


МИНИСТЕРСТВО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ И НАУКИ РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ
Федеральное государственное автономное образовательное учреждение
высшего образования
«ТЮМЕНСКИЙ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННЫЙ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ»

ИНСТИТУТ СОЦИАЛЬНО-ГУМАНИТАРНЫХ НАУК
кафедра английского языка

РЕКОМЕНДОВАНО К ЗАЩИТЕ
В ГЭК И ПРОВЕРЕНО НА ОБЪЕМ
ЗАИМСТВОВАНИЯ

Заведующий кафедрой
д-р филол. наук, проф.


Н.Н. Белозерова
8 июня 2018 г.

ВЫПУСКНАЯ КВАЛИФИКАЦИОННАЯ РАБОТА
(магистерская диссертация)

КОНЦЕПТ 'INTERNATIONAL STUDENT' В УСЛОВИЯХ ГЛОБАЛИЗАЦИИ
(НА МАТЕРИАЛЕ КОНТЕНТ-АНАЛИЗА ТЕКСТОВ ОНЛАЙН-ВЕРСИИ ГАЗЕТЫ
"THE GUARDIAN")

45.04.02 Лингвистика

Магистерская программа «Теория и практика преподавания иностранных языков и культур»

Выполнил работу
Студент 2 курса
очной формы обучения



Башмакова
Анастасия
Юрьевна

Научный руководитель
канд. филол. наук, доцент



Пономарева
Елена
Юрьевна

Рецензент
канд. филол. наук, ст. преп.
кафедры английского языка



Новокрещенных
Екатерина
Владимировна

г. Тюмень, 2018

СОДЕРЖАНИЕ

ВВЕДЕНИЕ.....	3
ГЛАВА 1. КОНТЕНТ-АНАЛИЗ ДИСКУРСА СМИ.....	6
1.1 Понятие дискурса СМИ	6
1.2 Типы текстов в дискурсе СМИ.....	9
1.3. Критический анализ дискурса СМИ.....	11
1.4 Контент-анализ: понятие и особенности	15
1.5 Описание программ Yoshikoder и Concordance.....	18
Выводы по главе 1.....	20
ГЛАВА 2. ОСНОВНЫЕ ПОНЯТИЯ И КАТЕГОРИИ КОНЦЕПТА...	22
2.1 Понятие концепта.....	22
2.2 Структура концепта.....	25
2.3 Методология анализа концепта.....	29
Выводы по главе 2.....	33
ГЛАВА 3. КОНЦЕПТ “INTERNATIONAL STUDENT” В УСЛОВИЯХ ГЛОБАЛИЗАЦИИ.....	35
3.1. Процесс глобализации высшего образования.....	35
3.2. Общая характеристика материала.....	39
3.3. Контент-анализ текстов газеты “The Guardian”.....	46
3.4. Анализ и интерпретация концепта“international student”...	53
Выводы по главе 3.....	62
ЗАКЛЮЧЕНИЕ.....	64
БИБЛИОГРАФИЧЕСКИЙ СПИСОК.....	68
ПРИЛОЖЕНИЯ.....	75

ВВЕДЕНИЕ

Тема магистерской диссертации – «Концепт 'international student' в условиях глобализации (на материале контент-анализа текстов онлайн-версии газеты "The Guardian")». Проблема влияния, оказываемого СМИ на формирование концептов в условиях глобализации широко разрабатывается в русле теории медиадискурса и когнитивной лингвистики.

Актуальность темы исследования обусловлена тем, что на данный момент в науке существует потребность в подробном описании особенностей протекания феномена коммуникации, осуществляемой средствами массовой информации. В последние годы понятие дискурса СМИ (или медиадискурса) прочно вошло в обиход гуманитарной науки. Сегодня к осмыслению СМИ и их содержательных форм (дискурса и текста) обращаются представители самых разных научных направлений – социологии, стилистики, коммуникативистики, социолингвистики и медиалингвистики (Д. Буссе, В. Тойберт, И.А. Стернин, Т.Г. Добросклонская, В.Г. Костомаров).

Кроме этого, изучение формирования и восприятия концептов в условиях глобализации становятся все более актуальными. Пристальное внимание современных лингвистов уделяется проблеме концептуализации внешнего и внутреннего мира (З.Д. Попова, Е.С. Кубрякова, Ю.С. Степанов, В.И. Карасик, В.А. Маслова). Практически ежегодно организуются научные конференции и семинары, которые посвящены данной проблеме. Однако, несмотря на большое количество работ, ряд вопросов еще не получил должного освещения, в частности: влияние СМИ на формирование концепта "international student". Таким образом, изучение новостных материалов и их тематики в средствах массовой информации Великобритании будет способствовать более глубокому осмыслению концепта "international student".

Объектом исследования является концепт “international student” в британских СМИ, **предметом** - языковые средства, связанные с его концептуализацией.

Цель данной работы заключается в выявлении языковых средств, влияющих на формирование концепта “international student” в британской прессе. Достижение поставленной цели предполагает решение следующих **задач**:

1. Осветить основные положения, составляющие теоретическую основу изучения концептов, дискурса СМИ и контент-анализа;
2. Рассмотреть тематические группы статей, посвященных иностранным студентам;
3. Выявить лексические репрезентанты концепта “international student”
4. Выявить индивидуальные черты, соответствующие концепту “international student” в британских СМИ.

Для решения поставленных задач использовались следующие **методы**:

1. Лексико-семантический анализ;
2. Концептуальный анализ.
3. Фреймовый анализ;
4. Контент-анализ;
5. Критический анализ дискурса
6. Статистический анализ;

Материалом исследования послужил корпус из 88 новостных материалов, освещающих темы, связанные с жизнью и проблемами иностранных студентов в Великобритании. Корпус сформирован методом сплошной выборки из текстов online-версий британской газеты "The Guardian, опубликованных в период с 1.01.2015 по 31.12.2017, объемом 241 страница.

Апробация результатов исследования проводилась на следующих научных мероприятиях: VI Студенческая научно-практическая конференция

«Множественность интерпретаций: Цифровая перезагрузка», грамота за 3 место (Тюмень, ТюмГУ, 16.02.2018), 69-я студенческая научная конференция, диплом I степени (Тюмень, ТюмГУ, 19.04.2018), 56-я Международная научная студенческая конференция 2018 (Новосибирск, НГУ, 22-27.04.2018), также в печати находятся тезисы и статья в сборниках: «Материалы 56-й Международной научной студенческой конференции МНСК-2018: Иностранные языки: лингвистика и межкультурная коммуникация», «Материалы VI Студенческая научно-практической конференции Множественность интерпретаций Цифровая перезагрузка».

Новизна исследования заключается в применении востребованных на сегодняшний день количественных методов лингвистического исследования и оригинальной постановке темы.

Теоретическая значимость исследования заключается в развитии положений теории концепта и дискурса СМИ, в углублении и конкретизации методики контент-анализа, а также в привлечении нового материала в исследовании дискурса СМИ.

Структура исследования: научная работа состоит из введения, трех глав (двух теоретических и одной практической), сопровождающихся выводами и заключения. К работе прилагается список литературы, список использованных словарей и приложения. Библиография насчитывает 51 источник на русском, 18 источников на английском языке, 7 словарей и 1 источник исследования.

ГЛАВА 1. КОНТЕНТ-АНАЛИЗ ДИСКУРСА СМИ

1.1 Понятие дискурса СМИ

Средства массовой информации, находящиеся в фокусе исследования данной работы, являются на сегодняшний день неотъемлемым влиятельным элементом жизни общества. С древних времен средства информации изменялись по форме и содержанию, менялась их популярность и отношение самого общества к ним. На современном этапе они включают в себя прессу, то есть печатные издания, радио- и телевидение, интернет. В данном параграфе мы рассмотрим специфику понятия дискурса СМИ.

Существует множество научных исследований, посвященных описанию СМИ и медиадискурса. Понимание дискурса – очень широкая многоуровневая познавательная деятельность. Однако само определение дискурса СМИ, или медиадискурса, основывается на общем понятии дискурса, поэтому стоит кратко остановиться на том, что обозначает сам термин «дискурс». Данное понятие используется в ряде гуманитарных дисциплин: философии, социологии, культурологии, социолингвистике. Согласно новой философской энциклопедии **дискурс** – это «многозначное понятие, использовавшееся в истории классической философии для характеристики последовательного перехода от одного дискретного шага к другому и развертывания мышления» [Гусев 2001]. В лингвистике дискурс понимается как «связный текст, сверхфразовое единство». Так, в словаре прикладной лингвистики, дискурс, в узком языковом значении, определяется как «словесная запись речевого события» [Davies 2016, 37].

В современной лингвистике данный термин появился в середине XX века в связи с развитием когнитивной лингвистики. Здесь дискурс рассматривается как «деятельность, включающая в себя в качестве исходного материала язык, а способом его реализации которого является речь с присущей ей процессуальностью» [Азимов, Щукин 2009]. Немецкие ученые Д. Буссе и В. Тойберт определяли дискурс как «тексты, охватывающие какую-либо тему, область знаний или концепт, состоящие из высказывания,

коммуникации, функций, взаимосвязей и, благодаря перекрещивающимся фрагментам, образующих общие связи» [Busse, Teubert 2013]. Т.Г. Добросклонская пишет, что дискурс является сложным коммуникативным явлением, «которое охватывает всю совокупность экстралингвистических факторов, сопровождающих процесс коммуникации, включая отправителя сообщения, его получателя, социальный контекст, особенности производства, распространения и восприятия информации, культурно-идеологический фон и т.д.» [Добросклонская 2014]. Таким образом, проанализировав определения различных областей знания, можно выделить ключевой компонент концепции дискурса – всесторонний комплексный подход к анализу речевой деятельности человека и общества.

Медиа-взаимодействия создают свой собственный дискурс. Переходя к рассмотрению понятия дискурса СМИ, можно обратиться к трудам Татьяны Георгиевны Добросклонской, которая в самом общем виде определяет **дискурс СМИ** как «совокупность процессов и продуктов речевой деятельности в сфере массовой коммуникации во всем богатстве и сложности их взаимодействия» [Добросклонская 2015]. Энн О'Кифф считает, что дискурс СМИ - это «широкий термин, который может относиться к совокупности того, как реальность представлена в вещательных и печатных СМИ, от телевидения до газет» [O'Keeffe 2006]. М.Р. Желтухина рассматривает термин дискурса СМИ как «связный, вербальный или невербальный, устный или письменный текст в совокупности с прагматическими, социокультурными, психологическими и другими факторами, выраженный средствами массовой коммуникации, взятый в событийном аспекте, представляющий собой действие, участвующий в социокультурном взаимодействии и отражающий механизм сознания коммуникантов» [Желтухина 2003]. Поэтому, рассматривая дискурс СМИ, можно сказать, что он представляет собой совокупность текстов, функционирующих в сфере массовой коммуникации и отражающих комплекс социокультурных особенностей.

Таким образом, дискурс СМИ представляет собой набор процессов и продуктов речевой деятельности человека в области массовой коммуникации во всем богатстве и сложности их взаимодействия. Более того, средства массовой информации в контексте глобализации не только выполняют развлекательную функцию, но и передают информацию и мнения о том, как устроен мир, о поведении людей, этических нормах, а также о проблемах, с которыми сталкиваются люди, и о доступных решениях для борьбы с ними. СМИ влияют на мнение читателей или зрителей, и это воздействие может быть положительным или отрицательным. В настоящее время важно осознавать это влияние на восприятие и концептуализацию иностранных студентов в мире.

1.2 Типы текстов в дискурсе СМИ

В дискурсе СМИ выделяют несколько типов текстов. Для начала, необходимо понимать, что **текст СМИ** рассматривается не только как лингвистическое, но и как культурологическое понятие. С точки зрения лингвистики текст СМИ обладает такими признаками текста как: целостность, связанность, информация о говорящем и адресате. Как культурологическое понятие текст СМИ предоставляет «ценностную информацию о состоянии языковой культуры общества» [Сметанина 2002].

Тексты СМИ относятся к публицистическому стилю, включающему в себя элементы как функционально-делового, так и научного стилей. Главной особенностью данного стиля является «чередование экспрессии и стандарта», обусловленное функцией воздействия на адресата и функцией сообщения [Костомаров 1974]. Традиционно **жанры** делятся на информационные, аналитические, сатирические, художественно-публицистические, рекламные. Однако, в зависимости от преобладания либо стандарта, либо экспрессии в текстах СМИ, можно выделить два более крупных подстиля: информационный и публицистический, каждый из которых имеет собственную жанровую структуру. К информационному подстилю относятся все информационные жанры (хроникальная и информационная заметки, репортаж, корреспонденция, интервью). Публицистическому подстилю соответствуют аналитические жанры (рецензия, аналитическая статья, обзор, комментарий), сатирические жанры (фельетон, памфлет, сатирическая реплика), художественно-публицистические (заметка, очерк, полемическая статья, зарисовка), рекламные жанры (наиболее открытая система, в связи с использованием элементов всех жанров с целью разрекламировать и воздействовать на адресата).

В основу деления текстов СМИ на определенные жанры могут быть положены различные принципы:

1. интенции автора (описать, проинформировать, разрекламировать, высмеять);

2. композиционные формы/регистры речи, образ автора;
3. модальность (объективная/субъективная);
4. оценочность (скрытая/открытая) [Клушина 2003].

Ольга Валентиновна Красноярова, в свою очередь, выделяет два вида текстов СМИ по функциональной ориентированности:

- информационный продукт
- рекламный продукт.

В нашем исследовании, основываясь на данной классификации, мы рассмотрим информационные тексты, которые по содержательно-структурным признакам можно разделить на следующие типы сообщений:

1. хроника (перечень-констатация фактов, событий и происшествий);
2. новость (событие или факт, которые отражают актуальную действительность, имеющую общественное значение и вызывающее интерес);
3. публицистическое послание (рефлексия по поводу события, ситуации или явления);
4. история, рассказ [Красноярова 2010].

Подводя итог, можно сказать, что СМИ воспринимается как особая социально-психологическая парадигма, отражающая общественное сознание. В стиле массовой коммуникации заметны инвариантные черты, константы, которые в том или ином виде обязательно присутствуют в любой исторический период. Дискурс СМИ, в свою очередь, представляя собой совокупность текстов, является отражением психологической, социальной и культурной парадигмы общества. Все данные тексты выделяются в две крупные группы: рекламные и информационные. Последние же делятся на четыре типа, согласно содержательным и структурным признакам, заключающим в себе скрытые интенции автора. Данные интенции являются шкалой ценностей, которые в языке публицистики представляются универсальным способом отбора и создания речевых средств для выражения

авторской мировоззренческой позиции, влияющей на формирование представлений читателя о том или ином вопросе.

1.3 Критический анализ дискурса СМИ

Дискурс СМИ включает в себя различные стили и типы текстов. Так, публицистический стиль речи является официальным стилем средств массовой информации и устных выступлений, главная идея которых заключается в донесении важной общественно-политической информации, а также побуждении слушателя к активным действиям. Более того, публицистический стиль служит для воздействия на людей через СМИ.

Публицистический стиль обладает достаточно широким рядом отличительных черт. Основными характеристиками современной публицистики стали метафоризация, ирония и языковая игра, свидетельствующие о возросшей экспрессивности публикаций, в которых реализуется интенция современного автора. На данный момент, в науке, для изучения скрытых интенций автора, используется критический анализ дискурса, направленный на изучение способов воспроизводства расового, социального, гендерного, этнического, и международного неравенства в целом. В этом параграфе мы изучим особенности методов критического дискурс-анализа, которые мы частично будем применять при работе с исследуемыми публикациями.

Согласно М.В. Гавриловой **критический дискурс-анализ** – «это тип аналитических исследований дискурса, изучающий способы, с помощью которых социальная власть осуществляет свое господство в обществе». Данный метод объясняет, как посредством текста и речи выражается социальное неравенство. Объектом таких исследований в основном являются публикации, тексты которых освещают моменты коммуникации, в которых участники находятся в ситуации социального риска и неравенства [Гаврилова 2003]. Также критический анализ дискурса можно рассматривать как «совокупность методик анализа дискурса, при помощи которых вскрываются

различные способы манипуляции общественным сознанием посредством языковых структур и дискурсивных практик для достижения политического, экономического, национального и иных форм доминирования» [Чудинов, Будаев 2006; Дрожащих 2009]. Таким образом, критический дискурс-анализ помогает в проведении исследований, в центре которых изучаются лингвистические составляющие социального взаимодействия. Анализ языковых единиц позволяет установить намерения и интенции автора, выраженные имплицитно, а также показать скрытые эффекты воздействия дискурса на систему социальных отношений [Чудинов, Будаев 2006].

Рассматривая процедуру критического анализа, необходимо отметить, что обязательными ключевыми понятиями являются концепты: язык, власть, история и идеология. Последняя определяется как система мнений и убеждений, выдвигаемых группой, имеющей власть [Чудинов, Будаев 2006; Гаврилова 2003]. Схема критического дискурс-анализа, которую мы будем частично использовать для настоящего исследования, базируется на материалах американского исследователя Т. Хакина. Она включает в себя несколько разделов. Вначале анализ проводится на уровне целостного текста, затем – на уровне предложения, далее – на уровне слова и значения [Huskin, Miller 1997].

При проведении анализа, необходимо выделить характеристики текста и дискурсивные факторы, влияющие на стиль:

1. адресант (автор текста);
2. адресат (читатель / массовая аудитория);
3. речевая интенция (коммуникативное задание, цель);
4. тип издания;
5. степень официальности / неофициальности текста.

В дискурсе СМИ основной целью автора является информирование читателя и воздействие на него, поэтому важна жанровая принадлежность текста, так как она предопределяет выбор языковых средств и обуславливает семантику и прагматику. В рамках определенных жанров информация

претерпевает своеобразное перераспределение, когда одна часть подается как более важная, выполняя при этом роль фигуры, а другая – как фоновая информация, менее значимая [Дрожащих 2008]. Из этого следует, что информация, выдвинутая на первый план, представляется читателю самой важной (даже не будучи таковой), а фоновая информация базового фрейма рассматривается как менее значимая.

Далее следует обозначить понятие фрейма и роль фрейминга в критическом дискурс-анализе. **Фрейм** – «это способ организации представлений, хранимых в памяти; рамки, фиксирующие наборы идей, образов, представлений, предписываемые культурой». **Фрейминг**, в свою очередь, является «формулировка ключевой идеи и определение набора фреймов, репрезентирующих ситуацию, – ключевой момент анализа» [Демьянков 2012]. В текстах СМИ фрейм формулирует главную идею в том виде, в котором он представляется автору. В связи с этим, часто в рамках манипуляции властью автор выдвигает на первый план фрейм иного характера, нежели тот, который реально репрезентирует коммуникативное событие. Основная цель этого – скрыть определенные факты или утаить главную, часто нелицеприятную информацию [Гаврилова 2003].

Рассматривая **функциональный стиль текста**, следует понимать его как «систему взаимосвязанных языковых средств, выполняющих определенную функцию в общении, различающихся различной прагматической установкой и обладающих совокупностью стилистически значимых языковых средств» [Гальперин 1981]. Функция сообщения предусматривает употребление нейтральной лексики, а функция воздействия (экспрессивная функция), в свою очередь, обуславливает употребление средств, обладающих свойством оценочности. Экспрессия в текстах СМИ передается при помощи многозначных слов, метафоризации и иронии. **Метафоризация** – «использование слов в переносных значениях в целях создания яркого образа, выражения оценки, эмоционального отношения к предмету речи» [Азимов, Щукин 2009]. При метафоризации формируются

положительные или отрицательные коннотации, воздействующие на читателя. По Ю.Д. Апресяну, коннотации лексемы – это «несущественные, но устойчивые признаки выражаемого ею понятия, которые воплощают принятую в данном языковом коллективе оценку соответствующего предмета или факта действительности» [Апресян 1995]. Поэтому, при интерпретации текста, необходимо обращать внимание на более широкий контекст, в рамках которого функционирует текст.

Сам по себе контекст является мощным механизмом для формирования оценки, которая закладывается не в сему (основное значение), а в ее словесное окружение. Так, различные установки современных средств массовой информации диктуют употребление одинаковых по значению слов в совершенно противоположных по стилистической окраске контекстах, коннотация которых (позитивная/негативная) зависит от говорящего. В последнее время ирония стала одной из ведущих черт языка современных СМИ. Если ранее она была ограничена рамками сатирических жанров, то теперь жанровые барьеры публицистической речи размыты [Клушина 2003]. **Ирония** – «это переносное значение, основанное на полярности семантики, на контрасте, при котором исключается возможность буквального понимания сказанного» [Азимов, Щукин 2009]. Однако проявление иронии в современной публицистике ощущается не только в рамках определенных стилистических приемов, но и «ирония пронизывает весь текст в современной публицистической речи, формируя его двуплановость» [Солганик 2003]. Более того, ирония скрывает за собой социальную оценку даже при объективной на первый взгляд подаче факта.

В заключении, при оценке текстов СМИ важно определить доминирующие приоритеты, ценности и установки прессы, изменяющиеся по средствам контекста, а также которые можно проследить в метафорах, иронии, коннотациях и фрейминге. В современных СМИ наблюдается вся шкала социальных оценок, от резко неодобрительной до весьма одобрительной, однако выраженной с помощью иронии. В связи с этим,

возрастает актуальность использования метода критического анализа-дискурса в современной лингвистике, так как он позволяет выявить скрытые авторские интенции, реализующиеся на уровне лексических единиц и контекста.

1.4 Контент-анализ: понятие и особенности

Изучение текстов дискурса СМИ требует использования определенных методик и подходов. Одним из наиболее актуальных современных методов анализа материала такого рода является контент-анализ. Контент-анализ, или анализ содержания, имеет более чем 50-летнюю историю применения в исследованиях по журналистике, социологии, психологии и экономике. Согласно профессору Кимберли Нойендорф, это самый быстроразвивающийся метод в количественных исследованиях в области массовой коммуникации [Neuendorf 2016]. Метод контент-анализа, состоящий из анализа содержания, играет важную роль в изучении текстов СМИ. Основываясь на статистическом подсчёте выбранных единиц текста, он позволяет выявить скрытые особенности, влияющие на формирование концептов. В данном параграфе мы рассмотрим методику контент-анализа и его особенности, а также выделим основные этапы, согласно которым будут исследоваться тексты.

Большой вклад в развитие контент-анализа внесли зарубежные исследователи. Профессор Бернард Берелсон в середине прошлого столетия писал, что **контент-анализ** может быть определен как «метод исследования для объективного, систематического и качественного описания явного содержания коммуникации» [Berelson 1952, 18]. Клаус Криппендорф рассматривал контент-анализ как метод, позволяющий делать реплицируемые и достоверные выводы из текстов (или другой смысловой единицы) в контексте их использования. Также данный метод дает новый взгляд на те или иные явления, улучшая понимание исследователя и информируя об их практической значимости [Krippendorf 2004, 18].

Отечественные ученые дают следующие определения: контент-анализ (анализ содержания) — «особая методическая процедура анализа текста (вербального, визуального и прочих), которая позволяет исследовать большой текстовый массив, выделяя в нем информационные аспекты, не лежащие на поверхности» [Семенова, Корсунская 2010]. Для получения количественного описания символического содержания текста в контент-анализе используется объективный подсчет, и систематически фиксируются получаемые данные. Контент-анализ относится к неопросным методам, так как исследователь при анализе никак не влияет на процесс размещения слов, символов в тексте. [Kreuger, Neuman 2006; Wodak, Meyer 2015]. Контент анализ рассматривается как количественный анализ, поэтому «показательно, что в рамках контент-анализа не делается различий по степени значимости между исследуемыми единицами – в центре внимания лишь частота их появления» [Назаров 2004]. Таким образом, можно подытожить, что метод контент-анализа основан на статистическом подсчёте специально выбранных текстовых единиц. Он позволяет выявить скрытые аспекты содержания текста и сравнить содержание различных текстов, а также анализировать их с помощью диаграмм и таблиц.

Существуют **качественная** и **количественная** версии контент-анализа. Как пишет Маргрит Шрайер между ними нет четкой границы, однако есть некоторые характеристики, которые отличают их друг от друга. Так «качественный контент-анализ фокусируется на латентном, скрытом значении, которое не всегда является явным, тогда как количественный контент-анализ сконцентрирован на очевидном, буквальном значении» [Schreier 2012, 15]. Существуют также некоторые другие особенности количественного и качественного анализа, которые выделяет Шрайер. Количественный контент-анализ не требует большого объема информации о контексте, авторе текста и его получателях, при этом он лишь частично зависит от концептов (concept-driven). Ему присуща строгая последовательность этапов анализа. Между тем, качественный контент-

анализ требует большей информации о контексте и, лишь частично зависит от исходных данных (data-driven). В нем более явно прослеживается взаимосвязь с контекстом, автором и получателем, а также допускается вариативность в выполнении этапов анализа [Schreier 2012]. Выбор типа контент-анализа зависит от целей исследования и исходных данных.

Для выявления аспектов содержания, репрезентирующих его в количественных параметрах, используется кодирование (совокупность инструкций или правил для фиксации и записи содержания, выделяемого из текста на систематической основе). После этого данные вводятся в компьютер и подвергаются статистической обработке. Общая процедура контент-анализа обычно включает следующие этапы:

1. «определение конкретных целей и задач исследования текста;
2. выделение значимых компонентов текста, которые берутся за единицу подсчёта в соответствии с целями и задачами исследования;
3. сбор текстового материала, предназначенного для обработки;
4. статистических подсчёт выбранных знаков-символов (в процентах или абсолютных цифрах);
5. научная оценка полученных данных» [Добросклонская 2015].

Подводя итог, необходимо упомянуть, что контент-анализ может документально, с помощью объективных, количественных индикаторов показать, являются ли смутные ощущения, основанные на несистематическом наблюдении, истинными. Данный подход позволяет определить частотные единицы тематически связанной лексики, устойчивые коллокации и приоритетные топики новостных текстов. Контент-анализ использует чисто лингвистическую информацию о характеристиках текста и помогает выявить семантические особенности. Е.П. Чернобровкина пишет, что «сущность контент-анализа, с лингвистической точки зрения, - по внешним (количественным) характеристикам текста на уровне слов и словосочетаний сделать правдоподобные предположения о его плане содержания, выводы об особенностях мышления и сознания автора текста –

его намерениях, установках, желаниях, ценностных ориентирах [Чернобровкина 2011]. Для настоящего исследования был выбран метод качественного контент-анализа, так как он помогает анализировать большой объем текстовых данных, собранных путем сплошной выборки, и дает возможность выявить важную информацию, не лежащую на поверхности.

1.5 Описание программ Yoshikoder и Concordance

Для контент-анализа в нашей работе мы будем использовать программы Yoshikoder и Concordance. Yoshikoder является кросс-платформенной многоязычной программой для количественного контент-анализа. Программа была разработана как часть проекта «Identity Project» в Центре по международным делам Гарвардского университета. Она позволяет работать с ключевыми словами в тексте: подсчитывать их количество, строить пропорцию их употребления относительно всего текста и выделять контекстуальное окружение для них. Последняя опция дает возможность для проведения самостоятельного качественного анализа контекста.

Yoshikoder позволяет не только сосчитать количество ключевых слов, но и дает представление о том, как часто они употребляются в тексте, какую долю ключевые слова занимают по отношению к общему количеству слов в тексте. Данный показатель фиксируется в графе Proportion. Индекс Proportion показывает какую долю ключевые слова занимают по отношению к общему количеству слов в тексте. Как отмечает автор программы Yoshikoder – Уилл Лоуи, низкие показатели в графе Proportion (величины в несколько процентов, или долей процентов) обусловлены тем, что почти 50% текста занимают вспомогательные слова – так называемые служебные части речи, которые служат для грамматической связи в предложении, но не несут существенного смыслового значения [Yoshikoder, URL; Блог о контент-анализе, URL].

Concordance является гибкой системой для анализа текстов. С ее помощью можно получить детальную информацию о текстах, а впоследствии

произвести глубокий и всесторонний анализ текстов на различных языках. С помощью Concordance можно подсчитать количество слов и их частотность. Данная программа имеет широкое применение при анализе текстовых данных в лингвистике, лексикографии и переводе. Данная программа реализует поиск веб-соответствий, конвертируя после этого результат анализа в HTML файлы, связанные между собой. Кроме того, есть возможность создать список выбора и «черный список». Последний позволяет задать слова, которые должны быть исключены из анализа. Данная программа поддерживает почти все языки, используемые операционной системой Windows. Concordance позволяет выбирать варианты сортировки слов: создание конкорданса, поиск фраз, учет расстановки слов, а также использовать регулярные выражения для поиска. Просмотр статистики по тексту осуществляется по количеству символов и предложений, типу слов и их процентному соотношению. Concordance считается наиболее гибким и мощным аналитическим программным обеспечением для анализа текстов. Сама программа платная, однако, при первом скачивании, дается бесплатное пробное пользование на 30 дней [Concordance, URL].

Мы выбрали эти программы, так как они имеют основные функции для контент-анализа выбранных нами данных. Кроме того, они распространяются в сети Интернет с бесплатным доступом. Таким образом, программы Yoshikoder и Concordance являются оптимальными для проведения нашего исследования.

ВЫВОДЫ ПО ГЛАВЕ 1

В данной главе мы рассмотрели основные теоретические положения дискурса СМИ и методологию настоящего исследования, в частности контент-анализа. Мы также охарактеризовали используемые программы, Yshikoder и Concordance, которые наиболее подходят для количественного исследования материала.

СМИ воспринимается как особая структура, отражающая общественное мнение. **Дискурс СМИ**, в свою очередь, представляет совокупность текстов, являющихся отражением психологической, социальной и культурной парадигмы общества. Все данные тексты разделяются на две крупные группы: публицистические и информационные, которые в свою очередь делятся согласно содержательным и структурным признакам. В практической главе мы будем рассматривать тексты новостного жанра.

Современный **критический анализ** направлен на детальное изучение текстов. Он помогает выявить скрытые бессознательные установки, и на этой основе показать результаты воздействия дискурса на восприятие информации. Формирование заданной оценки с помощью контекста активно используется современными СМИ. Положительное или отрицательное значение у нейтральной лексики появляется через развитие у нее заданных коннотаций при сохранении нейтральности сем. Сама же коннотация (положительная или отрицательная) зависит от самого автора.

