

# General Consultation Report Form<sup>1</sup>

Under the UNESCO World Higher Education Conference ([WHEC2022](#))

[Section for Higher Education](#) | Division for Education 2030

## Basic information

<b>Date of consultation</b>	[02/03/2022]			
<b>Location of consultation</b>	zoom			
<b>Hosting organisation(s)</b> (include webpage if available)	Education International			
<b>Name and email address of key contact person</b>	Antonia Wulff			
<b>Complete name, title, and affiliation of moderator(s)</b>	Antonia Wulff, Director of Research, Policy and Advocacy, EI			
<b>Language of consultation</b>	English, French, and Spanish			
<b>Time spent in consultation</b> (minutes)	90 min			
<b>Number of participants</b>	73			
<b>Participant profiles</b> (please, briefly describe the composition of the group)	Union leaders, teachers, researchers, and education support personnel			
<b>Countries represented by participants</b>	Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Ethiopia, Fiji, France, Ghana, Ireland, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Malaysia, Morocco, Netherlands, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Portugal, Saint Martin, Senegal, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Taiwan, Togo, UK, USA			
<b>Stakeholder groups</b> (please mark with an "x" as appropriate)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Professors/ Researchers	<input type="checkbox"/> Students/Youth	<input type="checkbox"/> Higher education managers/authorities	<input type="checkbox"/> Private sector
	<input type="checkbox"/> NGOs/civil society	<input type="checkbox"/> International organisations	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy makers/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Others (please, specify): education unions representing staff in higher education and research

<sup>1</sup> This template includes some elements used by the consultation developed by [The Futures of Education](#) initiative.

## Which theme did you choose for this consultation?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theme 1: Impact of COVID-19 on higher education | <input type="checkbox"/> Theme 8: Data and knowledge production                             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theme 2: Higher education and the SDGs          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theme 9: International cooperation to enhance synergies |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theme 3: Inclusion in higher education          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theme 10: The futures of higher education               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theme 4: Quality and relevance of programmes    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please, specify):                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Theme 5: Academic mobility in higher education             | - Terms and conditions of employment of staff in higher education                           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theme 6: Higher education governance            | - Academic Freedom in higher education  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theme 7: Financing higher education             |   |

## Synthesis of contributions

Kindly provide a summary, synthesising and reflecting the ideas provided by all participants. There is no need to identify participants. Consultation reports should not exceed 1,200 **words**, including the responses to the three questions outlined below (consider a balance of approximately 400 words per response). If necessary, add attachments. Remember that question 1 is general, but questions 2 and 3 should refer to the specific theme you have chosen (see list in **Annex 1**).

**Question 1:** *What are the main demands related to the terms and conditions of employment in higher education and research in the context of the ongoing transformations of the sector?*

**Casualisation** and precarious working conditions were identified as a major concern for the further and higher education and research workforce, and it includes the pay and pensions conditions of staff. The lack of job security proved particularly difficult during the pandemic, when many lost their livelihoods. The increased use of tenured appointments, or other functional equivalents and the reductions in the use of precarious short-term contracts are key for the future of higher education.

Participants reported **an increase in stress and anxiety** caused by heavy pressure and workloads, coupled with precarious working conditions. These issues predated the pandemic but have been exacerbated by the closures of education institutions and pressure on staff to adapt to remote teaching and learning overnight. The primacy of face-to-face teaching has been demonstrated throughout the pandemic, where students have struggled with remote arrangements while teaching staff have struggled to maintain quality standards while also ensuring work-life balance. This applies to women and staff with care obligations in particular.

The increasing **trends towards privatisation and commercialisation**, including through public-private partnerships, often have direct implications for the terms and conditions of those working in the further and higher education sector. These trends must be reversed.

Quality further and higher education and research rest upon the foundation of quality terms and conditions of employment and respect for and enforcement of professional rights. Public authorities, in cooperation with teachers and their representatives, should oversee and regulate the education sector and aim to constantly improve its quality, establishing and implementing a legislative framework that ensures a high-quality service, professional standards, access for all and a representative governance system. **Effective social dialogue** is key for improving the quality of higher education as well as to ensure the development of equitable higher education systems for all.

