

# Standing together

Universities helping business through the downturn



Universities UK

Distinction and Diversity  
in Higher Education



HIGHER EDUCATION  
FUNDING COUNCIL

hefce

FOR ENGLAND

## Foreword



*Rick Trainor*  
*President,*  
*Universities UK*



*David Baker*  
*Chair,*  
*GuildHE*

We are pleased to provide this leaflet which gives information for businesses on the services universities have to offer. Universities and colleges currently do a great deal to make themselves accessible and useful to business, but we are keen to do more.

The leaflet, which was produced with the assistance of the Higher Education Funding Council for England, reflects the desire of the UK higher education sector jointly to reach out to business, something we believe is particularly vital in a time of economic downturn. It's never been more important, or more timely, for businesses to look at what's on offer on their doorstep, or for universities to show what they can do to help.

Universities can provide staff training at all levels, with bespoke courses designed for the specific needs of business; university business schools can improve leadership and management skills, and develop programmes to improve the customer experience; consultancy services can help improve company practices; and businesses can also engage through work placements and similar schemes. This leaflet details these and other ways in which business can engage with universities and includes case studies of schemes that are already helping companies retain staff and customers and boost productivity.

We are all affected by a slowdown in the economy and, equally, we all stand to benefit from the longer-term investment that knowledge transfer between business and higher education represents. Students are the graduates, entrepreneurs, innovators, managers, employers and leaders of the future, and the UK's prosperity in years to come lies in our contribution to the global knowledge economy. We have included a contact point for every UK university and higher education college as well as general enquiry points at Universities UK and GuildHE to make that first engagement as easy as possible.

We hope this leaflet encourages business to look to higher education institutions for help and support in a difficult period; inspires those facing redundancy or a change in circumstances to think of the benefits of further training; and equally drives universities to examine how they can better interact with their local business community.

“ The Government has made it clear that we will do whatever we can to respond to the current economic challenges. Higher education can play a central role in supporting businesses and individuals with skills, advice, knowledge and know-how.

I know that business leaders recognise that their enterprises are more likely to survive if they continue to invest for the long term but they need help. Higher education can support them through the difficult times to emerge in a stronger position.

I congratulate Universities UK, with support from the Higher Education Funding Council for England, on producing this brochure as a call to action. I look forward to institutions using this resource imaginatively and in partnership with the other agencies in their region who together can make a difference to people's lives. ”

*David Lammy*

*Minister of State for Higher Education and Intellectual Property*

Department for  
**Innovation,**  
**Universities &**  
**Skills**

## Introduction

Higher education can play a major role in helping British business to survive the economic downturn and to build for the future. Your universities and higher education colleges have a strong record in fostering innovation, enterprise and skills, and in helping to create wealth and job-generating opportunities. And they want to work with you to improve the support they give to business.

Higher education has never been more business-friendly. This pamphlet describes:

- the kinds of support universities and colleges can offer to employers in the present economic climate and how this support may make a difference (and how universities can improve this offer by talking to and understanding businesses, to make their support quick, flexible and responsive to your needs)
- how higher education will continue to support knowledge, business, its workforce and the economy in the long term.

For businesses, there are also contact details for people local to you who can help you find the right university partner – and people who may be able to help you find funding to support the partnership.

## Helping out in the short term

Many universities are already offering practical ways to support their local firms in these difficult economic times. They are also seeking new ways to work with business, presenting companies with the opportunity to talk to their local university about how that support might best work for them.

Much is being done by universities and stakeholders to illustrate and support how businesses and universities can benefit each other. For example, Business Link East includes staff development, something that universities can help with, as one of its ‘top 10’ steps to help businesses prepare to survive the economic slowdown: ‘Staff are one of your greatest assets and could be the key to retaining customers and keeping your business running. Training is important to their personal development and the productivity of your business.’<sup>1</sup> This follows its announcement of a free business ‘health check’ to help small and medium-sized enterprises identify problems early and survive the current financial climate, focusing on the things these firms have identified as top priorities: cash flow, access to finance and training for staff.