Контент-анализ основан на статистическом подсчёте специально выбранных текстовых единиц. Он позволяет выявить скрытые аспекты содержания текста и сравнить содержание нескольких текстов, а также анализировать их с помощью диаграмм и таблиц. Более того, контент-анализ дает возможность определить частотные единицы тематически связанной лексики, устойчивые коллокации, наиболее распространенные способы ссылки на источник информации и приоритетные топики новостных текстов.

В практической главе исследования мы используем данный метод для выявления факторов, формирующих концепт ‘international student’ в британской прессе. Основываясь на статистических подсчетах, с помощью метода контент-анализа, мы сможем выявить частотность употребления слов и их контекстуальную сочетаемость. По средствам критического анализа дискурса сможем выявить качественную оценку упоминаний об иностранных студентах и их коннотации.

ГЛАВА 2. ОСНОВНЫЕ ПОНЯТИЯ И КАТЕГОРИИ КОНЦЕПТА

2.1 Понятие концепта

Одним из основополагающих понятий в современной когнитивной лингвистике стало понятие «концепт», пришедшее из когнитологии. Данный термин используется исследователями, занимающимися проблемами языкового представления мышления человека (когниции). Он включает в себе совокупность значения слова с его человеческим представлением. Концепты во всей их многогранности реализуются в дискурсе. Согласно Доминику Люкешу, человеческое мышление и познание (когниция) подразумевает как личное, так и социальное. «Оно включает в себя убеждения и цели, оценку и эмоции, структуры мысли памяти, а также представление и процессы в дискурсе» [Hart, Lukeš 2009, 85]. Идея «концепта» и «концептуализации» является основной в когнитивной науке для изучения лингвистических образов. Проблема описания сущности концепта является наиболее актуальной. Более того, термин «концепт» широко распространен в различных научных дисциплинах, в результате чего он имеет множество определений. В данном параграфе мы представим особенности и различные определения концепта в современной когнитивной лингвистике.

Часто слово «понятие» употребляется как синоним «концепта», однако термин «понятие» закрепился в философии и логике, а «концепт» является термином математической логики, а также употребляется в культурологии и науке о культуре. Понятие представляет совокупность базовых познанных признаков объекта, а концепт является ментальной единицей картины мира, содержащей языковые и культурные знания, представления, оценки [Арапова 2016]. Впервые в лингвистике понятие «**концепт**» было употреблено С.А. Аскольдовым в статье «Концепт и слово», в ней он дает следующее определение концепта «мысленное образование, которое замещает нам в процессе мысли неопределенное множество предметов одного и того же рода» [Аскольдов 1997]. Согласно словарю когнитивной лингвистики,

концепт - «фундаментальная единица знания, центральная для категоризации и концептуализации. Концепты принадлежат концептуальной системе человека и с раннего детства перерабатываются из восприятия опыта через процесс, называемый анализом восприятия смысла [Evans 2007, 31].

Среди ученых не существует общего определения понятия «концепт», мы можем отметить три основных подхода к его определению:

- Лингвокогнитивный (Н.Д. Арутюнова, Е.С. Кубрякова, Д.С. Лихачев, И.А. Стернин и др.),
- Лингвопсихологический (С.А. Аскольдов, А.А. Залевская, Р.М. Фрумкина),
- Лингвокультурологический (Ю.С. Степанов, С.Г. Воркачев, В.И. Карасик, Н.А. Красовский, и др.) [Ефремов 2009].

Лингвокогнитивный подход к пониманию концепта отражает Елена Самуиловна Кубрякова: «Концепт – это оперативная содержательная единица памяти, ментального лексикона, концептуальной системы и языка мозга (лингва менталис), всей картины мира, отраженной в человеческой психике» [Кубрякова 1996, 90]. С *лингвопсихологической* точки зрения данное понятие характеризует Александра Александровна Залевская: «Концепт - это спонтанно функционирующее в познавательной и коммуникативной деятельности индивида базовое перцептивно-когнитивно-аффективное образование динамического характера, подчиняющееся закономерностям психической жизни человека и вследствие этого по ряду параметров отличающееся от понятий и значений как продуктов научного описания с позиций лингвистической теории» [Залевская 2001, 39]. В настоящем исследовании мы придерживаемся *лингвокультурологического* подхода и позиции Юрия Сергеевича Степанова, где «концепт – это как бы сгусток культуры в сознании человека; то, в виде чего культура входит в ментальный мир человека. И, с другой стороны, концепт – это то, посредством чего человек – рядовой, обычный человек, не «творец

культурных ценностей» – сам входит в культуру, а в некоторых случаях и влияет на нее» [Степанов 2007, 43].

В рамках культурологии под концептом понимают основную ячейку культуры в ментальном мире человека. Карасик В.И. предлагает считать концептами «первичные культурные образования, выражения объективного содержания слов, имеющие смысл и поэтому транслируемые в различные сферы бытия человека; в частности, в сферы преимущественно понятийного, образного или деятельного освоения мира». По словам ученого, концепт отличается от других ментальных единиц наличием ценностного компонента [Карасик 2002]. С. Г. Воркачев трактует лингвокультурный концепт как «фантомное» ментальное образование, в силу своей эвристичности принадлежащее к инструментарию научного исследования, а также своего рода «ментальный артефакт», который создан усилиями лингвокогнитологов для описания и упорядочения все той же духовной реальности. Ученый акцентирует антропоцентричность концепта, другими словами ориентированность на духовность, субъективность, социальность и личную сферу носителя этнического сознания, что позволяет концептам выражать «дух народа» [Воркачев 2001].

Таким образом, обобщив и соединив различные значения понятия «концепт», можно дать следующее определение: **концепт** является продуктом когнитивного сознания человека и структурным элементом языковой картины мира, включающим в себя всю вариативность значения слова, его ассоциативное представление, а также специфическую фиксацию культурно значимых явлений и характеристик в форме языковых знаков. Существует три основных подхода к определению концепта: лингвокогнитивный, лингвопсихологический и лингвокультурологический. Система концептов образует картину мира, в которой отражается понимание человеком реальности, восприятие окружающего мира, а также формируется мнение о различных событиях и людях. Изучение данной системы наиболее

важно по отношению к иностранным студентам, находящимся и взаимодействующим с другой, отличной от их собственной культурой.

2.2 Структура концепта

Язык, по мнению Фарзада Шарифяна, представляет собой центральный аспект культурного познания как «коллективного банка памяти», который является «одним из основных механизмов, который хранит и передает культурные концепты» [Sharifian 2011, 39]. Концепт играет активно развивающуюся роль в процессе сознания, а также взаимодействует с другими концептами, следовательно, он имеет определенную структуру. Однако из-за многомерности концепта возможны разные подходы к ее определению. В данном параграфе мы проведем анализ современных подходов к интерпретации структуры концепта.

Концепт как сложное ментальное образование имеет определенную **структуру**. В его структуру входит все то, что относится к строению понятия, его исходная форма (этимология), указывающая на отношение к культуре. В современной лингвистике существует ряд метафор, употребляемых для описания структуры концепта: «зернышко первосмысла, из которого прорастают все новые и новые смыслы» (В.В. Колесов), «снежный ком» (Н.Н. Болдырев), «облако» (Г.В. Токарев) и другие. В большинстве подобных метафор просматривается идея уровневой, слоистой структуры концепта [Кошкина 2009]. В настоящее время можно выделить четыре основных подхода в лингвистическом понимании структуры концепта:

- историко-культурологический,
- культурологический,
- полевой
- когнитивный [Пономарева 2008].

Ю.С. Степанов с точки зрения *историко-культурологического* подхода, представляет структуру концепта следующим образом: строение концепта «слоистое», разные слои являются результатом культурной жизни разных поколений. Концепт образуется из исторически разных слоев, которые различны по происхождению, по времени образования и по семантике, и имеет особую структуру, включающую в себя следующие признаки:

1. буквальный смысл или внутренняя форма;
2. пассивный, исторический слой концепта;
3. новейший, наиболее актуальный, активный слой [Степанов 2007].

На основе *культурологического* подхода (С.Г. Воркачев и Г.В. Токарев) выделяются архетипная, культурологическая и индивидуально-авторская модель [Ляпин 1997].

Иосиф Абрамович Стернин рассматривает структуру концепта с точки зрения *полевого* подхода, ассоциирует концепт с плодом, где косточка является ядром, а мякоть - периферией. Ядро концепта – это основное понятие, сема, которую мы можем найти в словаре. Периферия – это ассоциативные дополнения, которые вносятся культурой и реализуются с помощью слов-репрезентантов. Дополнительные когнитивные признаки могут накладываться на базовый образ, тем самым образуя периферию концепта [Стернин 2001].

Также по мнению И.А. Стернина, существует три структурных типа концепта: одноуровневые, многоуровневые и сегментные концепты. Одноуровневый включает в себя только чувственное ядро, базовый слой. Таковыми могут быть концепты – предметные образы и некоторые концепты-представления как сладкий, синий, белый, бытовые концепты чайник, чашка, стул. В сознании ребенка таким образом структурированы многие концепты. В сознании большинства людей концепты более сложные.

Многоуровневый концепт представляет собой несколько когнитивных слоев, которые отличаются друг от друга уровнем абстракции, они отражают данный концепт и последовательно наслаиваются на базовый слой.

Например, концепт «грамотный» определяется не только базовым слоем, но и когнитивными слоями, которые располагаются по степени усиления абстракции.

Сегментный концепт включает базовый чувственно-образный слой, окруженный сегментами с одинаковой степенью абстракции [Стернин 2001].

И. А. Тарасова выделяет шесть слоев концепта: предметный, понятийный, ассоциативный, образный, символический, ценностно-оценочный [Тарасова 2004].

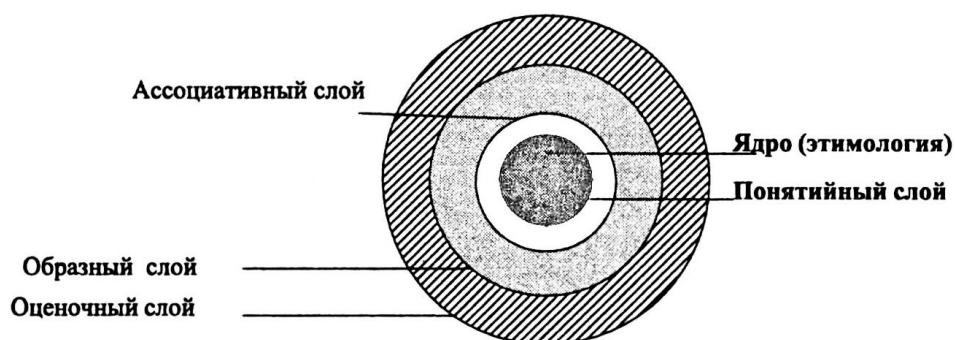


Схема 1. Послойное представление структуры концепта

В рамках *когнитивной лингвистики* для представления структуры концепта используются термины «фрейм» и «слот». Понятие «фрейм» было впервые введено М. Минским в его работе «Фреймы для представления знаний» [Минский 1979]. Лингвистические основы теории фреймов представлены в подходе Ч. Филлмора [Липина 2008]. В.З. Демьянков под фреймом понимает «единицу знаний, организованную вокруг некоторого понятия, которая содержит данные о существенном, типичном и возможном для представления стереотипной ситуации» [Демьянков 1996]. В лингвокультурологии фреймы рассматриваются неразрывно от концепта и являются основой для их выделения. Преимущество фреймового представления концепта объясняется также тем, что фрейм обладает чёткой структурой. Фрейм состоит из слотов, которые В. З. Демьянков определяет как «те элементы ситуации, которые конкретизируют определенный аспект фрейма, отражают в отдельном виде отношения, характеризующие объекты и события» [Демьянков 1996]. Согласно А.П. Чудинову, фреймы понимаются

как «фрагменты наивной языковой картины мира, структурирующие соответствующую понятийную область (концептуальную сферу). Слоты, в свою очередь, являются элементами ситуации, включающими какую-то часть фрейма» [Чудинов 2001]. Таким образом, можно представить фреймо-слотовую структуру концепта в виде следующей схемы:

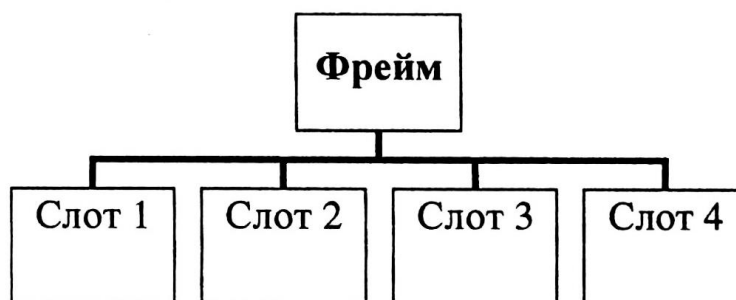


Схема 2. Фреймо-слотовая структура концепта

Таким образом, мы выяснили, что лингвокультурный концепт многомерен, тем самым обуславливается возможность различных подходов к определению его структуры. Концепт включает в себя как понятийно-дефиниционные, так и коннотивные, образные, ассоциативные, оценочные характеристики. Рассмотрев типы концептов, общую структуру, а также ее особенности мы выбрали фреймо-слотовый подход для структурного анализа концепта «international student». Концепт иностранных студентов в условиях глобализации раскрывает важные факты о роли студентов в социальных взаимодействиях и их имидже в различных контекстах реального мира.

2.3 Методология анализа концепта

Причиной пристального внимания и большого интереса к исследованию концептов является то, что информация, заложенная в концепте, невероятно многогранна, она не только дает сведения об обозначаемом объекте с различных ракурсов, но и информацию о его проявлениях и связях с другими объектами. В связи с этим существуют различные методы для анализа концептов, различные способы их описания, которые основываются на использовании разнообразного исследовательского материала. В данном параграфе мы проведем анализ современных методик исследования концепта в рамках различных подходов.

По мнению Ю.С. Степанова, поскольку концепт имеет «слоистое» строение и разные слои являются результатом, «осадком» культурной жизни различных эпох, то с самого начала следует допустить, что и метод изучения окажется не одним, а совокупностью нескольких различных методов (или даже «методик») [Степанов 2007]. Наиболее активно исследуются следующие методики:

1. Выявление семного состава ключевого слова (анализ толкования базовой лексической репрезентации концепта в различных толковых словарях);
2. Анализ лексических парадигм, которые вербализируют концепт:
 - а) синонимического ряда ключевого слова;
 - б) лексико-семантического, лексико-фразеологического, ассоциативно-семантического поля ключевого слова;
 - в) деривационного поля ключевого слова;
3. Анализ материала паремий и афоризмов;
4. Анализ лексической сочетаемости слов-репрезентантов концепта.

В свою очередь В.И. Карасик выделяет следующие специальные исследовательские процедуры толкования значения имени концепта и ближайших его обозначений:

1. дефинирование;

2. контекстуальный анализ;
3. этимологический анализ;
4. паремиологический анализ;
5. интервьюирование, анкетирование, комментирование [Карасик 2002].

В.А. Маслова описала методику **концептуального анализа** исходя из структуры концепта, где ядро – это словарные значения лексемы, заключающие, по мнению ученого, большие возможности в раскрытии содержания концепта, в выявлении специфики его языкового выражения. Периферия – субъективный опыт, различные прагматические составляющие лексемы, коннотации и ассоциации. В. А. Маслова предлагает следующие этапы концептуального анализа:

1. определение реферативной ситуации, к которой принадлежит концепт;
2. установление места концепта в языковой картине мира и сознании нации при помощи энциклопедических и лингвистических словарей, где дефиниция является ядром концепта;
3. этимология концепта и ее особенности;
4. привлечение художественных контекстов и данных паремиологического фонда языка;
5. сопоставление полученных результатов с анализом ассоциативных связей ключевой лексемы [Маслова 2001].

Важную роль при исследовании концептов играет фреймовый анализ. В рамках нашего исследования мы будем использовать его методику и приемы. Фреймовая структура концепта наглядно иллюстрирует когнитивные процессы, происходящие в сознании автора текста. Ее описание осуществляется посредством анализа лексических единиц, при этом отражается взаимосвязь между языком и мышлением человека, его познавательными процессами. В.Б. Гольдберг утверждает, что метод фреймового анализа при исследованиях значения языковой единицы

учитывает не только лингвистические, но и экстралингвистические, энциклопедические знания человека [Гольдберг 2003].

В виде фреймов в лингвистике представляют как группы языковых единиц, объединенных общей семантикой, так и сами значения языковых единиц. Фреймовый анализ используется в тех случаях, когда «репрезентируемое знание представляет собой стереотипную иерархически организованную структуру элементов в виде пропозиции или уровневого характера» [Болдырев 2000]. **Фреймовый анализ** представляет собой «метод исследования взаимодействия семантического и мыслительного пространств языка, позволяющий моделировать принципы структурирования и отражения определенной части человеческого опыта, знаний в значениях языковых единиц, а также способы активации общих знаний, обеспечивающих понимание в процессе языковой коммуникации. Для анализа значений той или иной лексической единицы в когнитивном аспекте необходимо установить область знания, лежащую в основе значения данного слова, и структурировать ее, т.е. смоделировать фрейм, определяющий данное значение» [Болдырев 2016]. Фреймовый анализ подходит для слов с пропозициональным типом значения, предполагающим наличие какой-либо ситуации. В настоящее время существует несколько методик фреймового анализа, предполагающих определенные приемы (элиминирование, модификацию слотов и т.п.) [Сергеева 2009] Таким образом, фреймовый анализ выявляет основные компоненты смысла текста с учетом фоновых знаний. Фрейм является наиболее удобной и наглядной формой представления знаний человека об окружающей действительности, отражая их системное представление в сознании человека.

Благодаря использованию различных подходов к исследованию концепта появляется возможность определить вариативные и устойчивые элементы в содержании концепта. Фреймовый анализ, также как и концептуальный анализ, дает возможность выявить характеристики того или иного концепта и показать специфику концептуализации предметов и

явлений в семантике языковых единиц. Для настоящей научной работы был выбран метод фреймового анализа, который является схематичным отражением восприятия человеком окружающей действительности. Более того сам фрейм адаптирует свою структуру в соответствии с этим восприятием.

ВЫВОДЫ ПО ГЛАВЕ 2

Во второй теоретической главе настоящего исследования мы отделили особое внимание понятию и структуре концепта, проанализировав различные мнения и взгляды российских и зарубежных ученых.

Концепт является многомерным культурно-значимым социопсихическим образованием в коллективном сознании, который выражается в языковой форме. Мы выделили сущность концепта, его типы и структуру, основываясь на теории различных ученых. Понятие «концепт» является основным термином когнитивной науки в исследовании проблемы языковых образов. Концепты - это так называемые мыслительные образы, стоящие за языковыми знаками, означаемые языковых знаков. Синтезировав дефиниции разных ученых, можно сделать вывод, что концепт является собирательным термином. Таким образом, мы вывели рабочее определение: **концепт** - продукт когнитивного сознания человека и структурный элемент языковой картины мира, включающий в себя всю вариативность значения слова, его ассоциативное представление, а также специфическую фиксацию культурно значимых явлений и характеристик в форме языковых знаков.

В настоящее время можно выделить четыре основных подхода в лингвистическом понимании структуры концепта:

- историко-культурологический,
- культурологический,
- полевой
- когнитивный

Типы концептов разнообразны и благодаря их слоистой структуре, можно говорить об одноуровневых, многоуровневых и сегментных концептах, характеристику которых приводит Стернин И.А.

В ходе исследования мы выяснили, что ученые обозначают концепт несколькими способами, которые различаются по структуре и классификации. Изучив структуры концептов, которые были выдвинуты

учеными, мы обратились к фреймовому представлению, где по определению В.З. Демьянкова, фрейм – «единица знаний, организованная вокруг некоторого понятия, которая содержит данные о существенном, типичном и возможном для представления стереотипной ситуации». Он состоит из слотов – «элементов ситуации, которые конкретизируют определенный аспект фрейма, отражают в отдельном виде отношения, характеризующие объекты и события» [Демьянков 1996].

Для настоящей научной работы был выбран метод фреймового анализа, который является схематичным отражением восприятия человеком окружающей действительности. В практической главе исследования мы используем данный метод, совместно с методом контент-анализа для выявления факторов, формирующих мнение об иностранных студентах в британской прессе.

ГЛАВА 3. КОНЦЕПТ “INTERNATIONAL STUDENT” В УСЛОВИЯХ ГЛОБАЛИЗАЦИИ

3.1 Процесс глобализации высшего образования

Важнейшей формой и одновременно новым этапом в развитии мирового сообщества становится глобализация. Под влиянием научно-технической революции глобализация вовлекает в себя большинство важных направлений деятельности человека, включая в себя такие понятия, как «глобализация образования», «глобализация экономики», «политическая глобализация». Более того, глобализация включает в себя и культурные изменения. Вопрос о том, какое влияние она оказывает на язык, является наиболее актуальным среди ученых-лингвистов. М.А. Тульнова полагает, что «воздействие глобализационных процессов на изменения, происходящие в национальных лингвокультурах, проявляется в развитии концептосфер этих культур» [Тульнова 2009]. В настоящем параграфе мы изучим определения понятия «глобализация», а также рассмотрим процессы, протекающие под ее влиянием в сфере высшего образования.

Несмотря на то, что сам термин «глобализация» является относительно новым, процесс, который он описывает, начался ещё в пятнадцатом веке и прошел несколько этапов. Согласно мнению Дэвида Мачина и Тео Ван Леувена, были периоды растущей глобальной коммуникации посредством новых, более быстрых форм транспорта и связи, создания общего календаря и общей системы часовых поясов, международных выставок, спортивных мероприятий и призов, например, таких как Нобелевская премия [Machin, Van Leeuwen 2007]. Глобализацию рассматривают как «процесс всемирной, экономической, политической и культурной интеграции, который оказывает влияние на все аспекты современной жизни общества» [Кехян 2013]. Согласно социологической энциклопедии, под **глобализацией** понимается «все более усиливающееся влияние и воздействие общечеловеческих, мировых (глобальных) процессов на судьбы отдельных стран и народов, а также всего человечества в целом» [Иванов 2003]. По мнению Майкла

Вайнштейна, глобализация относится к «процессу эволюции или более тесной экономической интеграции посредством расширения торговли, иностранных инвестиций и иммиграции» [Weinstein 2005]. Таким образом, проанализировав различные определения, можно сделать вывод, что глобализация представляет собой процесс интеграции человечества в единое целое, который охватывает культуру, экономику, политику, образование и другие сферы человеческой жизни.

Глобальная интеграция, происходящая в мировом сообществе, оказывает все большее влияние на систему образования в мире. Особое значение приобретает информационная подготовка в сфере образования, формирование навыков жизни и подготовка будущих специалистов для дальнейшей деятельности в условиях массового сетевого информационного воздействия. В условиях глобализации также важной становится интеграция профессиональной и повседневной деятельности в мировые информационные процессы [Болховской, Говердовская, Ивченко 2013].

На протяжении веков студенты ездили в другие страны, чтобы расширять свои знания и культурные горизонты. В пример можно привести Эразма Роттердамского, который учился и преподавал в Англии в шестнадцатом веке, в честь него назвали программу образовательной мобильности “Erasmus”. Широкая глобализация облегчает студентам мобильность для обучения за рубежом. Принимающие учреждения, страны и регионы создали стипендии и обменные схемы, способствуя мобильности одаренных студентов, например, через такие программы как DAAD, Erasmus, а также Фулбрайт.

М.Ю. Абабкова выделяет несколько этапов развития и становления глобализации образования. Так, *начальный период* можно обозначить эпохой средних веков и Возрождения. Он характеризуется становлением европейских университетов, мобильностью их слушателей и преподавателей. Преподавание латыни в этот период в большинстве университетов стало началом билингвального образования. *Второй этап* (XVIII – сер. XX вв.)

является периодом экспорта образовательных систем, когда в высшее образование колоний были привнесены элементы системы образования доминиона. *Третий этап* (1945 г. – конец XX в.) включает в себя доктрину расширения политического влияния со стороны сверхдержав, распространение русского языка и билингвального образования на русском языке в странах Восточной и Центральной Европы и в странах третьего мира, укрепление английского языка в качестве языка-посредника и создание англоязычных билингвальных школ в странах Западной Европы, Азии и Африки. На данный момент мы вошли в *четвертый этап* (конец XX в. – начало XXI в.). Он, в первую очередь, характеризуется переходом от эпизодических международных контактов в образовательной области между отдельными странами к содержательной научно-педагогической кооперации и всестороннему партнерству. На данный момент активно развивается совместная разработка межкультурных образовательных программ с билингвально-дидактическим компонентом, конструируются новые педагогические технологии в русле открытого обучения, а также проводятся совместные научные исследования в различных областях знаний [Абабкова 2011].

С.В. Камашев и Т.С. Косенко рассуждая о глобализации высшего образования, анализируют Всемирную декларацию о высшем образовании для XXI века, созданную ЮНЕСКО в 1998 году в рамках «Всемирной конференции по высшему образованию для XXI века: подходы и практические меры», на которой были выделены следующие подходы к глобализации образования:

- «справедливость доступа к высшему образованию вне зависимости от признаков расы, пола, языка и религии, а также каких-либо экономических, культурных и социальных различий или физических недостатков;
- продвижение знаний посредством научных исследований в областях естественных, гуманитарных наук, искусства и распространение их

результатов, обеспечение соответствующей сбалансированности между фундаментальными и целевыми исследованиями;

- долгосрочная ориентация на соответствие деятельности высших учебных заведений ожиданиям общества;

- всестороннее укрепление сотрудничества образовательной сферы с миром труда, осуществление анализа и прогнозов общественных потребностей в интересах профессиональной подготовки и переподготовки на протяжении всей жизни, позволяющих систематически учитывать тенденции, возникающие в мире труда, а также в сферах науки, техники и экономики;

- наличие у учебных заведений потенциала обеспечения широкого многообразия возможностей в сфере образования и подготовки кадров для обеспечения равенства возможностей;

- новаторские подходы в сфере образования, позволяющие подготовить и воспитать хорошо информированных и глубоко мотивированных граждан, способных к критическому мышлению, анализу общественной проблематики, поиску и использованию решений проблем, стоящих перед обществом, а также к тому, чтобы брать на себя социальную ответственность» [Камашев, Косенко 2012].

Таким образом, глобализация является наиболее значимым социальным процессом, определяющим лицо современности. Она охватывает многие социальные институты, организации, процессы, и образование активно включено в них. В XXI веке образование становится одним из приоритетных направлений в мире, которое определяет будущее каждого государства и планеты в целом. Студентам необходимы международные знания, чтобы в своей дальнейшей профессиональной деятельности успешно общаться и решать проблемы с людьми из других стран на любом уровне. Глобализационные процессы играют важную роль в становлении картины мира и восприятия иностранных студентов.

3.2 Общая характеристика материала

Роль влияния средств массовой информации на формирование лингвокультурных концептов часто недооценивают. Именно поэтому цель данной работы заключается в выявлении языковых средств, отражающих это влияние. Для осуществления данной цели был произведен контент-анализ и фреймовый анализ материала публикаций британской газеты «The Guardian», освещающих события и мнения, связанные с иностранными студентами.

Для анализа была выбрана британская ежедневная газета «The Guardian», известная как «качественная пресса» Великобритании. Газета была основана в 1821 году, и до 1959 года называлась «The Manchester Guardian». По данным, опубликованным в 2013 году в статье в Press Gazette, газета «The Guardian» была самой читаемой из качественных изданий Великобритании. Ее печатное издание имело средний ежедневный тираж около 162 000 экземпляров в стране, следуя за «The Daily Telegraph» и «The Times» [PressGazette, URL]. В научных работах газету часто характеризуют как влиятельную, престижную и качественную, а также как одну из самых уважаемых газет в мире. «The Guardian» имеет онлайн-издание в Великобритании, а также два международных веб-сайта: Guardian Australia (основан в 2013 году) и Guardian US (основан в 2011 году). По данным на октябрь 2014 года онлайн-издание газеты стало пятым по величине в мире с более чем 42,6 млн. читателей [The Guardian, URL]. Эти факты доказывают, что газета «The Guardian» является широко распространенным британским изданием, подходящим для анализа в рамках настоящего исследования. Материал публикаций даст возможность изучить концепт «international student», представленный в дискурсе СМИ.

Как пишет Моника Беднарек, медиа-язык является сложным с точки зрения его социально-экономического и коммуникативного контекста. По мнению Белла, анализ его «должен сначала иметь дело с рядом методологических решений. Анализ медиа-языка требует решения в трех областях:

- жанры: новости, реклама и т. д. (тип медиаконтента)
- выходы: публикации, радиостанции и т. д. (носители контента)
- результаты: конкретные выпуски новостей, программы и период времени, который должен быть охвачен (и дни, которые будут отобраны в течение этого периода) » [Bednarek 2006; Bell 1991]

В настоящем исследовании мы сконцентрируем внимание на новостных статьях в разделе «International Student» онлайн-издания газеты «The Guardian». Корпус материалов для анализа составил 88 публикаций различного размера и цели. Выбранные данные представляют разные жанры медиатекстов, в частности, письмо, новость и редакционная статья. Таким образом, корпус публикаций охватывает многочисленные темы, связанные с жизнью иностранных студентов, мнением реальных людей, политическими вопросами и позицией правительства. Нами были выбраны данные статьи с целью провести полный и непредвзятый анализ концепта «international student» в британском дискурсе средств массовой информации.

Объектом исследования являлись статьи, опубликованные в период с 1.01.2015 года по 31.12.2017 года. За 2015 год было отобрано 40 статей, за 2016 – 23 и за 2017 – 25, общее число составило 88 публикации. Диаграмма 1. показывает процентное соотношение количества статей по годам. Так, в 2015 году – 46%, в 2016 году – 26% и в 2017 году – 28%.



Диаграмма 1 Количество статей.

Как видно из диаграммы по уменьшению количества публикаций, интерес к иностранным студентам в британской прессе снизился в 2016 году практически вдвое, по сравнению с 2015 годом. Это в большей степени связано с политическими и культурными процессами, происходившими в Великобритании в тот период. В частности, парламентские выборы и миграционный кризис, которые вызвали повышенный интерес к иностранным студентам.

Также следует отметить, что интенсивность публикации статей была неоднородна. График 1 показывает соотношение количества статей, опубликованных в течение 2015-2017 года по месяцам. График публикации в 2015 и 2017 годах имеет схожие тенденции. Так, пики приходятся на следующие месяцы: февраль, апрель-май, июль-август. График изменений за 2016 год значительно отличается: в августе, наоборот, наблюдается нулевая активность публикаций. В октябре 2016 года наибольшее количество публикаций за год – 6, в то время как в 2015 и 2017 годах количество статей за этот месяц не превысило 1-2. Также можно выделить, что все графики за три года имеют общие тенденции, однако со смещением на 1-2 месяца.



