

Dean of Business School Presents at British American Business Council's Annual Conference

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Birmingham Business School Dean, Professor Simon Collinson was invited to present at the British American Business Council's Annual Conference (BABC) in Birmingham, May 16. The conference was part of a three-day conference comprising the Transatlantic Business Conference and the British American Group of Lawyers (BAGOL).

Professor Collinson's (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/business/staff/profile.aspx?ReferenceId=45910&Name=professor-simon-collinson>) presentation and Q&A session - with representatives from Caterpillar and P&G - was about what Universities currently do to best prepare graduates to find careers in business; and what we should be doing more of. Also discussed was how Universities supported the improvement of corporate performance.

In terms of **employability** (</schools/business/corporate/index.aspx>), the group discussed whether course content was 'fit for purpose' in relation to teaching students what they need to know in the world of work and how well students were prepared for the world of work in terms of their experience. The introduction of the £9,000 per year fee for undergraduates has focused all University departments on these questions. Business Schools have been focused for some time on helping fee-paying students find great jobs, however, building on and improving corporate performance is crucial.

As an example, **Birmingham Business School** (</schools/business/index.aspx>) has developed a partnership with KPMG, the third-largest graduate employer in the UK. The **KPMG School Leavers' programme** (</undergraduate/courses/business/kpmg-school-leavers-programme-accounting-finance.aspx>) involves the joint-recruitment of students to a 4-year Accounting and Finance degree programme where KPMG pays all fees, accommodation costs and a salary for the students who they employ for a minimum of three years after they graduate. Through a series of placements and project work with the firm during their degree, students gain experience and course exemptions to achieve their Accountancy certification with KPMG soon after leaving University. Birmingham faculty tailor the curriculum to the needs of the firm and work with KPMG to enhance the experience of the students so they are better-prepared for the real-world challenges of the workplace.

What is BABC?

The BABC is the largest transatlantic business network, with 23 chapters - and 2,500 member companies, including many of the world's largest multinationals - based in major business centres throughout North America and the United Kingdom.

Companies can gain access to the benefits of membership in this network by joining one of the BABC's chapters - all of which are independent British-American business organizations that participate in the BABC to provide their member companies with a broader transatlantic business network and additional **Member Benefits** (<http://www.babc.org/about/benefits.htm>), including marketing, networking and business intelligence opportunities.

The conference was moderated by BBC journalist Justin Webb.

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