

Growth and Opportunities in African Higher Education

It is clear that Sub-Saharan Higher Education has been expanding in recent years and there is growing pressure for further expansion with Higher Education being key to the African Union's 2063 Agenda for the transformation of Africa. With that in mind, we were delighted to host the Business Council for Africa's "Education Forum" in March.

Countries across Africa now see the benefits of tertiary education to fuel their economies, particularly in the "African Lion" economies, including Ethiopia, South Africa, Nigeria and Egypt.

Whilst the demand is clearly there, across Africa, the HE sector is not yet in a position to meet that demand due to a shortage of funding and suitably qualified staff. Universities outside of Africa have so far been reluctant to engage with African universities, but with opportunities diminishing elsewhere, with countries such as China and India developing their own HE infrastructure, that may well change, as European and US universities look for new opportunities in their continuing drive for greater internationalisation (provided the funding can be found).



We are members of the Business Council for Africa (BCA). For more information about the BCA or African Higher Education, please get into contact.

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Supply Chain Audit and Risk Management

While businesses may be grappling with the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 to disclose what activities they have undertaken to eliminate slavery and human trafficking from their supply chains, this is only part of a growing trend toward accountability and public scrutiny, which is hitting organisations of all kinds and in all sectors, Higher Education being no exception.

Organisations which recognise and accept the needs and advantages of embracing and policing their own supply chains better will likely avoid negative publicity, brand/value damage and may even gain a competitive advantage. Supply chain audits are great for verifying supplier policies but recent reports show they are often less effective at verifying actual practices and detecting problems.

Further details can be found on our [Global Supply Chain Law Blog](#).

To discuss the challenges and complexities in supply chain audits and how they might be effectively managed, please contact one of the individuals listed.

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Alternative Funding Vehicle to Fund Campus Infrastructure Development

The first quarter of 2016 has started strongly for the Higher Education sector and, due to capacity issues that are caused by the increasing demand for a UK-based education, there has never been a better time to invest in the education sector, which creates an opportunity for universities to look at new ways to fund development. We have acted for equity providers and universities that are actively seeking investment opportunities to refurbish or construct real estate assets and infrastructure on and around universities. We have developed a contractual structure which enables significant funding to be made for a range of projects which can provide numerous valuable benefits to universities when compared with traditional finance. The foremost of which is the ability to defer making any significant part of the payment for a period of up to four years, which allows the asset to fully mature and become profit making.

Read further details [here](#)

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The Future of the Right to Strike

It will not have escaped your attention that UCU has begun holding strikes over a pay dispute. At the ballot stage, there was reportedly a 35.5% turnout of UCU members. Under the proposed new laws, would that have been sufficient to hold a strike? In short, no.

The implementation date of the Trade Union Act 2016 is yet to be confirmed, but amongst the noteworthy provisions are the following:

- The imposition of a 50% turnout requirement in all ballots (meaning the current UCU ballot would have fallen at the first hurdle).
- Industrial action in "important public services" will require support of at least 40% of those eligible to vote.
- More detailed information on the ballot paper.
- A six-month time limit on the validity of each ballot (which can increase to nine months by agreement).
- 14 days' notice of strike action.

The above represents welcome reform for many Higher Education institutions.

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