

Research – Engagement with Parliament and Policy Makers

Huw Edwards

Universities – policy engagement and impact

Policy engagement

Policy engagement is an umbrella term describing the many ways that researchers and policymakers connect and explore common interests at various stages in their respective research and policymaking processes.

Impact

“Impact is the good that researchers can do in the world.”

Professor Mark Reed

For the purposes of the REF, impact is defined more elaborately as “an effect on, change or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia.”

Promoting Research to Parliament

Processes

- **Legislation** – Committees on Bills
- **Scrutiny** – PQs and Select Committees
- **Members** – MPs, Peers and their staff
- **Cross Party Groups**

Resources

- Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology (POST)
- Knowledge Exchange Unit
- Libraries – Commons and Lords

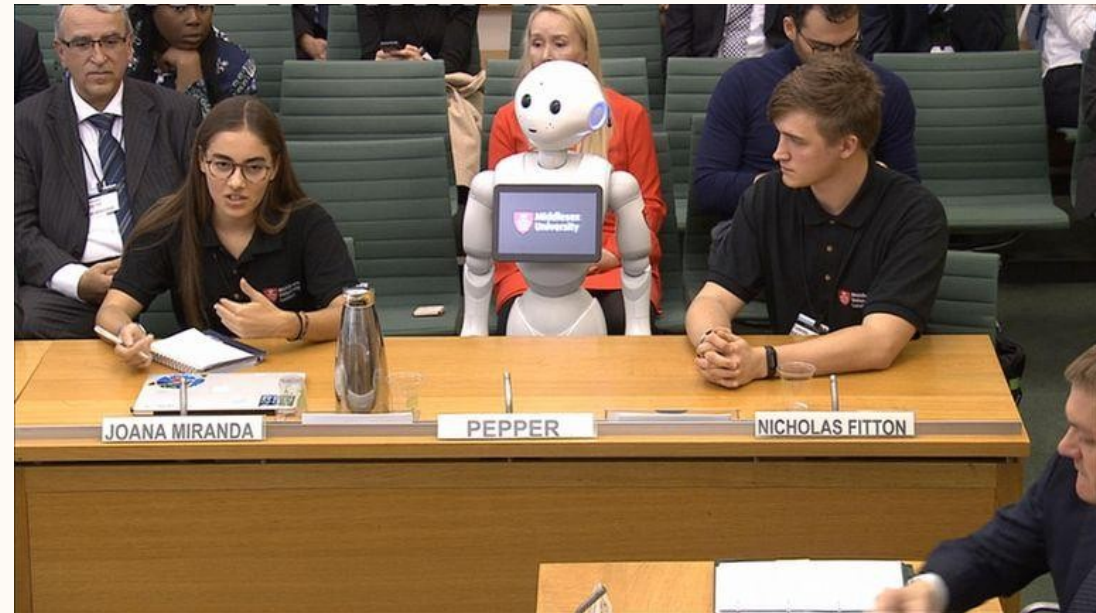


Four themes

- “Impact is the good researchers can have in the world”
- Every research subject has a policy focus
- Engaging with Parliaments and policy makers is essential – despite the difficulties
- Effective training can support researchers and your university’s research profile

Researchers and Select Committees

- Help the committee do its work
- Identify relevant current inquiries by Committee
- Submit written evidence on specific inquiry and follow the guidelines
- Appear as witness in oral evidence session
- Invite Committee to your University
- Act as advisor to Committee
- Committee evidence is good research source



- Education Select Committee: Inquiry on AI
- Middlesex Researchers + Humanoid

Myalgic encephalomyelitis research and treatment

EDM 31: tabled on 09 November 2023

Tabled in the 2023-24 session.

This motion has been signed by 22 Members. It has not yet had any amendments submitted.

Motion text

This House commends current research being conducted by the Quadram Institute on the Norwich Research Park that builds on recent evidence that conditions like myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME), and Long Covid, have a basis in the immune system; notes that ME (sometimes known as ME/CFS) is a severely debilitating condition thought to affect up to 250,000 people in the UK and that symptoms include widespread pain, extreme tiredness and an inability to concentrate and that the causes of ME are not known and there are no effective treatments; commends the funding provided by the charity Invest in ME Research to the Quadram Institute to run the only current clinical trial in the UK for ME; believes it is necessary to establish a Centre for ME Research, building on excellent biomedical research, to act as a hub for research and treatment of ME; and calls on the Government to support and promote such a specialist Centre to help develop effective treatments.

Signatures (22)



Supporters (22) Withdrawn signatures (0)

The first 6 Members who have signed to support the motion are the sponsors. The primary sponsor is generally the person who tabled the motion and has responsibility for it. The date shown is when the Member signed the motion.



Lewis, Clive
Labour



McDonnell, John
Labour



Edwards, Jonathan
Independent



Scope for research in government

- Liaising with key departments
- Chief Scientific Advisors
- Contribute to Government consultations
- Government commissioned research



Civil service – Areas of Research Interest

ARI – aim to improve how government departments

- align scientific and research evidence from academia with policy development and decision-making
- access a wide range of suppliers
- engage with researchers
- access stronger policy evidence bases at better value for money
- share research commissions

List of current department ARIs

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/areas-of-research-interest>

Explanation + guide

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1007378/areas-of-research-interest.pdf

“Defra’s policies are evidence-based and rely on research to ensure they are effective and take account of up-to-date understanding. This document describes the broad areas where Defra needs further research and innovation to inform its programmes and policies.”

Training Sessions

- Training Sessions: 3 hours
 - PhD Students
 - Early Career Researchers
 - Senior Researchers
 - Specific institutes/departments or cross disciplines
 - Professional Staff
 - Workshops – eg Select Committees



Thank you and Good Luck !

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Any questions?

