

# **SUPPORTING INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY: *MAKING GOOD ON THE PROMISE***

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# GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT IS AT THE HEART OF UK HE

## International students make up...

**19.6%**

of the total student population.



**14%**

of all undergraduates.



**35.8%**

of all postgraduates.



## International research collaborations

**55.2%**

of all UK publications are the product of international research collaborations.



## Transnational education

**693,695**

students are studying for a UK degree overseas.



## Outward student mobility

**7.8%**

of undergraduate students study work or volunteer overseas as part of their degree.



## International staff

**20%**

of all staff at UK universities are international.



## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT NUMBERS



# 19%

International students (EU and non-EU) make up a significant proportion of the UK university student population. In 2014–15 they accounted for **19%** of all students registered at UK universities, some **437,000**.



Universities UK

## UK EXPORT EARNINGS



# £10.8bn

International students are good for the British economy. In 2014–15 they were responsible for **£10.8 billion** of UK export earnings.

## TAX CONTRIBUTION

The economic activity and employment sustained by international students' subsistence spending generated **£1 billion** in tax revenues in 2014–15 – equivalent to the salaries of **31,700** nurses or **25,000** police officers.



## OFF-CAMPUS EXPENDITURE



# £5.4bn

Spending by international students benefits businesses all over Britain. As well as what they spend on university fees and accommodation, in 2014–15 international students spent **£5.4 billion** off-campus on goods and services.

## JOBS GENERATED

# 206,600

Spending by international students supports jobs all over Britain. In 2014–15 they supported **206,600** jobs nationally.



## OUTPUT GENERATED

# £25.8bn

On- and off-campus spending by international students and their visitors generated **£25.8 billion** in gross output in the UK in 2014–15 – equivalent to a **£13.8 billion** contribution to GDP.

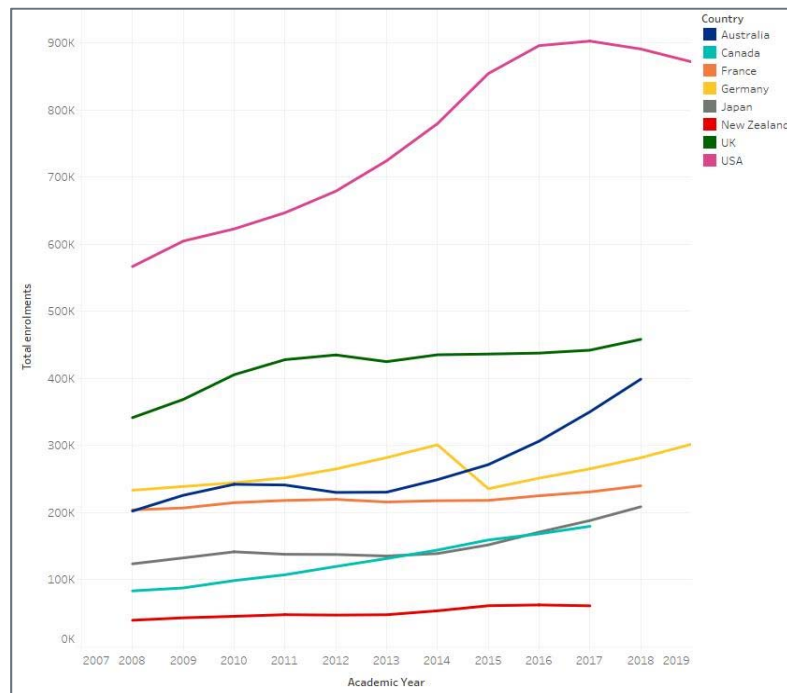


## BOOSTING OTHER SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY



International students are not just an economic asset to the higher education sector: they also boost other British industries. For example, in 2014–15 their off-campus spending added **£750 million** to the UK transport industry and **£690 million** to the retail industry.

## HOW IS THE UK PERFORMING ON THE GLOBAL STAGE?



The latest visa figures for the year to September 2019 show:

- The number of non-EEA students applying for a visa has risen by **14%** to **222,047** – the highest level on record.
- The higher education sector accounted for **85%** of all sponsored applications.
- Applications for university-sponsored Tier 4 visa applications have risen from China (**up 43%**), India (**up 63%**).

# THE INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION STRATEGY



- TARGETS – 600,000 int’l students, £35 billion education exports by 2030
- Focus on providing a “welcoming environment” for int’l students and to develop “increasingly competitive offer”
- Establish a whole-govt approach – not siloed, bringing all parties together
- Commitments that suggest working collaboratively to the sector rather than in isolation
- Providing better data on education exports
- Appointing an International Education Champion – and doing ore to promote the UK education offer

# A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE? GRADUATE OUTCOMES

## Action 5

**The UK Government will work with UUKi and the sector to identify and share good practice in how universities effectively support international students into employment and further study, both here in the UK and when they return to their home nation.** We will also work with the sector to enhance the evidence base on international graduate outcomes and to monitor the UK's comparative position with respect to international student recruitment and the international student experience.

