

University of Birmingham Vice-Chancellor comments on Government's Spending Review

Posted on Wednesday 20th October 2010

Speaking following today's spending review announcement, Professor David Eastwood, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Birmingham said:

"The combination of 40% cuts to higher education funding and the likely changes brought by the recommendations of Lord Browne's Independent Review of Higher Education herald a period of unprecedented financial turbulence for the sector. The Browne recommendations do however open the way to substitute the cuts in Government funding via affordable graduate contributions.

"Our universities are a huge success story, second only to those of the United States in terms of reputation, quality, and impact. However, despite this success, universities now face deep cuts as the Government attempts to reduce public spending and develop a more affordable higher education system.

"In the face of these cuts our challenge is to maintain the high quality of our research and teaching, offer a world class student experience, promote business growth and innovation, and sustain opportunities for all who can benefit to study in higher education.

"There is some positive news for world-class research-intensive universities such as Birmingham. Following the strong case the sector has made research funding has escaped the deep cuts that some had feared.

"Overall, these are challenging times for all universities, but at the University of Birmingham these are also times of opportunity. At Birmingham we have anticipated these changes, prepared, and made financial provision. Lord Browne's proposals allow us to maintain the high quality education we offer, improve the experience for our students and remain financially sustainable in the long term. Our new strategic framework sets out an ambition vision that will guide us through these challenging times as we continue to invest to achieve our mission to become a leading global university.

"There is now an opportunity for the best-run universities to reposition, increase the impact of their research and teaching and compete on quality with the world's leading universities."

Notes to Editors

Professor David Eastwood is Vice-Chancellor of the University of Birmingham and a panel member of Independent Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Support chaired by Lord Browne of Madingley. Professor Eastwood's full biographical details are available at <http://www.council.bham.ac.uk/membership/profiles/eastwood.shtml> (<http://www.council.bham.ac.uk/membership/profiles/eastwood.shtml>).

The University of Birmingham:

The University of Birmingham is a truly vibrant, global community and an internationally-renowned institution. Its work brings people from across the world to Birmingham, including researchers and teachers and more than four thousand international students from nearly 150 different countries.

The University is home to more than 28,000 students. With more than 7,500 postgraduate students from across the world, Birmingham is one of the most popular universities for postgraduate study in the UK.

The University is the eighth largest employer in the Birmingham/Solihull sub-region and plays an integral role in the economic, social and cultural growth of local and regional communities; working closely with businesses and organisations, employing approximately 6,000 staff and providing 10,000 graduates annually.

The University contributes over £660 million to the City of Birmingham and over £780 million to the West Midlands region, with an annual income of more than £470 million.

For further information

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