The **terms and conditions of education support personnel** (non-teaching staff) in higher education and research need to be drastically and urgently improved in line with [Education International's Declaration on the Rights and Status of Education Support Personnel](#). Education support personnel

are often employed on casual contracts and so many were affected by budget cuts and staff reduction measures in the wake of the pandemic. Education support personnel should be recognized as crucial staff to ensure the provision of quality higher education. Secure employment contracts and decent working conditions should be provided to attract experienced, skilled and highly qualified education support personnel to work in higher education.

**Question 2:** *How can quality and equity be advanced in further and higher education as we design post-pandemic recovery?*

Higher education and research contribute to the well-being and development of individuals and societies as a whole. Quality further and higher education is resilient and provides long-term perspectives also for its staff to allow these systems to play their important role in ensuring the sustainable development of the planet and humanity.

Participants expressed their concerns about many further and higher education institutions relying on unsustainable funding models, which may push them to choose between accepting fewer students, carrying out less research, or education of a lower quality. The pandemic had a direct impact on higher education budgets, especially those that are highly privatised and/or dependent on international student fees. It also brought about a rapid expansion of commercial activities in HE through the provision of technological infrastructure (e.g. pedagogic, social, administrative) and data management and analytics, which presents new challenges related to the quality of teaching and learning, working conditions, abuse of AI and surveillance. Participants called for better regulation of commercial actors in education and for this to be considered in a future HE roadmap.

In addition, concerns about hidden costs, such as excessive prices for textbooks and teaching materials, were raised. As e-book prices skyrocketed during the pandemic, the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Educational Resources became important and should be considered. It is essential to replace traditional textbook policies based on for-profit publishing models with the development of open educational resources. Similarly, it is essential to promote open access to research as well as improve copyright exceptions and limitations for the use of copyright protected materials for teaching and learning, including cross-border collaboration and exchange.

Consultation participants stressed that higher education and research is a public good and a human right that should be available and accessible to all on an equitable basis. It is the states' responsibility to ensure the provision of further and higher education in fulfilment of Article 13, paragraph 1(c), of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966).

Future financing models for higher education should be based on increased public investment through domestic resource mobilisation, including equitable taxation. Increased student fees mustn't be the solution to funding gaps. Sustainable and sufficient public investment in higher education is a precondition for access, equity, and quality.

Concerning quality and equity, participants stressed the need to understand and consider contexts. Quality education is defined by its inputs (including students' background, teachers' qualifications, working conditions, class-size and investment in education); by the education process (including teaching and related processes of learning) and by projected outcomes (including individual, social, cultural, economic and environmental needs). A contextual approach to quality is never deterministic, as it is contingent upon creativity and constant development. Concerns were also raised regarding inequality of access and opportunity within further and higher education, particularly for the most marginalised. In addition to prohibitive tuition fees, a lack of inclusion and accessibility was flagged, including the digital divide, were highlighted.

**Question 3:** *How can academic freedom be promoted and defended in the context of the ongoing transformations of higher education and research?*

Academic freedom is crucial to teaching and research. It is key to ensuring the integrity and mission of higher education institutions. First, casualisation and academic freedom are closely interlinked: in other words, there is no academic freedom without job security. As stressed by the UNESCO 1997 Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel: *“Tenure or its functional equivalent, where applicable, constitutes one of the major procedural safeguards of academic freedom and against arbitrary decisions.”* Secondly, collegial governance is critical for academic freedom, and unfortunately throughout the pandemic the attacks on collegial governance have increased, which has considerable implications for quality of teaching and research. Thirdly, intellectual property issues have been more pronounced during the pandemic due to the online teaching environment. It is also a critical issue for academic freedom. Decisions around intellectual property needs to stay with the academic rather than the institution.

