yes

Please provide evidence where possible to support your answer:

For many universities the provision of accelerated degrees would require a much greater restructuring of teaching than is envisaged in the proposals. A large number of modules would have to be given twice in a year and, particularly for some smaller providers, time could be taken from research thus damaging the UK's mathematical research base. More than this, it is not merely having to give modules twice in a year. It would require a restructuring on the scale of an entire parallel teaching structure with, in effect, a parallel campus on which to deliver this structure. Many providers are short of teaching space as it is and the argument that campuses are under utilised in summer is somewhat negated by the fact that teaching space use will have to increase in the standard teaching terms as well. If providers do not use summer semesters, then 2-year degree students will be doing 150% of the work of standard students. We then have many issues: stress from overwork, inability of students to take on part-time work.

In either situation, summer or no summer semesters, there will be a significant increase in workload for lecturers.

This major restructuring would give an advantage to new providers who could offer only accelerated degrees. This could easily lead to two separate systems, one in which the inexperienced new providers supply sub-standard degrees.

Mathematics is a subject where new material is carefully built upon earlier material that has to be mastered for the learner to gain most benefit. An accelerated degree does not give enough time for the digestion of new material. This will be particularly acute for mathematics. Couple this with poor provision and the outcome is that the standard of the average mathematics graduate is lowered with serious repercussions for the UK's competitiveness in this area.

Our design principles

Working with the Office for Students

Living cost and payment arrangements for students

New fee and loan arrangements for Approved (fee cap) providers

11 Do you agree that an annual fee cap set initially at the standard rate plus a 20% uplift is the right amount to incentivise wider provision of accelerated degrees?

No

Please provide evidence :

As in the response to the previous question the restructuring required to teaching provision is massive. The economics are that the providers will, overall, get less money for teaching the same number of students and yet have significantly increased costs due to running two entirely separate systems.

12 Do you agree that a 20% reduction overall for students, in tuition fee and maintenance loans, would incentivise wider take-up of accelerated degrees by students?

Yes

will 20% reduction incentivise wider take-up of accelerated degrees by students?:

Any reduction in fees will incentivise wider take-up. Whether this is a good thing is a separate matter.

New tuition fee loan arrangements for Approved providers

13 Do you agree that a 20% increase in loan cap rates per annum is the right value to incentivise wider uptake of accelerated degrees at Approved providers?

Yes

Please provide evidence where possible to support your answer:

See previous answer.

Quality assurance and access arrangements

14 Do you agree that accelerated degree fees should be treated in the same way as other higher course fees for the purpose of access funding?

Yes

Please provide evidence to support of your answer, where possible:

There appears to be no argument that it should be excluded.

Payment and repayment mechanisms and safeguards

15 Should any additional safeguards and controls be in place as a proportionate and effective measure to ensure expanded provision of loans for accelerated degrees provide value for money to the taxpayer?

No

Please provide evidence where possible to support your answer :

None with respect to mathematical science degrees are needed.

16 Are there any additional practical considerations we should take into account as we develop our final regulations to support accelerated degree course provision?

Yes

Please provide evidence where possible to support your answer :

See earlier answer concerning the difficulty of running two separate degree programmes.

17 Should the Government be aware of any other issues relating to the way in which the proposed tuition fee policy for accelerated degree courses will affect any of the protected characteristics? If your answer is 'yes', please set out what steps in your view the Government might take to mitigate any negative impact.

Yes

Please provide evidence where possible to support your answer :

Rushing through three years of material in two years is likely to be more stressful than a standard degree if only because there is less time to stop, reflect and

rest. Some of the protected characteristic students may already be in stressful situations and the lower fees may incentivise them to take a route which is not suitable for them.

Supply, demand and awareness

18 (For Providers): Do you currently provide any form of accelerated degree course?

No

If 'yes', please provide details of type of course, study pattern, current enrolment cadre:

The London Mathematical Society is not a course provider.

19 (For Providers): Based on the policies set out in this consultation, are you considering offering new or additional accelerated degrees when tuition cap uplifts are enacted?

No

If your answer is 'yes', please set out what types of course and volume of provision you are considering:

The London Mathematical Society is not a course provider.

20 (For individuals and students): Based on the policies set out in this document, are you considering applying for an accelerated degree when tuition cap uplifts are enacted?

No

If your answer is 'yes', please set out what type of course and provider you are considering.:

The London Mathematical Society is a learned society.

21 (For Employers): Have you been, or are you currently an employer of any graduates of accelerated degrees?

No

If your answer is 'yes', please tell us about your employee – subject of degree, job role.:

22 (For Employers): Based on the policies set out in this consultation document, do you agree that an accelerated degree has any specific merit in current or future potential employees?

Not Answered

If your answer is 'agree', please set out any advantages you consider an accelerated degree-qualified graduate might have as an employee over their standard three-year degree equivalent.:

N/A. The London Mathematical Society is a learned society.