



2018-000POSoS

**Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP**  
Secretary of State

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Nicola Dandridge, Chief Executive for the Office for Students

*Dear Ms Dandridge,*

## **Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015**

### **Delegation of monitoring authority function to the Office for Students**

I write formally to give notice under section 32(4)(b) and (5) of the above Act to delegate to the Office for Students (OfS) the function of 'monitoring authority' for 'relevant higher education bodies'<sup>1</sup> (RHEBs) in England with effect from 1 April 2018.

As monitoring authority, the OfS's function will be to collect information from RHEBs to enable it to monitor those bodies' performance in discharging the 'Prevent duty' imposed on them by section 26(1) of the Act.

Since the introduction of the Prevent duty for higher education bodies in September 2015 this function has been carried out by HEFCE. This letter replaces the notice previously given to HEFCE by letter dated 21 August 2015. HEFCE has built a strong co-regulatory approach, providing high-quality support to Relevant Higher Education Bodies. They have worked closely and constructively with my officials and the sector in the discharge of their duties, evidenced through their annual reporting. I am now looking to the OfS to build on this experience when undertaking their function as the new monitoring authority; and in particular I would like them to build on the valuable work HEFCE has undertaken in sharing good practice and driving continuous improvement, which I know the HE sector values. Their work should include ensuring RHEB's continue to effectively balance their Prevent and free speech

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'relevant higher education body' has the full meaning set out in section 32(1) of the Act (as amended by the Higher Education and Research Act 2017).

responsibilities.

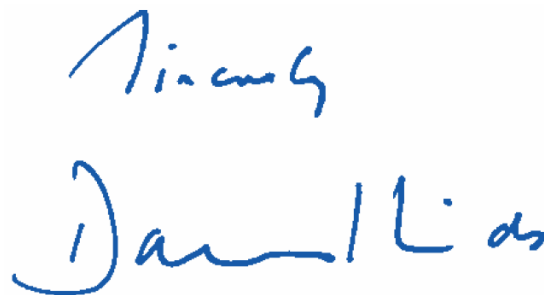
I would also like the OfS to take the opportunity to review the existing monitoring framework and consider how it might evolve to align with the values and approach of the Office for Students. In particular, I would like the Office for Students to consider how it might take a more **risk-based approach**.

I will expect the OfS to report to the Department by June 2018 on progress in establishing its monitoring role. I also expect reporting at appropriate intervals on the levels of compliance by RHEBs with the Prevent duty. This should follow the reporting schedule previously agreed between HEFCE and the Department for Education, and should be reviewed and agreed between the Office for Students and the Department on an annual basis.

I would also like the OfS to work with my officials to ensure appropriate levels of information-sharing take place with regard to specific risks and Prevent-related incidents.

HEFCW will continue to function as monitoring authority for Welsh higher education providers, as delegated by the Home Office. I would like the OfS to work closely with them.

The monitoring authority is an important function for the OfS to help the Government deliver its counter-terrorism strategy. As was the case with HEFCE as the former monitoring authority, the Department for Education will continue to make resources available to cover the costs of monitoring activity.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Damian Hinds', is positioned above the printed name and title.

**Damian Hinds**  
**Secretary of State for Education**