Higher education expects to work closely with existing business support and training partners in the present

difficult economic climate so they can pool their efforts. Partnerships through Regional Development Agencies, Sector Skills Councils, Train to Gain, science cities or – most importantly – Business Link are likely to be strengthened. Regional and local representatives of business – including chambers of commerce or local CBI offices – can also engage with their universities on how they might help local businesses during these times of economic difficulty. At the end of this leaflet we have included a list of contacts for businesses to find out more about how higher education and business support providers can help them.

## Innovation, knowledge transfer and supporting business

University-led and inspired innovation has helped our global economic competitiveness in major sectors such as pharmaceuticals and aerospace, and has helped to make our creative industries world leaders. But universities are also increasingly working with small and medium-sized firms in their own communities to help them become more productive and profitable. They also help large and small companies come together to innovate.

A good example is the ProfitNet programme at Brighton University, developed with support from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and the Regional Development Agency. It offers practical and hands-on advice for local firms through monthly sessions targeted at their sector. Bringing together 500 companies across Sussex, it has helped in the creation of supply chains, developing new processes and exploring joint venture opportunities<sup>2</sup>.

ProfitNet works by creating facilitated ‘learning networks’. Groups of 15 to 20 businesses meet monthly for knowledge exchange and sharing of best practice in business planning, strategy and innovation. Member companies include start-ups and established businesses. Demonstrated benefits (based on data from Sussex ProfitNet members) include:

- 91 per cent reported improved business planning and strategy skills
- 72 per cent implemented new innovation strategies
- 46 per cent made cost savings.

The UK’s strength in research is vital to our economy. The development of new science parks and incubator units has proved attractive to research-based businesses and given researchers the opportunity to turn their findings and innovations into new products and services.

<sup>1</sup> For further information see [www.businesslink.gov.uk/east/healthcheck](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/east/healthcheck)

<sup>2</sup> For more information see [www.brighton.ac.uk/profitnet](http://www.brighton.ac.uk/profitnet)

# A winning approach to medal design in Devon

For over 25 years, Bigbury Mint in Totnes, Devon, has been using traditional hand and machine equipment to design historical coinage and bespoke medals. This small family firm turned to Innovate, at the University of Plymouth's Faculty of Art, to update its ways of working. Innovate helped develop a patented process that uses digital technologies to capture, model and produce finely detailed reproductions of 3D portrait artwork. A team of consultants from the university is helping the Mint cut costs, increase market share and become more profitable using the new digital processes.

*For more information on the University of Plymouth see [www.plymouth.ac.uk/businessservices](http://www.plymouth.ac.uk/businessservices)*

University business schools have a particularly important role to play in improving management and leadership skills, and developing programmes to improve customer experience, all of which are vital in a period when businesses are finding it harder to attract customers.

Consultancy services, which help improve company practices, are a growing offer to business in universities, and are making a big difference to individual organisations and the wider economy.

Universities may also be a good place to go if you want to develop your new idea. Some host 'business angel' networks or provide space for incubator companies, particularly in science parks. An example is the University of Warwick Science Park Access to Finance programme. Access to Finance helps growth-orientated companies, particularly those in the technology and knowledge-based sectors, to raise start-up and development capital from 'business angels', venture capital funds, banks and corporate investors<sup>3</sup>. In addition the science park has the Minerva Business Angel Network, as well as business support services that include technology marketing, corporate venturing, market research, property services, student projects, new business creation, mentoring and business development.

## Skills, training and workforce development

A recent survey showed that 60 per cent of employers have developed links with local universities, and nearly half of these said they had used a university to help develop their workforce to some extent. For most of them, this meant improving leadership and management skills, but universities can also help improve business practices and efficiency<sup>4</sup>.

People concerned about job security or wanting to make a career change recognise the skills and benefits that the right course can give them in adapting to change. In 2006, two-thirds of employees said they wanted more training in the future. Over half wanted to acquire additional skills or qualifications over the next three years. Universities are responding flexibly to these demands, enabling people to match part-time study with their working lives.

