

News story: UK/ Egyptian workshop on Higher Education

On 11 February leaders of universities across Egypt were invited to a workshop at the British Embassy in Cairo to share best practice on improving higher education, by giving university teachers the recognition they deserve for their work, and ensuring that students leave university with the skills they need for the modern job market.

The workshop, delivered by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) and the British Government's Department for International Trade, was attended by Prof Dr Mohamed Salheen, Adviser to the Minister of Higher Education & Scientific Research, as well the British Ambassador to Egypt, John Casson, and Sir Jeffrey Donaldson MP, UK Trade Envoy to Egypt.

HEA is a UK-based organisation which works with ministries, universities and individual academics across the world to help them improve education standards. For teachers, this includes ensuring that systems are in place to recognise and reward good teaching. For students, it means ensuring that students stay in university, get thorough assessment and constructive feedback on their efforts during their studies, and leave university with the skills they need for the modern workplace.

British Ambassador John Casson said:

Giving young Egyptians the chance for world class education is at the heart of the UK's partnership with Egypt. When you put together world class UK university expertise and Egypt's best young talent and institutions there is no limit to what we can achieve together. Everywhere I go I am inspired by the talent and ambition of young Egyptians and this workshop is a fantastic opportunity to share ideas that will help teachers and students succeed in giving Egypt excellent universities and young people with the skills to succeed in the modern world.

Ian Hall, HEA Partnership Development Manager, said:

We are delighted to have this opportunity to speak to senior university leaders in Egypt. While every country is different, we've seen that higher education providers across the globe face many of the same issues. We'll be sharing lessons learned from the HEA's work across the world, including from our projects in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Oman, and how these could be applied within an Egyptian context. Our aim is to promote teaching excellence and to enable student success. An important route to achieving student success is by motivating great teaching in higher education through the reward and recognition of those who deliver

it. We've also decided to focus on student employability which is increasingly under scrutiny from governments and employers, quite apart from being critically important to students themselves. We want to highlight some of the work we have done to help institutions develop holistic strategies to supporting employability, particularly through curriculum design.

[News story: Latest Carillion update from the Official Receiver](#)

A spokesperson for the Official Receiver said:

“Arrangements have now been finalised to transfer prison facilities management and defence bases catering and cleaning contracts to new providers and as a result we have been able to safeguard employment for a further 4,418 employees.

“Ongoing employment has been confirmed for more than a third of Carillion’s workforce so far as part of the liquidation. There is a lot of interest from potential purchasers in the contracts the company delivered which will see the number of jobs safeguarded continue to increase.

“Employment could not be secured for a further 59 employees working on paused construction projects and regrettably they will leave the business later this week. Those who have lost their jobs will be able to find support through Jobcentre Plus’ Rapid Response Service and are also entitled to make a claim for statutory redundancy payments.

“Most employees who have transferred so far have done so on existing or similar terms and I will continue to facilitate this wherever possible as we work to find new providers for Carillion’s other contracts.

“The process to find new suppliers to deliver Carillion’s contracts continues. I am continuing to engage with staff, elected employee representatives and unions to keep them informed as these arrangements are confirmed.”

- in total, to date 6,668 jobs have been saved and 989 jobs have been made redundant through the liquidation
- further information about rights in redundancy is available on gov.uk
- continued support by Carillion’s public and private sector customers is enabling as many employees as possible to be retained in the interim until all contracts have been worked through

To be notified of future updates from the Official Receiver please [register to receive an email alert](#).

[Press release: Experience the UK at the Great British Festival](#)

Experience the best of British culture and innovation at the #GreatBritishFestival launch event on 23 February as the British Embassy Manila brings together different UK brands to create a fun-filled day with great British music, fashion, food, and arts at Glorietta 2 Palm Drive Activity Center, Makati City.

Daniel Pruce, British Ambassador to the Philippines said:

In this year's festival, our goal is to showcase the very best of what Great Britain as a whole nation has to offer. We are gathering a broad spectrum of British companies that represent not only world-class British culture and creativity but also the core values of the nation.

Among the participating companies are: M&S, Speedo, The Body Shop, Lush, Clarks, Shell, STI Limited, Digital Barriers, Diageo, Quorn, Costa Coffee, Union Jack Tavern, Shakeaway, Norton Motorcycles and HSBC.