График 1. Интенсивность публикаций 2015-2017 годы.

Следующим шагом было разделение отобранных статей на группы согласно основной роли иностранных студентов в публикациях. Таким образом, мы получили три основные тематические группы статей: британские студенты за границей (British students abroad), иностранные студенты в Великобритании (Overseas students in the UK) и тексты, представляющие как британских, так и зарубежных студентов вместе (Both). Количество публикаций в данных группах было различным, результаты представлены в диаграмме 2.

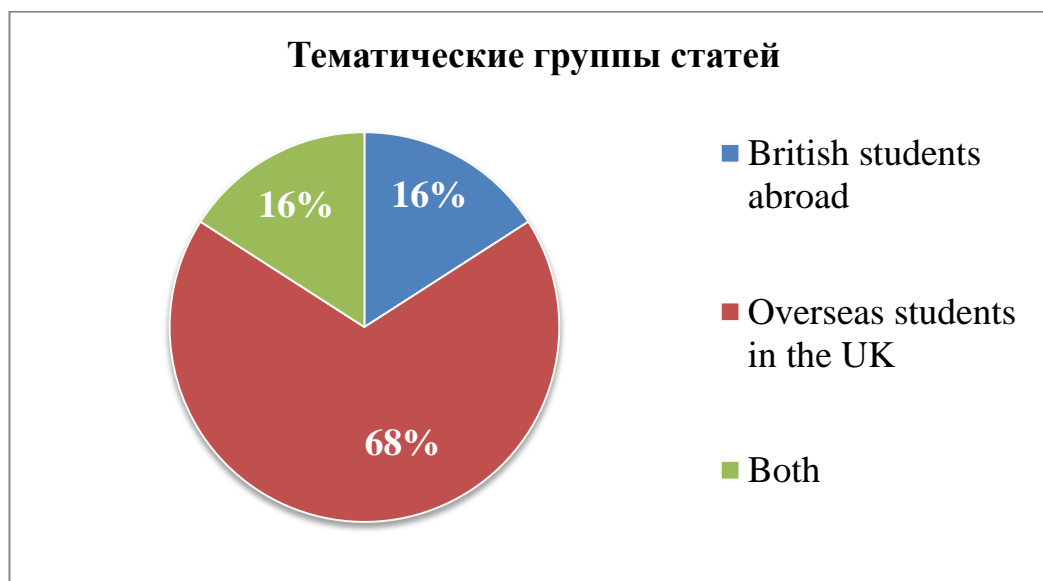


Диаграмма 2. Тематические группы.

Количество статей, посвященных британским студентам, составляет 14 (16%), в то время как публикации об их зарубежных сверстниках преобладают в количестве 60 (68%). Тексты, описывающие темы, касающиеся обеих групп: как британских, так и иностранных студентов, составляют - 14 (16%).

Первая тематическая группа «Британские студенты за рубежом» (British students abroad) в большинстве представлена письмами реальных людей, описывающих собственный опыт обучения за границей, а также их советы и консультации студентам, которые только планируют свою образовательную поездку. В статьях анализируются все аспекты жизни студента: учеба, работа, путешествия, личный позитивный и негативный опыт. С положительной точки зрения, студенты считают, что, благодаря

обучению за рубежом, они получили ценные, открывающие глаза, жизненные уроки и чувство независимости находясь вдали от родной страны. Кроме того, возможность изучения новых культур и повышения профессиональных и языковых навыков является неотъемлемой частью личностного развития учащихся в анализируемых статьях. Негативную роль здесь играет культурный шок и языковой барьер, в частности нехватка необходимой лексики и вокабуляра, а также такие чувства, как одиночество, стресс и отчужденность. Некоторые студенты выезжают за границу для учебы, например, проводят третий год обучения в другой стране или наоборот, уезжают на весь период обучения. Есть студенты, которые совершают краткосрочные поездки для прохождения стажировок или изучения английского языка. Другие же сочетают как учебу, так и работу.

Вторая группа «Иностранные студенты в Великобритании» (Overseas students in the UK) охватывает более широкий спектр тем. Наиболее развитой и представленной частью являются политические вопросы. В данной группе сочетаются положительные и отрицательные аспекты, такие как интернационализация и ее последствия, влияние Brexit на иностранных студентов, экспорт образования и миграционные правила. Проблема с мигрантами является наиболее актуальной в публикациях данной группы. В результате антимиграционных риторик иностранные студенты вынуждены покинуть страну после окончания университетов, иначе они подвергнутся депортации. Неоднозначной представляется политика Home Office, департамента Правительства Великобритании, ответственного за иммиграционный контроль. Большинство текстов посвящены именно этой проблеме. Несмотря на негативные аспекты, иностранные студенты, приехавшие из стран Европы и других стран мира, получают передовое образование и расширяют кругозор. Они также как их британские сверстники страдают от культурного шока, непонимания и юридических проблем. Кроме того, этнические меньшинства боятся столкнуться с расизмом, антисемитизмом, ксенофобией и исламофобией, как последствиями политики

правительства. Они не чувствуют себя в безопасности и принятыми в этой стране.

Третья тематическая группа «Британские и иностранные студенты» (Both) характеризуется более общей информацией, такой как рейтинги лучших студенческих городов мира и критерии их отбора, формы сотрудничества между британскими и иностранными студентами, а также политические вопросы, касающиеся этих двух групп студентов.

Количественное соотношение статей трех тематических групп изменялось с каждым годом, результаты представлены в диаграмме 3. Из диаграммы видно, что количество статей в тематических группах «British students abroad» и «Both» в 2016-2017 годах значительно сократилось по сравнению с 2015 годом, с 11 до 1-2 статей в год, и с 9 до 2-3 статей соответственно. В то время как количество публикаций в тематической группе «Overseas students in the UK» остается практически на одном уровне в течение трех лет. Представленные количественные данные указывают на то, что проблемы и вопросы жизни иностранных студентов, обучающихся в Соединенном Королевстве, являются наиболее актуальными и злободневными. В 2015 году раздел «International student» британской газеты «The Guardian» представлял собой статьи на различные темы, связанные как с обучением иностранных студентов в Великобритании, так и британских студентов за рубежом. Однако в 2016-2017 годах основные тематики публикаций были сконцентрированы на вопросах антимиграционной политики Home Office. Политические события, происходящие в стране в тот период, повлияли на содержание текстов СМИ, а также на их количество. Соответственно можно сделать вывод, что данный фактор также оказал влияние и на формирование концепта «international student» в британских СМИ.

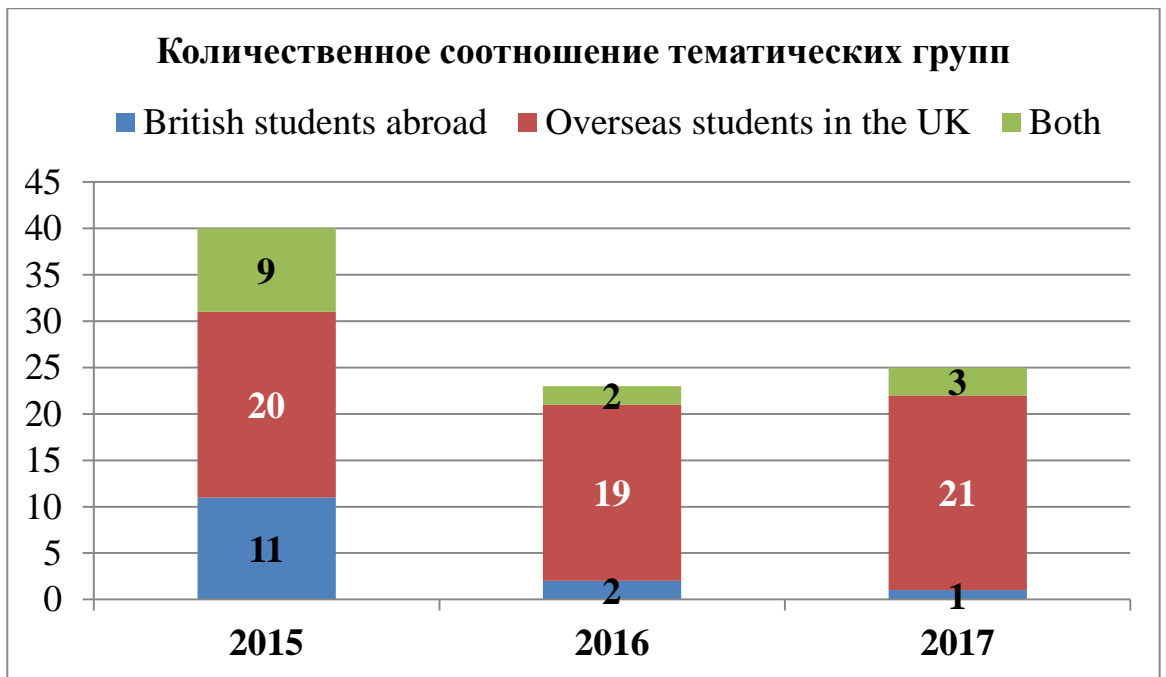


Диаграмма 3. Количественное соотношение тематических групп.

Таким образом, для исследования были выбраны 88 публикаций британской газеты «The Guardian», написанные в период с 2015 по 2017 год. Данные статьи затрагивают различные проблемы, с которыми сталкиваются иностранные студенты, описывают политическую ситуацию по отношению к ним, а также освещают значимые для студенческой жизни темы. Разделение анализируемых статей на тематические группы раскрывает иерархическую структуру концепта «international student» в британских СМИ. Более того, сравнение и анализ публикаций, написанных в течение разного времени помогут более глубоко описать особенности концепта «international student». В следующем параграфе мы изучим количественные данные, полученные при работе в программах для контент-анализа.

3.3 Контент-анализ текстов газеты “The Guardian”

Важную роль в нашем исследовании занимает контент-анализ содержания публикаций. Для этого нами были использованы программы Yoshikoder и Concordance. Основной целью является определение особенностей концепта «international student» в британской прессе и факторов его формирования.

Изучение содержания отобранных статей проходило по следующим этапам:

- анализ частотности слов и словосочетаний;
- поиск коллокаций и исследование лексического окружения;
- фреймовый анализ концепта;
- критический анализ содержания.

В настоящем параграфе мы рассмотрим результаты анализа частотности слов и словосочетаний, а также изучения коллокаций и лексического окружения. Фреймовый анализ концепта и критический анализ содержания будет представлен в следующем параграфе.

Проведя операцию контент-анализа в программе Concordance, мы выявили, что текстовый массив составляет 8555 словоформ, 76891 словоупотребление. Под **словоупотреблением** принято понимать «последовательности символов в тексте, отделенные друг от друга пробелами и знаками препинания (или другими разделителями)». Словоупотребление является единицей измерения корпусов, в английском языке для обозначения данного понятия используется слово «token». **Словоформа**, в свою очередь, является «абстрактной единицей, по отношению к которой конкретные идентичные словоупотребления являются контекстными реализациями», то есть каждой словоформе можно сопоставить исходную форму слова + набор грамматических категорий. Нескольким словоформам соответствует одна лексема – «абстрактная единица, соответствующая множеству всех морфологически связанных друг с другом (принадлежащих одной парадигме) словоформ с одинаковым

лексическим значением». Таким образом, сравнивая данные понятия можно выделить следующие различия:

- Словоупотребление – единица текста
- Словоформа – единица грамматики, абстрактная совокупность тождественных словоупотреблений
- Лексема – единица словаря, абстрактная совокупность родственных словоформ [Добрынина 2012; Хроленко, Денисов 2015].

При рассмотрении частотности всех словоупотреблений текстового массива с помощью программы Concordance, было выявлено, что наиболее частотными (за исключением служебных частей речи) стали следующие слова, представленные в таблице 1:

Таблица 1. Частотность слов.

№	Лексема	Частотность
1	Student(s)	1378
2	University(ies)	729
3	UK	563
4	International	526
5	Home	272
6	(Im)migration	224
7	Year	210
8	Work	164
9	Study	156
10	Education	155
11	People	143
12	EU	141
13	Time	137
14	New	136
15	Abroad	129
16	British	125
17	Country	121
18	Government	121
19	Visa	121
20	World	103

В данной таблице можно увидеть 20 первых по частотности лексем в общем текстовом массиве статей. Полученные данные показывают закономерность частотности слов с тематикой статей. Так, лексемы «student(s)»,

«university(ies)», «study», «education» и «UK» объединяют статьи всех трех тематических групп. Они в той или иной мере представлены в статьях, посвященных как иностранным студентам в Великобритании, так и британским студентам за рубежом. Данная лексика является основополагающей для фреймо-слотовой структуры концепта «international student» в британских СМИ. В свою очередь слова «international», «home», «(im)migration», «government», «work», «time», «EU» и «visa» свойственны публикациям об иностранных студентах в Соединенном королевстве, они ярко характеризуют основные темы и проблемы, представленные в данных статьях. Лексемы «year», «abroad», «British», «new», «people», «country», «world» преобладают в статьях, освещающих образовательные поездки британских студентов за границу. Однако, стоит отметить, что из-за широкого употребления и значения данных лексем, нельзя говорить о четком разграничении лексики по тематическим группам статей.

Далее следует проанализировать частотность слов в статьях, опубликованных в разный временной период. Таблица 2 отражает динамику изменений в частотности лексем.

Таблица 2. Частотность слов 2015-2017 гг.

2015 год			2016 год		2017 год	
№	Лексема	Частотность	Лексема	Частотность	Лексема	Частотность
1	Student(s)	626	Student(s)	345	Student(s)	407
2	University(ies)	311	University(ies)	198	University(ies)	220
3	International	241	UK	141	UK	205
4	UK	217	International	111	International	174
5	Year	127	EU	74	(Im)migration	98
6	Abroad	91	Home	71	Work	59
7	Work	73	(Im)migration	53	EU	59
8	(Im)migration	73	British	50	Education	51
9	London	68	Study	46	Government	49
10	People	67	Education	46	Study	46

Сокращение числа употреблений лексем вызвано различным объемом и количеством публикаций в 2015-2017 годах. Так, текстовый массив публикаций 2015 года составил 5469 словоформ, 34683 словоупотреблений. В 2016 году – 3847 словоформ, 19967 словоупотребление. В 2017 году корпус составил 3926 словоформы, 22241 словоупотребление. Таблица 2 показывает, что наиболее частотными остаются лексемы «student(s)», на первом месте, и «university(ies)», на втором, так же как это было в общем анализе корпуса всех статей за три года. Третью и четвертую позицию делят слова «international» и «UK». Далее частотность слов меняется в зависимости от года и преобладания той или иной тематической группы статей.

В 2015 году лексемы «year» и «abroad» занимают 5 и 6 позицию, что характеризует большее количество статей в тематической группе «British students abroad» по сравнению с 2016 и 2017 годом. Также в 2015 году появляется лексема «London», которая не представлена как в 2016-2017 году, так и в общей таблице частотности слов за три года. Это обусловлено повышенным интересом авторов и читателей к статьям, освещающим рейтинги «лучших студенческих городов мира», которые входят в тематическую группу «Both», широко представленную в 2015 году.

Изменения, начинающие происходить в политике Великобритании по отношению к иностранным студентам в 2016 повлияли на тематические группы статей, а также, следовательно, и на частотность употребления лексики. Так, лексемы «EU», «home», «(im)migration», «study» и «education» характеризуют материал тематической группы «Overseas students in the UK».

В 2017 году проблема с миграционным законодательством и статусом иностранных студентов в Великобритании усугубляется. Данный факт хорошо иллюстрирует перемещение лексемы «(im)migration» с 8 места по частотности в 2015 на 7 в 2016, и на 5 место в 2017 году. Также следует отметить, что в 2017 году появилась лексема «government», которая не была представлена в 2015-2016 году, но присутствует в общей таблице. Слова «EU», «work», «study», «education» относятся к тематической группы

«Overseas students in the UK», которая преобладает в публикациях за 2017 год.

Следующим этапом стало изучение коллокаций и лексического окружения лексем-компонентов, из которых состоит название концепта: «international» и «student». Таблицы 3 и 4 иллюстрируют наиболее частые коллокации с данными словами, включая количество их употреблений.

Таблица 3. Лексическое окружение лексемы «international».

№	Коллокация	Частотность
1	International student	415
2	International passenger	6
3	Prospective international	6
4	Qualified international	6
5	International graduates	5
6	International programmes	5
7	International education	4
8	International relations	4

Как видно из таблиц 3 и 4, словосочетание «international student» является наиболее употребляемым (415 раз) в исследуемых публикациях. Остальные повторяющиеся употребления делятся на существительные: «passenger», «graduates», «programmes», «education» и «relations»; и прилагательные: «prospective» и «qualified». Данная лексика связана со сферой образования и путешествий/миграции – основных тем, освещающихся в статьях.

Таблица 4. Лексическое окружение лексемы «student(s)».

№	Коллокация	Частотность
1	International student	415
2	Overseas student	59
3	EU student	44
4	Foreign student	35
5	Non-EU student	28
6	UK student	25
7	Home student	24
8	Student visa	22
9	Student numbers	20
10	Student experience	16
11	British student	11
12	Student life	10
13	Student migration	5

Рассматривая употребления лексемы «student» и коллокаций с ней, можно выделить также два значения, в роли которых выступает лексема: существительного и прилагательного. По отношению к определениям к существительному «student» можно увидеть четкое разграничение по социальным категориям студентов. Так студенты делятся на «international», «overseas», «foreign», «EU» и «Non-EU», «home», «British». Следует также отметить небольшие различия в употреблении лексем «international», «overseas» и «foreign» по отношению к определению категорий студентов. Мы обратились к толкованиям онлайн версий словарей Cambridge и Oxford. Так «international» характеризуется как *'involving more than one country', 'existing, occurring, or carried on between nations'*. Прилагательное «overseas» имеет значения *'in, from, or to other countries', 'from, to, or relating to a foreign country, especially one across the sea'*. В то время как лексема «foreign» обозначает *'belonging or connected to a country that is not your own', 'strange and unfamiliar'* [Cambridge Dictionary; Oxford Dictionary URL]. Из данных определений можно сделать вывод, что лексема «international» имеет наиболее нейтральную окраску, тогда как «overseas» и «foreign» выражают дистанцирование одной нации или страны от другой. В данных лексемах прослеживается деление студентов, которое включает в себя противопоставление «свой – чужой» и априори негативную коннотацию. Рассматривая лексему «student» как прилагательное, мы видим следующие существительные: «visa», «experience», «numbers», «life», «migration». Данные слова охватывают широкий список тем, таких как образование, миграция, жизненный опыт. Важно отметить, что лексика из всех приведенных словосочетаний в большей степени входит в общую таблицу 1 частотности слов статей за три года 2015-2017.

Таким образом, в данном параграфе мы провели контент-анализ новостных материалов онлайн версии британской газеты «The Guardian» в разделе «international student». При помощи компьютерных программ Yoshikoder и Concordance мы провели анализ частотности слов и

словосочетаний, а также поиск коллокаций и исследование лексического окружения. Данные программы являются гибкими системами для работы с текстами, которые позволяют выбрать вариант сортировки слов: поиск фраз, учет расстановки слов при поиске, составление конкорданса, а также использовать регулярные выражения для поиска. Корпус текстов исследуемых публикаций составил 8555 словоформ, 76891 словоупотребление. Мы выявили список наиболее частотных слов за три года, а также по каждому году с 2015 по 2017 отдельно. Показатели частотности, также как и анализ общего содержания статей, показывают основные изменения в тематиках статей с течением времени. Наиболее актуальные новостные топики сопровождаются использованием определенной лексики, что сразу отражается на частоте ее употребления в тексте. В следующем параграфе мы более подробно исследуем качественные показатели, влияющие на формирования концепта «international student» в условиях глобализации на материале текстов британских СМИ.

3.4 Анализ и интерпретация концепта «international student»

При исследовании текстов СМИ необходимо определить установки, приоритеты и ценности прессы, которые в основном выражаются с помощью контекста. Для определения данных средств используется критический дискурс-анализ, позволяющий выявить имплицитные интенции автора. В настоящем параграфе мы проводим фреймовый анализ концепта «international student», а также критический анализ содержания статей. Совокупность данных методов исследования и комплексный подход к их использованию позволит нам изучить фреймо-слотовую структуру концепта в рамках квантитативной лингвистики.

Для реализации поставленных задач, мы рассматривали три тематические группы исследуемых публикаций: «British students abroad», «Overseas students in the UK» и «Both». Все статьи были проанализированы по контексту и лексике, а затем составлены таблицы-схемы, репрезентирующие фреймо-слотовую структуру концепта «international student», где числа в скобках указывают на количество употреблений того или иного субфрейма или слота. Особенности концепта и его структура была различна для каждой тематической группы.

Структура концепта «international student» для тематической группы «British students abroad» представлена в таблице 5. В тематической группе «Британские студенты за рубежом» анализируются все аспекты жизни иностранного студента: учеба, работа и путешествия, личный позитивный и негативный опыт. Так концепт делится на два основных фрейма «tips and advice» и «student life». Первый фрейм менее разветвлён и включает в себя четыре субфрейма «travelling», «accommodation», «study» и «food». Субфрейм «study» состоит из двух слотов «savvy shopping» и «dietary requirements», также как и субфрейм «study» из слотов «language improvement» и «motivation». Данный фрейм включает в себя основные советы по адаптации на новом месте обучения за рубежом студентам, только планирующим свою образовательную поездку. Фрейм «tips and advice» представлен только в

статьях, где описываются британские студенты, обучающиеся за границей. Это формирует определенный индивидуальный концепт британцев как иностранных студентов.

Второй фрейм в данной тематической группе – «student life». Он включает в себя четыре субфрейма первого уровня «travelling», «study», «work» и «student experience». Субфрейм «work» состоит из слотов «teaching English» и «internship». В то время как субфрейм первого уровня «student experience» делится два субфрейма второго уровня «positive» и «negative». Субфрейм «positive» (student experience) репрезентирует слоты «exploring new cultures», «achieved skills», «sense of community» и «independence», они описывают опыт студентов с положительной стороны. Субфрейм «negative» (student experience), представляя собой отрицательные коннотации, разделяется на три слота «culture shock», «expensive cost» и «language barrier», а также на субфрейм третьего уровня «feelings», который в свою очередь имеет четыре слота «loneliness», «leaving comfort zone», «high stress level» и «disconnection from the world». Фрейм «student life» иллюстрирует многогранность жизни иностранного студента за рубежом, а также множество различных бытовых аспектов и чувств, с которыми им приходится сталкиваться ежедневно, находясь вдали от дома. Публикации «The Guardian» в этой тематической группе отражают позитивный взгляд на концепт иностранного студента. Студенты дают советы и рекомендации своим сверстникам, а также рассказывают истории и опыт реальных людей. Здесь иностранные студенты – это амбициозные молодые люди с широким кругозором, открытые и не боящиеся рискнуть и попробовать себя в чем-то новом. Они уезжают за рубеж для получения опыта международного обучения, погружения в новую культуру, развития языковых навыков, расширения круга знакомств и поиска новых друзей. Проблемы, с которыми они сталкиваются, представляются больше как вызовы, которые просто нужно принять и преодолеть.

Таблица 5. Фреймо-слотовая структура концепта «international student» для тематической группы «British students abroad»

British students abroad										
Tips and Advice				Student life						
Savvy shopping (7)	Dietary requirements (4)	Language improvement (8)	Motivation (4)	Accommodation (14)	Travelling (6)	Travelling (11)	Study (52)	Work	Students experience	Positive
exploring new cultures (15)	achieved skills (8)	sense of community (3)	Independence (6)	culture shock (9)	expensive cost (8)	language barrier (5)	Feelings			
Loneliness (12)	Leaving comfort zone (5)	High stress level (4)	Disconnection from the world (3)							

Таблица 6 репрезентирует вторую тематическую группу статей «Overseas students in the UK». Статьи, посвященные иностранным студентам в Соединенном Королевстве, охватывают более широкий спектр фреймов и субфреймов, чем в группе «British students abroad».

Во второй тематической группе концепт «international student» делится на три фрейма «student experience», «politics» и «economy», они обладают сложной иерархической структурой. Фрейм «student experience» делится на три субфрейма «feelings», «study» и «cultural diversity». Субфрейм «feelings» состоит из четырех слотов «unsafe», «homesickness», «loneliness», «unwelcome», все из которых репрезентируют лексику с негативной коннотацией. Вторым субфреймом «study» состоит из двух слотов «cutting-edge training» и «language skills improvement», имеющих позитивную оценку. Третий субфрейм «cultural diversity» включает в себя как положительные так и отрицательные по коннотации слоты: «mutual misunderstanding», «cultural shock», «international friendship», «minority ethnic students». Следующий фрейм в концепте – «politics», который состоит из пяти достаточно крупных субфреймов: «internationalisation», «government hypocritical treatment», «Brexit», «education export», «immigration regulations». Вместе они охватывают большой ряд различных политических явлений и событий, происходящих в Соединенном королевстве. Субфрейм «education export» делится на три слота «humanitarian crisis», «losing generation of talent» и «damage the UK's attractiveness». Субфрейм «immigration regulations» имеет четыре слота «tough visa controls», «force to return home after graduation», «anti-immigration rhetoric» и «potential deportation». Третий фрейм данного концепта «economy» состоит из трех субфреймов «ban on student loan», «valuable financial contribution 'cash cows'» и «exchange schemes», последний из которых включает в себя два слота «CARA (Council for at Risk Academics)» и «Grants».

С экономической точки зрения, иностранные студенты в Великобритании вносят ценный финансовый вклад, так как плата за

обучение для них в два раза или даже иногда в три раза выше, чем для британских студентов. Фраза «cash cows» часто используется в статьях данной тематической группы с целью описания лицемерного отношения властей к иностранным студентам.

Несмотря на культурные и экономические выгоды, приносимые иностранными студентами, правительство ужесточает визовый контроль и создает многочисленные препятствия в процессе подачи заявок на обучение. Данная ситуация наносит ущерб привлекательности университетов Великобритании, некоторые эксперты называют ее гуманитарным кризисом в секторе высшего образования Великобритании. В статьях говорится о том, что Соединенное королевство теряет поколение талантливых и «лучших и ярких» студентов из-за политики государства.

Иностранные студенты приезжают в Великобританию как из стран Европы, так и стран не входящих в Европейский Союз, чтобы получить передовую подготовку и расширить свой кругозор. Они, так же как и их британские сверстники, страдают от культурного шока и недопонимания, хотя кроме этого им необходимо также решать юридические проблемы. В новостных материалах часто отмечалось, что этнические меньшинства боятся столкнуться с расизмом, антисемитизмом, ксенофобией и исламофобией как последствиями политики правительства. Они не чувствуют себя в безопасности и желанными в этой стране. И это всё в дополнение к тоске по родине, дому и чувству одиночества, которые также были частью опыта британских студентов.

Следует отметить, что по сравнению с первой тематической группой, анализ показал более негативное отношение к концепту «international student». Иностранные студенты подвергаются дискриминации со стороны недобросовестной политики Министерства внутренних дел Великобритании и сталкиваются с рядом других трудностей. Например, с такими же как и их британские сверстники: культурный шок, языковой барьер, недопонимание и тоска по дому.

Таблица 6. Фреймо-слотовая структура концепта «international student» для тематической группы «Overseas students in the UK»

Overseas students in the United Kingdom			
<i>Student experience</i>		<i>Politics</i>	<i>Economy</i>
Feelings Study Cultural diversity	Unsafe (10)	Internationalisation (8) Government's hypocritical treatment (47) Brexit (20)	Ban on students loan (3) Valuable financial contribution ("cash cows") (13)
	Homesickness (8)		
	Loneliness (5)		
	Unwelcome (18)	Education export Immigration regulations	Exchange schemes
	Cutting-edge training (6)		
	Language skills improvement (13)		
	Mutual misunderstanding (4)		
	Cultural shock (6)	Humanitarian crisis (3) Losing generation of talent (5) Damage the UK's attractiveness (15) Tough visa controls (76) Force to return home after graduation (19) Anti-immigration rhetoric (8) Potential deportation (4)	Cara (Council for at Risk Academics) (3) Grants (11)
	International friendship (7)		
Minority ethnic students (9)			

Тематическая группа «Both» представлена в Таблице 7. Статьи, освещающие темы, связанные как с британскими, так и зарубежными студентами включают в себя более общие темы и информацию.

В третьей тематической группе концепт «international student» делится также на три фрейма: «politics», «cooperation» и «best student cities in the world». Фрейм «politics» имеет два субфрейма первого уровня «demonstrations» и «Brexit effect». Субфрейм «demonstrations» включает в себя субфреймы второго уровня «charity and fundraising», «fear of deportation» и «protests», который в свою очередь состоит из слотов «refugees crisis» и «mistreat of international students». Далее рассмотрим фрейм «cooperation», который делится на «positive» (cooperation) и «negative» (cooperation). К отрицательным относятся слоты «lack of knowledge» и «language barrier», а к положительным: «global contacts», «internationalisation», «integration», «exchange schemes», «learning cultures» и «language skills improvement». Фрейм «best student cities in the world» описывает критерии отбора лучших студенческих городов и состоит из слотов «quality of the universities», «affordability», «graduation employment», «quality of life» и «multiculturalism».

В настоящее время студенты известны как наиболее политически активная часть населения, они участвуют в различных демонстрациях и протестах. Однако, будучи иностранным студентом, участие в публичных мероприятиях такого рода может быть опасным. Именно поэтому иностранные студенты имеют имидж политически неактивных, по сравнению с их британскими сверстниками. Также недостаточный уровень языковой подготовки и непонимание законов страны создают трудности при сотрудничестве между студентами. Тем не менее, британские студенты стараются поддерживать своих иностранных коллег и протестовать против кризиса беженцев, а также против жестокого обращения с иностранными студентами. Существуют различные программы обмена, которые способствуют интернационализации и развитию глобальных контактов. Тексты данной тематической группы представляют иностранных студентов

пассивными и незащищенными, по сравнению с их политически активными и энергичными британскими сверстниками. Однако, обе категории студентов заинтересованы в совместном межкультурном опыте общения и обучения.

