

University of Cambridge submission to APPG Inquiry

International Students APPG Inquiry: A sustainable future for international students in the UK?

Response submitted by Professor Graham Virgo, Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education, on behalf of the University of Cambridge.

The University of Cambridge would be very happy to engage further with the APPG's inquiry on a sustainable future for international students.

Section 1: In the classroom

What are the educational opportunities and challenges of welcoming international students into our schools, colleges and universities?

Answers could include: impact on all students' cultural understanding, global perspectives, impact on breadth of courses, additional resources needed, integrating UK and international students, impact and cost of immigration compliance.

Collegiate Cambridge has a diverse international student body with students from over 150 different countries studying at various levels and in a wide variety of subject areas. International students contribute significantly to the academic, social and cultural environment of Cambridge as a global University.

In 2017-18, a total of 1,653 non-EU undergraduates and 1,414 non-UK EU undergraduates were enrolled at Cambridge, accounting respectively for 13.3% and 11.4% of our total undergraduate students enrolled that year.

Over the same year, 3,736 non-EU postgraduate students and 2,370 non-UK EU postgraduate students were enrolled at Cambridge, accounting respectively for 36.7% and 23.3% of our total postgraduate students in 2017-18.

The collegiate University highly values the contribution of EU, EEA and overseas international students because we believe they enrich the educational experiences we are able to offer to all of our students. This is a consequence of the broader and more diverse range of perspectives and learning experiences; of students' and teaching officers' exposure to different cultures, languages and scholarly approaches; and of the opportunities to build and strengthen connections and to facilitate exchanges with universities, research hubs, industries and governments across the world.

Financial assistance from the collegiate University and philanthropic sources

The significant contribution made by international students to the University's educational and cultural environment, as well as to our research outputs and international collaborations, means that the collegiate University undertakes considerable fundraising activity to attract the most talented overseas students to Cambridge.

Like other UK universities, Cambridge faces fierce international competition in the recruitment of the best and brightest undergraduate and postgraduate candidates from across the world, and therefore needs to be able to offer globally competitive packages of student support.

The financial assistance available for eligible international undergraduates and postgraduates includes awards distributed by the Cambridge Commonwealth, European and International Trust

(the Cambridge Trust), the Gates Cambridge Trust, College awards and support from the International Disabled Students' Fund, which is administered by the University's Disability Resource Centre.

The Cambridge Trust offers Cambridge International Scholarships for international students undertaking postgraduate studies. In 2016-17, the Trust supported 1,140 students (754 PhD, 203 Master's and 183 Undergraduates) from 100 countries at an average cost per student of £20,160.

The Cambridge Gates Trust also distributes awards to exceptional non-UK postgraduates undertaking residential full-time courses at the University. Since being set up in 2000, the Gates Trust has awarded 1,596 scholarships and spent £91m in support. There are about 225 Gates Scholars from c. 50 countries studying in Cambridge at any one time who pursue the full range of subjects available at the University and who are spread across its departments and Colleges.

The philanthropic support offered to PhD candidates is especially important in ensuring we are internationally competitive, as overseas candidates are not eligible for RCUK studentships, whilst non-UK EU candidates are eligible for a fees-only award (whereas UK candidates can also claim a maintenance stipend).

The University is currently looking to increase fundraising for studentships supporting students who are not eligible for UK grants and loans. In particular we are focusing on scaling up our postgraduate fundraising and recruitment activity, through the implementation of a Postgraduate Recruitment Strategy. Our evidence suggests that the availability of student funding is a critical factor in efforts to attract prospective postgraduates to UK universities. The University has therefore decided to provide a £50m challenge fund to stimulate philanthropy for postgraduate studentships, with the ambition to raise £300 million for such awards.

Integration into the student community

The University's International Student Office provides specialist support to international students. As well as a visa advice service, its staff offer information and guidance on the practical aspects of living and studying in Cambridge. The Office provides web resources, interactive training modules, information guides and welcome events to assist with orientation and induction.

At College level, each College is a close-knit community which is able to support all students' integration into Cambridge life. Individual Colleges' Student Unions provide international students' freshers' welcome packs and handbooks, and some run new international students' events at the beginning of each academic year.

iCUSU, the international branch of the Cambridge University Students' Union, is the umbrella body for all international student societies and students at Cambridge. iCUSU hosts International Freshers' Week, an introductory series of events for international students across the University which takes place in late September.

There is a huge range of international students' societies at Cambridge and many of them seek to provide academic and cultural exchange between Cambridge and their respective countries through academic and social events, as well as recruitment events with overseas employers. In particular, the Cambridge Trust and Cambridge Colleges make financial assistance available to international students to enable them to participate fully in educational, social, sporting, cultural and volunteering opportunities.