In the recent past years there have been attacks on the academic freedom of academics working on specific subjects considered “sensitive” or “controversial” such as gender studies or critical race theory in so-called liberal democracies. The issue of precarious contracts is here an even more serious risk for academics within such disciplines.

Further and higher education and research institutions serve democracy and the common good of society through the preservation, advance, and dissemination of knowledge, and by fostering independent critical thinking and expression. These ends cannot be achieved without academic freedom, that is the right of academics, without restriction by prescribed doctrine, to freedom of teaching and discussion; freedom in carrying out research and disseminating and publishing the results thereof; freedom to express their opinion about the institution or system in which they work; and freedom to exercise their civil liberties without institutional or political reprisal.

A key element of academic freedom is the right of academic staff and researchers to be directly represented on all key decision-making bodies within universities and colleges that should be founded on the principle of collegiality. This principle includes guarantees of individual staff rights such as the freedom to determine teaching style, research priorities and the right to retain intellectual property rights.

**Which Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were particularly emphasised during this consultation?**

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 1: No poverty                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy                | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 2: Zero hunger                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 13: Climate action                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 3: Good health and well-being   | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 9: Industry, innovation, and infrastructure   | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 14: Life below water                       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal 4: Quality education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal 10: Reduced inequality             | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 15: Life on land                           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal 5: Gender equality   | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities        | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 16: Peace and justice strong institutions  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 6: Clean water and sanitation   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> Goal 17: Partnerships to achieve the goals      |

**You may provide additional feedback...**

*Are there any other issues that should be considered in relation to higher education challenges and options in your community, your region, the world?*

*Academic freedom is an overarching topic that touches upon so many issues of critical importance for the future of higher education, including quality of teaching and research, equity and inclusion and decent work in the sector. A key piece to promote and defend academic freedom is to implement the UNESCO 1997 Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel.*

*Is there any other comment you wish to share with UNESCO or the organisers of the WHEC2022?*

## List of participants

[Moderator: Antonia Wulff, Director of Research, Policy and Advocacy, EI]

Mr./ Mrs.	First name	Last name	Title/organisation	Nationality	Email address (if the participant wishes to receive information about the WHEC2022)	Indicate with a "NO" if the participant DOES NOT want to be publicly identified as a participant in this consultation.
	Antonia	Wulff	Director of Research, Policy and Advocacy/ EI			
	Haldis	Holst	Deputy General Secretary/EI			
	Aigul	Mukasheva	President/ KTUESW	Kazakhstan		
	David	Duffy	Education Officer/TUI	Ireland		
	Karin	Åmossa	Head of Research and International Affairs	Sweden		
	Carrie	Su	International Coordinator/NTA	Taiwan		
	Howard	Isaacs	Principal/JTA	Jamaica		
	Yohannes Benti	Chokorso	President/ETA	Ethiopia		
	Malathie	M. Seneviratne	General Secretary/ USLTS	Sri Lanka		
	Jan	Soons	National Secretary/COC	Belgium		
	Błażej	Mądrzycki	Professor/ZNP	Poland		
	Helen	Li	Sr. Analyst/NEA	USA		
	Stuart	Johnson	President/WITU	Saint Martin		
	José Luís	Abrantes	Post-doctorate Teacher. Head of the Management Department. Coordinator of	Portugal		