Таблица 7. Фреймо-слотовая структура концепта «international student» для тематической группы «Both»

Both: British and Overseas students										
Politics		Cooperation						Best student cities in the world		
Refugees crisis (12)	Mistreat of international students (4)	Demonstrations	Brexit effect (14)	Negative	Positive			Quality of the universities (9)	Affordability (10)	Graduation employment (6)
Quality of life (14)	Multiculturalism (4)									

Таким образом, подводя итог важно отметить, что использование двух различных методов, фреймового анализа и критического анализа содержания, помогло изучить особенности формирования концепта «international student» в условиях глобализации на материале британской прессы.

Тематические группы имеют общие фреймы, субфреймы и слоты. Такие как «student experience», «politics», «feelings», «study», «cultural shock», «language improvement», «language barrier», «positive», «negative» и «internationalisation». Это указывает, что существуют основные концептуальные представления об иностранных студентах не зависимо к какой категории они относятся, их социального статуса и национальности. Однако, каждая отдельная тематическая группа включает в себя различные слоты и интерпретации, индивидуальные для каждой категории студентов.

Общее представление концепта «international student» делится на две категории: британские студенты за рубежом и иностранные студенты в Соединенном Королевстве. Образ этих двух категорий абсолютно разный, а также различны темы и контекст самих публикаций. Иностранные студенты в Великобритании описываются с негативной точки зрения. Здесь преобладают такие темы, как миграционная политика, сокращение учебных виз, дискриминация, культурный шок, языковой барьер и проблемы с адаптацией в чужой стране. Британские студенты, в свою очередь, представляют позитивное отношение и мнение. Основные темы – это культурное разнообразие, обмен опытом, новые знакомства, развитие языковых компетенций. Данные настоящего исследования доказывают, что концепт «international student» имеет сложную иерархическую структуру.

ВЫВОДЫ ПО ГЛАВЕ 3

Объектом лингвокультурологического исследования в настоящей работе был выбран концепт «international student» в контексте глобализации, что обусловлено растущими тенденциями создания единого образовательного пространства в мире. В связи с этим в данной главе мы изучили особенности структуры концепта «international student» на материале британских СМИ.

Глобализация охватывает все сферы человеческой жизни, и образовательная политика и международный академический обмен не являются исключением. Образование активно включено в глобализационные процессы. В последние десятилетия во всем мире возросло число иностранных студентов. Это происходит главным образом из-за рекламных акций и обмена информацией. Большинство современных вузов вовлечено в международную деятельность. При этом основной целью, которую преследуют студенты, уезжающие получать образование за рубеж, является дополнительная подготовка к будущей профессии, развитие знаний, умений и навыков, которые могут пригодиться на рынке труда любой страны в условиях интернационализации экономики.

В третьей (практической) главе мы проанализировали данные, полученные методом сплошной выборки из интернет-издания британской газеты «The Guardian». Корпус составил 88 публикаций, написанных в период с 1 января 2015 года по 31 декабря 2017 года, объемом 241 страница. Все статьи были опубликованы в разделе «international student» и посвящены различным темам, связанным с жизнью иностранных студентов.

Для проведения контент-анализа и выборки данных мы использовали программы Yoshikoder и Concordance, которые доступны в сети Интернет с бесплатным использованием. Данные программы позволяют выбрать вариант сортировки слов: поиск фраз, учет расстановки слов при поиске, составление конкорданса, а также использовать регулярные выражения для поиска.

Просмотреть статистику по тексту можно по типу слов, процентному соотношению, количеству символов и предложений. Это гибкие системы для анализа текстов, которые позволяют получить детальную информацию об электронных текстах и производить глубокий и всесторонний анализ.

Изучение выбранных статей проходило по следующим этапам:

- анализ частотности слов и словосочетаний;
- поиск коллокаций и исследование лексического окружения;
- фреймовый анализ концепта;
- критический анализ содержания.

В результате анализа, все публикации были разделены на три тематические группы:

1. Британские студенты за границей (British students abroad);
2. Иностранцы студенты в Соединенном Королевстве (Overseas students in the UK);
3. Тексты, представляющие как британских, так и зарубежных студентов вместе (Both);

Данные тематические группы освещают различные сферы студенческой жизни, проблемы, с которыми сталкиваются иностранные студенты, а также возможные формы сотрудничества британских и иностранных студентов.

Проанализировав частотность слов, фреймовую структуру и контекст, можно сделать вывод, что показатели частотности употребления той или иной лексики отражают основные интенции автора и напрямую зависят от актуальности новостных топиков публикаций. Концепт «international student» делится на две основные категории: британские студенты за рубежом и иностранные студенты в Соединенном Королевстве, их образ различный. Иностранцы студенты в Великобритании описываются с негативной точки зрения, в то время как по отношению к британским студентам преобладают положительные коннотации.

ЗАКЛЮЧЕНИЕ

Целью данного исследования было выявление языковых средств, влияющих на формирование концепта “international student” в британской прессе. Работа лежит в русле медиалингвистики, когнитивной лингвистики и контент-анализа. Рассмотрев основные *теоретические положения* дискурса СМИ, теории концептов и методики контент-анализа, мы выделили основные понятия.

Дискурс СМИ является совокупность текстов, которые представляют собой отражение психологической, социальной и культурной парадигмы общества. Все данные тексты разделяются на две крупные группы: рекламные и информационные, которые делятся согласно содержательным и структурным признакам. В практической главе мы рассматривали тексты новостного жанра. Основной коммуникативной интенцией текстов, использовавшихся в нашей работе, является создание определенного мнения об иностранных студентах, которое влияет на формирование концепта в британской прессе в целом.

Концепт является многомерным культурно-значимым социопсихическим образованием в коллективном сознании, который выражается в языковой форме. Это продукт когнитивного сознания человека и структурный элемент языковой картины мира, включающий в себя всю вариативность значения слова, его ассоциативное представление, а также специфическую фиксацию культурно значимых явлений и характеристик в форме языковых знаков. Среди ученых не существует три основных подхода к определению концепта:

- Лингвокогнитивный (Н.Д. Арутюнова, Е.С. Кубрякова, Д.С. Лихачев, И.А. Стернин и др.),
- Лингвопсихологический (С.А. Аскольдов, А.А. Залевская, Р.М. Фрумкина),
- Лингвокультурологический (Ю.С. Степанов, С.Г. Воркачев, В.И. Карасик, Н.А. Красовский, и др.).

В настоящем исследовании мы придерживаемся лингвокультурологического подхода и используем метод **фреймового анализа**, который является схематичным отражением восприятия человеком окружающей действительности. Под фреймом понимается единица знаний, организованная вокруг некоторого понятия и содержащая данные о нем. Фрейм состоит из слотов – элементов, конкретизирующих определенный аспект фрейма.

Контент-анализ основан на статистическом подсчёте специально выбранных текстовых единиц. Он позволяет выявить скрытые аспекты содержания текста и сравнить содержание нескольких текстов, а также анализировать их с помощью диаграмм и таблиц. Для проведения контент-анализа и выборки данных мы выбрали программы Yoshikoder и Concordance.

Глобализация представляет собой процесс интеграции человечества в единое целое, который охватывает культуру, экономику, политику, образование и другие сферы человеческой жизни. В наши дни широко распространен феномен глобализации в секторе высшего образования. Университеты из всех стран мира заключают различные союзы и партнерства, с целью создания совместных научно-исследовательских лабораторий, открытия образовательных программ двойного дипломирования, а также организации и реализации программ обмена. Ежегодно число студентов, которые проводят все свое обучение в высшем учебном заведении или его часть за рубежом, стремительно растет. Однако основной поток абитуриентов сосредоточен в относительно небольшом количестве стран и представляет значительный финансовый интерес для их университетов. Именно поэтому по отношению к иностранным студентам различные изменения в данном секторе играют важную роль. В настоящем исследовании мы рассмотрели пример университетов Соединенного Королевства, которые имеют имидж наиболее привлекательных для

иностранцев со всего мира. В связи с этим, в настоящее время существует быстрый рост числа иностранных студентов в Великобритании.

В *практической главе*, для выявления языковых средств, мы проанализировали данные, полученные методом сплошной выборки из интернет-издания британской газеты «The Guardian». Корпус составил 88 публикаций, написанных в период с 1 января 2015 года по 31 декабря 2017 года, объемом 241 страница. Все статьи были опубликованы в разделе «international student» и посвящены различным темам, связанным с жизнью иностранных студентов. Однако, количество статей в данном разделе с течением времени сокращалось: в 2015 года это 40 статей, в 2016 – 23, тогда как в 2017 году – 25. Основываясь на данных статистики, можно сделать вывод, что у данного британского издания снижается интерес к иностранным студентам.

Изучение выбранных статей проходило по следующим этапам:

- анализ частотности слов и словосочетаний;
- поиск коллокаций и исследование лексического окружения;
- фреймовый анализ концепта;
- критический анализ содержания.

По тематикам публикаций можно выделить три основные группы:

1. Британские студенты за границей (British students abroad);
2. Иностранные студенты в Соединенном Королевстве (Overseas students in the UK);
3. Тексты, представляющие как британских, так и зарубежных студентов вместе (Both);

Корпус текстов исследуемых публикаций составил 8555 словоформ, 76891 словоупотребление. Мы выявили список наиболее частотных слов за три года, а также по каждому году с 2015 по 2017 отдельно. Наиболее частотной лексикой стали следующие лексемы: «student(s)», «university(ies)», «UK», «international», «home», «(im)migration», «year», «work», «study», «education», «people», «EU», «time», «new», «abroad», «British», «country»,

«government», «visa», «world». Показатели частотности, также как и анализ общего содержания статей, показывают основные изменения в тематиках статей с течением времени. Наиболее актуальные новостные топики сопровождаются использованием определенной лексики, что сразу отражается на частоте ее употребления в тексте.

Фреймовый анализ и критический анализ дискурса подтвердил, что концепт «international student» в британской прессе делится на два основных представления: британские студенты за рубежом и иностранные студенты в Соединенном Королевстве. Образ этих двух категорий абсолютно разный, а также различны темы и контекст самих публикаций. Иностранные студенты, приезжающие в Великобританию, изображены с негативной окраской, угнетенные правительством, борющиеся с непониманием со стороны окружающих. Они чувствуют себя нежеланными в этой стране, а также опасаются за свою безопасность. Рост числа иностранных студентов в Великобритании также связан с политическим скандалом и антимиграционной риторикой в средствах массовой информации Великобритании. Между тем, британские студенты в анализируемых статьях сталкиваются с более распространенными культурными и языковыми проблемами. Они воспринимаются как авантюрные, непредвзятые и общительные молодые люди. Таким образом, в изученных нами публикациях отражены два абсолютно разных представления иностранных студентов, которые характеризуют сложность и многогранность концепта “international student” в контексте глобализации на материале дискурса британских средств массовой информации.

БИБЛИОГРАФИЧЕСКИЙ СПИСОК

1. Абабкова М. Ю. Понятия «глобализация образования», «интернационализация образования», «международное образование»: общее и различное // Теория и практика сервиса: экономика, социальная сфера, технологии, 2011. – №. 1 (7).
2. Апресян Ю. Д. Избранные труды. Лексическая семантика. Синонимические средства языка. М.: Школа «Языки русской культуры», Издат. фирма «Восточная литература» РАН, 1995. Т.1. С. 326-401
3. Арапова Г.У. КОНЦЕПТ, ПОНЯТИЕ И ЗНАЧЕНИЕ СЛОВА // Международный журнал прикладных и фундаментальных исследований, 2016. – № 1-4. – С. 591-593;
4. Аскольдов С. А. Концепт и слово // Русская словесность. От теории словесности к структуре текста. Антология / Под общей редакцией д-ра филол. наук проф. В. П. Нерознака. М.: Academia, 1997.
5. Болдырев Н. Н. Фреймовая семантика как метод когнитивного анализа языковых единиц // Проблемы современной филологии: Межвуз. сб. науч. тр. – 2000. – №. 1. – С. 36-45.
6. Болдырев Н. Н. Когнитивная семантика: Курс лекций по английской филологии. – Directmedia, 2016.
7. Болховской А. Л., Говердовская Е. В., Ивченко А. В. Образование в глобализирующемся мире: философский взгляд // Экономические и гуманитарные исследования регионов. – 2013. – №. 5. – С. 80-85.
8. Воркачёв С.Г. Лингвокультурология, языковая личность, концепт: становления антропоцентрической парадигмы в языкознании // Филологические науки, 2001.
9. Гаврилова М. В. Критический дискурс-анализ в современной зарубежной лингвистике. СПб.: Изд-во С.-Петербур. ун-та, 2003. С. 5-22
10. Гальперин И. Р. Текст как объект лингвистического исследования. М.: Наука, 1981. С. 29-93.

11. Гольдберг В. Б. Лексика современного английского языка в свете лингвистических парадигм: методы исследования. – 2003.
12. Демьянков В. З. Фрейм // Краткий словарь когнитивных терминов / под общ. ред. Е.С. Куб-ряковой. М.: Филол. фак. МГУ, 1996. С. 187–189.
13. Добросклонская Т. Г. Массмедийный дискурс: теория и методы изучения // Сб. науч. работ / под ред. Кожемякина Е. А., Полонского А. В., Ходеева А. Г.. Белгород: КОНСТАНТА, 2014. С. 48-56.
14. Добросклонская Т. Г. Медиалингвистика: системный подход к изучению языка СМИ. Современная английская медиаречь. М.: Издательство «Флинта», 2015. С 123-224.
15. Добросклонская Т. Г. Массмедийный дискурс в системе медиалингвистики // Международный научный журнал. СПб., 2015. № 1 (6). – С. 45-54.
16. Добрынина К. С. О методике работы над конкордансами // Филологические науки. Вопросы теории и практики. Тамбов: Грамота, 2012. №. 1. С. 59-63
17. Дрожащих Н. В. Дискурс-анализ. Часть 1: Конверсационный анализ: учебно-методическое пособие для студентов специальности «теория и практика МК». Тюмень: издательство ТюмГУ, 2009. С. 15-49
18. Дрожащих Н. В. Дискурс-анализ. Часть 2: Критический анализ дискурса: учебно-методическое пособие для студентов специальности «теория и практика МК». Тюмень: издательство ТюмГУ, 2012. С 5-67
19. Ефремов В. А. Теория концепта и концептуальное пространство // Известия Российского государственного педагогического университета им. АИ Герцена, 2009. – №. 104.
20. Желтухина М. Р. Тропологическая суггестивность масс-медиального дискурса: о проблеме речевого воздействия тропов в языке СМИ: монография. Волгоград: Изд-во ВФ МУПК, 2003. С. 36-108

21. Залевская А. А. Психолингвистический подход к проблеме концепта //Методологические проблемы когнитивной лингвистики, 2001. – №. 32. – С. 36-44.
22. Камашев С. В., Косенко Т. С. Глобализация образования и «глобальное образование» в современном мире //Философия образования. – 2012. – №. 6. – С. 124-132.
23. Карасик В. И. Языковой круг: личность, концепты, дискурс. Волгоград, 2002.
24. Кехян М. Г. Основные тенденции глобализации сферы образования //Креативная экономика. – 2013. – №. 1 (73).
25. Клушина Н. И. Общие особенности публицистического стиля //Язык СМИ как объект междисциплинарного исследования. М., Из-во МГУ, 2003. С. 26-36.
26. Костомаров В. Г. Лингвистический статус массовой коммуникации и проблема "газетного языка" // Психолингвистические проблемы массовой коммуникации. М., 1974. 53-66 с.
27. Кошкина Е. Г. Понятие и сущность концепта как многомерного смыслового образования в коллективном сознании //Язык и коммуникация в контексте культуры: материалы IV международной научно–практической конференции, 23-24 июня 2009 г/. – Рязанский государственный педагогический университет им. СА Есенина, 2009. – С. 100-108.
28. Краснаярова О. В. Медийный текст: его особенности и виды // Известия Иркутской государственной экономической академии. Иркутск, 2010. №. 3. С.177-180
29. Кубрякова Е.С. // Краткий словарь когнитивных терминов. М., 1996.
30. Липина Е. А. Лингвокультурный концепт «Время военное/Kriegszeit» в идиолектах КМ Симонова и ЭМ Ремарка (на материале текстов военной прозы): Автореферат дисс.... канд. филол. наук.-Тюмень, 2008.-25 с.

31. Лихачев Д. С. О концептосфере русского языка // Вопр. языкознания. 1993. № 1.
32. Ляпин С. Х. Концептология: к становлению подхода // Концепты. Научные труды центроконцепта, 1997. – №. 1. – С. 11-35.
33. Маслова В. А. Лингвокультурология: Учеб. пособие для студ. высш. учеб. заведений. М., 2001.
34. Минский М. Фреймы для представления знаний. М.: Энергия, 1979.
35. Назаров М. М. Массовая коммуникация и общество. Введение в теорию и исследования. М.: Аванти плюс, 2004. С. 125-186
36. Пономарева Е. Ю. Концептуальная оппозиция жизнь–смерть в поэтическом дискурсе (на материале поэзии Д. Томаса и В. Брюсова) // Томаса и В. Брюсова: дис.... канд. филол. наук. Тюмень, 2008.
37. Попова З. Д., Стернин И. А. Очерки по когнитивной лингвистике. Воронеж, 2001.
38. Семенова А. В., Корсунская М. В. Контент-анализ СМИ: проблемы и опыт применения. М.: Институт социологии РАН, 2010. С. 9-48
39. Сергеева Е. Н. Понятие концепта и аспекты его изучения в современной лингвистике // Вестник вэгу, 2009. – №. 3. – С. 72-85.
40. Сметанина С. И. Медиа-текст в системе культуры: динамические процессы в языке и стиле журналистики конца XX века. СПб, 2002. С. 29-44.
41. Солганик Г. Я. О языке и стиле газеты // Язык СМИ как объект междисциплинарного исследования. М., Из-во МГУ, 2003. С. 10-24
42. Степанов Ю.С. Концепты. Тонкая пленка цивилизации. - Языки славянской культуры, 2007
43. Стернин И.А. Методика исследования структуры концепта // Методологические проблемы современной лингвистики. Воронеж, 2001.
44. Тарасова И. А. Категории когнитивной лингвистики в исследовании идиостиля // Вестник Самарского государственного университета, 2004. – №. 1. – С. 163-169.

45. Тульнова М. А. Динамика развития концепта «индивидуализм» в контексте глобализации //Известия Волгоградского государственного педагогического университета. – 2009. – №. 7.
46. Хроленко А. Т., Денисов А. В. Современные информационные технологии для гуманитария. М.: Издательство «Флинта», 2015. С. 31-87.
47. Чернобровкина Е. П. Контент-анализ в лингвистических исследованиях //Вестник Бурятского государственного университета. Улан-Удэ, 2011. №. 11. С. 125-128
48. Чудинов А. П. Россия в метафорическом зеркале: Когнитивное исследование политической метафоры (1991–2000): моногр. Екатеринбург, 2001.
49. Чудинов А. П., Будаев Э. В. Современная политическая лингвистика. Екатеринбург: УрГПУ, 2006. С. 10-42
50. Busse D., Teubert W. Ist Diskurs ein sprachwissenschaftliches Objekt? Zur Methodenfrage der historischen Semantik // Linguistische Diskursanalyse: neue Perspektiven. Wiesbaden, 2013. С. 13-30.
51. Bednarek M. Evaluation in media discourse: Analysis of a newspaper corpus. – A&C Black, 2006.
52. Bell A. The language of news media. – Oxford : Blackwell, 1991. – С. 9.
53. Berelson B. Content analysis in communication research, 1952.
54. Hart C., Lukeš D. (ed.). Cognitive linguistics in critical discourse analysis: Application and theory. – Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009.
55. Huckin T. N., Miler T. Critical discourse analysis // DOCUMENT RESUME. Washington, 1997. С. 78-92.
56. Krippendorf K. Content analysis: an introduction to its methodology. Sage //Thousand Oaks, CA, 2004.
57. Machin D., Van Leeuwen T. Global media discourse: A critical introduction. – Taylor & Francis, 2007.
58. Neuendorf K. A. The content analysis guidebook. – Sage, 2016.
59. O'keeffe A. Investigating media discourse. – Routledge, 2006.

60. Schreier M. Qualitative content analysis in practice. – Sage Publications, 2012.
61. Sharifian F. Cultural conceptualisations and language: Theoretical framework and applications. – John Benjamins Publishing, 2011. – Т. 1.
62. Weinstein M. M. (ed.). Globalization: what's new. – Columbia University Press, 2005.
63. Wodak R., Meyer M. Methods of critical discourse studies. New York: Sage, 2015. С. 2-21

ЭЛЕКТРОННЫЕ РЕСУРСЫ

64. Всемирная декларация о высшем образовании для XXI века: подходы и практические меры / Высшее образование в XXI в.: подходы и практические меры ЮНЕСКО // Всемирная конференция по высшему образованию: заключительный доклад. – 1998. – [Электронный ресурс]: URL: <http://docs.cntd.ru/document/901839539> (18.05.2018)
65. Блог о контент-анализе [Электронный ресурс]: URL: <http://content-analysis.ru> (17.04.2018).
66. Concordance [Электронный ресурс]: URL: <http://www.concordancesoftware.co.uk> (27.01.2017)
67. Yoshikoder [Электронный ресурс]: URL: <http://www.yoshikoder.org> (17.01.2017).
68. PressGazette (2017) Print ABCs: Seven UK national newspapers losing print sales at more than 10 per cent year on year available from [Электронный ресурс]: URL: <http://www.pressgazette.co.uk/print-abcs-seven-uk-national-newspapers-losing-print-sales-at-more-than-10-per-cent-year-on-year> (03.04.2018)
69. The Guardian (2014) The Guardian overtakes New York Times in comScore traffic figures [Электронный ресурс]: URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/internationalstudents>> (03.04.2018)

СЛОВАРИ И СПРАВОЧНИКИ

70. Азимов Е. Г., Шукин А. Н. Новый словарь методических терминов и понятий:(теория и практика обучения языкам) [Электронный ресурс]: М.: Изд-во ИКАР, 2009. URL: <http://www.gramota.ru/slovari/info/az>
71. Гусев С. С. Новая философская энциклопедия. М.: Мысль, 2001. Т. 2. С. 548-549.
72. Иванов В. Н. и др. Социологическая энциклопедия. М., 2003. Т.1. 696 с.
73. Davies A. A glossary of applied linguistics. – Routledge, 2016.
74. Dictionary C. Cambridge dictionaries online. [Электронный ресурс]: URL: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org> (04.06.2018)
75. Dictionary O. E. Oxford English dictionary online [Электронный ресурс]: URL: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com> (04.06.2018)
76. Evans V. Glossary of cognitive linguistics. – Edinburgh University Press, 2007.

СПИСОК ИСТОЧНИКОВ

77. The Guardian [Электронный ресурс]: URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/internationalstudents> (29.04.2018).

Exchange students: how to survive abroad on a shoestring

A year studying in Europe needn't break the bank. Here's how to be a savvy saver when you cross the channel

'I'd never lived in the land of the euro before and I found it financially difficult at times.' Photograph: Alamy

Daisy Lacey

Friday 2 January 2015 10.37 GMT

When I was preparing to head to Nantes, France, for my year abroad, returning exchange students would constantly tell me that it's cheaper to live abroad.

But my friends and I often found ourselves struggling for money while we waited for our Erasmus grants.

Like many British students in countries such as France, Germany and Spain – the most popular destinations for UK students – I'd never lived in the land of the euro before and I found it financially difficult at times. Admittedly, I prioritised socialising, which probably didn't help.

Nonetheless, hindsight is a wonderful thing – and here is some guidance based on my experience.

Open an overseas bank account

Getting yourself a bank account in your new home country is an absolute must, as it will save you money when withdrawing euros.

Ask people in your host country to recommend a bank and set up an international bank transfer with your bank before you go – this will make the withdrawal process easier and cheaper.

Opening an account also meant I could receive the French housing benefit CAF, which provides big rent reductions for students.

Buy a local SIM card

Having a phone that's not working, or being charged ridiculous amounts for data roaming, can be a networking nightmare.

The solution? Buy a SIM card from a trusted phone company in your host country and ensure you can cancel it easily and at short notice. You should cancel your phone bill one to two weeks before leaving your host country.

Smart food shopping

Depending where you are, food shopping can be more expensive overseas than it is in the UK, but check out local markets for cheaper fresh produce.

For anything else, the bigger the supermarket, the better – you'll find countless deals on products that you can store. I'd also budget an amount for each week for food – and try to cook in bulk where possible..

Be sure to make the most of local treats. For me, French bread and pastries were both cheap and delicious.

Savvy socialising

Advertisement

An important part of the student experience is going out. If you're going to a club or bar, I recommend buying alcohol in the supermarket and pre-drinking like you're back in first year.

Join Facebook groups and look for student nights out, and show tickets, by joining the Erasmus pages and groups for your host city. This was important for me – my year abroad was my first time away from home, and my closest friends had been sent elsewhere in Europe.

I also booked concert tickets before I left England. I wanted something to look forward to when I left my home city of Manchester behind.

Thrifty travel

When you're out and about in the daytime, look for your local travel office and buy a pass each month for trams, buses and other public transport.

If you want to cycle, look on Facebook groups for a second-hand bike or go to the travel office for a yearly pass on intercity bicycle rentals. I rented a bike, but ended up walking everywhere because of my convenient location.

Download the travel app for the town from the Windows, Android and Apple app stores, to stay on top of public transport news.

For taxis, download the Uber app on to your smartphone, especially for deals if you're travelling in a group. Uber didn't exist when I was in France but like many students, I swear by it in Manchester.

Make cut-price visits to other cities

If you plan on going abroad, download free apps such as SkyScanner, Voyages SNCF and InterRailing EU, which enable you to book flights and train tickets and provide timetables.

I'd also buy a railcard from your host country to save up to 50% on train tickets and receive deals such as two for one on train travel. For cheap coach travel between countries, try Megabus and Eurolines.

When planning visits to other cities in France, Belgium and Italy, I was devoted to Hostelworld and Hostelbookers for cheaper accommodation.

An International Student Identity Card (ISIC) costs just £12 and is your pass visiting tourist attractions for free. Take a student card with you wherever you go, as most museums and galleries have student deals. I regularly failed to do this, forgetting I was a student rather than a tourist.

Check out the Erasmus+ website, Third Year Abroad, STA Travel and the Erasmus Student Network for more specific tips – and try Twitter, Facebook and blogs, too.

Plans to send overseas students home blocked by Tory leadership

Theresa May's proposals to force students to reapply for UK visas rejected in move reportedly led by George Osborne

Theresa May and George Osborne at the first cabinet meeting of 2015. He reportedly led the opposition to her plans for students. Photograph: Pool/REUTERS

Nicholas Watt, political correspondent

Wednesday 7 January 2015 01.12 GMT Last modified on Tuesday 21 February 2017 18.16 GMT

A plan by Theresa May to force overseas students to return home after they have graduated has been blocked by the Tory leadership in a move reported to have been led by George Osborne.

A day after sharing a pre-election platform with the chancellor, the home secretary lost a battle to revive a proposal from the Tories' 2010 general election manifesto to require overseas students to apply for a new UK visa from their home country after graduating.

The setback for May, reported by the Financial Times, followed a campaign led by the former universities minister David Willetts and the inventor Sir James Dyson to reject the plan to force overseas students to leave the EU after graduating.

Senior Tory officials said the party would not repeat its pledge from its 2010 general election manifesto, as May had demanded, to "require that students must usually leave the country and reapply if they want to switch to another course or apply for a work permit".

One senior Tory official told the FT: "We have a policy that international students can stay when they graduate if they find a graduate-level job paying £24,000 a year. That remains the policy."

The intervention by Osborne will be seen as a setback for May, who is seen as the frontrunner to succeed David Cameron as Tory leader. Osborne is said to be highly

wary of the home secretary – she was the only potential leadership candidate not invited by the chancellor’s close ally Michael Gove to meet Jeb Bush during his recent visit to London.

Downing Street suspected last month that May was moving to shore up her position with the Tory right ahead of the formal failure to meet the prime minister’s target of cutting net migration to the tens of thousands by outlining plans for a drastic cut in the number of overseas graduates.

Advertisement

The home secretary, whose team briefed the Sunday Times shortly before Christmas, said that the projected increase in student numbers will be unsustainable unless most leave when their student visa expires.

She said the proposal would build compliance into the system by requiring new graduates to return home to apply for a new student visa or a work permit.

But Willetts described May’s plan as “mean-spirited”. In a Times article last month, he wrote: “There is a global trend for more students to study abroad. We should aim to increase our share of this growing market.

“But if we implement the latest idea from the Home Office for new restrictions on overseas students, we would not only miss this golden opportunity – we would be acting in a mean-spirited and inward-looking way.”

Dyson wrote of May’s plan in a Guardian article: “May’s immigration plans simply force the nimble minds we nurture to return home and fuel competition from overseas. Why would they return? Often they hail from emerging economies and nations that respect science and engineering.”

David Willetts pleased plans to send overseas students home dropped

Former universities minister attacks Theresa May proposal saying foreign students are a 'great British export industry'

David Willetts said attracting overseas students was 'one of the great British successes'. Photograph: Graham Whitby-Boot/Sportsphoto Ltd/ Allstar

Frances Perraudin

Wednesday 7 January 2015 11.25 GMT First published on *Wednesday 7 January 2015 10.49 GMT*

David Willetts, the former Conservative universities minister, has welcomed the news that Theresa May's plans to force foreign students to leave the UK after graduating have been blocked.

Willetts, who was dropped from his post in last summer's reshuffle, described the market for foreign students as "a great British export industry" and said he was pleased the plans had been abandoned.

Speaking on BBC Radio 4's Today programme, Willetts said: "Attracting overseas students to study in Britain is one of the great British successes. We make friends around the world and we make a lot of money from them."

After a campaign by Willetts and business leaders, including the inventor James Dyson, the Financial Times reported that the Tory leadership, including George Osborne, had rejected the home secretary's plan, which would have required foreign students to reapply for a work visa from their home country after graduating from universities in the UK.

Willetts said: "What we're talking about here is an internationally competitive market. There are several million students every year who go abroad to study, many of them from India and China, and there's a competition between the United States, us, Australia, Canada ... Our market share is about 15% or so, it's a growing market; each one of those students is worth over £20,000 a year to the British economy."

Willetts said the coalition had already tightened the rules on allowing international students to stay on after their degree, but said the requirement that they secure a graduate job paying at least £24,000 should be relaxed to allow for regional average wage variations.

He said: “Getting that kind of money in London and the south-east is easier than earning it as your first job in the Midlands or the north. So this policy has the effect of sucking overseas graduates into London and the south-east and I personally think that we should allow some flexibility, with rather lower wage requirements in other parts of the country, but that’s my personal suggestion.”

The blocking of May’s plan to tighten the rules on international students – which was first laid out in the Tory party’s 2010 election manifesto – will be a personal blow as she is widely thought to be in competition with Osborne to succeed David Cameron as Conservative party leader.

4

Student visa U-turn: the battle is far from over

Theresa May’s visa plans may have been blocked, but the UK’s policy on international students is still a disaster

Theresa May’s plan to force international students to reapply for UK visas has been rejected. Photograph: Alamy

Simon Marginson

Wednesday 7 January 2015 13.32 GMT Last modified on *Friday 17 February 2017 14.06 GMT*

Theresa May’s plan to scrap bridging visas for non-EU international student graduates has been blocked – for now. The proposal, which appeared in the Tories’ 2010 general election manifesto, will not be invoked. Following a sharp campaign by Sir James Dyson, and the former universities minister David Willetts, the chancellor has reportedly forced the home secretary to back down.

Non-EU graduates will still have four months to obtain a job worth £24,000 a year and apply for a work visa. They will not have to return home and apply for work and a new visa from outside the UK, which would have meant that most of these high-skill UK trained graduates, especially in Stem fields (science, technology, engineering and maths) would have been lost.

But the UK's disastrous policy on international students is still far from resolved. With all the weight of her office the home secretary has turned non-EU students into another migration bogey, akin to Ukip's Rumanians and Bulgarians. She has gifted Nigel Farage with an issue he can run whenever he wants, either before the election or under a Tory-Ukip coalition government.

Defending her position, May pumped up the scare factor. There would be 600,000 non-EU students a year by the next decade, she said. Each year 121,000 non-EU students arrive and only 51,000 leave. The implications are clear. Non-EU students overstay and Britain will be overrun. Anyone can do the maths.

This is as bad as it gets. The home secretary's numbers will fit neatly on a Ukip poster, but they do not fit with the downward trend in non-EU student numbers.

Until 2012 the UK offered non-EU graduates two years to find a job, akin to the present rules operating in Australia and Canada, though not as generous.

When this was scaled down to four months, the number of graduates who were granted extended visas dropped by 84% in one year. There were only 6,238 such visas granted to non-EEA graduates in 2013. And once the UK began to close the door to the rest of the world, non-EU student entry fell in response, with a 5% drop in non-EU postgraduate student numbers in 2012-13.

Advertisement

The UK is the only English-speaking country where non-EU student numbers are falling. But it is not fast enough for a government under pressure to block migration at any cost.

Efforts to take international students out of the net migration target, the object of a strenuous campaign by Lords committees, industry and Universities UK, have been set back.

Even among the Tory hard-heads who refused to back the home secretary this time round, reducing non-EU students is still central to the government's plan to cut migration numbers.

The slowdown of high-skill mobility into the UK is already hurting. It would hurt more if net migration comes down at a faster rate. Not only does this detonate two generations of marketing the UK (especially London), as the cosmopolitan global centre, Cool Britannia, it fundamentally undermines the economy.

The fact that Ukip can never face - to do so would negate its whole existence - is that high cross-border mobility is the norm. It is culturally and economically inevitable. Countries like North Korea that go it alone pay the price.

In 2012-13, 43% of all postgraduates enrolled in UK engineering and technology were non-EU students, and 50% of those in maths. Advanced economies depend on access to the global pool of high skills.

For non-EU graduates it is much harder to apply for work from outside the UK. The best UK-trained graduates would be the ones most likely to leak to countries with more welcoming immigration regimes, especially the US and Canada.

Slow UK visa processing, another consequence of the anti-migration politics that has gripped the government, would increase the leakage.

Under the Obama government the US has swung the door open, stapling a green card to the diplomas of Stem graduates. In 2013-14 there was an 8% increase in international student numbers in the US while numbers in the UK trended down.

Theresa May has been stopped this time, but the battle is far from over.

Simon Marginson is professor of international higher education at UCL Institute of Education

International students: don't be afraid to get involved in protests

Political campaigning can be complicated for international students in the UK – but they shouldn't be put off making a stand

“For many of us, the British style of democracy is a far cry from what we have at home.” Photograph: Alamy

Anh Pham

Wednesday 28 January 2015 10.16 GMT Last modified on Friday 24 February 2017 20.50 GMT

When I began my studies at UCL, I joined the Fossil Free UCL campaign, which demands that the university divests from the industry. My home country of Vietnam is extremely vulnerable to the impact of climate change, so the campaign really excited me.

But I started to wonder why more international students don't take part in these kinds of campaigns, some of which directly affect them – like the campaign against fees and cuts.

One possible reason is that, for many of us, the British style of democracy is a far cry from what we have at home. I'd never campaigned before coming to the UK – in Vietnam, student-led protest is a taboo. The government tightly controls the media and often imposes severe punishments on protesters.

My parents were petrified learning that I attended a demonstration and an organised die-in in London, because to them, tactics like those should be strictly prohibited. I have to regularly reassure them that what I've been doing is legal and dedicated to a good cause.

Bemnet Alemayehu, an Ethiopian human and animal rights student activist at the University of Surrey, says that in his home country, there's a lack of civic societies and associations for like-minded young people to organise and campaign for social and political causes. Combined with laws preventing public protest, this makes student activism in Ethiopia rare.

But living in a relatively advanced, democratic country doesn't necessarily encourage international students to become politically active.

Aside from the cultural reasons, UK immigration laws add to our worries. Shreya Paudel, international students' officer at the National Union of Students (NUS), says: "Non-EU students are reluctant to attend protests because being arrested might mean deportation. It's important to understand that if we are arrested, we have fewer legal rights than home students."

For example, the Home Office can curtail some student visa holders' leave to remain if they are found to be involved in activities that "represent a threat to national security". In theory, this could be used against protesters.

Sanaz Raji is an American student who started her own campaign, Justice4Sanaz, after her scholarship to study at the Institute of Communications Studies (ICS), University of Leeds, was revoked. Raji says universities and students unions provide inadequate services to non-EU students, making them feel unsupported and possibly reducing their chances of engaging in protests.

Non-EU students must register with the police when they arrive and report changes of address and places of study. This makes international students cautious of the authority and more wary of campaigning. Therefore, before any protest, I need to make sure I know my own boundaries and what my legal rights are so that I can make informed decisions.

The language barrier and a minimal understanding of the structure of authority can also put international students off campaigning.

Myrto Skouroupathi, a Cypriot student at UCL and activist with the Fossil Free campaign, says: "Campaigning requires overcoming bureaucracy, talking your way through management, knowing how the legal system works and being able to use the correct terminology to form arguments that will convince others to support you."

Skouroupathi stresses the importance of team coordination to overcome obstacles. "Using the assets of the team wisely will achieve much more than trying to achieve everything alone," she says.

But despite the challenges for international students, campaigning can be rewarding and educational. Michael Gonzalez, a Filipino student at UCL who campaigned to mitigate the impact of Typhoon Haiyan, says: “I found the experience fulfilling and humbling, as I was working with other students for a cause much greater than me getting a first in my degree or networking for career advancement. Campaigning allowed me to get out of my university bubble, and to address current real-world issues.”

Personally, campaigning has taught me more about the struggles of the less fortunate – such as when I listened to people from Colombia and Indonesia talk about how coal mining has devastated their communities – something I can’t get from university lectures.

I hope other international students will be empowered by the lively atmosphere surrounding student activism in the UK, and that they’ll find their voice to speak up about the important issues that concern us every day.

6

Face it: you probably won't become fluent on your year abroad

It’s expected that language students will return having mastered our chosen language, but in reality this is often not the case

By giving us unlimited access to the English speaking world, technology can prevent our immersion into a foreign culture.

Helen Parkinson

Friday 6 February 2015 10.00 GMT Last modified on Friday 6 February 2015 15.18 GMT

The year abroad is touted by professors as the best opportunity for language students to become fluent in their language of choice.

For a year, we leave the anglicized learning environment of our British universities behind and replace it with a foreign culture for which even the most helpful lectures and textbooks can’t fully prepare us.

Twelve months and often too many croissants later, we're expected to arrive back in the UK having mastered the most troublesome tenses and conjugations.

Fluency: that's not too much to ask, right? With plenty of immersion and dedication, it's certainly not impossible.

But as my stay as an exchange student in Geneva, Switzerland, comes to an end, I appreciate that my French won't be receiving any praise from the Academie française just yet.

Of the many reasons why language learning can stall during our time away, it seems to me that the prominence of the English language locally is the biggest one. My host city is home to countless international organisations, including the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross. As a result, I can go without hearing a single word of French spoken on my daily commute to university.

English, on the other hand, is often in earshot. On the whole, Genevans are very encouraging to foreigners' attempts to speak French, but bump into lakeside souvenir sellers and you'll be greeted by a cheery "hello" rather than "bonjour".

Stephanie Rogers, an exchange student studying French at Lancaster University, says: "Most people here under the age of 40 speak English very well, so they like to use it as soon as you stutter, because their first reaction is to believe that you don't understand. You've just got to trust your own abilities and persevere."

Technology is another factor that can prevent our total immersion into a foreign culture, because it gives us unlimited access to the English speaking world. After a day of French seminars, the lure of an evening spent binge-watching British TV or chatting in English on Facebook is often tempting.

By spending every night using anglophone social media, however, we're missing out on amazing opportunities to consume our target language – such as going to a foreign cinema or theatre.

Before leaving for our foreign hosts, my university lecturers warned us against only making friends with other exchange students. This is easier said than done for

me, though. Most of my classes consist solely of international students and often English is the classroom lingua franca, not French.

Michael Pearson, a law and French student at the University of Leeds, currently on his year abroad in Nancy, France, agrees that speaking English is a convenience. “I only hang out with other Erasmus students and we all speak English fluently, so that’s what we use,” he says.

John Paddison, a student of Spanish, French and Portuguese at the University of Nottingham, says speaking English a huge hindrance to his language learning. “In all three countries I was living in accommodation where people spoke English – either natively or as a second language – and in two countries I socialised with English speakers.

“For most of my year abroad I was also working as an English language assistant, so speaking English was a major part of my job,” says Paddison. “And my nervousness about making mistakes when speaking hindered me from wanting to speak much.”

If you’re feeling swamped by the prevalence of English on your year abroad, here are my tips to increase your exposure to your target language:

- Find a tandem partner online or through your host university to have free, regular conversation practice in an informal setting. As a bonus, you’ll probably come away with a new friend.
- Change the language of all your electronic devices and social media sites to your target languages and you’ll pick up new technology-related vocabulary without realising.
- Make the most of free resources like newspapers and university publications, which are perfect for reading and translation practice.
- If you’re studying abroad, taking classes outside of the language faculty will allow you to meet more native speakers and integrate yourself into your host university even more.

British students should venture farther than two hours away from home

Many British students study at universities relatively close to home. As an international student, I wonder whether they may be missing out

“The farther away you live from home, the more likely you are to experience a new culture and way of living.” Photograph: Alamy

April Roach

Monday 16 March 2015 09.56 GMT Last modified on Monday 16 March 2015 10.35 GMT

My family and I left London for the Netherlands when I was eight years old. I learned Dutch, made friends and went to an international school where I met people from all over the world.

So when I moved back to the UK to study at Warwick University, I was surprised that most students, when I asked where they lived, gave the same answer – “about two hours away”.

According to survey data from Education Phase, UK students travel an average of 91 miles from home to attend university.

A two hour drive is close enough for parents to pick students up at the end of term, but is far away enough that they don't feel too close to home.

Nevertheless, there's much to be gained from venturing beyond the two hour radius. The farther away you live from home, the more likely you are to experience a new culture and way of living, and become more independent.

Ines Boussebaa, 19, who has lived in France and the Netherlands and is currently a student at Boston University, says: “Being an international student definitely gives me a different attitude. I miss my family sometimes, but I'm good at being away from home.

“It enables me to focus on creating relationships with the people around me, without being distracted by going home. Many of my friends who go home at weekends are more distracted and have a hard time making friends.”

During my first term at Warwick, I missed the lively atmosphere I was used to at home. I made friends and had university work to focus on, but still felt lonely sometimes – especially when my housemates went home at weekends.

But in my second term I filled my spare time by joining societies and volunteering at a primary school.

Anna Berestova, 19, a student at the University of Sheffield who is originally from Russia, is on her year abroad in Barcelona at Pompeu Fabra University. “Being an international student means that you have a completely different attitude to everything,” she says. “I’m used to travelling and spending holidays away from my family.”

Berestova notes that few of her fellow students on years abroad in Barcelona are from the UK: “Sometimes I get the feeling that UK students are afraid to leave their comfort zones.”

Samantha Clark, 20, who is originally from Redcar in north east England, studies at Methodist University in North Carolina and recognises the difficulties of studying far from home.

“It can be difficult to adapt to a completely new way of life and balance my university workload without my family’s help and support,” she says.

But there are advantages, Clark adds: “Anyone who doesn’t consider moving away from home for university is missing out.

“They could be losing an opportunity to experience new cultures, and preventing themselves from growing as an individual by leaving their comfort zone.”

My comfort zone was my Dutch international school. But most of my fellow English literature students are British, which has taken some getting used to. Arguments between “northerners” and “southerners” were confusing at first, for example.

Karen Jones, an educational psychologist, says that when deciding where to study, students may face different pulls, such as financial and practical concerns. Some may be carers and have family to worry about.

“Studying abroad results in a very different perception of language and cultural barriers,” says Jones. “Some students might feel more inclined to accept challenges thrown at them.”

Abigail Day, 19, studies at the University of Warwick, which is just over two hours away by car from her home in Manchester. She didn’t want to be too close, but doesn’t think she’s missing out by not being farther away.

“Unless it was somewhere like North America, where I’d like to travel anyway, I wouldn’t choose to be any farther from home.”

Sandeep Purewal, 19, another Warwick student, lives at home and values the family time she gains by doing so. “I have two younger siblings and wanted to continue to help them with school work and be there for them.

“Some people would argue that moving out for university is important to teach you about responsibility, but I’m already more responsible than many students I know.”

Moving back to the UK has been difficult for me at times. It wasn’t easy setting up a bank account after having lived in the Netherlands for ten years with a British passport. I also get homesick during stressful times at university.

But I’m glad I chose to study in the UK – via apps like Whatsapp and Skype, I can communicate easily with my family anyway. I enjoy living in two countries and continuing my international learning experience.

Moving far away from home isn’t for everyone, but more UK students should at least consider it an option.

International students forced to queue in their thousands to collect visas

Julia Goodfellow, incoming president of Universities UK, warns that administrative hurdles make students feel unwelcome

Julia Goodfellow, vice chancellor of the University of Kent, says she has been forced to bus overseas students down to post offices to collect visas. Photograph: University of Kent

Rebecca Ratcliffe

Thursday 19 March 2015 11.43 GMT Last modified on Friday 17 February 2017 13.51 GMT

International students are being forced to queue up in their thousands to collect visas from post offices, according to Julia Goodfellow, vice-chancellor of Kent University.

Speaking at a Guardian higher education panel debate, Goodfellow highlighted the plight of Indian students in the UK, and warned that their belief that they are not welcome is not perception but a reality.

Goodfellow – who is the incoming president of Universities UK, the umbrella organisation for university leaders – told an invited audience of vice-chancellors in London that unnecessary administrative hurdles are deterring international students.

“I’ve got a thousand more overseas students coming to university in Kent – I’ve got to bus them down to Ashford post office, they have to stand in line there, all 1,000 of them, to get their visas,” she said. “I’m sorry, but that’s not being made welcome.”

Goodfellow appeared on a panel alongside the universities minister Greg Clark, John Newbiggin, chair of Creative England, and Andy Westwood, former special adviser to Labour’s John Denham and professor of politics Winchester University, and chaired by the Guardian’s opinion editor, Jonathan Freedland.

Clark conceded that there were “some perceptions in India that the obstacles to getting to study here were too great”. He is planning to meet regularly with the Indian High Commission and the Home Office to consider “any administrative problems that surface” in relation to international students.

Westwood said the government was “hamstrung” on the issue. “It’s hamstrung itself with two competing narratives about being open for business and being worried about immigration,” he said. Questions were submitted by the audience, and the panel was asked whether current tuition fees of £9,000 would have to increase to meet the rising costs of providing degrees.

Clark defended the changes the coalition government had introduced, saying that universities now have more funding to support teaching. He added that Labour’s proposal to lower fees to £6,000 was a “profound step away from sustainability”.

“Ed Miliband says he’ll make the fee up, but that will come through an annual application to the Treasury,” he said. “That becomes an annual headache and source of anxiety.”

Goodfellow told audience members that the current system is not sustainable if fees are kept at £9,000. “It’s not going up with inflation – which should really be a minimum. Or we should look at areas that are under pressure, the science subjects, for example.”

But Newbigin said the arts should not be neglected if university funding is overhauled. “Everyone believes the creative industries are very important, but there’s a paradox, in that they are decreasingly present in so much of our education.”

Newbigin pointed to Steve Jobs, who said that employing poets, musicians and artists – rather than just computer geeks – was the secret to Apple’s success.

He stressed the role of arts graduates in shaping society. “When science and technology are changing the way we understand the world so profoundly, if we don’t have a parity of esteem in the study of culture and humanities, then we are in danger of creating a really unbalanced dystopia.”

Six ways the Dutch are nailing student life

Being a student in the UK can be stressful and intense – so I’m glad I opted for the easygoing Netherlands

The Netherlands’ laid-back vibe transforms the student experience. Photograph: Alamy

Phoebe Dodds

Wednesday 1 April 2015 09.59 BST Last modified on Tuesday 13 September 2016 07.14 BST

It wasn’t easy for me to turn down a place at Cambridge in favour of studying in Amsterdam. As the end of my first year approaches, however, I’m in no doubt that I made the right choice.

After an international childhood spent living in four different countries, I wanted to be in a global city. I also wasn’t sure which subject I wanted to study, and the liberal arts course at Amsterdam University College allows me to explore a range of options.

The Netherlands is a very relaxed country – as shown by its liberal attitude towards drugs and prostitution – and this laid-back vibe is central to the student experience. Here’s why Dutch student life trumps that in Britain.

1. You’re a part of the place you live

Dutch universities typically offer fewer societies, so students take part in activities in their town or city – such as amateur sports teams and local choirs. I help to organise European Youth Parliament conferences in Amsterdam.

Nicole Brusa, who studied at University College Roosevelt in Middelburg last year, volunteered at her local art museum. She spent weekends there, “as a way of escaping the study bubble and doing something that has nothing to do with the university”.

Others volunteer at food banks, charities and even refugee camps. Brusa, who lived on campus, points out: “You need to meet people from outside the gated community that you live in. You know, the university world isn’t real.”

2. You cycle everywhere

The idea of jumping on your bike on a summer’s day to cycle down Amsterdam’s canals is pretty idyllic. But you have to cycle to get around every day, no matter what time of year.

Cycling in sleety wind in January isn’t always blissful, but it does mean you get daily exercise without any extra effort.

Hero Scott, a British student at Amsterdam University College, says: “The Netherlands is designed for cyclists, so it’s by far the best way to get around, whether you’re going to the supermarket or the club.”

3. Sport is an integral part of life

Children in the Netherlands are brought up playing multiple sports from a young age and, unlike in England, they keep this up as they get older – and that includes the girls.

“Most of my friends have played field hockey, tennis and football from the moment they could walk,” says Hannah Drooglever Fortuyn, a student at the University of Amsterdam.

Their sports teams often aren’t related to the university, giving students another chance to expand their friendship circles.

4. There’s time to travel

At Dutch universities, students typically have classes for around 40 weeks each year. This may sound hellish to British students who are used to a month off at Easter and Christmas - in the Netherlands you get a maximum of two weeks off for these holidays.

But after seven months here, I’ve realised I actually prefer this system. Because you’re here for so long, you have to build a varied life for yourself, organising day trips to other Dutch cities or exploring your university city.

The location of the Netherlands – in the middle of western Europe – also means that cheap weekend trips are very easy to do. You can get to Antwerp, Cologne or Paris in a few hours by coach.

5. The work is spread out

There is more time for academic reading and assignments – this reduces stress levels and means you can pursue other interests without affecting your grades.

My friends at British universities, with much shorter terms, often complain about not having enough time to do everything they want to do. The cliché of work hard, play hard really applies here.

One Cambridge student, who wanted to remain anonymous, says: “We have to cram about 10 weeks’ worth of work into an eight-week term, while also doing extracurricular activities like plays and rowing. Each term feels like a marathon run at sprint pace.”

6. Doing a master’s is a matter of course

It’s very common for students at Dutch universities to do a master’s after their first degree, especially after a liberal arts course, where you study a broad range of subjects.

Employers in the Netherlands tend to focus on your postgraduate qualification rather than your bachelor’s, so you have the luxury of discovering new areas of interest in your first degree without worrying about what you want to do later.

Thanks to the broad nature of my course, I could still end up majoring in anything from international relations to art history. There’s no pressure to decide what to do later – or even race to get internships. The working world is still a few years off.

Why international students are choosing London

They make up over a quarter of the capital's student population, so what is it about London that's so appealing to international students?

"We all have preconceptions of London before we live here," says one student.

Photograph: Alamy

Joseph Zeballos

Tuesday 7 April 2015 10.33 BST Last modified on Wednesday 8 April 2015 09.35 BST

London – known for its vibrant, cosmopolitan way of life, its rich history and its cultural diversity – attracts international students from all around the world.

Eager to escape sun-soaked Florida, I came here to experience life in a bustling city. I wanted easy access to museums and restaurants, and public parks that could provide an escape.

Nearly 103,000 international students were studying in London in 2011-12 – comprising 26% of its student population, according to the UK Council for International Student Affairs.

For a glimpse of international student life in London, I spoke to a diverse group of global students to find out what brought them to the capital.

Luís Costa Da Silva

Da Silva, 27, is Portuguese and has a bachelor's and master's degree in clinical psychology from the Higher Institute of Applied Psychology, Lisbon. He is pursuing a PhD in psychology at Goldsmiths, University of London

Luís Costa Da Silva

"I'd been to London a few times as a tourist, but living here is completely different. At first I was overwhelmed by the number of people and the speed of everything.

"We all have preconceptions of London before we live here. Movies like *Closer*, *James Bond*, and British comedies or TV shows like *Sherlock* sometimes

romanticise it. Oxford Street is portrayed as magical, but when you run an errand there at 6pm on a weekday, you realise it's not so pleasant.

"I enjoy London's free museums, restaurants, and its contrasting architecture. I also attend a lot of music concerts. Culture is so much more available here.

"I miss Portuguese coffee culture. Coffee is different in Portugal – not just its taste and size, but also in the social habit that comes with it. We meet friends for a quick coffee or chat for hours, usually outside. There's more of a pub culture in London, and it's hard to find a nice custard tart to go with my coffee."

Jordyn Holman

Holman, 21, is from Chicago, US, and studies journalism, law and public policy at the University of Southern California. She is currently at City University London on a study abroad programme

Jordyn Holman

"As a journalism student, I think it's important to experience new cultures. When I arrived in London I didn't think it was too different to Chicago. I also remember being extremely impressed by the public transport system, the markets, the freshness of food and the accents.

"Museums help me learn more about British history and aspects of the culture that aren't in history books. My favourite are the Museum of London and the V&A. I enjoy attending slam poetry competitions in Shoreditch and grabbing lunch from Borough Market.

"I miss how late restaurants and fast food places stay open in America – most are open 24 hours. I also miss the Southern California weather. I'm often sent photos of my friends sunbathing, but I get over it quickly when I remind myself I'm living in one of the most vibrant cities in the world."

Guilherme Wendt

Wendt, 27, is from Roque Gonzales, a small Brazilian village, where he grew up with nine siblings on a farm. He has a bachelor's and master's degree in clinical psychology from two top Brazilian universities. He is pursuing a PhD in psychology at Goldsmiths, University of London

Guilherme Wendt

“I always wanted to be a researcher and realised I’d have to study abroad for cutting-edge training. The decision to come to London was based on the high quality of education and location – it’s close to many European cities and just seven hours from New York.

“I was disappointed when I arrived – the city was a mess, too crowded, with terrible food, constant rain and high prices. But after a month, I realised how amazing London is and I became an Instagrammer in love with London.

“I enjoy taking buses to random destinations – I’ve been to nearly all the London boroughs now. I also take short trips to cities like Cardiff and Brighton, and am following the Time Out food guide to experience new cuisines.

“I miss the Brazilian sun. Food isn’t a problem because there are so many Brazilian shops here and I can cook. I also miss the connection between people – in Brazil we hug our friends a lot, but here I have friends I’ve never touched. It’s weird.”

Mostafa Rajaai

Rajaai, 25, left Iran to study photography at the London College of Communication and was recently elected to be the next National Union of Students (NUS) international students officer

Mostafa Rajaai

“My first few months in London were amazing. It was my first time living away from home and the freedom seemed like a dream come true. There was always something to do and I was constantly meeting people from all over the world.

“Listening to British music – Led Zeppelin, Pink Floyd, Rolling Stones and Queen – formed my understanding of the country. I’d also associated James Bond films with Britain from an early age, but none of these initial impressions resembled the reality.

“After a couple of months, the loneliness and homesickness hit me – the depressing weather and individualistic lifestyle were a shock. I miss little things about Iran – the mannerisms, street gossip and making cultural references with people on the street.

“I studied art, so spending time at London’s countless galleries is one of the most exciting things for me to do. I try to visit the Tate, White Cube, the National Portrait Gallery, Whitechapel Gallery and the V&A as often as possible.”

Emilie Jauneau

Jauneau, 21, is originally from Bordeaux, France. She moved to Gabon, Africa, at age two and returned to France at 19. Jauneau is in London for a term studying business at INSEEC Business School

Emilie Jauneau

“I fell in love with London. I like the people and the energy. People come from everywhere in the world here, unlike in France. London is a cosmopolitan and a very tolerant city.

“I like to lose myself in different neighborhoods – I choose a tube station and walk there, and I might meet people or go to a pub. My favourite neighbourhood is definitely Shoreditch. London has great food, vintage shops and original people – the kind you can have great conversations with.

“I’m glad to be here, because I really like to share my culture with people from every part of the world. But I do miss French food and good wine.”

11

Are international students in the UK getting a raw deal?

High fees, NHS charges and tougher visa controls are causing international students to think twice about UK universities

Students protested in London against the potential deportation of thousands of overseas students after London Metropolitan University was stripped of its right to sponsor students from outside the EU. Photograph: Sang Tan/AP

Natalie Gil and Lawrence Wakefield

Thursday 23 April 2015 12.09 BST Last modified on Friday 17 February 2017 13.40 GMT

In our “Virgin voters” series, we listen to what young people and first-time voters have to say about the election issues that matter most to them. This week we look at immigration, ahead of our Guardian Live election event.

International students made up around 18% of those in higher education in the UK in 2013-14, according to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (Hesa). The UK attracts a large proportion of international students globally, with a market share of around 13% in 2012 (pdf, page 345), second to the US on 16%, according to the OECD.

Students and immigration: what’s going on?

- **The post-study work visa was scrapped in 2012.** This had allowed non-EU students to stay in the UK and work for up to two years after graduation. Students are now able to stay up to four months after the completion of their course. Theresa May had planned to expel international students from Britain immediately after graduation, but this move was scrapped after opposition from business leaders – including James Dyson – and key Tory figures.
- **Some international students must now pay to use the NHS.** Now that the Immigration Act 2014 has become law, those coming from outside the European European Area (EEA) must pay a “health surcharge” as part of their immigration application – £150 per student, per year of the visa, with a further £75 for part years of less than six months.
- **International students pay huge amounts to attend UK universities.** On some courses, such as medicine, those from outside the EU are charged up to four times as much as UK and EU students – £35,000 a year. And fees can often rise part-way through courses.
- **Many international students say they don’t feel welcome in the UK.** Over half of the 3,100 international students surveyed by the NUS in 2013 said they felt unwelcome – and 19% wouldn’t recommend the UK to a friend or relative as a good place to study (pdf here). In 2012-13, there was a 25% reduction in the number of Indian students recruited to the UK compared with 2011-1, with many choosing Canada and Australia instead.

What the political parties are saying:

- Labour is pushing for a tightening of the visa system, in an attempt to clamp down on abuse of study visas. It wants to see students removed from net immigration numbers – a pledge that also appears in the Ukip and Lib Dem manifestos.
- The Conservatives are planning a review of the visa system, to reduce abuse.
- The Lib Dems want post-study work visas for science and engineering graduates who find graduate-level employment within six months.
- The Green party doesn't want any restrictions on international students, and claim that its plan to increase university funding would mean better value for money for international students.
- Ukip wants to charge students from EU countries the same tuition fee rate as international students.

We spoke to international students to find out whether or not they feel welcome in the UK and what they think about the NHS charge: is it fair, and what effect will it have on students thinking about coming to the UK in the future?

'Tight immigration laws already make us feel like outsiders'

Shreya Kalra, 22, a journalism master's student at the University of Sheffield who is originally from India, says:

Shreya Kalra

I don't feel completely welcome in the UK. I haven't experienced xenophobia or racism personally, but I'm reluctant to say I'm Indian for fear of being categorised as an outsider. Politicians are separating people, rather than integrating them. The new legislation just adds to the tight immigration laws that already make us feel like outsiders.

We should be given at least six months to stay and find a job after we graduate. One year would be ideal because the job market is so competitive. Three months puts too much pressure and stress on students, as they have to start job hunting well in advance. The NHS charge is completely unfair – I've been here for seven

months and haven't used any facilities. Young people don't even need NHS services as much.

It's also infuriating that our tuition fees can be over twice those of home/EU students. My master's costs £17,000, compared to home/EU students who pay £6,000.

'Overseas students may now decide to study elsewhere'

Lim Shu Ching Minerva, 21, a history student and international students' officer at the University of Oxford who is originally from Singapore, says:

Minerva Lim

Given the recent change in visa regulations and the new NHS fee, the situation for international students has become increasingly unattractive. International students should be allowed at least three months to look for a job after graduation, bearing in mind the challenges of applying for and securing a job in the UK without being present to attend interviews.

I recognise that higher fees are inevitable but universities and the government could do more to offer financial aid. In the UK, unlike the US, there is no strong culture of university-funded financial aid programmes, which is a serious downside when comparing British universities against their counterparts around the world.

On top of high tuition fees, these policy changes mean higher costs and more paperwork for overseas students. If this situation doesn't change, students will have to weigh up the quality of UK education against the financial and administrative costs of coming here, and they may well decide to study elsewhere.