Tier 4 compliance

The administrative burden for institutions of sponsoring students under Tier 4 is considerable and could be reduced. Since 2009, Tier 4 has been subject to frequent regulatory changes. These require us to review systems and procedures regularly, adding to the compliance burden. We note, however, that there has been more stability with Tier 4 policy recently, and this has been welcomed.

The University is participating in the Tier 4 pilot, which enables Masters students to access a streamlined visa application process and be granted 6 months' additional leave from their course end date. The initiative also removes the requirement to monitor the attendance of Masters students for immigration compliance purposes. The pilot promotes a more favourable view of the UK immigration system and has been well-received by eligible students. It also provides a more realistic timeframe for students to seek employment or pursue entrepreneurial activities in the UK after graduation. We would like to see the benefits of the pilot rolled out to students at all degree levels.

It is important that international students are provided with viable visa options which facilitate work opportunities after studies and enable the UK to retain highly skilled international graduates within its labour market. We strongly support the concessions within immigration policy that support the switch from Tier 4 into longer-term employment being maintained.

We were very pleased to note the Home Office's recent announcement that Tier 4 student visa holders' eligibility for dependents' visas will now apply to courses of 9 months or more, which would cover all our Masters courses (previously, eligibility was confined to courses of 12 months or more, whilst 60% of our Masters courses are under 12 months).

Post-Brexit EEA student mobility

We need to ensure EEA students continue to have easy access to study opportunities in the UK. Imposing visa requirements would not only send an unwelcoming message but could create a barrier to choosing UK as a study destination.

Section 2: In our communities

What are the challenges and opportunities of integrating international students and their dependants into local communities? Do international students differ from other migrant or visitor communities in this regard?

Answers could include: impact on school education, transport, and housing; facilitating cultural diversity and international dialogue in the local community; co-production of social initiatives between community and education institutions; perception of international students as migrants by the community.

Housing and transport

EU and non-EU undergraduate students at Cambridge are expected to reside in College accommodation, as are UK undergraduates. This reduces the impact on demand for non-College housing accommodation and, due to the central location of most College accommodation, limits students' reliance on local transport modes in order to move around the University site. The majority of students get around Cambridge by cycling, walking or using the University subsidised bus route.

Many postgraduate students are also accommodated in College and University accommodation. Those students who require private accommodation support the local rental market and generally do not encounter housing issues.

In addition, once fully completed, the University's new landmark housing development at Eddington will provide 2,000 postgraduate student rooms. With rent exposure significantly below market rates, any international students who benefit from this investment will have additional money to spend elsewhere in the local economy.

Social and educational initiatives

International students are prominently involved in the activities of the Cambridge Hub, a student-led group offering practical volunteering, skilled placements, project incubation and events.

In 2016-17, of a total of 289 programme participants (i.e. those who volunteer on a project intensively for at least a University term), 65% were UK fee status, 12% were EU, and 23% were non-EU International.

Examples include:

- [Schools Plus](#), a programme working with over 120 students to mentor over 300 school children in 5 Cambridge schools, had a volunteer composition of 75% UK, 8.3% EU and 15.28% international.
- The [Social Innovation Programme](#), the Cambridge Hub's charity consultancy training scheme, brings teams of students into contact with local charities, grassroots groups and larger organisations. In 2016-17, participants were 43.7% UK, 14.07% EU, and 40% International (some students preferred not to state their status). The Social Innovation Programme cohorts have students of all stages of study, grouped into teams of 3-6 people, and every single one of the team leaders in the Lent term cohort (2016-17) was an EU or international student.
- Half of the Cambridge Hub's student executive committee are EU/International, again pointing to a high level of integration in the student volunteering community.

Over the course of a year, the University's STIMULUS programme, which gives Cambridge students the opportunity to volunteer as teaching assistants, donates over 2,000 hours of volunteering to local schools. Of the 101 Cambridge students supporting the teaching of STEM subjects in local schools in the autumn 2017 term, over a third of the total were non-UK, including c24 non-EEA nationals, with particularly strong representation among Chinese students.

Section 3: For our regions and nations

What are the costs and benefits of international students participating in the regional and national labour market and how could we ensure they have a sustainable role in supporting and building local or skilled industry post-study?

Answers could include: impact of UK-wide approach to immigration, working during study, work experience and internships, entrepreneurship and starting businesses in the UK and greater post study work visa options.

Working during study

The University of Cambridge restricts the work students can do during their studies. Undergraduate and Masters students are expected not to work during term-time. PhD students may work up to a maximum of ten hours per week; this work must be academic-related or related to a student's professional or career development.

