

**Westminster Higher Education Forum Keynote Seminar: UK universities as a destination of choice for international students - recruitment, regulation, student experience and global competition**

Timing: Morning, Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> October 2015

Venue: Sixty One Whitehall, London SW1A 2ET

Agenda subject to change



**WESTMINSTER  
HIGHER EDUCATION  
FORUM**

- 8.30 - 9.00 Registration and coffee
- 9.00 - 9.05 **Chair's opening remarks**  
**Dr Fabrizio Trifiro**, Manager International/Deputy Head International, Quality Development Group, Quality Assurance Agency
- 9.05 - 9.55 **Student visas: regulation and its impact so far**  
*To what extent have the recruitment and visa compliance practices of universities changed following the introduction of a 10% cap on the level of visa rejections permitted for institutions with highly trusted sponsor status in November 2014? How many universities are at risk of losing their status due to the new regulations; and what are the potential financial impacts on institutions in light of the higher tuition fees paid by international students? How can the UK government and higher education institutions address concerns that the current immigration system creates a perception that the UK is unwelcoming to international students, particularly in India? Is the growth in TNE entrance routes helping to address this? What impact do the Prevent strategy measures aimed at tackling extremism on campus have on the pressures experienced by students and universities during recruitment and application processes? In light of concerns about the rigor of SELT (Secure English Language Test) testing for prospective students, what more can be done to ensure the English language proficiency of international students? How do current student visa regulations affect the level of graduate skills in the UK labour market, and the needs of sectors in which there is a skills shortage?*  
**Pat Saini**, Partner, Head of Immigration Team, Penningtons Manches  
**Pam Tatlow**, Chief Executive, million+  
**Mostafa Rajaai**, International Students' Officer, National Union of Students  
**Mark Hilton**, Executive Director, Policy, London First  
**Huan Japes**, Deputy Chief Executive, English UK  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.55 - 10.25 **The growing use of recruitment agents: value and regulation**  
*In light of the increasing use of agents by universities and international students, how best can this growing sector be regulated to ensure compliance with visa regulations? Does the use of agents by universities provide value for money for the sector, particularly at a time of cuts within the sector and following reports of growing commission rates? How can the expertise of agents be best utilised to support the recruitment of high quality candidates to UK higher education institutions?*  
**Vincenzo Raimo**, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement), University of Reading  
**Allyson Hewitt**, Senior International Recruitment Manager, Newcastle University  
**Colin Chen**, Managing Director, Overseas Student Service Centre (OSSC)  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.25 - 10.30 **Chair's closing remarks**  
**Dr Fabrizio Trifiro**, Manager International/Deputy Head International, Quality Development Group, Quality Assurance Agency
- 10.30 - 10.55 Coffee
- 10.55 - 11.00 **Chair's opening remarks**  
**The Earl of Selborne**, Chair, House of Lords Science and Technology Committee
- 11.00 - 11.45 **The perception of international students in the UK**  
**Sue Edwards**, Director of Compliance and Accreditation, Kaplan International Colleges  
**Marketing the UK as a destination for study in an increasingly competitive global environment**  
**Kevin Van-Cauter**, Higher Education Adviser, British Council  
**Tim O'Brien**, Vice President, Global Business Intelligence and Development, INTO University Partnerships  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.45 - 11.55 **Ensuring a quality study experience for international students in the UK**  
**Dr Fabrizio Trifiro**, Manager International/Deputy Head International, Quality Development Group, Quality Assurance Agency
- 11.55 - 12.30 **Experience, consumer protection and support for international students**  
*How can the experience of international students at UK institutions be improved? How effective is the level of academic, English language and integration support offered by universities to international students in enabling their success; what can be learnt from best practice in this area? How can the consumer rights of international students in the UK be better protected? Should specific safeguards be put in place to protect students affected by college closures or the removal of highly trusted status from their sponsors; how could this be formulated? With high fees for international students compared to EU and home students, does UK higher education represent value for money in comparison to global competitors?*  
**Peter Ingram**, Head of International Partnerships, Plymouth University  
**Evelyn Vera-Barreto**, Head of Education and International Cooperation, Embassy of Mexico, United Kingdom  
**Sanam Arora**, President, National Indian Students' Union  
Questions and comments from the floor with **Dr Fabrizio Trifiro**, Manager International/Deputy Head International, Quality Development Group, Quality Assurance Agency
- 12.30 - 12.55 **Government's priorities for the future of international student recruitment**  
**Brian Johnson**, Head, International Higher Education, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 - 13.00 **Chair's and Westminster Higher Education Forum closing remarks**  
**The Earl of Selborne**, Chair, House of Lords Science and Technology Committee  
**Jonny Roberts**, Associate Editor, Westminster Higher Education Forum

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