



# Experience, Consumer Protection and Support for International Students

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# Higher Education in the United Kingdom

**435,000**

International  
Students

**53 %**

From China & India

**4 of 6**

TOP Global Unis

**Inspiring**

Teaching

**Excellent**

Facilities

**Incredible**

Diversity

**Industry**

Partnerships

**Ground-breaking**

Research

**Support**

UKCISA, NUS, NISU

# Who Needs to be at the Heart of Policymaking?

- Various issues surrounding international students in the UK, notably:
  - Closure of Post Study Work visa
  - Bogus Colleges
  - Mid-Cycle Changes
  - Other related issues – health surcharge, landlord check, attendance checks...
- International Students need to be at **heart** of student immigration policymaking (and not migration targets or vote-bank politics)
- Customer at the heart of the business...Customer needs dictate the Product
- Policymaking should be designed to meet student needs

# The Definition of Education is Changing...

- Demand for education is (mostly) now *'Derived Demand'*
  - Education today is a means to an end, not the end goal in itself
- Today students are looking for the right 'package'
  - World-class education
  - Global work experience
  - A good international living experience
- Not everyone wants to stay abroad in the long run
  - British Council research – only 3% international students want to shift abroad permanently
  - Our own experiences with students confirm this
- A Post Study Work visa is key to achieving the **most crucial work experience** which is a **must** for the returning student

# Manifesto Ask – Post Study Work

All students at graduate or postgraduate level should be entitled to a period of post study work in the UK

 #myvotematters

# Fair Visa Fair Chance



- Proposed visa scheme for Indian students to gain work experience in the UK conditional on return to India in the medium to long run
- More than 3000+ signatures received in support by just word of mouth
- Background to concept:
  - Most Indian students do not wish to settle abroad permanently
  - In today's globalised world, they need to supplement their UK education with practical work experience
  - Indian students are struggling – they are suffering from a new difficult cycle whereby they are finding it very difficult to find work experience to complement their degrees in the UK while also losing out on building their network in the Indian job market by missing on-campus recruitment opportunities in India
  - UK is struggling with migration targets and loss of various monetary & non-monetary benefits of international students
  - India is struggling with brain drain as many of its best and brightest seek employment abroad

**A Win - Win situation**

# Fair Visa Fair Chance



## Recommendation:

- Develop a 2 year employment or internship scheme conditional on return to India. Students not able to switch into any other category, route does not lead to settlement. No recourse to public funds.
- The Indian government should incentivise these returning professionals into Public Sector jobs to have the most effective impact within the Government as well as on the wider community
- The subjects eligible for this scheme should be carefully chosen and must comply with the requirements of both countries' shortage subject lists

**The problem is unidirectional for both countries**

# 'Bogus' Colleges and 'Crackdowns'

- Recent 'immigration crackdown' and subsequent QAA review has negatively affected numerous students
- Completely innocent Indian students have been caught unfairly amidst migration targets and bogus colleges' profit motives
- Even prospective students have been affected...

*"I am really **disappointed**. I left a prestigious job at **Tata Consultancy Services** in India to pursue MBA Finance at the University of Sunderland London campus starting August 2014. After receiving my visa and fulfilling necessary requirements, I am told in July 2014 by the University that they are withdrawing offers for 2014 due to them being put through fraud college review. I have a 7.5 IELTS score and can communicate perfectly well in English. This **shocking news** has come my way a **mere few weeks** before I am due to start an entirely new life in the UK, something I have been planning for years. Why am I being **harassed** and put through this? Why is there **no support** from the University, the British Council, the UK government or the Indian government? Who am I supposed to speak to? I can't continue studies now, I can't return to my job for another year due to company policies and I have taken out a loan to fund my studies that I can't repay early. Please help me"*

**Students should not have to pay for Institutional Failures**



# Manifesto Ask – Student Protection

No student who has not been found to be at fault should have their visa curtailed merely because their sponsor has lost their licence

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# Manifesto Ask – Student Protection

All students should have access to some form of student protection scheme and independent arbitration when disputes cannot be resolved internally

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# Improving and Communicating the Support Available

- While some support is available, international students aren't necessarily advised of this
- Awareness of rights and active engagement is needed
- Recommendations:
  - i. Development of an International Students body ran by students and alumni, for students
  - ii. Development of a Regulatory Framework
  - iii. International Students Identity Card

**Active Engagement and Support will really demonstrate the UK's Welcome**

# The Need to Setup an International Students' Body

Development of an International Students body created by the UK Government for the welfare of students

Key Responsibilities:

- Work **globally** to increase student inflow to the UK
- Work **domestically** to represent, retain and regulate students
- Provide **students protection** against financial and educational loss
- Increase **ease of studying** in the UK by addressing the hassles students face – a one stop 'Identity Card' solution should be implemented
- Increase students' **awareness of their rights and responsibilities**
- **Regulate and oversee** the work of 'agents' and 'consultants' in priority countries, particularly those where the issue of misleading marketing has been identified
- Create a **personal connection** with the families of students studying in the UK, via e.g. periodic newsletter (securing future students)

**Immensely powerful marketing tool to ensure increased revenues to the UK**

# Clear Messaging is Required

- The government should send a clear message that should not conflict with its policies
- Students are **brand ambassadors** & go back as *Friends of the UK*
  - UK
  - City they studied in
  - University they studied at
- Any campaign undertaken should demonstrate how the government fully recognises and celebrates the financial, cultural and intellectual value of international students to the UK. Helping set up a dedicated international students body and easing some of the requirements such as landlord checks, mandatory attendance recording will go a long way to improve the perception of the UK in the eyes of the international student body

**Current messaging is Oxymoron-ic**

# Manifesto Ask – Value Recognition

The Whole Of Government Needs To  
Recognise And Celebrate The Financial,  
Cultural And Intellectual  
Value Of International Students To The UK

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# Manifesto Ask – Student, Not Migrant

International students should be excluded from all further policy and debate on reducing net migration

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# UK Higher Education is Prized and Unparalleled

- The UK is a most fantastic destination for studies and millions of students all over the world dream of studying in the UK
- But this rich heritage is being severely negatively impacted by what clearly seem to be short term political motives

**Future policymaking must focus on facilitating an environment where the international student is enabled rather than constrained**