Higher education is also helping employers and employees with continuing employee development, enabling the workforce to respond to change in firms. This can help businesses not only to thrive in difficult economic conditions, but also to restructure or adapt their products and services for longer-term competitiveness. And higher education is increasingly

<sup>3</sup> For more information see [www.warwicksciencepark.co.uk](http://www.warwicksciencepark.co.uk)

<sup>4</sup> Data taken from 'Stepping Higher: Workforce development through employer-higher education partnership', a joint report by Universities UK, the CBI and the Higher Education Funding Council for England. It is available at [www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/Bookshop/Pages/Stepping-higher.aspx](http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/Bookshop/Pages/Stepping-higher.aspx)

introducing new ways of working, such as expanding work-based programmes, so that training fits better with business needs and company practices. Tailored and flexible programmes save money and time for business, and ensure higher productivity returns. As part of all this, universities can talk to employers and give professional advice on what kinds of training support could help that particular business.

Universities can develop bespoke courses for business including foundation degrees, which combine academic study with workplace learning. They can also work with employers to accredit their in-house training. Foundation Degree Forward advises business on foundation degrees and works with employers and higher education institutions to improve the way higher education meets business needs.

Universities want to engage employers who are not already working with higher education and, with them, provide value to business and to individuals by developing their workforces. A recent report produced in partnership between Universities UK, HEFCE and the CBI, 'Stepping Higher: Workforce development through employer-higher education partnership'<sup>5</sup>, provides illustrations of how employers and universities work together for their mutual benefit.

Where people are facing redundancy, one way of helping them find new jobs could be to include a higher education training course or even an MBA programme as part of a redundancy package, giving them a greater chance of securing a new job quickly in the future.

Skills up to and including masters- and doctoral-level programmes are also a key driver of innovation, entrepreneurship and creativity within the economy. Professional masters and doctoral programmes in particular provide a mixed university-business environment for the acquisition of high-level, specialist skills that are vital for innovation and competitiveness.

Higher education has always been a source of specialist professional skills. Now universities increasingly recognise the importance of developing the sort of generic skills that business wants to see in graduate recruits. So there are more opportunities for useful work experience during undergraduate courses, with the student helping the business during the placement but also becoming a more productive employee for the future.

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<sup>5</sup> For information on 'Stepping higher' see footnote 4.

<sup>6</sup> For more information on the awards see [www.step.org.uk](http://www.step.org.uk)

# Just the job in Yorkshire

The University of Leeds is a big player in the regional economy. Through its leadership of six regional centres for industrial collaboration, the university has helped to create or safeguard an estimated 968 jobs in the region, as well as several hundred elsewhere in the country. Through the centres, the university has developed over 200 projects with small firms in the region, 150 with large firms in the region and 50 with international companies. Like many universities, Leeds is also directly creating 'spin-out' companies, which provide jobs and create wealth: 65 are already operating and a further 60 are planned.

*For more information see <http://enterprise.leeds.ac.uk>*

The recent 2008 Shell Step awards<sup>6</sup> illustrated the enormous value that business can get from placement students: Andrew McIntosh from Hertfordshire received an award after driving a PR campaign with a potential audience of 160 million during a summer work experience placement while working at CV-checking agency, Powerchex. A management student at York University, Andrew succeeded in co-ordinating a PR campaign most professionals in the field would be envious of, with free coverage worth £170,000 generating 160 million opportunities to see. Most importantly, this had a big effect on the business's bottom line: the company has two new customers worth £34,000 per annum, while there is an opportunity for a new £150,000 contract with the London Olympic Committee.

Many university students spend some of their time gaining hands-on experience through internships and short-term placements with companies. Such students – especially in business schools, including those on MBA courses – can prove invaluable in helping small firms to improve their competitiveness and ways of working.

## Universities as purchasers

Universities aren't just helping to create tomorrow's products and services, they are major purchasers of those available today. As such, they are big spenders in the local economy. Many are now looking at ways that their role as purchaser could help local businesses.