'The UK is doing an amazing job of welcoming international students'

Laavynia Su-Lin Nambiar, 22, an economics and international relations student at the University of Sussex who is originally from Malaysia, says:

Laavynia Nambiar

At first, I was apprehensive about moving so far from home, but the local Bahá'í community have been like a family to me. The university also gives

me a sense of community and I feel very integrated into university life. We should be able to stay for six months to look for a job after graduation.

I think the NHS fee for international students is reasonable because it works out as less than one pound a day, and we aren't UK taxpayers. But it's unfair that we aren't charged the same tuition fees – we're getting the same information from the same lecturers, with the same amount of contact time.

In general, the UK is doing an amazing job of welcoming international students, and being a student here has many benefits, such as student discounts. We also don't have to pay council tax and most importantly – even though we might be here for just three years – we're entitled to vote in the general election (this applies to qualified Commonwealth citizens who live in the UK). This shows that the UK sees us as valued individuals and that our opinions matter.

'I worry that the UK will continue using us as cash cows'

Florence Lee, 21, a geography student at the University of Cambridge who is originally from Hong Kong, says:

Florence Lee

I feel very welcome here. The range of different nationalities and backgrounds at UK universities creates a strong sense of community. International students should be able to stay for at least four or five years, if not more, because of the time it takes to find a job in this difficult era. Many, like me, come to the UK to participate in the job market and work for UK companies. It would benefit the UK economy to keep international students' skills in the country, rather than letting the best students get away.

Being charged higher tuition fees means we're stereotyped as rich, so there's a stigma attached to being an international student. But many talented international students are deterred from studying here because of the cost – even food tends to be more expensive here.

From my experience, international students prefer to bring medicine from home rather than use the NHS, and I worry that the UK will continue using us as cash

cows by implementing more charges in future. This will seriously deter middle-income families from sending their children here for an education.

12

Immigration rules could damage British culture, say leading figures in arts

Actors, writers and other creative talents argue in letter that many students who could contribute to UK cultural life are likely to be forced to leave by rules that penalise freelancers

John Hurt, one of the letter's signatories. Photograph: Linda Nylind for the Guardian

Richard Adams Education editor

Thursday 23 April 2015 18.38 BST Last modified on Saturday 28 January 2017 07.57 GMT

British culture could lose a generation of talent unless the next government allows students from overseas more latitude to stay in the UK after finishing their degrees, leading figures from the world of arts and fashion have warned.

In a letter published in the Guardian, the group of artists and writers – including the actor Sir John Hurt, Turner prize winner Grayson Perry and broadcaster Sandi Toksvig – argue that those most likely to contribute to Britain's arts sector are penalised by the current immigration rules, which make it difficult for those who rely on freelance or unstructured work to qualify for visas.

The signatories include high-profile figures in the arts world who also hold leadership positions at British universities, including the actor Sanjeev Bhaskar, who is chancellor of Sussex University, and author and critic Bonnie Greer, who is chancellor of Kingston University in London. Other signatories include John Rocha, the Hong Kong-born fashion designer who graduated from the Croydon school of art, and Wayne Hemingway, co-founder of the Red or Dead fashion label.

“Some of the most acclaimed individuals from the arts – spanning film, fashion, fine art, design, drama, dance and music – have studied in the UK. Not only that, but we have allowed them to stay on and work after their studies, enriching the cultural life of the UK. However, this is at risk as a result of the UK government’s approach to immigration,” the letter says.

The letter recommends removing students from immigration targets and calls for “an increase in opportunities for qualified international graduates to remain in the UK once they finish their degree. Otherwise, if we do not act, we risk losing a generation of talented individuals to our competitors.”

Under current immigration rules, students wishing to stay on in the UK need to work for a single employer and earn a minimum of £20,800. But many entry-level roles in the arts sector offer lower salaries, while young artists, musicians and actors are often freelancers who have multiple or short-term employers.

Nicola Dandridge, chief executive of Universities UK, which lobbies on behalf of higher education, said her organisation was concerned that the government’s immigration policy was hurting the ability of British universities to attract students and staff from overseas. “Several leading figures in the arts world have studied at UK universities, many of whom have gone back to their home countries and remained lifelong ambassadors for the UK, or have stayed on in the UK to contribute enormously to our cultural life,” she said.

“If the UK is to remain internationally competitive, it should be looking to broaden, not limit, the opportunities for qualified international graduates to stay in the UK to work for a period and contribute to the economy. Numbers accessing post-study work categories in the UK have dropped dramatically since the government’s most recent changes were introduced.”

Labour has said it would reintroduce a post-study work visa, while both Labour and the Liberal Democrats say they will remove students from immigration statistics.

Revise immigration policy to keep talented overseas arts students in the UK

Heathrow departure lounge. ‘The immigration rethink should include an increase in opportunities for qualified international graduates to remain in the UK once they finish their degree.’ Photograph: David Levene

Letters

Thursday 23 April 2015 19.57 BST First published on *Thursday 23 April 2015 18.38 BST*

Some of the most acclaimed individuals from the arts – spanning film, fashion, fine art, design, drama, dance and music – have studied in the UK. Not only that, but we have also allowed them to stay on and work after their studies, enriching the cultural life of the UK. However, this is at risk as a result of the UK government’s approach to immigration.

International students currently have to earn a minimum salary of £20,800 (considerably more in some professions) to qualify for a work visa after their studies. They must also be employed by a single employer. These requirements do not reflect the reality of the creative and cultural industries, and we support the former universities minister David Willetts and the all-party parliamentary group on migration, who both say that greater flexibility is needed.

Whatever the makeup of the next government, it must think again about the UK’s immigration policy. The rethink should begin with the removal of students from any immigration target set for the next parliament and an increase in opportunities for qualified international graduates to remain in the UK once they finish their degree. Otherwise, if we do not act, we risk losing a generation of talented individuals to our competitors.

Sandi Toksvig *Writer, comedian and broadcaster and chancellor, University of Portsmouth, George Martin* *Music producer and patron, Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts, Bonnie Greer* *Playwright, author and critic and chancellor, Kingston University London, Melvyn Bragg* *Broadcaster, author and chancellor,*

*University of Leeds, **Sanjeev Bhaskar** Actor, writer and chancellor, University of Sussex, **Grayson Perry** Artist and chancellor, University of the Arts London, **John Hurt** Actor and chancellor, Norwich University of the Arts, **Monisha Shah** Trustee of Tate and National Gallery, **Harry Rich** Chief executive, Royal Institute of British Architects, **Wayne Hemingway** Fashion designer, **John Sorrell** Designer and chairman of the Court of Governors, University of the Arts London, **Richard Eyre** Film and theatre director and president, Rose Bruford College, **John Rocha** Fashion designer, **Professor Christopher Frayling** Writer, cultural historian and chancellor, Arts University Bournemouth*

14

University in Europe: how to know if it's right for you

Student life on the continent can seem idyllic, and with Ucas now including European universities in the admissions process, many British students are shunning the UK. But how do you know if this is the right choice for you?

Studying in Europe offers a whole new way of life. Photograph: Alamy

Louise Tickle

Friday 8 May 2015 11.16 BST

Milly Quinton, 19, is half way through her application to study international relations at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. She's also applying to universities in Maastricht and The Hague, and is wondering whether to complete forms for Strasbourg too.

"Every day, I do about half an hour on them, and more at weekends," she says. "I've probably spent around 20 hours so far."

Quinton has done fair bit of research to reach this point, having considered a human rights course in Malmo, Sweden, and read through the website prospectuses of several German universities.

Now that Ucas has agreed to process UK students' applications to European universities, Quinton's daily slog of filling in individual forms, while ensuring she

fulfils each institution's individual entry criteria, could soon become a thing of the past. "It would help a lot in terms of time and effort!" Quinton laughs.

Although no large European institution has yet signed up to the Ucas system – Groningen stalled its application at the eleventh hour due to unforeseen costs – once initial teething troubles are resolved, UK students will hopefully be able to apply to European institutions in the same way as they do to UK universities: via a single, streamlined system.

However, prospective undergraduates thinking about studying abroad will still need to consider a whole range of factors before boarding the Eurostar.

Doing your prep properly, overseas education experts say, will dictate whether your foray across the Channel is a successful adventure, or a discouraging damp squib.

Culture shock

Your first step is likely to be scanning the internet for a course at a university you fancy going to, in a country that excites you. But should it be?

Before making any decisions, consider your personality type, suggests Paul Kelly from Gabbitas Educational Consultants, which advises on higher education and careers. Do you have the resilience to cope with the culture shock that is likely to hit even in a country relatively close to home?

Wherever you go, Kelly says, "you're likely to be in the minority, with very few other British people around you". It's worth considering whether you have friends, family or personal links to a particular country that will make you more familiar with its culture and social norms.

While many students cite the prospect of living in a new environment as a major attraction, Martin Hyde, student recruitment director at The Student World, emphasises that the effects of culture shock shouldn't be underestimated.

"Culture shock is a psychological process that will affect you, so it's best to understand it and be prepared for the stages of a cycle you'll probably go through to some degree or another," he says. "It can make you respond in an irrational manner

to certain prompts, and can greatly affect your ability to successfully study in a new environment.”

Quinton says she may well be leaning towards the Netherlands because she already has some links to the country. “I know the Netherlands well though visiting friends, and what I’ve seen is that it’s a really relaxed atmosphere and they seem to balance life and work well there.”

It’s not just about getting a good cultural “fit” with your prospective host country, however. For your degree to benefit you in the longer term, your course should of course match your interests, skills and career aspirations, says Dr Giacomo Calzolari at the University of Bologna, Italy.

The director of a newly launched undergraduate degree in economics and finance taught in English, Calzolari advises that students “identify for each country and topic of interest the two or three best institutions in terms of international rankings”, and then look to see if they have reasonable numbers of international students enrolled, which would suggest that the university understands how to cater to their needs.

Cost isn’t everything

Don’t be seduced by the lower cost of courses in Europe, advises Michael Geary, who chairs Maastricht University’s UK student recruitment team: the quality of teaching should be a priority.

“Maastricht offers both,” he says. “We have very competitive fees and Maastricht University is ranked higher than many British universities in terms of the quality of our teaching and the international recognition of our research. These are significant considerations when students and their parents decide on universities abroad.”

Another important ingredient to consider, Calzolari says, is that a medium-sized town – rather than a big city – might help slash living costs, while providing a good student experience. “Bologna is a wonderful town, with the oldest university in the western world, and its department of economics ranks among the best in Europe for research,” he says. He points out that tuition fees are much lower than in

the UK, and that UK students qualify for the same financial assistance as home students.

There might also be a language barrier to think about, says Hyde. Even if you've studied some of the local language at school, "you need to be ready for the shock of realising that many people don't understand you," he explains. You may need to learn the language properly, and the effort involved can be easy to shy away from, especially if the indigenous students you meet speak English. But Hyde is clear that "the sooner you set about learning the local language to survival level, the better will be your psychological readjustment to the new environment".

Picking your course

Thinking through these issues and taking advice from parents and a personal tutor may help to refine your search criteria. But with the internet as your oyster, and every university across Europe an option, getting going may still feel daunting. Study In Europe, which separates undergraduate degrees taught in English from those which are not, is a good place to start.

Some universities have gone all out to recruit international students over the past few years, and offer numerous degrees in English. Groningen, for instance, offers 24 undergraduate courses taught in English, and has around 5,000 international students. Maastricht offers 13.

Never assume, however, that just because entry requirements may be less stringent than for UK universities, you're in for an easy ride. "This is the number one misconception about studying in Maastricht," says Danielle Older, from Maastricht University's UK project team.

"University works very differently here: we have attendance requirements, exams every eight weeks, and small tutorial groups. From day one, students have to be involved in their own learning process: preparing for, attending and participating in tutorials. While you might get in with low grades, the expectations are high and you have to prove yourself once you're here."

It's essential to get stuck in straight away, says second-year undergraduate Caitlin Bones, 21, who is delighted with her choice to study international and European

law at Groningen. “You do have to work as soon as you get here, and the first year counts as part of your degree,” she warns. “We lost about 30 students from our first year from an initial intake of 90.”

If this all sounds a bit full on, ask yourself: will it suit me? “For me, the advantage compared to my friends back home was a huge amount more one-to-one time with tutors and professors, and regular interaction with my peers,” says Older, herself a Maastricht graduate who loved studying there. “Tutorial groups change at the end of every eight-week semester, meaning by the end of the first year, you’ve met and worked with a large number of the people in your year group.”

Geary, from Maastricht’s student recruitment team, says the university aims to attract high quality applicants with ABB grades. “We also look for diversity, for students who are curious about the world, and who might want an international career in business, law, politics or in the health sciences,” he explains.

In an increasingly competitive jobs market, Geary points out, students need to differentiate themselves through the educational choices they make. “Studying abroad brings a significant number of opportunities. Maastricht, opens up all sorts of opportunities due to the city’s proximity to Brussels and a host of international organisations, multinational corporations and the policy world.”

Many universities run open days – if you can afford to go, you should. A visit will answer lots of your questions about whether a particular university is right for you. Once you’ve made the decision to apply overseas, it’s important to be positive, pragmatic and committed to solving the practical issues that may arise.

There’s no UK student finance available if you opt for a university on the continent, so unless you’re eligible for support in the country where you’re applying, you’ll need to pay fees and accommodation up front. If you need to support yourself by working part-time, remember that there will be few jobs available that don’t require at least intermediate skills in the local language.

Finding a place to live

Accommodation is a common concern: showing up at the start of term with a rucksack and nowhere to live is not a great start to your university career. Not all

European universities have halls, and you can't be running around checking out digs, so as with everything else, preparation is crucial.

Bones signed up to the accommodation-finding service at Groningen, and paid for a room-finding service, but nothing suitable was offered. "A couple of weeks before I was due to start, I still hadn't found anywhere," she says. "In the end I found a place through a rental agency online. We were slightly anxious, so I rang the council to confirm that the agency did actually exist." Finding somewhere to live won't necessarily be as easy as at home, so Bones advises making extra time for research and telephoning agencies used to working with students.

Sorting out her banking was also tricky, Bones says: it was a glitch she hadn't anticipated. In Holland, she explains, you have to register with the council in order to get a bank account. You can't register without an address. And without a bank account, you can be left for weeks dependent on pricey cash withdrawals from your home account. At an expensive time, it all adds up.

Despite all the application faff, the worries about digs, and the initial banking issues, would Bones recommend studying abroad to others keen to leap straight from the classroom to a continental university? "I'm very pleased I did it," she says instantly. "You grow up a lot. It makes you view the world differently, and gives you an alternative outlook on life."

15

How to find accommodation for your year abroad

Accommodation can be one of the biggest headaches of organising your year abroad. How do you find somewhere affordable – and liveable – in an unfamiliar location?

'Sometimes the best way to find a place is through someone who knows someone else with a spare room going.' Photograph: Alamy

Hannah Partos

Monday 18 May 2015 10.12 BST

Finding a decent place to live abroad isn't easy, and I've had my fair share of housing dramas. I've lived in an isolated convent outside Rome, with no phone signal, no Wi-Fi and some intimidating nuns.

I've stayed in the backroom of a law firm in Paris, paying a reduced rent in return for teaching English to the head lawyer's unruly children. Having signed a dodgy contract with the lawyer-mother waiving my tenant's rights, I was terrified she could kick me out on a whim if she decided her little darlings hadn't learned enough English.

But at least the law firm was an escape from my previous residence in Paris – a grotty student centre, where I shared a tiny bedroom in which the sink fell off the wall.

One lesson I've learned is to persevere until you find the right place, where you can focus on what you're there for: improving your language skills. Here are some tips for navigating the process.

1) Be an early bird

Start looking for somewhere to live as soon as you have confirmation of where you'll be working or studying, and don't be scared to ask your new employer or host university for suggestions. Third Year Abroad, a platform set up by former year-abroad student Lizzie Fane, is a useful starting point – especially its compilation of accommodation websites for various European countries.

Partos's room at a student centre in Paris after the sink fell off the wall

2) Talk to year-abroad veterans

Seek out the fourth-year students who have just returned from their time abroad and get their recommendations – or start chatting to other year-abroad veterans on the Third Year Abroad forum and find out about newly-vacated flats. “Remember you're not alone,” says Fane. “There are huge numbers of students going abroad at the same time as you, and huge numbers going back home. So you can use a platform like ours and ask, ‘Is anyone leaving their flat in Berlin?’”

3) Keep an ear to the ground

Sometimes the best way to find a place is through someone who knows someone else with a spare room going. Flat hunting through the official routes can be tough, and landlords are often suspicious of year-abroad students, but I eventually found my small Paris flat through a friend of a friend – an Australian student who had to leave suddenly because of a visa problem. He introduced me to his elderly landlady and sung my praises, which convinced her I would make a trustworthy tenant.

4) Be adventurous

Don't assume that student housing is the best – or the only – option. Halls in Europe tend to be less sociable than in England and local students typically go home to their families at the weekend. “There's a ghostly atmosphere here,” says Isabella Kirwan, a law student at the University of Manchester, who is currently living in a student residence in Nancy, France. “Most of the others are Erasmus students as well – it's not helping me learn French.” Her advice to other students is to choose a flatshare with native speakers instead.

A statue outside the Rome convent where Partos stayed.

Ori O'Donnell, a university student in Dublin, agrees. “I lived with Spanish students in Hamburg and we got lazy and mainly spoke English instead of practising German,” she says. Now spending the rest of her year in Italy, she's making much better progress in Italian as a result of living with locals. After starting out in Siena with an elderly landlady who didn't speak any English, O'Donnell is now working on an organic family farm in Tuscany in return for board and lodging in the family home. It gives her the chance to brush up on her Italian around the dinner table with her hosts, and sampling the local cuisine is a bonus – “huge portions of pasta, rice and gnocchi”.

5) Beware of dodgy deals

So you've found your perfect flat online and the landlord wants a deposit? Try to visit it first before handing over any money – remember online photos can be misleading. Look at ads for similar places in the area to gauge a sense of prices and

check you're not being ripped off. If you're staying somewhere for more than a month, make sure there is a proper contract involved and read all the small print.

6) Don't panic

Still can't find somewhere to live? It's not the end of the world – staying in a cheap hostel or on a friend's sofa for a few weeks can give you some time to find a decent place. The same goes for when your accommodation turns out to be a total disaster. "If you're miserable, then move," says Fane. "When you have job interviews later, and you have to describe a moment you triumphed over adversity, you can say 'I had this experience where the ceiling kept leaking and I had to move flats, and I had to make all those negotiations in Spanish.'" At least you'll have a good story to tell.

16

London's international students prove lucrative for UK economy, claims study

Analysis by London First and PwC suggests overseas students contribute £2.8bn each year, while providing them with public services costs £540m

Far from being a burden to public services such as the NHS, the report says international students support nearly 70,000 in London.

Sally Weale Education correspondent

Monday 18 May 2015 19.01 BST Last modified on Tuesday 19 May 2015 00.01 BST

International students in London contribute net gains of £2.3bn a year towards the UK economy, yet many of them say Britain's immigration system has negatively affected their experience of studying here, according to a study.

The report by the business lobby London First and the PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) consultancy aims for the first time to quantify the economic costs and benefits of non-EU international students studying at the capital's universities to both London and the UK economy.

Far from being a burden to public services such as the NHS, the report says international students contribute £2.8bn in fees and consumer spending, supporting nearly 70,000 jobs in London, while the cost of providing them with public services is £540m.

Yet more than a third of students surveyed said the complexity of the immigration system had impacted negatively on their experiences as students here. The vast majority also said they found it difficult to secure work in the UK after completing their studies.

The report reflects widespread concerns about anti-immigration rhetoric surrounding international students who are currently included in the government's net migration target, and fears that Britain's higher education sector is losing out to other countries which are seen as more welcoming.

Jo Valentine, chief executive of London First, said: "International students are made to feel unwelcome because of anti-immigration rhetoric – and the fact that they are currently included in the government's net migration target. But students' expenditure here is a modern-day export: they pay substantial fees and contribute significantly in consumer spending.

"As a matter of priority, our new government should follow the lead of Australia and Canada and reclassify international students as temporary visitors, not migrants. It makes no sense to imply through classification and rhetoric that they are unwelcome, which is harming our universities' abilities to sell education to talented students around the world."

The report calls for a "proper debate about creating an immigration regime that welcomes those who contribute economically to our country".

It echoes appeals to the government by leading figures in higher education, business and the arts, not just to remove international students from migration targets but to make it easier for graduates to stay and work in the UK. Under current immigration rules, students wishing to stay on in the UK after completing their studies need to work for a single employer and earn a minimum of £20,800.

The status of international students is just one of the issues in new universities minister Jo Johnson's inbox, but one he has considered before. Three years ago he co-authored a piece in the Financial Times which suggested foreign students should be taken out of the net migration target.

According to the report, in 2013-14 there were almost 67,500 international students attending London universities – making up 18% of the total student population in the capital, and 22% of the 310,000 international students across the UK.

They contribute £1.32bn in fees; £1.36bn in subsistence spending, and £121m from from their friends and families who visit them in the UK. And despite Home Office concerns about international students overstaying after completing their studies, the report says only 12% stay in the UK after graduating.

Their positive influence extends beyond the money they spend too. Among foreign students surveyed for the study, 60% said they were more likely to do business with the UK as a result of studying here.

Julia Onslow-Cole, head of global immigration at PwC, said: “While politicians recognise the importance of international students, there has been considerable debate over the economic value.

“This is the first study to quantify the benefits of student migration. We need more hard data like this to inform immigration policies and targets. The £2.3bn benefit of international students illustrates there is a huge amount at stake.”

Nicola Dandridge, chief executive of Universities UK, said following a period of decline, there were now signs of potential growth in international student recruitment to the UK.

“However, a number of worrying signs remain – not least a drop in those taking Stem courses and the continued decline in Indian students, following a remarkable 49% drop between 2010 and 2012.

“International students make an extremely valuable contribution to the UK, both academically and financially.

“If the UK wants to fulfil its potential in this growth area, it must present a welcoming climate for genuine international students and ensure that visa and immigration rules are consistent and properly communicated.”

Responding to the report, immigration minister James Brokenshire said: “The independent Office for National Statistics uses the United Nations definition of net migration – just like all of our international competitors – which includes students.

“And it is right to do so. All immigrants who are in the UK have an impact on our communities, on housing and on our public services. The latest ONS estimate shows that while 133,000 non-EU students came to Britain in the last year only around 48,000 left the country – a gap of 85,000.

“The government will pursue further reforms to tackle abuse while continuing to attract the brightest and the best to our world-class universities. The latest figures show this strategy is working – university applications from overseas students are up by 18% since 2010, with applications to our world-leading Russell Group institutions up 30%.”

17

University guide 2017: University of London International Programmes

All you need to know about studying at the University of London International Programmes

Monday 25 May 2015 02.15 BST First published on *Monday 25 May 2015 02.15 BST*

Royal Holloway, one of the institutions offering UoL programmes.

University of London International Programmes is part of the University of London, and was set up more than 150 years ago to enable students around the world to gain a University of London degree through distance and flexible study.

All of the programmes are developed by one of the University of London’s constituent colleges and are internationally recognised.

Students studying with the University of London International Programmes have between three and eight years to complete an undergraduate degree on the international programmes, meaning study can be combined with other commitments.

Students study using a combination of printed materials and online learning resources, and have access to a course website, which offers resources such as podcasts, activities to test progress, newsletters, and computer-marked assessments. Conferencing and discussion forums supervised by tutors are also available.

It also offers the opportunity to link up with fellow students around the world and participate in the university's worldwide learning community. Course fees include 24/7 access to the university's online library.

Fees Course fees are considerably lower than the costs of studying full-time, on campus. Visit londoninternational.ac.uk/ for more information.

Contact

Tel: +44 (0)20 7862 8360/1/2

Web: londoninternational.ac.uk

18

Education exports to rise by two-thirds, says Jo Johnson

The UK's offer to international students is strong, but has suffered from misunderstandings, according to the new minister for universities and science

Jo Johnson: no plans to change the visa system for international students.

Photograph: Lewis Whyld/PA

Rebecca Ratcliffe

Monday 1 June 2015 16.31 BST

The Conservative government has set targets to increase education exports from £18bn in 2012 to £30bn by 2020, but has no plans to change the visa rules for international students, according to the new minister for universities and science, Jo Johnson.

The UK's offering to international students is strong, Johnson said, but has "suffered from misconceptions and, in some countries, misunderstandings".

Asked if the Conservative government would reintroduce post-study work visas or remove students from net migration targets, the minister said: "We have a system which has been in place for a number of years and is now bedding down in terms of how post-study work works, and the whole structure of our offer. It is a strong offer."

University leaders have criticised the previous coalition government's policy on international students, arguing that its rhetoric, and the removal of post-study work visas - which allowed students to work for two years after finishing their course - was off-putting for international students. Vice-chancellors have also called for international students to be removed from net migration targets.

The number of Indian students coming to the UK fell from 18,535 in 2010-11 to 10,235 in 2012-13, according to a report by the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

Johnson defended the Home Office's approach to international students, which has shut down 870 bogus colleges since 2010: "It is in the interests of everyone in the higher education sector to drive up quality and drive up standards."

Johnson made the comments after delivering his first speech as minister at the British Council's Going Global conference, in which he said: "The government's welcome to international students is genuine. But it is to genuine students."

Details about the role universities will be expected to play in ensuring that international students do not overstay their visa will be announced shortly, he added. "We are still looking at ways of helping institutions deal with overstaying. We now have a great advantage of a strong system of exit checks that will enable us to keep tabs on overstaying and determine where and when it's a problem."

The Conservative manifesto said that it would transfer the responsibility to visa sponsors - universities - for those who infringe the terms of the visas.

Johnson did not give details of how the UK would boost the value of education exports, but said the market has three business streams. “We have the component of education exports derived from income from students coming to study here; we have our institutions basing themselves overseas and then we have technology-enabled education exports.”

Johnson added that he remained committed to protecting the science budget, saying: “In the Conservative manifesto, which the prime minister has committed to implementing in full, we say we will continue to prioritise science spending. There should be no doubt about this government’s commitment to science funding or research.”

The minister would not speculate on how science and research would fare if Britain were to leave the EU, saying this was a “hypothetical question.”

19

Got the post-year abroad blues? You're not alone

After a year spent enjoying a new culture and meeting new people, it can be hard to settle in to life back home

Alice (bottom) and a friend on a trip to the Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco

Alice Barraclough

Thursday 4 June 2015 10.00 BST Last modified on Thursday 4 June 2015 10.04 BST

The study abroad office warned us about “reverse culture shock” – feeling blue upon returning to the UK. But nothing prepared me for the reality.

Goodbye Reese’s cupcakes, fraternity parties and weekly American football games. Goodbye free gym membership, glorious sunshine and endless amounts of frozen yoghurt. Goodbye travelling – and the free spirit of the year abroad.

After returning from a year in America last year, studying at the University of South Carolina, I felt a little out of place back in the UK.

Words such as restlessness, isolation, uncertainty and depression were thrown around at meetings before we left to study abroad. But it wasn't until I moved back to my UK university that feelings of loneliness surfaced.

Immediately after returning to the UK comes the giddy excitement phase – being reunited with friends and family after being thousands of miles apart. But once the initial elation is over, the downward spiral begins.

Dread filled my stomach as I packed my bags for my fourth and final year at university. The familiar was distorted, filled with new faces and lacking the ones who had graduated and left.

A year abroad enables you to be independent and adaptable. It develops your respect for other cultures and viewpoints, and indicates a desire to challenge yourself. The skills I gained, and the memories and friendships I made, will stay with me forever.

So why, after gaining confidence and cultural awareness abroad, do students sometimes lose them soon after returning to the UK?

Lance Workman, a psychology professor at the University of South Wales, says there has been little research into the reverse culture shock, but it's something he has "frequently encountered in students who have decided to take a year out prior to beginning their course or undertaking an exchange year during their course".

Some may say one year is too short a period after which to experience the phenomenon, and that students are being over-dramatic. But as Workman points out, a year is 5% of a 20-year-old's lifetime.

Alice enjoying American candy in Charleston, South Carolina

I'm far from the only student to have experienced this. Sasha Catcher, 21, a final-year student at the University of Warwick, spent a year in Hong Kong and, like me, felt certain things didn't live up to her expectations upon returning to the UK.

"After a year sharing a room with two other people, I was looking forward to being reunited with my bed and my things and having personal space," says Catcher.

"But I discovered that material things aren't that important to me anymore and I'd be just as happy living back in my crowded Hong Kong room."

Rob Daniel, 21, also at Warwick, spent a year in Barcelona at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra. What he misses most about Spain is his tight-knit friendship group. “We did everything together, since we all knew we were all there for only a year,” he says.

This unity and belonging is key to understanding how displaced you feel upon returning home. Daniel adds: “We were all in it together – a feeling I don’t really get back in England.”

So why is returning home such a struggle? Perhaps it’s because no matter how much I bore others with my stories of spring break, Thanksgiving, southern fried chicken and most importantly, the people, they’ll never really “get it”.

Isobel Sayers, 21, a student at the University of Leeds, studied at the University College Utrecht, Netherlands, and describes returning home as an anti-climax. After adapting to the Dutch educational system, “being immediately snowed under with lots of work was a shock,” she says.

Life in Britain seems unbearably slow now: instead of weekends spent socialising and sightseeing, essay deadlines dominate my thoughts and even going to the gym leaves me feeling guilty for not spending time in the library.

Ellie Charles, 22, a student at the University Kent, studied at the Univerzita Karlova v Praze, Prague, and feels the same. “Life in Prague seemed more exciting, with a lot more opportunities to explore,” she says. “I forgot how expensive the UK is, and most of my friends have now graduated, so the experience seems different without them.”

A spokesperson at the University of Kent’s student wellbeing team says the absence of old friends and peers makes it hard for year-abroad students to settle back in to university life. “They feel alone having to start making friends all over again, and having experienced a vibrant study, work and social life abroad, it’s difficult to settle back to the mundane student lifestyle back here.”

I may have lost honky-tonk bars and Dunkin’ Donuts, but I haven’t completely lost my new found independence and outlook on life. My year abroad profoundly

changed me and the person I strive to be, and after having moved to the other side of the world on my own, all other challenges seem minor.

