**AFTERNOON ALL!**

**Here is your weekly digest of the pertinent issues in HE that may impact Students’ Unions. If you’ve read anything of interest that’s not here, please share it with us! These will be released every Wednesday and provide an overview of HE Policy, research and other interesting factoids. If you have any questions, pop me an email. This week is a bit of a quieter one, with many of last week’s issues still carrying over. Below I have only mentioned the new stuff!**

## Record number of University Applicants for Medicine, Dentistry, Vet School and Oxbridge

**(UCAS)**

Despite the drop in the number of 18 year olds (hence the measures the University is taking to make up the predicted deficit in tuition fees), 11% more English 18 year olds applied for University courses that had a 15 October deadline (for us that would be Medicine, across the country this would be Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Dentistry and Oxbridge.)

<https://www.ucas.com/corporate/news-and-key-documents/news/record-number-applicants-early-deadline-university-courses>

## Major Decline in Part-Time Students

**(Universities UK (UUK), Confederation of British Industry (CBI))**

The number of Part-Time undergraduate students in the UK has decreased by over 50% since 2010, with over half of the missing students between 25-44 years of age. Factors include the rigid timescales of part time courses and the high cost. Recommendations from UUK and CBI include making part time pre-undergraduate and undergraduate courses shorter and more flexible to those who wish to develop their skills for career progression/change, or to go onto further University courses.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-45979230>

## Combatting Care-leaver Disadvantage

**(Department for Education, Spectra First)**

The Care Leavers Covenant, a collective where voluntary, public and private organisations support care leavers into careers through giving them experience opportunities. Universities are also being encouraged to join the collective to support care leavers into university through bursaries. The aim of the scheme is to remove some of the barriers that care leavers face through no fault of their own.

<https://mycovenant.org.uk/>

## Alcohol risk training for 1st years

**(BBC News, The Guardian, Independent, Coroner Karen Dilks)**

Karen Dilks suggested that first year students should be trained on the risks of alcohol in direct response to the death of Newcastle student Ed Farmer who died during an initiation ceremony as a result of binge drinking.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-tyne-45979243>

## Student Loans

**(WonkHe)**

Two bits –

1) Student tuition fees will be fixed at £9,250 for the academic year 2019-20 as per the new Budget

2) Secondly, the CEO of the Student Loans Company has apologied for the ‘surveillance’ culture of using Social Media to find out if students are really estranged from their guardians. The Student Loans company also wants to change their image, as they think of the loan as ‘graduate contribitions.’