The Government has said that its departments and agencies should aim to pay small firms within 10 days of the receipt of an invoice. This is something that a growing number of universities are seeking to achieve, too. There are many universities involved in large-scale building projects, with their contractors often working with small firms as sub-contractors. Universities are looking to their contractors to achieve the same turnaround time for invoices.

Where small firms are having difficulties with training or course costs, including the costs of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, there may be ways to phase those charges in agreement with the university or college concerned.

Universities can also play a major role in improving the skills of their suppliers, by developing training facilities for local employers.

Another way that universities may be able to support business training needs or consultancy requirements is through accepting payment in kind where a business could supply services needed in return for such support. Obviously, such arrangements would need to be transparent and competitive, but might be brokered at a local level.

## Support in the longer term

Higher education is also making long-term changes and investments to support business, and the economy and society more broadly. Four in five universities and higher education colleges now see the exchange of knowledge and expertise with business and the wider community as a central part of their mission.

# Boosting financial services in Lancashire

The innovative Postgraduate Certificate in Managing People in Financial Services course has been specifically designed and developed by the University of Central Lancashire to meet the management needs of financial service practitioners in the North West. The course, which began in October 2008, primarily aims to meet the needs of managers who work in the financial services customer management centres and shared service centres in the North West.

This 'demand-led' management development programme has been designed and developed in unison with representatives from the financial sector including Barclays Bank, Co-operative Financial Services, Esure, MBNA/Bank of America and the Royal London Group. The purpose of the course is to meet the companies' needs to develop managers who can successfully implement change and get the best out of teams and individuals.

Giles McClelland, Project Lead, states: 'The financial services industry is going through changes. It is progressively moving to be dominated by high-value-added services, being delivered by a highly educated labour force. It is important that the North West continues to retain and attract the high-value-added roles within the sector by supporting the development of the current and next generation of managers. The course seeks to enhance the sustainability of the Financial Services sector in the North West.'

*For more information see [www.uclan.ac.uk/management/index.php](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/management/index.php)*

# An employers' one-stop shop in Staffordshire

Business Evolution is Staffordshire University's employer engagement brand, located in the multi-million pound University Quarter development. Business Evolution, working with Stoke on Trent College, operates a 'skills escalator' that enables support skills development and training across a continuum of levels according to employer requirements. Its aim is to work with organisations every step of the way to identify areas for improvement and development; to provide employees with the essential knowledge, skills and expertise to work more effectively, enhancing business efficiency and the bottom line.

Business Evolution works in a number of sectors including the creative and cultural industries, distribution and logistics, manufacturing and engineering, and health and social care. It focuses on areas including leadership and management development, information technology, technology, telecommunications, and enterprise and entrepreneurship.

*For more information see [www.hefce.ac.uk/econsoc/employer/projects/show.asp?id=31](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/econsoc/employer/projects/show.asp?id=31)*

Universities have numerous, long-standing collaborative relationships with national and international businesses. They have links, partnerships and collaborations with universities, business and other organisations around the world.

Universities' research facilities, research expertise and other services are utilised by national and international businesses. The economic importance of higher education and the contribution that it makes is of key importance in the creation and transfer of knowledge to the UK economy through its teaching, research and other activities.

As a talent builder and skills booster, higher education is already improving people's productivity and adaptability. One very important way is by educating the 330,000 people who graduate each year; after all, the economy needs more people with degrees if it is to remain competitive in an increasingly well-educated global environment.

Demand for higher education usually grows during an economic downturn. Young people tend to recognise that higher education will make them more competitive in the jobs market, and improve their earning power

over their lifetime. Employers said in a recent survey that 30 per cent of jobs already require degree-level skills, and this proportion is rising all the time. These new graduates will help businesses thrive and grow after these difficult economic times.

But the traditional, full-time, 18 year-old undergraduate is not the only face of today's universities. There has been rapid growth in part-time study and now over 40 per cent of students are part-time. Courses have become more flexible to cater for their needs<sup>7</sup>.

