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for Education



Department for
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Dear Norman,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak at last week's Brexit: Science and Innovation Summit and to answer some questions from attendees. I thought it was a very productive session and I look forward to giving evidence to the Committee on issues arising from the Summit on 6 March. I very much value the work of the Committee and indeed the wider Parliamentary scrutiny of the work of this Department, and as part of my new role I am very much looking forward to working with the Committee on a wide range of issues.

At the time that the Research Integrity Concordat was launched, BIS was listed as a supporter. As such, the Department signalled its support for the ambitions articulated by the concordat and agreed that the highest levels of integrity and rigour are fundamental to achieving excellence in research practice and findings. I am happy to be able to reaffirm this support by BEIS for the Concordat. While Government retains responsibility for policy on science funding and high level priorities, the detail of how those priorities are delivered, including the terms and conditions applied to researchers, is the responsibility of the funders, employers and researchers themselves and I do not believe that this is best furthered by direct intervention from Government. Sir Mark Walport will be able to fully account for those controls that will be upheld by UKRI in regards to its funding.

I therefore look to Sir Mark and the BEIS Chief Scientific Adviser to provide advice on any issues related to the implementation of research integrity requirements. The standards for research funded and undertaken by Government departments is the responsibility of departmental Chief Scientific Advisors (CSAs), with oversight provided by the Government Chief Scientific Advisor. I understand that you have already written to departmental CSAs and they have responded detailing the controls and processes in place.

On further consideration and after meeting with Sir Mark, I feel it would be a better use of the Committee Members' time to focus questions on research integrity to UKRI, as opposed to myself as a Government Minister. He is already attending on 6 March and, given both his current and previous roles, is better placed to answer specific questions on this issue.

Please accept my apologies for the late notice in confirming this to the Committee. I look forward to giving evidence to the Committee on the issues arising from the Brexit: Science and Innovation Summit on 6 March and working closely with you in future.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sam Gyimah', written in a cursive style.

SAM GYIMAH MP

Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation