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The Sunday Times University of the Year 2008-2009

Professor Shirley Pearce

Vice-Chancellor, Loughborough University

Loughborough University

Also representing the:

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Established to promote excellence in university research and teaching

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1994 Group Members

- University of Bath
- Birkbeck, University of London
- Durham University
- University of East Anglia
- University of Essex
- University of Exeter
- Goldsmiths, University of London
- Institute of Education, University of London
- Royal Holloway, University of London
- Lancaster University
- University of Leicester
- Loughborough University
- Queen Mary, University of London
- University of Reading
- University of St Andrews
- School of Oriental and African Studies
- University of Surrey
- University of Sussex
- University of York

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A view from Loughborough and the 1994 Group about:

- Student Experience
- Quality
- Funding

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Student Experience:

- Great teaching and learning in a stimulating environment
- Co-curricular opportunities
- Social life and network of friends
- Arts, sports and other opportunities
- Residential experience – on or off campus
- Appropriate financial arrangements during studies

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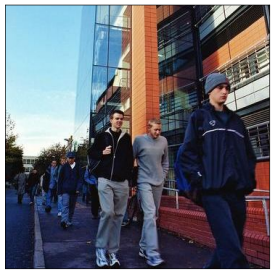
What makes a great learning environment?

- People
  - Staff
  - Students
- Places
  - Physical environment
  - Facilities
- Culture
  - Ethos
  - Expectations



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People:

- Inspiring academics conducting research at the forefront of their field
- Staff who CARE about students and facilitating learning
- Culture which LISTENS and RESPONDS to students
- Staff and students from different cultures and different countries
- Effective Students Union that works with the university management
- Preparation for the global ‘world of work’

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Places and physical infrastructure:

- Learning in a research environment
- State of the art laboratories, theatres, music facilities…..
- Library and learning resources
- Sport and recreational opportunities
- Well equipped students union
- Healthy campus, high quality nutrition….

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Culture and Ethos:

- Care and Respect for students (from ALL staff)
- Engagement of students in decision making
- Listen and respond to student feedback
- Recognition of extra and co curricular learning
- Valuing and encouraging work placements
- Listen to employers: improves courses and employability

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Distinctiveness and differentiation:

Across the Sector:

- Universities must be clear about their own kind of Teaching & Learning excellence
- Global competitiveness

Loughborough key features?

- International experience for all
- Student union: sustainability, volunteering, RAG
- Work experience: Industrial placements
  - Employability award
  - Co curricular activities

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The 1994 Group is distinctive:

- Small to medium sized
- Human and personal scale
- Research intensive ***and*** committed to research-led teaching
- Delivering excellence in academic and wider student experience

- The 1994 Group is committed to continuing to be leaders in offering a high quality Student Experience

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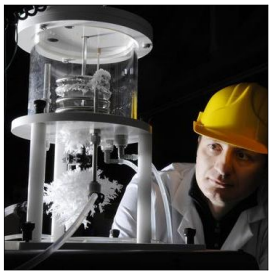

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Leading on the Student Experience – 1994 Group

Latest NSS results revealed 1994 Group as leaders on Student Experience:

- 7 of the top 10 Universities were 1994 group members
- 88% of 1994 Group students were satisfied with their experience
- Significantly higher than national average of 81%
- 1994 Group above national average in all six categories

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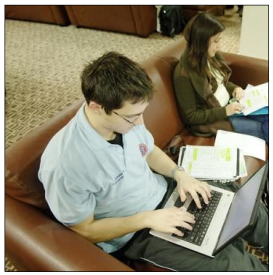

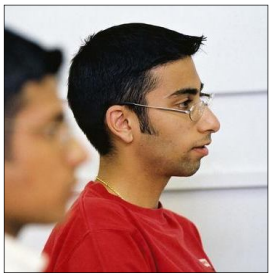

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Confident but not complacent - 1994 Group:

- Policy statement '*Enhancing the Student Experience*' November 2007
- Statement set out 7 major challenges for the sector:
  - A requirement to provide transparent and accurate information around the student experience
  - Towards the 2020 Workforce: Promoting the well-rounded graduate
  - Promoting the student voice
  - Engagement with schools and colleges
  - Student-focused resources
  - International strategy and internationalisation
  - Excellence and enhancement in teaching and learning

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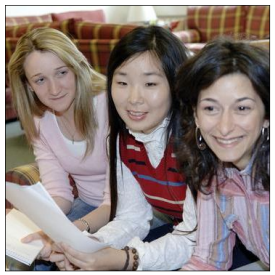

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Confident but not complacent – Loughborough:

Confident:

- NSS results
- THE “Best Student Experience” Award in 2006, 2007 and 2008
  - Award not available in 2009!
- “Outstanding Support for International Students” Award
- LSU going global (Christina now on the NUS exec and speaking later)

Not complacent:

- Driving continuous improvement across the Institution
- University, Academic Departments, Support Services, Students’ Union working together

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Quality costs money:

- Salaries and Pensions
- Buildings need maintenance and replacing
- Sustainable campus expensive
- Laboratories and equipment need constant updating
- Residential provision: Student expectations high
- Facilities need renewal and enhancement
- International competition

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UK needs strong HE sector:

- HE is a major driver in the UK economy
  - Sector generates £58 Billion for the UK economy
  - Bigger sector than agriculture, advertising or pharmaceuticals
  - 668,500 full time equivalent jobs across the economy
  - 25% growth over 4 years
- HE vital in positioning the UK in the Global Economy
  - Research-intensive UK Universities are world leaders
  - UK has 29 of the top 200 Universities in the world
  - Providing competitive edge for the UK
  - Skills needed for knowledge based economies and growth industries
  - Essential part of low carbon community