There is a growing appetite for higher education across all generations. More than 582,000 first-year undergraduates were accepted on university courses in 2008, which is 60,000 more than in 2006<sup>8</sup>.

Universities play a crucial part in regional and urban economic regeneration: modern cities need universities as part of their civic identity. UK universities directly employ 300,000 people; some are the largest employers in their area and they are independent business entities which generate substantial economic activity through institutional expenditure<sup>9</sup>. UK higher education institutions contribute an estimated £45 billion a year to the economy.

<sup>7</sup> Figures from 'Stepping higher' (see footnote 4).

<sup>8</sup> UCAS figures. See [www.ucas.ac.uk/website/news/media\\_releases/2008/2008-10-15](http://www.ucas.ac.uk/website/news/media_releases/2008/2008-10-15)

<sup>9</sup> Data from 'The economic impact of UK higher education institutions' (UUK), which is available from [www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/Bookshop/Pages/Publication-237.aspx](http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/Bookshop/Pages/Publication-237.aspx)

# Keeping the spark alive in Surrey

These difficult times also represent an opportunity for those businesses that can survive while keeping alive the vital spark of innovation that will give them competitive edge when the downturn ceases. Universities have a major role to play: for example, the University of Surrey Technology Centre supports 84 small companies, helping them with the practicalities of controlling cash flow coupled with mentoring and research support. Companies can then move onto the main Surrey Research Park, which has an estimated value to the regional economy of over £1 billion. Surrey start-up success story, Detica, was recently acquired by BAe for £538 million.

*For more information see [www.surrey.ac.uk/stc](http://www.surrey.ac.uk/stc)*

Through the growing pool of international students and researchers – and some new overseas campuses – higher education is both a major export and an importer of some of the brightest and best from around the world. This talent drawn to this country increases the expertise and knowledge pool that business can use in the longer term.

Higher education plays its part in maintaining social cohesion, through groundbreaking research, management and leadership education for the public sector and the development of active citizens who play their part in their communities.

Many universities are engaged in collaborative research with industry and the public sector to develop new

products, ideas and ways of working. Such research often leads to spin-out companies, which create jobs and boost the economy. Over the last four years, 30 spin-out companies have been successfully floated on the stock market, at a value of £1.7 billion<sup>10</sup>. This shows that universities are plugged into business thinking and entrepreneurship.

Specialist higher education colleges can play a particularly important role in stimulating innovation, not least those linked to the creative industries. There is often a cross-fertilisation of ideas and a movement of people between the industry and the college.

For example, at the London College of Fashion (part of the University of the Arts, London) the Fashion Business Resource Studio provides a single point of contact for the fashion industry to access the college's creative, business and technical expertise. The links developed also help students at the college to improve their contacts and find jobs. Partners in the project include Next, Jaegar, Puma and the 2012 Olympics. Lecturers at the college are often practitioners who bring their real-life experience to tomorrow's fashion trendsetters, while BA Fashion Management students work in pairs to act as consultants to industry partners<sup>11</sup>.

Relationships between a business and a university often start from an initial contact in one area and develop in depth as each comes to understand the full range of the other's needs and capacities. Business can then progress along the 'innovation escalator' through their increased interaction with universities, starting with the employment of graduates and moving towards increased engagement in research and development activity.

## Funding partners

### Support to business

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships is a UK-wide programme funded by 17 organisations and is led by the Technology Strategy Board, a business-focused organisation dedicated to promoting technology-enabled innovation across the UK<sup>12</sup>. The purpose of a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) is to enable companies to access knowledge and skills from higher education institutions, further education colleges or research organisations for use in the strategic development of the business. Each partnership employs one or more high-calibre KTP Associates (including degree and higher degree; post-doctoral) for a project

<sup>10</sup> Unico contribution to the DIUS Science and Innovation Strategy (February 2008).

<sup>11</sup> For more information see [www.fbrstudio.org.uk](http://www.fbrstudio.org.uk)

<sup>12</sup> For more information on the Technology Strategy Board see [www.innovateuk.org](http://www.innovateuk.org)

# Support for small firms in the West Midlands

The Aston INDEX (Innovation Delivers Expansion) scheme provides small and medium-sized enterprises in the West Midlands with a £3,000 voucher to buy academic support for an innovation at any of the region's 13 universities.