Different fun activities await everyone in Glorietta Mall on February 23. There will be interactive exhibits, multiple raffles, a great trivia challenge, British film screenings, book reading for children, a whisky pavilion, and the much-anticipated Rockaoke Contest (with a first prize of two tickets to London on Etihad Airways).

Admission to this Great British Festival event is free.

This year's Festival will be a celebration of UK culture and innovation and will reach out across the Philippines. It will run for two weeks, with activities in Metro Manila, Iloilo, Cebu, Dumaguete, and Baguio.

Organised by the British Embassy and its partners, the Great British Festival 2018 will be a great showcase of the creativity, innovation, culture, heritage and knowledge that spell Britain's success in fashion, music, food, education and design.

Watch what we're up to and join in the conversation on our social media channels.

For more information, like and follow the British Embassy Manila on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

[Recording of the week: Listening Project Symphony](#)

Paul Wilson, Curator Radio Broadcast writes:

This week's selection celebrates [World Radio Day 2018](#) (13th February). It's an excerpt from the *Listening Project Symphony*, a beautiful composition by Gary Carpenter for the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra which was first broadcast live from Manchester in December 2012. The piece incorporates extracts from some of the intimate and often surprising conversations which have emerged from The Listening Project, a collaboration between the BBC and the British Library in which family members or friends are invited to share their stories, private thoughts and feelings with an unseen radio audience.



Afshan (left) and her mother Flavia, with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra at Salford Quays (composite image courtesy of the BBC)

In this extract we briefly hear voices from three separate conversations, each poignant or moving in its own way even in this edited form. The third – part of a conversation between a young British Muslim woman of Indian/Pakistani descent and her India-born mother – will hold a particular resonance for some. Afshan, the daughter, begins by gauging her mother Flavia's response to a hypothetical question: how would you feel if I were to marry a man of a different religion? Only then does she take the hypothetical situation a step further – how would you feel if my partner were another woman?

[Excerpt from the Listening Project Symphony BBC Radio 4 29 Dec 2012](#)

The complete *Listening Project Symphony* can be heard on the BBC iPlayer [here](#) and the Listening Project's BBC homepage is [here](#).

Afshan and Flavia's conversation can be heard in full [here](#), while the complete collection of unedited Listening Project conversations can be explored at the British Library's [Sounds website](#).

Follow [@soundarchive](#) for all the latest news.

[The costs of nationalisation](#)

The Shadow Chancellor has come up with new economic doctrine. Apparently if you borrow money to pay for something this means it does not have a cost to you. He accepts that were a Labour government to be elected, it could nationalise say the water industry by offering government bonds to the current shareholders. The good news about this is he does recognise that in a free society and democracy the state does have to offer compensation or a price to asset owners, if it wishes to acquire their asset. The bad news is he thinks issuing government bonds to acquire the shares means taxpayers do not pay!

There are good reasons why advanced democracies do not usually elect governments that say they will confiscate assets held by private owners. Whilst in the first round of any such policy it might prove popular with those who benefit from the confiscation, the second round effects are very negative for many. Investors will be put off buying and building assets in the UK if they think a government might simply steal them. Anyone living in the UK with savings or a pension fund will be very unhappy, because they are likely to hold some shares in the utilities or large companies the state wishes to confiscate. So one cheer for the Shadow Chancellor that he sees it would be a very bad policy to say the state will simply take companies and assets over without payment.

The idea that offering shareholders a bond in return for their shares must mean for it to work that the state would pay fair levels of compensation. The shareholders will only accept the bond as compensation if it is at a realistic level, and if the bond can immediately be converted into cash, as many may not want to hold the bond. They may wish to sell the bond on to someone else. Whichever way you look at it, the government will be in effect paying cash for the shares they buy, and borrowing all the money. That means taxpayers have two big bills to face. They have the annual interest bill on the debt incurred to buy the shares, and the repayment of the bond in due course when the entire cost of the shares falls due. This will mean higher taxes to meet these bills.

Labour may argue that they will enjoy the benefits of the profits of the companies they buy, which they hope will cover the interest cost of the bonds. Here, if we look at history, we see that unfortunately many nationalised industries in the past did not earn enough to pay the costs of their capital. There had to be frequent injections of new capital and writes off of old at the expense of the taxpayer. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that this will be an expensive policy for taxpayers. After all, if Labour also wishes to cut prices and boost wages in these nationalised businesses, that means they will not be making profits.