|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| |  | | --- | |  | |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | |  | | --- | | Dear colleague,  **Thank you!**  This morning UCU gave evidence to the House of Commons education committee about the impact of Brexit on staff and students.   Armed with the dozens of stories you have sent me in recent months I was able to give the committee a clear message that following the vote for Brexit:   * many valued colleagues are now considering leaving the UK; * that academic collaboration with European colleagues is becoming increasingly difficult; and * that many UCU members do not now feel welcome in a place that they have previously called home.   Our higher education system and our country is enriched by staff and students from beyond the UK choosing to work and study here and by reciprocal opportunities to work and study abroad. So I also told the committee that while Brexit is a serious problem, the situation is made even worse by the government's appalling rhetoric on immigration which sends the message to international students around the globe that they are a problem rather than a substantial benefit for the UK.  The committee asked what the government should do to counter this twin problem. While rebuilding the trust of international staff and students is a long term process, I told them that a good start would be to do two things: first, immediately guarantee the right to stay of EU citizens currently resident in the UK; and second, remove international students from their immigration targets. That at least would begin to correct the damage being done to our education system by Brexit.   So thank you again for all the stories you sent me, the surveys you filled in, the letters you wrote to MPs because you have helped to make the case for a better higher education system.  Will the government listen to the voice of UCU, NUS and others? We can but hope but in the meantime we must keep campaigning on behalf of HE and our international colleagues and friends.  You can see [the main points the union made this morning to MPs here](https://list.mercury.ucu.org.uk/t/15435/151504/781/1/) or [read the press release here](https://list.mercury.ucu.org.uk/t/15435/151504/3421/2/?c73c8e04=dWN1LW1lbWJlcnM%3d&60bc612e=YWxs&560a3889=VUNVIHVwZGF0ZTogQnJleGl0IGFuZCBoaWdoZXIgZWR1Y2F0aW9u&x=590c95fb).  Thanks again.   Sally Hunt UCU general secretary | |