



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

23rd June 2020

Dear Constance,

RE: CORONAVIRUS - SUPPORT FOR UNIVERSITIES.

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of support for universities during the Coronavirus outbreak; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

Our universities contribute hugely to the economy and more widely to society and I understand the concerns about their finances. Universities are at the core of our response to this virus, not only leading on research into potential cures and vaccines, but also being fundamental to the knowledge economy which will be so key to the national recovery. I am pleased that Ministers have announced measures to support students and universities through these difficult times.

To stabilise admissions, temporary student number controls have been put in place. Providers will be able to recruit students up to a temporary set level, based on provider forecasts, which allow additional growth of up to 5 percent in the next academic year. The Education Secretary will also have the discretion to allocate an additional 10,000 places on top of the controls, of which 5,000 will be allocated to students studying nursing or allied health courses, to ensure growing numbers that will support our vital public services. A ban on unscrupulous recruitment practices, such as the large-scale use of unconditional offers, and a more structured approach to clearing, will also ensure the admissions process this year is fair and orderly.

An estimated £2.6bn of tuition fee payments will be brought forward to help universities better manage financial risks over the autumn. This will have no impact on students. A further £100 million of public funding will be brought forward to this academic year to help protect vital university research activities.

Ministers have confirmed that education providers are eligible to apply for the broader COVID-19 support packages, including business loan support schemes, which the Office for Students estimates could be worth at least £700 million to the sector. Further guidance has been published about how providers should access the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme to safeguard staff jobs, in particular stating that any grant from the scheme should not duplicate other sources of public funding where these are being maintained, such as UK home student tuition fees.



Further details about the support for universities can be accessed here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-support-package-for-universities-and-students>.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me, and I hope that the above has offered some reassurance. If I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With best wishes,
Tom

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**