So far 220 such businesses have benefited from the Aston scheme, which is funded by the European Regional Development Fund, Advantage West Midlands, the Economic and Social Research Council and the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council. A further 500 vouchers are planned for the next two years.

*Find out more about innovation vouchers at [www.indexvouchers.org](http://www.indexvouchers.org)*

lasting one to three years and over 75 per cent of the current portfolio of KTPs are with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

The Technology Strategy Board, together with its delivery partners, has committed to doubling the number of KTPs between April 2008 and March 2011. In doing so, it will deliver shorter-term, flexible KTPs and increase the breadth of coverage to include, for example, the service sectors where technological innovation is important. Shorter term, flexible KTPs are particularly focused towards smaller companies not requiring a more in-depth, longer-term project.

There were 975 live partnerships as of 31 March 2008, which represents around 1,057 individual projects. For every £1 million of government spend, the average benefits to the company amounted to a £3.08 million annual increase in profit before tax, £2.27 million investment in plant and machinery, with 54 new jobs created and 395 company staff trained as a direct result of KTP.

Innovation vouchers are another successful product to support businesses that are being rolled out further

based on initial experience in the West Midlands (see 'Support for small firms in the West Midlands', above). Over the English regions at least 500 businesses will be given an innovation voucher to work with a knowledge base institution of their choice, with the aspiration that this will increase to at least 1,000 per year by 2011 as the vouchers are demonstrated to be effective for businesses. This is expected to mean an investment of at least £3 million to initiate collaborations between SMEs and the knowledge base.

Business Links (contacts at the end of this leaflet) are the best source of advice on all the sorts of public funding support for businesses.

## **Support to universities to help them work with business**

Nationally, HEFCE is putting £148 million over the next three years into supporting greater employer engagement<sup>13</sup> in addition to its £400 million<sup>14</sup> Higher Education Innovation Fund and the billions invested in research and teaching. These funds support universities and colleges to reach out to businesses and provide the ideas and skills needed for innovation and improved productivity.

<sup>13</sup> At least £105 million over three years from the HEFCE 2008 Grant Letter (see [www.hefce.ac.uk/news/HEFCE/2008/grant](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/HEFCE/2008/grant)); the rest is either money that HEFCE had previously allocated or which was reallocated by agreement of the HEFCE Board in the July 2008 re-prioritisation of special funds.

<sup>14</sup> See 'Higher Education Innovation Fund round four outcomes', which can be read at [www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2008/08\\_34](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2008/08_34)

# Business-friendly introductions in Leicestershire

De Montfort University in Leicester is keen to eliminate obstacles that make it harder for small firms to work with its 3,000 staff and 20,000 students. The university's DMU Corporate is a central point of contact for new corporate clients at its dedicated Innovation Centre on the main campus.

Organisations approaching the university through the centre meet with members of the DMU Corporate team for exploratory discussions and diagnosis of their business needs. The team then advises on appropriate solutions, and if agreement is reached to progress further, it acts as go-between for the client with the university's academic and research staff. The university is putting together cost-effective packages, including distance-learning materials, that can be used in the workplace. It is also devising assessment built around the work carried out by employees<sup>15</sup>.

*For more information on DMU Corporate see [www.dmu.ac.uk/faculties/business\\_and\\_law/commercial/](http://www.dmu.ac.uk/faculties/business_and_law/commercial/)*

As part of its employer engagement programme, HEFCE provides funding alongside employer contributions to give public funding support for the kinds of training businesses need. This is linked with support of Sector Skills Councils, so that packages of skills and higher education funding make it easier for employers to get support for training.

## How to make contact

### Directly with a university or college

Many universities now have dedicated teams who work with business. Some operate a separate employer engagement or business unit, staffed by people who can manage the different needs of business and help them navigate their way through the university. DMU Corporate at De Montfort University is a good example (See 'Business-friendly introductions in Leicestershire', above).