			CISeD - Centre for Research in Digital Services/FNE			
	Rob	Copeland	International Policy Officer/UCU	UK		
	Garang Deng Kuol	Athian	Chairman/ NTUSS	South Sudan		
	Frank	Jones	General Secretary/IFUT	Ireland		
	Jorunn	Norgård	Chief Advisor/NAR	Norway		
	Nanise	Bale Kamikamica	Coordinator/FTA	Fiji		
	Onesmus	Mutio	National Organizing Secretary/UASU	Kenya		
	Pedro	Oliveira	Professor/FENPROF	Portugal		
	Ceren	Pekdemir	Assistant Professor/AOb	Netherlands		
	Patricia	Keefer	International Affairs Director/AFT	USA		
	Luc	Allaire	Head of international relations/CSQ	Canada		
	Mario	Beauchemin	Vice-president/CSQ	Canada		
	Lucie	Piché	President/FEC-CSQ	Canada		
	Vincent	Beaucher	President/ FREUQ-CSQ	Canada		
	Catherine	Huart	Advisor/CSQ	Canada		
	Valérie	Fontaine	President/ FPSES-CSQ	Canada		
	Vinnciannah Poilep	Auru	Coordinator/PNGTA	Papua New Guinea		
	Cyril	Hewa Garusinghe Dapanage	Admin. Secretary/ Union of Sri Lanka Teachers Solidarity	Sri Lanka		
	Dave	Kammerer	Senior Associate Director/AFT	USA		
	Emma-Émilie	Gélinas	Vice-President/FPPU	Canada		
	Christophe	Schneider	International Advisor/SNES-FSU	France		

	Nilton Ferreira Brandão	Brandão	President/ PROIFES	Brazil		
	Eduardo Rolim	de Oliveira	International Director/ PROIFES	Brazil		
	Fatima	Echaabi	Member of the National Board/ SNESUP	Morocco		
	Benoît	Lacoursière	General Secretary/FNEEQ-CSN	Canada		
	Yamile	Socolovsky	International Secretary/CONADU	Argentina		
	Alyssa	Picard	Higher Education Director/AFT	USA		
	Marjolaine	Perreault	Executive Director/CSQ	Canada		
	Gloria Cecilia	Arboleda Fernandez	Vice-President/ASPU	Colombia		
	Michio	Sano	Vice Chair/JTU	Japan		
	Isao	Aizawa	Executive committee member/JTU	Japan		
	Amidou	Diedhiou	General Secretary/SELS	Senegal		
	Fatou	Gueye	Advisor/SELS	Senegal		
	Hidehisa	Nakamichi	Central Executive Committee Chair/Japan Public University College of Technology Faculty and Staff Union/JTU	Japan		
	Amanullah	Aman	President/ ATSA	Afghanistan		
	Pedro	Hernández	President/ASPU	Colombia		
	Matthew	McGowan	General Secretary/NTEU	Australia		
	Kwame	Dagbandow	Deputy General Secretary/GNAT	Ghana		
	Pablo	García de Vicuña Peñafiel	Director/ FECCOO	Spain		
	Sanen	Marshall	GERAK (MOVE)	Malaysia		
	Michel	Maric	Co-leader/SNESUP-FSU	France		

	Xavier	Lambert	Co-leader/SNESUP-FSU	France		
	Claude	Fortin	President/FPPU	Canada		
	Cuqui	Vera	International Officer/FECCOO	Spain		
	Maria Encina	Gonzalez Martinez	Secretary of university and research/ FECCOO	Spain		
	Amy	Sarr	SNEEL/CNTS	Senegal		
	Elisabeth	Diedhoiu	Secretary/SELS	Senegal		
	David	Robinson	Executive Director/CAUT	Canada		
	Emilia	Trabucco	Professor/CONADU	Argentina		
	Faseega	Solomon	Education Vice-President/SADTU	South Africa		
	David	Matsepe	Head of Research/SADTU	South Africa		
	Brenda	Ndelu	Teacher Development Specialist/SADTU	South Africa		
	Mama	Nthunya	Curriculum Specialist/SADTU	South Africa		
	Charles	Kumchenga	Secretary General/TUM	Malawi		
	Annette	Dolan	Secretary General/TUI	Ireland		
	Nadine	Molloy	Trustee/JTA	Jamaica		
	Noelia	Naranjo	International Secretary/CONADU	Argentina		
	Sônia Mara	Ogiba	Professor/ PROIFES	Brazil		
	Leighton	Johnson	Principal/MHS	Jamaica		
	Miguel	Duhalde	Education Secretary/CTERA	Argentina		