

# The Rt Hon John Denham MP

Secretary of State for Innovation,  
Universities and Skills

Department for  
**Innovation,  
Universities &  
Skills**

Sir John Chisholm  
85 Buckingham Gate  
London  
SW1E 6PD

17 September 2008

Dear Sir

## CONTRIBUTING TO THE GOVERNMENT'S HE DEBATE

As you know, in February this year, I began the process of producing a 10-15 year framework for the expansion and development of HE. I commissioned a series of contributions from experts within the university sector which will provide recommendations on how Government, the Funding Council and Higher Education Institutions should respond to these challenges. These will be published on our website ([www.dius.gov.uk](http://www.dius.gov.uk)) at the start of October.

The debate that has been started by these strands of work underlines the ability of the higher education sector itself to think radically and creatively about the future. But many other people too have a huge interest in the success of our universities and colleges. So I thought we should complement the work being done within the sector with what I hope will be equally challenging and provocative work from outside the sector.

I am very grateful to you for agreeing to take part in this stage of the process. Your experience and perspectives will be most useful, and I hope you will be able to examine in particular:

- drawing on your commercial experience, what those in businesses at the leading edge of science and technology, such as Qinetiq, need from Higher Education over the next 10-15 years to remain internationally competitive and world-leading
- drawing on your Research Council experience, what will our universities need to do to maintain world leadership in pure and applied science over the period

- how business can work with the Research Councils, Government and universities to make this happen
- your reactions to the recommendations of the contributors, setting out what implications there are for the Research Councils and business

I would be grateful if you could let me have your thoughts by the end of November. I am not setting out a template for you and others taking part in this exercise, but you may wish to consult the guiding principles we issued on our website (<http://www.dius.gov.uk/policy/he-debate.html>).

I am very much looking forward to receiving your views.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Denham', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**JOHN DENHAM**