Such arrangements are not universal but they are increasingly common, and offer an easily accessible first point of contact – an important step in building potential partnerships between business and universities. Another way in which universities can bring business together with academics is through specialist networks, focused on particular sectors emerging as a result of particular courses. Sometimes these networks can become more formal support programmes.

### Other resources to help get access to university support

Visit the Higher Education Research Opportunities portal for a University Finder, a wide range of information about research, student placements and much more: [www.hero.ac.uk](http://www.hero.ac.uk)

Visit the Training Gateway to source corporate, vocational and executive training from UK universities: [www.thetraininggateway.co.uk](http://www.thetraininggateway.co.uk)

Train to Gain helps businesses to identify skill needs at all levels and puts them in touch with providers: [www.traintogain.gov.uk](http://www.traintogain.gov.uk)

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<sup>15</sup> From 'Stepping higher' (See footnote 4).

## Sources of advice and support for businesses

Business Link is the main conduit by which all companies – large or small, new or existing, early stage or growing – can access government-funded business support, as well as support from other providers. Publicly funded support is being streamlined into a portfolio of 30 ‘Solutions for Business’ products and services accessible through business. Business Link advisors can help companies identify their support requirements, brokering them to the most appropriate solution for their needs.

The Regional Development Agencies aim to co-ordinate regional economic development and regeneration in their areas. They work to support links between higher education and the business support and regional economic development infrastructures.

## Conclusion

We know that the economic downturn will be challenging for many companies and their employees. But our universities and higher education colleges are better placed than ever to help them cope. Through consultancy programmes that can help businesses become more efficient or profitable, or through higher level training courses that can improve the productivity of staff members, universities are already making a big difference in thousands of companies across the country. A growing number of campuses and science parks are also providing the innovative solutions and ideas that will lead to tomorrow’s products and new ways of working.

To find out more about how higher education could help you to operate more effectively during the downturn, please get in touch with your local university or college contact as supplied in this leaflet.

For further information on universities please contact: [business@universitiesuk.ac.uk](mailto:business@universitiesuk.ac.uk)

For information on your local higher education college please contact [business@GuildHE.ac.uk](mailto:business@GuildHE.ac.uk)

## What to do now if you want help

- Business Link is a national service, managed regionally and delivered locally. It is free and open to all by phone (0845 600 9006), online at [www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk) or face-to-face at local branches.
- Alternatively, go directly to your local university – this leaflet includes a full list of contacts.

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Contact name</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>E-mail</b>
Aberystwyth University	David Craddock	01970 622382	DJC@Aber.ac.uk
Anglia Ruskin University	Dr Tony West	0845 196 4204	Tony.West@anglia.ac.uk
Aston University	Dr Phil Extance	0121 204 4549	P.Extance@Aston.ac.uk
Bangor University	Professor Sian Hope	01248 382695	S.Hope@Bangor.ac.uk
Bath Spa University	Susan Cherrett	01225 875556	S.Cherrett@BathSpa.ac.uk
Birkbeck, University of London	Helen Lawrence	020 7631 6676	H.Lawrence@bbk.ac.uk
Birmingham City University	Professor David Maguire	01213 315575	David.Maguire@bcu.ac.uk
Bournemouth University	Services to Business	01202 961961	s2b@Bournemouth.ac.uk
Brunel University	Teresa Waller	01895 266206	Teresa.Waller@Brunel.ac.uk
Canterbury Christ Church University	Audrey Songhurst	01227 782196	Audrey.Songhurst@Canterbury.ac.uk
Cardiff University	Gareth Evans	029 2087 9423	EvansG21@Cardiff.ac.uk
Central School of Speech and Drama City University London	Bruce Wooding	020 7559 3902	Bruce.Wooding@cssd.ac.uk
Coventry University	Sue Gunn	020 7040 3154	S.H.Gunn@city.ac.uk
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Durham University	John Rance	0116 257 7927	JPrance@dmu.ac.uk
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