

Office for Students: Appointment

Sarah Wollaston Chair, Health Committee, Chair, Liaison Committee (Commons)

I am afraid that I feel Mr Young's comments do cross a line and are indicative of an underlying character. We are talking about the kind of person who would tweet comments to a woman about masturbating over images of refugeesâ€”this does just cross a line. I feel that he should withdraw. When we apply for jobs, we all say whether or not there is anything in our past that could cause embarrassment. If that question was asked and it was answered "no", there is clearly a case for the board revisiting this and asking him to step down.

Jo Johnson Minister of State (Department for Education) (Universities and Science) (Joint with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy), Minister of State (Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) (Universities and Science) (Joint with the Department for Education)

I recognise that, as I have said, many of the tweets have been obnoxious and repellent in many waysâ€”obviously, I have not seen all 40,000 of themâ€”but it is also important to recognise that that tweet was probably eight or nine years old, since which time Mr Young has been on something of a developmental journey. It is possible that there is a capacity for reform, and we want to encourage Mr Young to develop the best sides of his personalityâ€”those that have led to him setting up good schools and to working with disadvantaged children in London so that they can make the most of their potential. It is for those reasons that he has been appointed to the board.

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