A number of Tier 4 students work at the University on a time-limited basis. As of October 2017, the total was 81 Tier 4 students, 40 of whom held a time-limited contract of employment whilst 41 were engaged as temporary workers. Many more PhD students undertake work in Colleges, in particular providing undergraduate supervisions, and this is not reflected in the data.

Many undergraduate students undertake internships outside of Cambridge during the summer period, which is actively encouraged. Internships are undertaken in a wide variety of sectors and provide students with valuable work experience.

University job offers

Over 2016-17, 74 Cambridge students sponsored under Tier 4 were made a job offer by the University and supported in switching into Tier 2. This represents 28.3% of all unrestricted Tier 2 Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) issued for the academic year. The vast majority were made job offers for Research Assistant/Associate roles. Out of the 74 CoS assigned, 71 moved into this type of role. The others were offered non-PhD level specialist roles, such as in data management.

Researchers were employed across the University in a wide variety of departments, the most prevalent being Engineering, Physics and Computer Science. Feedback from employers we speak to in the local region, and indeed more widely, suggests that there are marked skills shortages in these disciplines, meaning that the scientific and teaching contribution of international graduates plays an important role in helping to build up local and skilled industry.

Entrepreneurship

The University has endorsed around 50 graduates under the Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur route since the scheme was introduced in 2012. The businesses have had varying success, as would be expected for new businesses and start-ups, but a number of graduates have transferred into Tier 1 Entrepreneur at the end of the two years and continue to grow their businesses in the UK. If this route was not an option, many graduates endorsed under the scheme would still establish their own businesses but overseas. The UK therefore reaps the benefits of having innovative and rapidly growing companies, many of which are at the forefront of technological advances within their sectors, basing themselves here long term.

Some examples of the businesses supported under Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur are outlined below:

- A genomics technology company developing molecular tools and techniques for DNA sequencing. The company has now successfully developed its core technology which is a group of products that allow researchers - and eventually doctors - to expand the amount and sophistication of information that they can generate with DNA sequencing, across a whole slew of important genetic analyses.
- The development of a free mobile app and pharmacy platform that has now been launched and gained over 8000 active patients through more than 200 pharmacy partners to date. The pharmacy integrated mobile app solution helps chronic disease patients manage their prescriptions with the professional help from local pharmacies. They also integrate with pharmacy IT and GP system providers to automate medication usage further and improve adherence. The business now employs 10 programmers, sales and marketers.
- A company manufacturing solar energy generators with the goal of helping global industry switch to lower-cost renewable energy sources. The business was founded to address a dislocation in the energy market where risk and complexity were discouraging remote business from adopting solar. The company takes existing solar tech and makes it modular and portable, yet similar in cost and performance to traditional large-scale systems. It is the

world's first mobile solar field that uses tracking technology, enabling up to 30% more energy production from each panel installed.

We look forward to receiving further information from the Home Office about the new Start-up route, which will replace Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur next spring. We would like to see permission under the new route granted for a longer period as only being able to secure the visa for an initial year and having to extend it for the second year is costly and unnecessarily bureaucratic. This lack of stability could also impact on the entrepreneur's ability to secure interest and investment in the business.

Tier 4 Doctorate Extension Scheme

Around 20% of eligible Tier 4 PhD students at the University opt to switch into the Doctorate Extension Scheme (DES) at the end of their studies. The scheme is designed to provide a bridge for PhD students to Tier 2 (and Tier 1). It provides an extended timeframe for graduates to gain work experience or secure longer-term employment in the UK. The DES is particularly useful for graduates moving into research roles where funding is limited to a year or less, or for those moving into academic jobs as they can often publish from their PhD whilst also applying and interviewing. As such, it helps the UK to retain highly skilled, highly qualified and potentially highly mobile individuals. The considerable cost of obtaining a DES visa followed by the cost of obtaining a Tier 2 visa can, however, be discouraging for individuals at an early stage in their career.

Non-EEA Cambridge leavers' employment in the UK

Returns from non-EEA graduates to the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey over the past 5 years (2011/12-2015/16) provide an indication of the extent to which Cambridge students stay to work in the UK after their studies. Since 2011/12, of those graduates who responded, 1,134 were working in the UK which makes up 22% of respondents. 98% were in graduate level employment, the most prevalent sectors being Research (science), IT and banking and investment.

Section 4: For research, trade and soft power

What role do international students play in increasing global research capabilities, trade links and soft power for the UK and what strategies could be implemented to support this further?

The inquiry will take evidence from a range of expert stakeholders including: international students; school, college, and university leaders; education, business and local community representatives; government; and researchers.

Scientific and educational contribution of postgraduate research students

Postgraduate research students are integral to the success of the University's world-class research and 56.4% are non-UK domiciled. Such students develop highly specialised knowledge, problem solving and leadership skills which help to maximise the impact of UK research on UK society and on the wider world, including addressing grand challenges which are shared by nations globally.

