

**Westminster Higher Education Forum policy conference:
Next steps for UK transnational education**

Timing: Morning, Wednesday, 18th March 2026

Taking Place Online

Draft agenda subject to change



WESTMINSTER
HIGHER EDUCATION
FORUM

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Chair to be announced
- 9.05 **The current regulatory landscape for UK transnational education and priorities moving forward**
Charles Watson, Senior Regulation Manager, Office for Students
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.30 **Priorities for developing the UK's TNE offer - evolving demand and delivery objectives**
implications of the International Education Strategy | coordination with trade, industrial strategy, and wider diplomatic objectives | market sizing and scaling overseas delivery | priority regions | diversification to manage regulatory and geopolitical risk | leveraging TNE to support host-country skills pipelines | research collaboration and partnerships | soft-power and reputational safeguards | ethical considerations, academic freedom and institutional autonomy | supporting universities' financial resilience and income diversification through TNE | implications of shifting aid and immigration approaches for long-term sector planning | market access and navigating restrictive regulatory environments | new partnership guidelines in countries such as Nigeria and India | the role of ambassadors, diplomatic networks and Local Education Champions | balancing expansion with compliance, governance and reputational risk | aligning TNE growth with export priorities
Professor David Carter, University of Reading
Jennifer Sloan, Consultant, SUMS Consulting
Andrew Church, Senior Associate, Pinsent Masons
Senior representative, partner institution
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.25 **'Delivering mutual benefit and contributing to sustainable development through TNE provision'**
Eduardo Ramos, Head, Higher Education Systems and Internationalisation, British Council
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.45 **Chair's closing remarks**
Chair to be announced
- 10.50 Break
- 11.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Chair to be announced
- 11.05 **Building digital capacity for inclusive TNE provision**
Elizabeth Newall, Senior Sector Specialist, Digital Transformation, Jisc
- 11.15 **Developing workforce capacity to support digital TNE strategies**
Staff training, CPD, and cross-jurisdiction teaching skills | staffing requirements for international delivery | workforce models - local hire vs UK mobility | managing capacity across domestic and overseas commitments | shared sector approaches | building expertise | addressing variation in digital competence among staff and students | supporting pedagogy and assessment | academic integrity | financial sustainability of operating models | working around gaps in host-country digital infrastructure | licensing restrictions affecting access to learning materials | workforce implications of scaling provision at pace | skills requirements to support AI-enabled teaching, learning and assessment | maintaining quality, consistency and compliance across digitally enabled multi-country delivery
Professor Stuart Perrin, Associate Principal, XJTLU Entrepreneur College, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University
Fariba Soetan, Head, Policy and Research, Association of Commonwealth Universities
Senior representative, edTech
- 11.25 Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.40 **Safeguarding the quality and credibility of UK qualifications in TNE**
Shannon Stowers, Director of International Policy and Engagement, Quality Assurance Agency
- 11.50 **Quality assurance, global standards alignment, and transparency**
OfS risk-based oversight for TNE | European Standards and Guidelines and international QA alignment | pressures on British Council resources and its ability to support TNE activity | partner due-diligence and metric for consistent standards | graduate mobility and employability | coordination of oversight across UK regulators, host authorities, and international bodies | reliance on alternative diplomatic and regulatory channels | recognition for UK degrees delivered abroad | safeguarding consistent learning outcomes across jurisdictions | implications for graduate mobility and employability in priority regions | safeguarding student welfare in varied cultural and regulatory settings | managing risks associated with concentrated market exposure | implications of tougher compliance expectations for overseas delivery models | enforcement tools and thresholds, including recruitment caps and licence revocation, and their relevance for TNE | the role of quality assurance in supporting the UK's global education brand
Thomas Pollitt, Partner, VVV
Bobby Mehta, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Global Engagement, University of Portsmouth
Riffat Shaheen, Vice President, Postgraduate and International, University of Nottingham Students' Union
Chris Lyons, Head, Policy and Engagement, UK ENIC, Ecctis
- 12.10 Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.30 **Next steps for UK Transnational Education - policy priorities and delivery**
Oscar Tapp-Scotting, Deputy Director, International, Department for Education
Senior speaker confirmed from **Department for Business and Trade**
- 13.00 **Chair's and Westminster Higher Education Forum closing remarks**
Chair to be announced
Sean Cudmore, Westminster Higher Education Forum