**Ongoing:  
review annually**

# SUPPORTING INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY: MAKING GOOD ON THE PROMISE



**UKCISA** UK Council for International Student Affairs

**Coventry University** 



Universities UK  
International



**AGCAS**

*“Overall, the main objective is to set the agenda for the future – to help identify good practice in the sector, and suggest a way forward for all of those working within UK higher education that want to further enhance the support and guidance that international students and graduates benefit from when choosing to study in the UK.”*





## Audiences

- Careers practitioners in the HE sector
- Pro vice-chancellors and directors with an international, strategy, recruitment or employability remit
- Other HE staff who have responsibility for or play a part in international student recruitment and experience at their university
- Policy makers and advocacy groups in HE

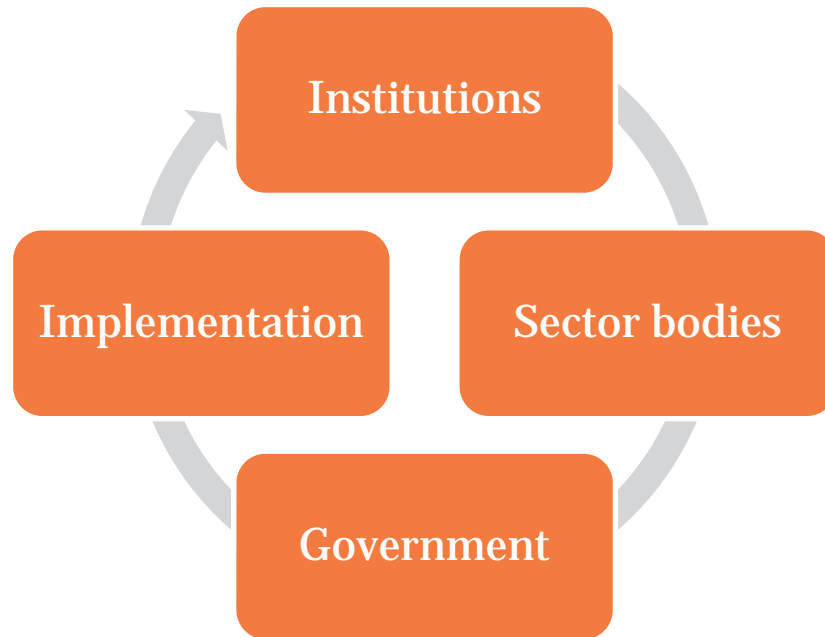


## Aims of the report:

- To provide a snapshot of current practice in this area
- To develop and present case studies illustrating innovative approaches
- To make recommendations that will help stakeholders to better support international graduate employability

*“ I think that the conversation at the moment in higher education and certainly in the university is about how do we provide a really positive student experience which is inclusive of the diversity of our student body, which very much includes our international students. And I think there’s also a recognition that they are an important part of our community and our alumni. We want them to feel supported and connected to the university.”*

## RECOMMENDATIONS



*“...there is scope for more collaboration ... in UK education **how everybody performs affects how everybody is perceived.**”*

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS: INSTITUTIONS

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- Take a more strategic approach to supporting the employability of international students and graduates
- Establish a cross-institution working group – with senior leadership and student/graduate representation
- Be more systematic when monitoring outcomes
- Do more to embed experiences that develop employability skills and work experience in to PGT courses
- Invest in targeted employer engagement with overseas employers – and other resources to support the specific needs of international students
- Use international partnership agreements and contracts to generate new opportunities for all students

## **KEY RECOMMENDATIONS: SECTOR, PROFESSIONAL & REPRESENTATIVE BODIES**

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- Sector, professional and representative bodies should work collectively to develop the resources, support and guidance that institutions, HE professionals and businesses can draw on to enhance the employability of international graduates
- Invest in further research and analysis to support evidence-based, data-driven strategies and interventions
- Support training for higher education and careers professionals to ensure they are better equipped to meet the demands of international students and graduates
- Consider ways in which UK businesses might be better supported to access the pool of international graduate talent in the UK

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS: GOVERNMENT

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- The Government is encouraged to restate its commitment to the International Education Strategy, building on the positive aspirations to deliver an “increasingly competitive offer” and a “more welcoming environment” for international students
- Implement the proposals for the Graduate Route, and work with the sector to promote the opportunity to prospective students
- Encourage international employers engaged through government business to work strategically with UK institutions, helping to identify opportunities for the UK’s international graduates

## **NEXT STEPS: MAKING GOOD ON THE PROMISE**

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- It will be important for relevant sector bodies – including AGCAS, UUKi and UKCISA – to set a clear agenda for the future.
- There needs to be a strategic coordination group, focusing on supporting international student employability through collaboration, comprised of sector bodies and institutional representatives.
- An action plan should be developed by the coordination group, setting out a framework of activities to enhance international graduate employability –to coincide with the first year of the Education Strategy, in March 2020.

“*The government has now laid down the line in terms of their expectations, it’s for the sector to respond.*”

**Pro vice-chancellor**





# Thank you!

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