Many postgraduate research students also undertake undergraduate supervisions, enhancing the learning opportunities for undergraduate students and supporting teaching across the collegiate University. These students are a vital part of UK universities' talent pipeline and make excellent candidates for postdoctoral research and Principal Investigator roles, thereby helping to attract further research funding and to sustain UK institutions' international competitiveness.

International alumni and 'soft power'

Many of our international alumni have gone on to build academic, scientific, business, diplomatic and international development-related networks with countries and institutions across the world. We have compiled the following case studies as examples of the roles international graduates have played in extending UK soft power and influence abroad.

Cambridge Trust

The following alumni who attended Cambridge as overseas students and received support from the Cambridge Trust are influential leaders in multilateral science, education and international development projects:

Dr Arabinda Mitra is Adviser and Head of International Bilateral Co-operation at the Government of India's Department of Science and Technology. He oversees India's international science, technology and innovation relationships with over 40 countries worldwide. He has also served as Indian representative for International Antarctic Treaty bodies like SCAR and COMNAP, and as the first Executive Director of the bi-national Indo-US Science and Technology Forum.

Professor George Oduro is Pro Vice-Chancellor and Associate Professor of Educational Leadership at the University of Cape Coast, Ghana. He is a Leadership and Management Training Facilitator for the British Council's Connecting Classrooms Project and the Local Director of the Leadership for Learning (Ghana-Cambridge) programme.

Dr Nidhi Singal is a Fellow of Hughes Hall and a Reader at the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge. Dr Singal's research interests include addressing educational inequity and improving the quality of teaching and learning processes for the poorest children in South Asia and Africa, with a particular focus on those with disabilities. She has worked on various international research projects, including those funded by the Department for International Development (DFID, UK) and the Economic and Social Research Council (UK). She has worked in an advisory capacity with international organisations, such as CBM, Handicap International and UNESCO. Nidhi has published widely both in high quality peer reviewed journals and for wider audience.

Gates Cambridge Trust

The Gates Cambridge Trust currently counts over 1,340 alumni who are helping to improve lives across the world. Gates Cambridge Scholars are expected to be academically outstanding with the ability to make a significant contribution to their discipline while in Cambridge. Successful applicants must also demonstrate clear leadership potential and a commitment to improving the lives of others.

We have provided below a small selection of case studies of Gates Cambridge Scholars who have gone on to highly influential and internationally recognised roles:

Rajiv Chowhury [2009] completed his PhD in Public Health and Primary Care and was the first Gates Cambridge Scholar to be awarded the Bill Gates Senior Prize in recognition of his work. Rajiv is currently joint Principal Investigator on CAPABLE [Cambridge Programme to Assist Bangladesh in Lifestyle and Environmental risk reduction], a programme which will see researchers from the UK and developing countries working together as equal partners. CAPABLE is funded by an £8M grant from the Global Challenges Research Fund, which will enable the establishment of a 100,000-person cohort study from across Bangladesh to study their long-term health. The aim is to develop simple, scalable and effective solutions to control major environmental and lifestyle risk factors in Bangladesh.

Srilakshmi Raj [2007] has recently been named as one of Forbes' 30 under 30 in healthcare. Sri has been doing medical research since she was 14 years old. Now a postdoc at Cornell, she works as a population geneticist focused on how evolutionary adaptations have elevated or lowered different groups' susceptibility to chronic disease. Her research spans from hypertension in African patients to adaptation to cold among native Siberians.

Daniel Storisteanu [2012], Toby Norman [2011] and Alexandra Grigore [2012] developed a tech start-up, SimPrints, which has recently won a \$2m innovation prize to prevent maternal and child deaths in the hardest-to-reach regions of the world. The start-up was selected as among 15 of the world's most promising ideas to prevent maternal and child mortality by Saving Lives at Birth, a 'Grand Challenge for Development' funded by the Gates Foundation, USAID, UKaid, and the Canadian, Korean and Norwegian governments. Simprints simultaneously received a \$250k innovation award to begin R&D on neonate fingerprinting technology that can improve vaccination rates across the developing world. Cambridge tech giant ARM Ltd has also announced that it will match the prize to the tune of \$200k to expand Simprints' integration with leading global health technology platforms.

In 2013, two Gates Cambridge Scholars – Greg Nance [2011] and Bart Szewczyk[2001] – were named in the 99 most influential foreign policy leaders under 33 by the Diplomatic Courier and Young Professionals in Foreign Policy. Greg Nance has also received recognition from the Jefferson Awards for Public Service as a Globe Changer in 2011 and was selected to attend the 2017 World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

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