How to overcome the post-year abroad blues

- **Fully immerse yourself in student life.** Join a sports team, a musical band, the student radio station, or even the tea-drinking society, to make new friendships with like-minded people.
- **Don't be afraid to talk about your time away.** If it's getting you down, seek help at your university's counselling service.
- **But avoid "When I was in [country name]..." anecdotes where possible.** They'll alienate anyone who didn't spend a year away.
- **Explore new places in your university town.** Go to new bars, secret cafés, or cool museums. This will help you find a new love for it, instead of comparing it to the place you've just come from.
- **If you feel a little different from how you felt before your year away, that's normal.** Acknowledge that you're a different person. Your world view has been altered by living in another culture. Keep a journal to help you understand how you've changed and developed.

20

What nobody tells you about studying abroad

Everyone told me how much fun I was going to have, but there are many things it would have been more useful for me to have known

'I much prefer France's fondness for fresh bread over our own devotion to Hovis; but I've come to appreciate the convenience of self-service checkouts.'

Jack Harry

Wednesday 17 June 2015 10.00 BST Last modified on Thursday 11 February 2016 17.23 GMT

Going on a year abroad is an exciting prospect. If you're getting ready for yours, no doubt half the people you know have told you how much of an "amazing time" you're going to have.

They might be right, but after spending a semester in Bordeaux and another in Santiago, Chile I've learned a few things that your university might have failed to mention.

You'll miss the UK's admin obsession

You might feel conflicted about the computerisation of almost every single facet of your life, but it definitely makes doing a degree easier. Unfortunately, your host university abroad may not have got the memo.

Your initial enthusiasm will be punctured by queuing, form-filling, sitting in stuffy rooms, waiting, coming back tomorrow, and completing tasks that you're accustomed to having done for you.

Sam Courtney-Guy, 21, a PPE student at Durham, found this to be true in Paris. "France's reputation for crippling bureaucracy is well deserved," he says. "Even if you painstakingly go through every one of your termly admin duties to try to stay on the ball, a member of staff will knock you off it by pointing out extra chores that were supposed to be obvious."

You'll re-live freshers' week

Whether you breezed through your first week of university and secured BNOC (big name on campus) status instantly, or hated every minute of it, prepare to be sociable – especially if you're dividing your year between two places.

Wallowing in your introversion won't get you far on your year abroad. This is the time for clubs where entry costs more for men than women, trap remixes of the top 40, and spending time with people you have nothing in common with.

Any cultural capital you've built up at home counts for very little, and your carefully curated group of Wes Anderson-adoring, Balearic record-collecting friends aren't here to save you – so you're best off just getting involved.

Your outlook on the UK will change

Living abroad makes you reflect on what you like and dislike about home. I much prefer France's fondness for fresh bread over our own devotion to Hovis; but I've come to appreciate the convenience of self-service checkouts when food shopping in Santiago.

"I used to spend quite a lot of my time moaning about the UK," says Euan McCarthy, 20, a French and Spanish student in Bristol. "Politics and the weather are just two aspects of British life that I don't like so much, but after living in socially conservative and largely dry Chile, I'm starting to miss the rain more than thought I would."

At the risk of sounding wanderlust-afflicted, travel does broaden the mind and your new-found worldliness will probably impress people back at home.

The year abroad is fundamentally contradictory

Your year abroad will fly by, but it can really drag. Your mates are jealous of you, but a part of you would rather be at home. There are moments that make your studies feel worthwhile – when the language flows more naturally and you begin to understand the culture, and yet it can sometimes feel like you're not working at all. These contradictions will define your time away, so embrace them.

Learn to love the unfortunate haircut you got because of your limited vocabulary, and the odd group of people you end up hanging out with. Enjoy it, you're abroad for a good time – not a long time.

Student travellers: make the most of your holiday. Go it alone

Eager for a summer adventure but can't find anyone to go with? Don't be scared to take a 'solocation'

"An independent holiday is the perfect way to get yourself in an exploratory frame of mind." Photograph: Alamy

Kayla Schmidt

Tuesday 23 June 2015 10.05 BST Last modified on Thursday 30 July 2015 11.50 BST

"You look just like my granddaughter!" I heard a lot of that sort of thing. After impulsively booking a solo cruise to the fjords of Norway for my spring break, I soon discovered that, at 25, I was by far the youngest person on board – and almost everyone was surprised I was travelling alone.

I'm an American doing a postgraduate course at the University of East Anglia (UEA) – travelling long distances on my own wasn't new to me. But this was my first vacation alone.

A "solocation" is the perfect way to explore; it allows you to tailor your itinerary to your own interests. Surrounded by senior citizens and the North Sea, I started out with slight trepidations about my travel plans – but I found a sense of freedom in the fjords.

Here's why sightseeing in solitude might be the most relaxing holiday you've ever booked.

You don't miss opportunities

Synchronising travel plans with your fellow students doesn't always work out, as a fellow American student at UEA, Alexis Kuzma, 24, learned.

After finding a deal online for a flight and hotel trip to Rome that she couldn't pass up, Kuzma discovered the friends she'd planned to go with didn't have the time or enthusiasm. "I decided if I really wanted to go, it would have to be alone," she says.

Schmidt enjoyed her solo cruise around Norway's fjords and mountains.

Photograph: Kayla Schmidt

Sean Wai Keung, 24, planned a trip to Norway after a bout of illness. He says: "I really wanted an adventure, and to prove I no longer needed constant support. "I wanted to see things on my own and basically meet the local people."

You're alone, but not lonely

As a shy person, I enjoyed the little nooks aboard the ship where I could sip my lattes in peace; but I also learned how starting small talk with strangers can become meaningful.

Technology ensures you never have to lose touch with friends and family if you don't want to. "Even though you're alone, you can still tell your friends and family about your experiences," says Kuzma, who used Skype to stay in touch.

Kelsey Rasmuson, 25, from the US, says studying abroad at the Université de Pau et Pays de l'Adour in France gave her the confidence to take solo trips to Tasmania and North Queensland. "I took the leap and made a bunch of new friends," she says. "Sure it was scary, but I met people whom fate destined me to meet."

It's still possible to be safe

Kayla Schmidt alone in Norway.

Being on your own in a new country isn't without risks. Kuzma felt slightly intimidated by the language barrier in Rome, and took care to be back at her B&B before dark. Make sure someone has an idea of your schedule beforehand, and do some pre-departure research about which areas tourists should avoid.

Wai Keung recommends pre-booking as much of your transport as possible. "There is nothing more confusing than the different ticket machines and methods of transport in a foreign country," he says.

Erik Kolb, an American who travelled alone in Rome when he studied at John Cabot University, says solo travel makes you more flexible when flights are delayed and rerouted – "I was able to grab the last seat on a different flight" – and advises bringing a smartphone and downloading hostel and airline apps. "I used

wifi a lot on my phone while abroad, so having a smartphone was a huge benefit, and airline apps are handy and save you digging out your computer,” he says.

Set your own agenda

Rasmuson relished being able to do every activity she wanted and take it easy whenever she pleased: “I didn’t need to consult another person, I just went.” She’s currently planning a solo trip to the west coast of Australia.

Kuzma also enjoyed the freedom to choose between setting a strict schedule for the day or wandering about with no definite plan. She advises solocationers: “Tell yourself before you leave that you’ll step outside your comfort zone.”

Wai Keung says: “There was no greater joy than to wake up in a completely new place and know that, apart from me, nobody was experiencing it in that way.” He’s hoping to make future trips to America and Europe.

For many students, the idea of vacationing alone in a foreign country may feel intimidating. But the opportunity to satisfy a craving for adventure, along with your need for independent downtime, is too good to overlook. So pack your bags – and your bags only.

22

Get a job or get out: the tough reality for international students

Visa controls make life difficult for international students who want to stay in the UK after graduation

There is a four-month time limit to find a job for international students who want to stay in the UK after they graduate.

André Rhoden-Paul

Thursday 2 July 2015 10.21 BST Last modified on Thursday 2 July 2015 12.14 BST

International students account for almost a fifth (18%) of those in higher education, according to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (Hesa). However, unlike their British and EU-national peers, non-EU students have only four months after the end of their course to find a job, or they face deportation.

Most non-EU graduates go home after their studies, but of those who want to work in the UK, many apply for a Tier 2 visa. To be eligible for a Tier 2 visa:

- You must have been offered a job at a particular skills level by an employer with a Tier 2 visa sponsor licence
- Your job must pay a minimum of £20,800 (though this can depend on the job)
- You must have £945 in savings, unless your sponsor is fully approved (A-rated)

In 2014, only 5,639 students were granted leave to stay in the UK under a Tier 2 visa, according to the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA).

It's difficult enough for students and recent graduates to find employment at the moment, but with a four-month time limit it can seem like an impossible feat.

With this in mind, I asked a range of university careers advisers how international students on the job hunt can boost their chances of finding employment.

Top tips for international students applying for UK jobs:

- **Apply for jobs early.** Many companies have long recruitment processes, so apply for jobs early on in your final year. Use your careers service to help you with your CV and personalise your application. If you get a job you will also need to apply for your working visa before your student visa expires.
- **Use your internationalisation to your advantage.** Think about what sets you apart as an international graduate, says Ellen O'Brien, international careers adviser at the University of Birmingham. "You may have language or enhanced numeracy skills that home students don't have."
- **Check if an employer is registered to sponsor students.** "If applying for a Tier 2 visa, you can check if an employer is on the Home Office list of registered UK employer sponsors," says Justin Richardson, careers adviser at the University of Liverpool. "You should also know the salary requirements and conditions of Tier 2, while other visa options such as Tier

5 could be considered. However, always check the latest visa information with your university international support team.”

- **Be flexible and resilient when rejected.** You may want to consider other career paths. “You might not get the job of your dreams, but if you can get anything it’s a step on the ladder,” says O’Brien.
- **Network your way into a job.** Use your university careers service, and go to international student-focused careers fairs and introduce yourself. “Use alumni networks to contact past graduates from your country who are now working in the UK,” says David Gee, global employability manager at the University of the West of England.
- **Have a backup plan if you can’t stay in the UK.** If your struggling to find a job in the UK, it’s good to consider backup options at home. Sites like GradLink UKspecialise in linking international students who have studied in the UK with employers in their home country.

I spoke to four recent international graduates who have had varying levels of success when searching for work. How does it feel to have just four months to secure a job?

‘I had to make sure I was the most desirable candidate’

Chloé Redman, 21, graduated from Oxford Brookes last year with a degree in occupational therapy. She is originally from Barbados and now works as an occupational therapist for the NHS in Somerset. She says:

Chloé Redman

I probably applied for 15 different jobs in London, Bristol and Somerset. I was definitely anxious. I was told so many horror stories about people who couldn’t get sponsorship. I had to make sure I was the most desirable candidate, so I volunteered in an after-school club and at a mental health hostel to make sure I had more experience than anyone else applying.

My advice to others? Look for something you want to do but keep your options open. Apply for as many jobs and get as much experience as you possibly can.

Even in those four months after your course, don't just sit around – go out there, volunteer and get more work experience.

'I'm frustrated, but that's because I'm ambitious'

Karel Kingsley, 23, is a legal practice course student at City University London. She is originally from the USA and is currently looking for a job in the UK. She says:

Karel Kingsley

I've been putting a lot of effort into applying for jobs. I'm frustrated, but that's because I'm ambitious. Getting a job is important for me and I want to get one before the four months come to end in August.

Because of the time limit, I feel I can't just wait around for the job I desire to arrive. I have to think on my feet and be resourceful because if I don't get what I want before the deadline, that's it. I'm not ready to leave the UK yet. I feel privileged that I can go back to the US, but that would mean starting afresh.

'The effort was not wasted'

Ibukun Shorinwa, 27, graduated from Queen Mary, University of London last year with a degree in aerospace engineering. He is originally from Nigeria and now works as a project engineer for a railway network in London. He says:

Ibukun Shorinwa

I started applying at the start of my final year and applied for more than 10 jobs. The rejections were tough to take, as they came during exam periods. I finally got my current job one month before my student visa expired. I felt like the effort was not wasted. I would not want anyone else to go through it, but it was necessary for me to stay in the UK.

I recommend students use their university careers service. They helped me get my CV ready, looked through my applications, and gave me practice questions.

'It's tough for me to compete with home students'

Deeptha Sreedhar, 21, is a broadcast journalism master's student at the University of Sheffield. She is originally from India and is currently looking for a job in the UK. She says:

Deeptha Sreedhar

I finish my course in September but I've started looking for jobs ahead of when it finishes. I'll have to get a job by January because of the visa restrictions. I'll probably have to apply for another 20 or 40 jobs before I hear back from an employer or get shortlisted for a few interviews.

It's tough for me to compete with home students even though I have the qualifications and credentials required. My biggest drawback is that I'm an international student. I could probably find a small journalism job in India, but the pay in my country isn't very good – I'll receive a third of what I'll get in the UK.

23

Universities don't understand how international students learn

Current university strategies aren't working and fail to take into consideration that international students aren't a homogenous bunch

'Universities need to change their perceptions about why international students study in the UK.' Photograph: Alamy

Thushari Welikala

Friday 3 July 2015 15.47 BST Last modified on Friday 3 July 2015 17.02 BST

The UK is one of the top destinations for international students, holding around 12.6% of the global market for recruitment. But those working in higher education will know that the sustainability of this market is uncertain. Both EU and non-EU student enrolments have significantly dropped during 2013-2014. And while non-EU students represent 48% of the UK postgraduate Stem (science, technology, engineering and maths) courses, there is a 50% drop in the postgraduate numbers from India.

The falling numbers have been attributed to a range of factors: increasing global competition, the strict migration policy of the UK and the emerging new regional markets such as China, Egypt, Japan and Malaysia.

But there is another issue that universities are often less keen to discuss: are international students satisfied with the quality of their university experience while studying in the UK?

Almost 24% of all the complaints received by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator during the last year were from international students, which should send some key messages to the sector.

The problem is that international student experience has now become a catch-all phrase.

UK higher education has talked about internationalisation and international student experience for over three decades. Universities have focused on supporting international students, helping them to mix with home students and teaching them to be critical beings using academic English and so on. But there are signs that this approach isn't working.

The problem is that "international student experience" has now become a catch-all phrase. The term has almost lost its meaning and direction – just like the term internationalisation.

Much of the research on international student experience has focused on cultural differences or differences in learning styles between home and international students. But this binary divide between home and international has led to some misleading assumptions and counterproductive narratives.

Academics continue to believe that Asian students aren't critical thinkers. We imagine that Chinese students will never speak up in the classroom, yet even this doesn't drive us to question our belief that their mere presence will create a global campus.

Rather than meeting the needs of the overseas students, universities are keen to create "international pedagogies and curricula" to help the international students to be like the home students. We force home students to mix with international students and teach this Other how to adjust into British higher education by mixing them with home students during group discussions, showing them how to talk critically and to be fearless about the authority of teachers.

This strategy has failed, international students are not chatty compared to home students due to lack of proficiency in English language and lack of knowledge about the focus of the discussions which are often centred on British context. This has led to mutual misunderstandings rather than intercultural dialogue, with international students believing that home students waste their time by dominating the discussions and home students assuming that international students hinder their learning by keeping silent.

Universities need to change their perceptions about how students learn and why they are here. Students today – whether home or international – have access to multiple ways of learning. They make use of a range of learning sites both physical and virtual. The so-called “passive Asian students” are very smart users of modern technology and are well connected with the online world. They are already international.

Some of the undergraduate international students from non-EU countries come to the UK because they are not able to secure a place in the best universities in their home countries.

The UK has been a popular destination since English language has become the international language of academic publications and so on. But the myth that the only reason behind the choice of coming to UK is the quality and reputation of our higher education system. This has led to the assumption that international students come to the UK to escape the less sophisticated, traditional national education systems.

For many decades, UK universities supporting international students have assumed that the key factor that affects learning is one’s national culture. Respecting different cultures is very important. Our curricular should encourage students to improve multiple perspectives, know more about alternative ways of learning – both western and non-western. Categorising students into national cultures and providing support to address Confucius or Socratic influence on learning has not brought any significant change over the years. Over emphasis as well as complete ignorance about different cultures of learning can both be harmful.

And higher education research cannot call itself inclusive until it addresses the needs of all students. At the moment, academia seldom focuses on Polish or Lithuanian or Kenyan student experience.

New strategies need to be developed to address actual difficulties that hinder students' success in education. There is a crucial need for helping students to improve language proficiency. When students are not confident about their language ability they are not able to actively contribute in classroom discussions. Misinterpreting this behaviour as being passive is not helpful.

Like any other student, international students bring valuable knowledge and skills. It's time we began to see what we can learn from their pedagogic cultures.

Reconsidering our outdated approach aimed at making international students sophisticated learners by totally assimilating them in to UK pedagogic culture is now crucial. When students' experiences, skills and perceptions are valued, they will be more prepared to negotiate their problems and issues and not complain.

24

World on your plate: how to cope abroad on a restricted diet

Having to watch what you eat can make overseas travel an uninspiring and even dangerous prospect, we look at ways to manage during your trip

Not everywhere will cater for your dietary requirements, so do your research before you travel.

Fiona Henry

Monday 6 July 2015 12.30 BST Last modified on Monday 6 July 2015 12.47 BST

In my second year at university, I joined the 20% of 16- to 24-year-olds who are vegetarian. It was an ethical and practical decision: a vegetarian diet is cheap, easy and accepted in the UK – plus it justified my excessive peanut butter habit.

Then came a boeuf bourguignon-shaped spanner in the works: I moved to France for a year to study. It soon became clear that I was going to struggle – while the

meat-free food market is worth around £657m in the UK, according to a recent estimate, demand in France is much smaller.

With vegan meals effectively banned in school canteens, Quorn not always available in Carrefour, and my host family's horror that I wasn't "much of a meat-eater" – not to mention the subpar peanut butter – the practical advantages of vegetarianism had gone.

For me, compromise was the best option – while not cooking meat for myself, I was keen to avoid insult or hassle so ate what I was given. Besides, I reasoned, food is a major part of every culture – would I really be getting into the year-abroad mindset if I refused to try local, traditional foods?

But for students with medical or religious reasons for restricted diets, or who are just less hypocritical than myself, flexibility isn't an option. So how can you navigate a year abroad on a restricted diet?

Come prepared

Abigail Jones (not her real name) studies French and Italian at the University of Kent, and is allergic to nuts, as well as mosquito bites. She found preparation key for her time in Switzerland and Italy: "I keep a ready supply of the stuff I need in case I get bitten or eat something. Make sure you know exactly how to explain to waiters that you have an allergy, so you don't accidentally order something that could make you ill."

Allergy UK offers translation cards and gives advice for coping with allergies when travelling. To ask students who might have been in your situation for advice, start a discussion on the Third Year Abroad website.

Research your destination

Find out how aware your host country is of your requirement. Awareness can vary considerably from place to place, even for common medical conditions. Jess Husbands studies French and Spanish at the University of Edinburgh, and is coeliac. "Spain was much better than France for being coeliac: if I said 'soy coeliaca' in Spain, most people knew what it was. But in France no one had heard

of it – I had to say ‘je suis allergique au blé’ which is obviously not the same thing.”

In France only 10 to 20% of coeliacs are diagnosed, making awareness levels much lower than in the UK. Coeliac UK provides useful country guides, detailing awareness levels, and where to find products and local coeliac groups.

Try new things

Having to be a bit more creative with your culinary choices can turn into an advantage. Chloë Rose, a Jewish student at the University of Birmingham, spent a year in Spain: “I found out before I went that there was no Jewish community in Granada, which meant getting kosher food would be next to impossible. I decided the best option would be to go vegetarian.”

Although she missed eating meat, Rose didn’t struggle to find something she enjoyed eating. “Eating out can be difficult but we often went to restaurants where there are plenty of meat-free options. I expanded my range of what I eat a lot more than I did in Birmingham: I tried couscous, and I didn’t really eat eggs before, but now I feel better that I have more healthy options instead of just resorting to fish fingers or a frozen pizza. And if in doubt I always have tortilla.”

Don’t worry!

When preparing to go abroad, the threat of endless uninspiring dinners can fill restricted eaters with dread. But food is only one small aspect of life, as it is at home, and your diet won’t deprive you of your best memories. “There will always be something to eat,” adds Rose. “I knew that other parts of my year abroad – such as location and the university – were more important than what I was going to eat every day.”

By taking the same precautions as you would at home, and doing research before arriving – as you would for any other aspect of your time abroad, like accommodation – there’s no reason why a restricted diet should get in the way of a great year.

How teaching English on my year abroad improved my French

It seems counterintuitive, but teaching English can be the best way to immerse yourself in another culture and learn its language

Teaching your own language gives you a broader insight into language learning – you see what works and what doesn't. Photograph: Alamy

Hannah Partos

Monday 13 July 2015 10.13 BST

I began my year abroad in Paris as an intern at a publishing house, earning €2.70 an hour for menial work.

I'd hoped to be able to soak up French in a real-life setting, but was constantly writing emails and making calls in English, with little free time for learning my second language. I soon realised the only thing I'd really learned was how to use a document-binding machine.

Luckily, I'd taken an intensive English-teaching course in London the previous summer, which helped me find a new job with a language school.

I took the Tesol course (the Celta is also recognised by the British Council and reputable schools worldwide), which enabled me to spend the rest of my year teaching English to adults, either in one-to-one lessons or small groups.

Students planning their years abroad might worry about teaching English. It seems counterintuitive – you go to another country to learn the language and end up speaking your mother tongue.

But in my experience, it can be a rewarding job and is perhaps even the best way to immerse yourself in another culture and learn the language.

Ellen Rothnie, a student at the University of Glasgow, who has recently returned from two years abroad as a British Council language assistant in a school in Arévalo, Spain, agrees. She says: "The feeling of integrating is so special. I wanted to improve my Spanish and was astounded by how much I did. I noticed a difference within a month."

Broadly speaking, you can either work or study on your year abroad. While some universities offer exchange schemes such as Erasmus, participants sometimes find they struggle to practise their target language, as their social circle often revolves around fellow international students.

As for work, there are year-abroad internships – these are fiercely competitive and frequently involve dull admin work for minimal pay, which is difficult to live on when you add up the costs of travelling to another country and renting accommodation.

Teaching English is among the best-paid options; I earned €19 an hour, although my weekly hours varied a lot. The British Council assistantship offers a fixed monthly income – between €700-1,100 in Europe, depending on the country you choose – and a more reliable chance of finding a position. The only drawback is that you might not be offered your first-choice destination within your chosen country.

What struck me most about teaching English though, was the potential for improving my French. Teaching your own language gives you a broader insight into language-learning – you see what works and what doesn't.

Among my students, I encountered a full range of abilities – speakers of near-native fluency and those who could barely string together a simple English phrase. I noticed what held my weakest students back – too much focus on writing down notes, crippling shyness and fear of making mistakes, and the other extreme – overconfidence, speaking at length and carelessly repeating the same errors.

I saw how my best students learned – by being chatty and enthusiastic, and by watching hours of Anglo-American TV and films in their spare time. Trying to follow their example, I studied French thrillers and reality shows, picking up slang and colloquialisms, which helped me get by in everyday conversations.

Rothnie also found that teaching English helped with her Spanish. “My students often didn't know what I considered to be basic expressions involving prepositions, such as ‘run out’, or ‘left over’,” she says.

“Then I realised that in Spanish there is usually a separate, single equivalent verb which, before my year abroad, I probably didn’t know either.”

At university, language teachers often tell students to avoid directly translating English phrases word-for-word, but it’s only when you’re interacting with native speakers in another country that you grasp the common expressions and idioms.

Teaching English can also give you the chance to socialise with native speakers, as Amy Stewart, a student at the University of Strathclyde, found on her year abroad in Tenerife.

As a British Council assistant, she became friendly with her fellow teachers and even went to stay at the family home of a Spanish colleague. Despite her concerns about living in a hotspot for Anglophone tourists, Stewart improved her Spanish by taking part in language exchanges with locals.

You need to be proactive too, she says: “If you go looking for areas that aren’t quite as touristy, then you’ll find them.”

Ultimately, the success of your year abroad is down to your own efforts – but maybe there’s something about teaching that gives you a certain motivation.

After all, when you’ve been telling your students to knuckle down and practise vocabulary in their spare time, you feel like a hypocrite if you don’t do the same.

26

Theresa May’s hard line on international students will rob us of income and talent

Making it more difficult for foreign students to study in the UK will be financially and culturally damaging for the country

International students at Tianjin Medical University, China. Foreign students are increasingly choosing alternative destinations to the UK. Photograph: Yue Yuewei/Xinhua Press/Corbis

Vincenzo Raimo

Wednesday 22 July 2015 14.19 BST Last modified on Friday 17 February 2017 13.16 GMT

If life wasn't hard enough for UK universities in the competitive international student marketplace, the home secretary, Theresa May, has just made things worse. Britain is competing in a global race for growth and prosperity. In education we have a world-leading sector, one that overseas governments, international sponsors, students and their parents recognise and are willing to pay good money to benefit from, and in doing so contribute some £18bn a year to the UK economy. Yet May clearly thinks there are too many international students in the UK and wants to limit their number. Last week, she suggested "universities should now develop sustainable funding models that are not so dependent on international students".

There are many merits in adopting a tougher stance on immigration, and universities cannot ignore public opinion or the mandate of elected ministers. But seeking a blanket reduction in the number of international students for this purpose is what Sir Humphrey might have called "brave". The Tories, elected as the party most trusted on the economy, could be in danger of cutting off their nose to spite their face.

The government's long-term economic plan involves cutting the deficit, encouraging growth, creating jobs, boosting productivity and increasing exports.

UK universities contribute to all of these. The Treasury and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), which oversees universities, appear to understand this and recognise the benefits of education exports in particular. Indeed, universities minister Jo Johnson has backed plans to increase foreign earnings to £30bn a year by 2020 – an ambitious target, even if the government is not working against itself. And the sector is already facing numerous barriers it must overcome.

The UK's record of joined-up government is not particularly strong. In recent years, there has been an annual ratcheting up of immigration regulations, making

it harder and more expensive for British universities to attract the best students in what is becoming an ever more competitive international market.

It's no wonder that some prospective students are choosing alternative destinations for their studies. More and more universities across the world, seeking to benefit from the market for English-language higher education, are now offering courses taught wholly in English and with generous financial incentives.

With increased international competition and regulatory headaches, UK universities have already seen the financial margins on international student recruitment reduce. These margins, we should remember, support university research and the teaching of British students, the costs of which are principally borne upfront by the taxpayer.

Of course, this isn't just about money. The international student population in British universities has become increasingly imbalanced, impacting on the international as well as domestic student experience. A quarter of the UK's total annual international student intake comes from one country: China. At master's level, it's almost one-third. Over the past five years, the number of international students at UK universities has stagnated and the number of those from the Indian subcontinent has halved. Meanwhile, the UK's biggest competitors – the US, Australia, Canada and Germany – all saw increases and have ambitious strategies for growth.

If we're not careful, the UK, its universities and the economy will miss out on the financial benefits international students bring and, just as important, the benefits of having the best students in the world study in Britain. But we also risk losing the longer-term benefits gained through the relationships established by international students with their UK counterparts, their lecturers and British society more widely.

This is not just a problem for universities. Britain is already beginning to miss out on some of the positive long-term economic and cultural ties created when students of different nationalities live and study together. Aside from aiding integration at

home, British soft power, international influence and global reputation abroad can all begin on campus.

The government's position is particularly troubling because it is based on notoriously unreliable data. Net migration figures are calculated from the International Passenger Survey, which is woefully inadequate at tracking where international students end up. The official statistics suggest many more settle in the UK than is actually the case.

Even on the basis of current figures, the government could choose the approach favoured by many other countries, by removing international students from its headline immigration figures. That would allow UK universities to pursue the government's targets on education exports, without adding to the headache of reducing net migration to below 100,000 a year. This would seem to provide both the political and economic results the government wants, yet it's a happy compromise that's so far been overlooked.

Despite constant statements from ministers that "genuine" international students, the "brightest and the best" are welcome, the reality has been different. The latest message from May is telling and the façade of rhetoric is beginning to fade.

27

I don't feel welcome in this country as a foreign PhD student

The government's Orwellian-style monitoring of international students makes me feel like an imposter – a slick devil likely to game the system

'With the ever-changing goal-posts for post-study work visas, we find ourselves wondering if we would even want to stay and work in the UK.'

Alamy

Adam Trettel

Friday 24 July 2015 12.32 BST Last modified on Friday 17 February 2017 13.15 GMT

The Home Office has repeatedly said it wants to tackle visa abuse by “bogus colleges” while attracting the “best and brightest” students to UK universities. As an American student with a degree from an Ivy League university, on a PhD course at a Russell Group university, I can say that it feels like the Home Office also wants to niggle with me just enough to remind me that I am not really (quite) welcome in this country.

I am speaking not just of the drumbeats for an enhanced student-visa “crackdown” in the news recently. There are, in fact, already a number of measures in place that make it clear to students like myself that we are actually imposters. Potential parasites on the British state. Slick little devils likely to game the system. Aliens.

As a non-EEA (European Economic Area) migrant, if I wish to complete the most mundane paid tasks at the university – such as sealing up undergraduate exam scripts and carrying them from the examination hall to the faculty – I have to fill out seven pages of paperwork.

Each time I complete such a task, I must also fill out an online form requesting that a letter be mailed to my flat, which I then take in person back to the university offices, in order to prove my physical existence in the UK and its correspondence to my address. Such letters expire every 30 days, so I have had to apply for new ones several times. The last time I was asked to help carry exam papers I refused, on the grounds that it would take longer to fill out the paperwork than to actually do the job.

This week marks the ninth time since I arrived in the UK that I must appear in person at the university registry and display my US passport in order to “confirm my attendance”.

The Home Office is like a repairman who, when called to fix a hole in the wall, decides to burn down the house

Apparently, it is not enough to the Home Office that I attend a university that is a “highly trusted” sponsor. Or that as a postgraduate tutor I must, ironically, take attendance records of students who attend my classes, as part of the university’s

own self-monitoring practices established to retain its “highly trusted” status. Or that I paid several hundred pounds to obtain my Tier 4 visa and residence permit. Or that UK Border Control can track each time I enter and exit the country. Or that I possess a national insurance number and am registered with an NHS surgery. Or that I meet regularly with my supervisors.

In a visa provision that may be eliminated for future international students, I am allowed to work 20 hours a week. I am banned, however, from working as a private tutor. Why? I suppose because some students came to do a course like mine and decided they would set up a tutoring business instead, and were actually quite good at it. So the Home Office says, no more tutoring for you lot. They introduce a blanket policy.

“Better make sure”. “Can never be too careful”. “Be safe”. “You never know...” More and more I am beginning to think that soporific banalities like these are the real bedrock of UK immigration policy. It is either that, or it is bean-counting dressed up as an intelligent response to a real emergency.

