

# The Rt Hon John Denham MP

Secretary of State for Innovation,  
Universities and Skills

Department for  
**Innovation,  
Universities &  
Skills**

Nick Hytner  
National Theatre  
South Bank  
London  
SE1 9PX

17 September 2008

Dear Nick

## 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:

- what the Arts and cultural activity in this country need from Higher Education over the next 10-15 years in order to play in full their role of nourishing a good society
- how the Arts and cultural worlds can work with government and universities to make this happen

- your reactions to the recommendations of the contributors, setting out what implications there are for the Arts and culture

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**