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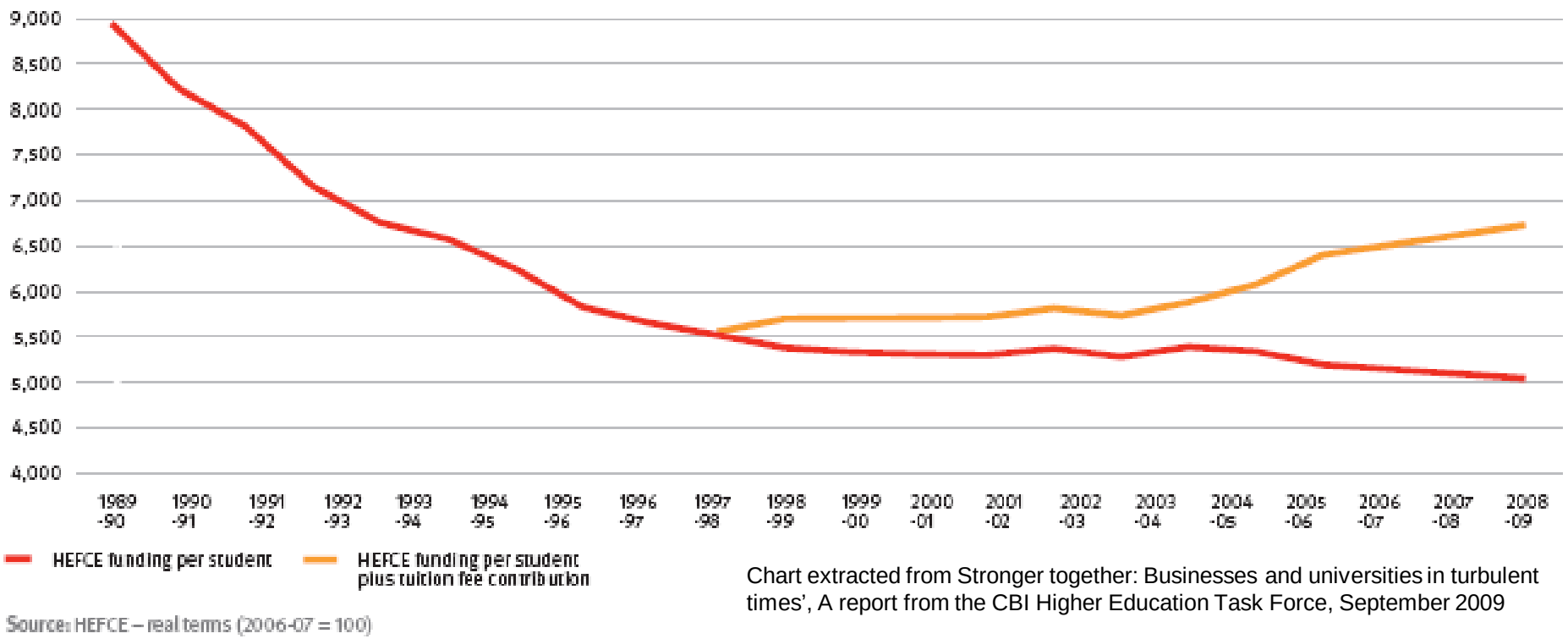
Funding per student in England:



Source: HEFCE – real terms (2006-07 = 100)

Chart extracted from Stronger together: Businesses and universities in turbulent times', A report from the CBI Higher Education Task Force, September 2009

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Quality under threat:

- Fees have been used to ‘shore up’ facilities and staffing
- Costs have increased faster than income
- Not enough to ensure sustainable quality
- Estimates are that an additional 15-20% needed to sustain current teaching levels

- This in a context of INCREASING investment in other parts of the world

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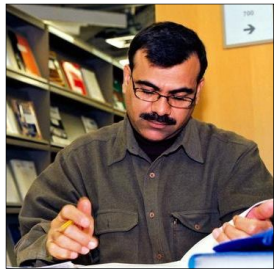

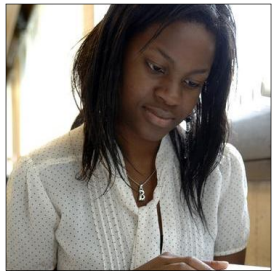

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Principles of further funding:

- Government must:
  - Recognise the value of HE and invest in it
  - Retain University autonomy
  - Provide Incentives for diversification of income streams
    - including philanthropic support of HE
  - Provide incentives for cost saving and sharing services (VAT issue)

- Students should experience:
  - HE that is 'Free at point of access' for students
  - Robust support system
  - Real value for their increased financial contribution
  - Broad base of skills for employment etc

- Universities must:
  - Provide enhanced student experience, delivering skills that improve UK economy
  - Increase and diversify income streams
    Increase commercial activities
  - Operate with maximum efficiency

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Don’t forget the students:

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Universities have more than repaid the investment in them:

- Making a bigger direct impact on the economy (25% growth over 4 years)
- Enhanced foreign earnings (could triple to £12 Billion by 2020 – UKTI)
- High performing globally
  - UK Universities are the most productive in the G8
  - Ranked second only to US, with investment at half US levels
- Delivering more high quality education
  - More students than ever before
  - Greater engagement with business and employers
  - More responsive to students
- Progress requires sufficient funding

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Options - three scenarios that the fees review will be looking at:

- No extra resource – quality decays
- Moderate extra resource – quality is maintained
- Significant increase in resource – quality is enhanced

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