If student migration abuse is a problem, then the Home Office is like a repairman who, when called to fix a hole in the wall, decides to burn down the house.

With the ever-changing goalposts for post-study work visas, we international students find ourselves wondering: even if we got a job offer, would be able to stay in this country? Would we even want to?

The idea of deporting students upon graduation, and then inviting them to apply for a job from abroad and re-migrate, is simply laughable as a method to attract the “best and brightest”. As a general principle, the more the rules change, the more trust is eroded.

It is worth underscoring that this small corner of the immigration debate is not just about economics and the job market: the billions of pounds international students contribute each year to the UK economy; the detrimental effect falling recruitment will have on UK university funding and the teaching of British undergraduates; the fact that businesses are crying out for the government to allow more international students to work here.

The Home Office's continued threats towards international students have created an Orwellian monitoring system that shreds the peace of mind and the sense of stability necessary for critical reflection and groundbreaking research.

Such meddling undermines the mental wellbeing of young persons and mocks the vocation of people who came to this country to use its libraries and laboratories, and to learn.

28

The year abroad 2.0: how technology is changing foreign study

Technology can help combat loneliness – but won't solve all the problems you encounter

'Has technology improved the year abroad, or is terrifying loneliness just a key part of the experience?' Photograph: Alamy

Jamie Green

Tuesday 28 July 2015 10.45 BST Last modified on Monday 10 August 2015 10.31 BST

"I packed up my worldly goods and set off to France. It took me 24 hours – I cried nearly all the way there." Many students today will identify with Paula Newton's traumatic beginning to her year abroad in Strasbourg in 1985; the trains, the tears and the downright terror as you set off to an unfamiliar land, unsure what to expect.

Today, in times of trauma, technology acts like a pet cat. It wakes us up in the morning, provides us with a warm and cuddly virtual safety net and occasionally makes a low purring sound for no apparent reason.

You may not know how to explain to the local plumber why your toilet has decided not to flush, but at least you can look up the Italian word for "cistern" on your smartphone. I speak from personal experience.

If all else fails, you can console yourself by Skyping a university friend and bemoaning the fact that your knowledge of Dante's *Divine Comedy* exceeds your ability to describe basic household appliances.

But imagine having to resolve household problems with no access to phones or the internet, and no contact with home.

This was my dad's experience in Munich in 1971 – on his year abroad from Swansea University. “A two-month postal strike meant I had absolutely no contact with home,” he says.

“My parents resorted to going to Manchester airport and giving letters to people to post from other countries.”

This puts my own frustration at the lack of Wi-Fi in my room into perspective (I've loitered outside hospitals, churches and in library entrances, all for an internet connection).

Freddie Thomson, a Durham University student currently in Beirut, can identify with feeling disconnected from the world. He says there is a three-hour power cut every day, and a faulty illuminated sign on the municipal electricity building that reads “Electr _____ a ___” instead of “Electricity of Lebanon”.

These days, smartphones are most students' main form of portable entertainment, but obviously that option wasn't available to Newton in the eighties. Her mum came to the rescue, though. “She would cut out crosswords from the local paper in Hull and sent them to me in case I needed something to do.”

A reoccurring battle for year-abroaders is the struggle to find accommodation equipped with mod-cons. “In desperation, I took a room in a place right on the edge of town where I was locked out of the rest of the house,” says Newton.

“There was no fridge and a cooking ring that we were banned from actually cooking on, so I spent six months living on the French equivalent of pot noodles.”

For Eleanor Southern-Wilkins, a student at the University of Manchester currently living in Chemnitz, 21st century Germany has been little better than 1980s France when it comes to living arrangements.

“My school told me they had accommodation for me, but no one had checked it in advance,” she says. “When we got there it was lacking basic necessities such as electricity and windows that shut and lock.”

I’ve been lucky with accommodation. At the Catholic boarding school where I work, I’m provided with three meals a day and copious amounts of local wine.

Malcolm Hope enjoyed a similarly positive experience in Caen, France, in 1968. “Local cider was delivered weekly to the school in something resembling an oil tanker. Our quota was always consumed,” he says.

So has modern technology improved the year abroad, or is terrifying loneliness and ill-equipped accommodation just a key part of the experience?

While Skype and Facebook obviously help in combatting homesickness, for those hoping to sharpen their language skills, the easy access to English-speaking media can hinder immersion.

I’ve started watching Italian films to strengthen my own language skills, and among them has been *Benvenuti al Sud*, a comedy about a disgraced postmaster banished to southern Italy.

Upon his arrival, he’s told: “When an outsider comes to the south, he cries twice: once when he arrives and once when he leaves.”

The same probably applies to most students on their year abroad. No amount of technology can help you avoid the usual pitfalls. There will be numerous embarrassing moments, along with despair at your lack of vocabulary.

Eventually though, there’s the quiet sense of achievement when you realise that – maybe – it wasn’t that bad after all.

A guide to the government's new rules for international students

Home secretary Theresa May has just announced new immigration rules that will make life harder for many international students in the UK

Students join the National Union of Students to protest against the Home Office on International Migrants Day last December. Photograph: Alamy

Natalie Gil

Wednesday 29 July 2015 10.12 BST Last modified on Friday 17 February 2017 13.14 GMT

It's a tough time for international students in the UK, and their plight has only been made worse by home secretary Theresa May's recent announcement of changes to the immigration rules.

In a recent confidential letter, May wrote that universities should "develop sustainable funding models that are not so dependent on international students". And business secretary Sajid Javid told BBC Radio 4's Today programme earlier this month that he wants to "break the link" between studying and settling to work in the UK.

Since it came to power, the government has tried to make it more difficult for international students to stay in the UK after completing their studies, as part of its failed plan to cut net immigration to below 100,000 per year and reduce visa fraud.

The most significant step in this direction was the scrapping of the post-study work visa in 2012. This had allowed non-EU students to stay in the UK and work for up to two years after graduation.

International students have also been hit by an NHS charge for hospital treatment this year, on top of paying extortionate university tuition fees – up to four times as much as UK students on some courses – which can rise without notice.

Despite media reports implying that all international students will now be kicked out as soon as their courses ends because of a new rule, this isn't the case. This new rule only applies to students in further education colleges, not universities.

In fact, the latest rules differ in several ways depending on whether you are studying at a university or a further education college.

Changes affecting international students at UK universities

- **Students will need evidence of significantly more savings on arrival.** The amount of money they need to have access to will increase from November. This will apply to international students extending their time here, as well as those coming for the first time, and will be higher for students in London. The area considered as London is also being expanded so a great number of students will be affected. International students currently need to show they have enough money for course fees and living costs for either two months – if they have an “established presence” – or nine months. But the established presence provision is being removed, so all students will need to show they can support themselves for up to nine months or the full length of their course, whichever is shorter. A PhD student, for instance, in London and needing to extend for nine months will have to show they have £11,385 in the bank rather than the current £2040.
- **Stricter rules around academic progression.** From 3 August, students wanting to extend their general visas must be moving up a level on the National Qualifications Framework. Those hoping to extend their studies at the same level will only be able to if their proposed course is linked to their previous one, or if it supports their career aspirations, as determined by their university. So, for example, you won't be able to do a BA in English if you already have one in sociology. Applicants for PhD or doctoral qualifications can continue at the same level.
- **The minimum salary requirement for tier 2 visas is likely to increase.** The government's Migration Advisory Committee is reviewing tier 2 visas – the most common route by which international students stay

and work in the UK – in a bid to reduce the number of non-EEA migrants working in the UK. To be able to stay and work with a tier 2 (general) visa after their studies, an international graduate’s employer must currently pay at least £20,800 and sponsor a work visa, but this minimum salary requirement looks set to rise. A small number of international students may be able to stay and work in the UK by other means, such as a tier 1 (graduate entrepreneur) visa, a tier 5 (temporary worker) visa, a tier 1 (entrepreneur) visa or a tier 1 (investor). Information about these can be found [here](#).

- **Spouses’ and dependants’ rights to work in the UK may be restricted.** Most international students below master’s level are already banned from bringing dependants. But international postgraduates can currently bring spouses and other dependants if their course lasts a year or more, as well as students who are fully sponsored by their government for a course longer than six months. However, May has circulated proposals to ban dependants from being employed in low-skilled jobs, according to The Times. This change could disproportionately affect science and technology departments, as around 47% of students on postgrad Stem courses are international students.

Changes for international students at further education colleges

- **Students will no longer be able to extend their visa or switch to a work visa while in the UK.** From November, tier 4 (general) students at colleges will have to apply from outside the UK, creating a barrier to further study or employment.
- **They won’t be able to extend their studies in the UK unless they are registered at an institution with a formal link to a university.** This comes into force on 12 November and could limit students’ progression from colleges to universities.
- **Those at publicly funded FE colleges will be banned from working part-time.** They can currently work for up to 10 hours per week and for an unlimited time outside term time. The new rule will apply to students who

apply for their tier 4 visa on or after 3 August, but won't apply retrospectively to students already here. International students at private colleges lost this right in 2011.

- **Study visas at FE level will be cut from three years to two.** The government says the change, which comes into force on 12 November, will help ensure academic progression. But some FE courses can run for more than two years, and this change could reduce the number of qualifications students are able to gain while in the UK.

International students have some powerful supporters

- Within the government, chancellor George Osborne is more welcoming of international students than May. In January he blocked her plan to expel foreign students upon graduation, allegedly warning it would damage the economy.
- As deputy prime minister, Nick Clegg was also against May's plan when it was first floated last year. He called for international students to be removed from immigration targets and urged the government to adopt a flexible approach to student visas – a viewpoint notably absent from this Conservative government.
- Business leaders such as Sir James Dyson have spoken out against May's stance on foreign graduates. Dyson says it is difficult enough getting skilled young engineers through the visa system already, without further tightening of the immigration rules.
- Universities have condemned the rule changes. Vincenzo Raimo, pro vice-chancellor of the University of Reading, highlights the contradiction between the government's long-term plan for economic growth and its tough stance on immigration. Professor Paul Webley, director of Soas university, has also criticised the plans, saying: "International students bring money and – if they stay – talent to the UK that the country would not otherwise attract."

School-leaver overturns immigration-related blanket ban on student loan

Supreme court decision in favour of Beaurish Tigere, 20, could pave way for hundreds of other young people settled in UK to fund higher education

When Beaurish Tigere applied for student finance, she was told that her immigration status meant she was not eligible for a loan. Photograph: Johnny Green/PA

Owen Bowcott Legal affairs correspondent

Wednesday 29 July 2015 14.29 BST Last modified on Thursday 30 July 2015 00.01 BST

A school-leaver who was denied a student loan has succeeded in overturning a blanket ban – related to immigration status – on funding for higher education.

The supreme court decision could pave the way for hundreds of other young people who are settled in Britain and have been to school in this country to carry on to higher education.

The case was brought by Beaurish Tigere, 20, who arrived from Zambia with her parents at 6 and went on to attend primary and secondary schools in York.

She became head girl, obtained three A-levels and won a place at Northumbria University to read international business management. When she applied for student finance, however, she was told that her immigration status of discretionary leave to remain meant she was not eligible for a loan.

The supreme court found that the blanket exclusionary rule preventing anyone except UK citizens or those with indefinite leave to remain in the UK from applying for student loans was disproportionate and could not be justified.

Delivering the judgment on Wednesday, Lady Hale, deputy president of the court, said: “The numbers affected are not insignificant but a tiny proportion of the student loans which are made every year ... These young people will find it hard to understand why they are allowed access to all the public services, including cash

welfare benefits, but are denied access to this one benefit which is a repayable loan.”

She suggested that a delay of only three years for regularising ordinary residence status would be better than the period of up to 10 years currently in force.

Many school-leavers did not discover they were not entitled to a grant until their final year at school. Paul Heron, a solicitor with Public Interest Lawyers, who represented Tigere, said: “Beaurish is a talented and brave individual and is a credit to the school system in the UK. She has worked hard to obtain excellent grades. Yet she was denied the opportunity to go to university for the past two years. She has now succeeded in challenging this policy.

“The regulations ... made no economic sense. The court’s decision will now allow her and hundreds of other students unfairly excluded from higher education the opportunity to fulfil their potential.”

The legal charity Just for Kids Law, which intervened in the case, welcomed the judgment. Its director, Shauneen Lambe, said: “This ruling is wonderful news for many ambitious and academically successful young people, who would otherwise be blocked from ever entering professions which require a degree.

“We look forward to working with the government to make sure their ability to get a loan is restored in time for this year’s A-level results on 13 August so that students who have achieved their grades have the chance to take up university places in the autumn.”

Many school-leavers in a similar position attended the judgment at the supreme court in Westminster, London. Dami Makinde, 21, said afterwards: “This is the best outcome we could have had. I don’t know how quickly it will change. We may have to wait a while but at least we can go to university. I’m ecstatic.”

Makinde, who has been granted limited leave to remain in the UK, has been offered a place at Royal Holloway College in Surrey to study psychology and criminology but has been told she will have to pay £13,000 a year as a foreign student because she does not qualify for a student loan.

Emmanuel Opuku, 20, who has been offered a place at Imperial College in London to read chemistry, was told he would have to pay £26,000 to take up his place because he was not entitled to a loan. “I have had to go on two gap years,” he said. “This campaign shows that we have had some effect.”

Alison East, a solicitor at Coram Children’s Legal Centre who provided evidence for the hearing, said: “These young people have worked hard to do well at school and at college, and aspire to achieve the best they can. Seeing their friends and peers go to university when they cannot and being aware of being held back for as long as 10 years in pursuing qualifications that are essential in a competitive job market inevitably causes these young people to feel marginalised, which is why we are thrilled with the supreme court ruling in this instance.”

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, said it was considering the detail of the judgment.

31

Get UK students out of comfort zone and engaging with international peers

The challenge is to convince home students that they can benefit from working and socialising with international students

‘In creating the wider benefits of diversity on campus, there is a need to take all students out of their comfort zones.’ Photograph: Alamy

Paul White

Tuesday 11 August 2015 10.18 BST

A concern sometimes expressed about the UK’s success in attracting international students is that the experience of home students will be weakened: classes will be swamped by those with poor English, residential ghettos of foreign students will emerge, and segregation will become the norm in student clubs and societies. And indeed with the growth of pathway programmes whereby international students spend months preparing for admission to their degree programmes, there are fears

that such students will never break out of the international friendship groups they form on arrival.

So what actions can university authorities and others take to prevent this from happening?

Increase student intakes from other countries

Government and university policies have rightly dictated that international students must have competence in English to be successful – this is vital from both an academic and social perspective. In addition universities and pathway providers are increasingly recognising that diversity among the international student cohort is beneficial. And it isn't a question of cutting back on recruitment from the buoyant Chinese market: rather the need is to increase student intakes from other world regions. Students from Latin America, for example, are woefully under-represented on UK campuses.

Introduce mixed tutorial and seminar groups

Student housing is a pertinent issue effecting integration, particularly in those cities where a separate housing sub-market has developed, catering for particular student groups – especially the Chinese. But if students don't initially want to live in mixed nationality groups there are other ways of generating the confidence to live, work and learn with others.

Academic departments can play a huge role in nominating mixed tutorial and seminar groups, and in creating tasks and projects where the varied backgrounds and perspectives of students from different origins is a real advantage. After all, global corporations will expect future graduates to work not just in interdisciplinary but also in international teams. And student unions can act to promote and celebrate the diversity of their members through such things as international food or dance competitions and festivals. In most unions an increasing number of non-alcohol events are held, and cafés with no alcohol on sale are present on most campuses. These reflect cultural considerations that are crucial to extended integration.

The potentials for successful student mixing are there, and there is increasing understanding in senior higher education teams of how to achieve the internationalisation of the student experience that many universities aspire to. So, what are the remaining problems?

Research shows that home students understand the importance of integrating with their international peers to help prepare them for work in a global environment. But despite this, the reality is that many UK students don't have the confidence to reach out and do so. Many home students transition from school or college to university with the expectation that they will continue to live their lives as before – but with a greater degree of independence.

International students present a huge opportunity to universities, and to home students, to enhance the global skills of everyone and hence create graduates who can take work or other opportunities anywhere in the world.

Provide opportunities for new friendships

A truly international campus environment benefits both domestic and international students. But these benefits do not come automatically. Actions have to be taken to generate them, and those must come from academic departments and from service providers within universities, from students themselves, and from pathway college providers.

Most students on arrival at university want to develop a sense of belonging, and one easy way to do so is to seek out others like themselves. But in creating the wider benefits of diversity on campus there is a need to take all students out of their comfort zones, to provide opportunities for new experiences and new friendships, and to help to build an understanding of different ways of life among those from varied backgrounds.

The “brightest and best” from abroad do not travel thousands of miles to immerse themselves in their home cultures, but instead they are seeking international environments which will make them highly employable in future. The greater task may be to convince some home students that they could also benefit in such environments.

Deciding to study abroad can be tricky for minority ethnic students

Planning time abroad is stressful for any student, but for BME students there's also potential racism to contend with

It's important for minority ethnic students to research their destination(s) before they leave. Photograph: Alamy

Fedora Abu

Saturday 22 August 2015 09.00 BST Last modified on Sunday 17 January 2016 14.36 GMT

Preparing to study abroad is nerve-wracking whoever you are. It may be exciting, but the build-up can also be stressful: from finding a place to live to navigating foreign bureaucracy.

However, for many minority ethnic students, there can often be an added concern, particularly when heading to countries that are less racially diverse or tolerant than the UK.

Speaking to BME (black and minority ethnic) students who've studied abroad, it seems the extent to which they experienced racism largely depended on where they chose to study.

Anita Barton-Williams, a Nottingham Trent University graduate, spent her year abroad in Strasbourg, France, and at the University of Salamanca's Avila campus in Spain. Her experiences – and those of her friends – led her to write an article advising other BME students.

People would stare and cross the road 'to get a closer look'

"I did some research before I chose where to go, but definitely not enough. I wish I'd found out which political parties were in power", admits Barton-Williams, who arrived in Strasbourg to find it was Front National territory.

Finding accommodation also proved a problem, with one estate agent saying they weren't having much progress because they were black. "I got lucky and found a place with a Guadeloupean, but two of my black guy friends really struggled.

Eventually, they ended up living with a Martiniquais lady who rented to them out of empathy.”

In Spain, Barton-Williams hoped that being in a small town such as Avila would help with her Spanish, but soon found that being black made her and her friends local celebrities – people would stare and cross the road “to get a closer look”.

Fortunately, they were welcomed by the town’s small Dominican community, but Barton-Williams thinks having other BME students with her was what helped her cope. “If I hadn’t gone with my group of friends, I would’ve probably quit my year abroad because there was no support.”

Selena Falcone decided to study her whole psychology degree at the University Luxembourg instead of the UK, with a term at Sophia University in Japan, and quickly noticed the difference in attitudes to race compared to the UK.

“It’s something people are more aware of in Luxembourg and Japan. In Luxembourg, what shocked me were the casual comments people would make about black people as if they didn’t concern me, because my appearance can be misleading,” says Falcone, who is of Eritrean, German and Italian descent.

“My background suddenly became relevant, whereas in England I never had to think about it. It made me more wary of becoming friends with people because of the inevitable comments they would make.”

By contrast, picking a diverse place in which to study can leave you feeling a lot more welcome. Cecilia Effa, a student at the University of Birmingham, spent a year of her English and creative writing degree at New Mexico State University in the US, staying in Las Cruces.

“Las Cruces was a fantastic place with a huge mix of cultures”, says Effa, who is of Iranian and Nigerian heritage. “There were a ton of Hispanic, black and mixed race people, and a huge Native American and Mexican influence as well. There really wasn’t much potential for racism – I never had anyone say anything negative about my race.”

These are the sorts of varied experiences that BME students planning to study abroad are having to keep in mind. Nyasha Mugavazi, who studies politics and

eastern European studies at UCL and will be heading to Helsinki in September, followed by Budapest, admits that her ethnicity was a factor when deciding where to go.

“I could have gone to Moscow, which would have been amazing, but my ethnicity made me doubt whether I’d get the same experience of Russia as my peers,” says Mugavazi. “Race relations in Hungary are also far from good, but I feel like the positives there outweigh my fear of feeling ostracised.”

Like several others I spoke to, Mugavazi also thinks universities could do more to ensure all minority students are given adequate advice before they leave to study or work abroad.

“I wasn’t really offered any specific advice as a BME student and I feel like this also applies to other minority groups, such as LGBT students, who may also have to think about how the way they identify may give them a different year abroad experience to their peers”, says Mugavazi.

Universities should put minority ethnic students in touch with BME students and alumni who’ve studied abroad so they can hear their experiences. It can be difficult to find information on race and demographics online, and it doesn’t compare to hearing first-hand accounts from students who’ve been there.

That being said, responsibility also lies with students themselves, who know whether or not they’re willing to sacrifice visiting a diverse place to experience a particular culture, country or city.

And while it’s not fair that minority ethnic students may feel they have to limit their choices because of their race, it’s important they take such factors into account so they can get the most out of their experience studying abroad.

My year abroad was terrible – but I don't regret it

Spending a year working in Spain was a lonely and tough experience, but I'm grateful for the life lessons I learned

“My reality was long days teaching in Spain for less than one euro an hour.”

Annie Foyster

Friday 4 September 2015 10.02 BST Last modified on Sunday 17 January 2016 14.36 GMT

The idea of spending a year in a hot, beautiful country is an alluring option for any 20-year-old university student, and record numbers of students now take a year out to study or work abroad through Erasmus. Two years ago, I joined them.

It often feels like you can't criticise your own year abroad – no one wants to hear that, actually, it was terrible. Perhaps that's why all my friends returned saying they “had suuuch an amazing time”.

Maybe they're pretending, I don't know. But I do know that my year wasn't what I'd had in mind.

I didn't meet life-changing and inspiring people, I didn't learn how to make jokes in a foreign language, I didn't sit in a mountainous cave smoking an obscure plant and chanting meditation hymns, and I certainly didn't “find myself” – or anyone else for that matter.

My reality was long days teaching in Spain for less than one euro an hour. Despite my best efforts, I barely spoke Spanish and made just one friend. I couldn't wait for it to end and come June, after nine long months, I boarded the plane home crying tears of happiness.

However, it's taken me a while to realise that I wouldn't have it any other way. I wouldn't do it all over again, but I certainly wouldn't change it. It was tough, but I learned some serious life lessons.

I had to grow up and learn how to rely on myself. I learned that things don't always go the way you expect or want. I had time to think about what I was doing with my life and what I wanted to get out of my degree.

For many others, too, a terrible year abroad can turn into a positive, character-building experience.

One student, who wanted to remain anonymous, spent the year in France in a freezing room teaching a group of disruptive children. "But the other language assistants were fab," she says. "We banded together in the face of the school's indifference to us." She says she became more empathetic and that she'd "do it all over again, absolument".

Banding together is something I can relate to, as it's what I did with my fellow Leeds student Anna Dell'aglio. For Dell'aglio though, the year was always going to be much harder. It was her first time moving away from home and it wasn't the easiest transition.

"I definitely learned more from having a tough time than I would have if it had all been easy," she says. "We both had to learn fast and grow up quickly. It was hard but I'm a better person for it now."

Another student, who also wanted to remain anonymous, moved to Saudi Arabia on her year abroad and the culture shock and language barrier soon became too much. "Loneliness sunk in and with the loneliness came my depression. It was the deepest, darkest depression I'd ever felt."

She sought help from online resources and forced herself to eat and sleep as normal, demonstrating how the isolation and loneliness of being alone in a foreign country can make you realise your own capabilities and strengths.

For me, this was the greatest thing I took from my year – realising that no matter how bad it got, I had the strength to pick myself up.

I'm not saying that if you have a great year then you don't learn anything. I'm still jealous of all the adventures and travelling my friends reminisce about.

But a disastrous year abroad gave me the boost I needed to stop taking the opportunities I have for granted. I spent a long time feeling like I'd wasted what

was supposed to be one of the best years of my life, until I realised that was only because I was comparing it to other people's experiences.

That year was the best thing that could have happened to me. So if you've recently started your year abroad, remember to take it as it comes – appreciate the experience *you're* having, without comparing it everyone else's.

34

Did Theresa May duck the issue of tougher tests for foreign students?

There are signs the balance of power may be shifting in the Conservative party, giving universities reason to be optimistic

Theresa May makes her bid for power.

Andy Westwood

Friday 9 October 2015 15.51 BST Last modified on Friday 17 February 2017 12.58 GMT

"I don't care what the university lobbyists say," said Theresa May at this week's Conservative party conference. And on the face of it, she doesn't, preferring instead to see universities as part of Britain's "immigration problem".

However, she might be more rattled by how the media, business groups and some of her colleagues reacted to her speech on immigration. The Telegraph described it as "awful, ugly, misleading, cynical and irresponsible". The Spectator accused May of "pandering to the basest elements of the Tory party" and offering a "stale and noxious concoction of tawdry nativism".

The question for the higher education sector is: did May's speech live up to media speculation that she would make it even tougher for international students to find places at British universities?

The speech followed a "revelation" in the Times that David Cameron had abandoned support (paywall) for May over her insistence that overseas students continue to be included in the government's net migrant target and a claim in the Sunday Times that she was on a collision course (paywall) with universities

over plans to slash the number of foreign students coming to Britain by at least 25,000 a year – by setting tougher English language tests.

The new language tests, the paper claimed, “are expected to be tougher than those in place in Australia and America, putting Britain’s top universities at a disadvantage”.

But May elected not to go into the detail of her plans for stricter language requirements for international students, or even visa thresholds.

In fact, her speech has been widely judged as a leadership bid. It certainly wasn’t an economic argument. Her claims about the impact of immigration on houses, jobs, wages were a clear pitch for political advantage well to the right of the other likely runners.

On the face of things then , little has changed. Proposals on language thresholds, refusal rates and students remaining in the migration figures are still on the table and, no doubt, in various Home Office drafts of an imminent immigration white paper. So we’re not there yet. But for the first time in years, there may be reason to be optimistic.

George Osborne knows he might have to upset universities by cutting some of their cash in the November spending review. But alongside Philip Hammond at the Foreign Office and more recently Sajid Javid at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, he is keen to allow them to make this up via increased international recruitment.

He and the Treasury know what economic benefits that both migration and international students bring to the economy. Furthermore, Osborne won’t want to lose any political tussle with a leading rival for the leadership.

So where do we go from here? In the immediate future, this only leads us directly to what David Cameron is thinking. Thus far he has stood by his home secretary - immediately after the May general election, the Conservatives reiterated their target to bring net migration down to the tens of thousands. This week he claimed to agree with every word of May’s speech, including her view that ‘immigration makes it impossible to build a cohesive society.’

But Theresa May has powerful new opponents in the media, business and among her own colleagues. On this issue, it is only Cameron's support that matters. Will he change his mind? Osborne, Hammond, Javid and Johnson want him to do so. But none are the leader yet.

As May ramps up measures against international students and anti-immigration rhetoric, it gets more difficult for the prime minister to remain neutral. It is time to make his choice.

35

The UK universities offering a lifeline to Syrian academics

Most Syrian refugees fight for sanctuary at Europe's borders – but Reem Doukmak found it on Google. So is the story of the PhD student who swapped Homs for Warwick an example of elitism, or a model that could help build a better future?

'We never experienced fighting and bombing in Syria in my generation. That's why it's hard to accept' ... Reem Doukmak. Photograph: David Sillitoe for the Guardian

Rachel Shabi

Friday 23 October 2015 17.19 BST Last modified on Friday 17 February 2017 12.54 GMT

Walking though the calm, leafy campus at Warwick university, which is currently showing off its stunning autumn colours, Reem Doukmak says: "I think I've maybe even started to take things for granted, just like the people here. For instance, taking the bus – you never think that it's not going to come – or that there is food, electricity, heating. At some point, you start to think that life is easy."

None of these things are a given for this 33-year-old Syrian academic who, not so long ago, was teaching English as a foreign language at the al-Baath university in Homs. There, one of the most embattled cities in Syria's terrible war, the buses to work often didn't come, because of fighting on the roads, or checkpoints that blocked and lengthened journeys. Classes were routinely curtailed because

students could hear shooting and couldn't concentrate – they could only think of getting back home before things got worse.

Walking through the huge al-Baath campus, Doukmak would hear gunfire, but not know where it was coming from, or where to take cover, or she would feel rockets shaking the earth. “People wake up every day and make some sort of risk assessment for the day,” she says. “You know something bad might happen, but you do it anyway, because you want to live your life in the space that's left.”

Now having been in the UK for two years, Doukmak – who did her masters at Warwick in 2007 through a highly competitive British-Syrian scholarship – remembers reaching a point when, constantly sick from the stress, she couldn't handle Homs anymore. “Syria was a peaceful place. We used to hear about fighting and bombing in Iraq, in Palestine, but we never experienced it in Syria in my generation. That's why I found it really hard to cope, to accept this as part of life.”

Doukmak started to seek alternatives, and looked for grants, overseas programmes or scholarships. “And that's how I found Cara, by accident,” she says. “What you find on Google, you don't know that it will change your life.”

Cara – the Council for At Risk Academics – is a UK charity set up in 1933 which helped academics expelled from Germany's universities, and those facing internment by the UK, including neuroscientist Marthe Vogt and molecular biologist Max Perutz. Since then, it has been helping academics from all over the world, propelled by the humanitarian desire to relieve suffering, but also by the need to defend learning, to safeguard a nation's intelligence wealth in the understanding that it will be needed to help rebuild countries once wars have ended. Currently, Cara works with 110 universities around the UK and has assisted 140 people, plus 200 dependents. The academics it helps these days – by matching them to a sponsor university, by contributing to living costs and by facilitating laborious visa applications – are predominantly from Syria.

Academics coming to the UK through Cara might be working on a PhD – as is the case for Doukmak – or engaged in postdoctoral research, but in all cases they are

here because a British university has waived its academic fees and often helped with living costs, too. At a time when universities might be more focused on the potential income streams provided by international students, when many higher education institutions are reliant on such fees to function, this kind of work with Cara seems to be bucking the trend – and perhaps finding a way round the questions about refugee numbers that have recently become so vexed.

Austrian-born molecular biologist Max Perutz was one of the first beneficiaries of the Cara charity, which was set up in 1933 to provide refuge for academics fleeing Nazi Germany.

“They understand that they are helping people much like themselves,” says Stephen Wordsworth, Cara’s executive director, who adds that the pairing of academic to university is always premised on a mutually beneficial collaborative fit, in research terms. “Higher education is a global business, so people recognise that they have some responsibility when things go wrong.” And, he adds, there is an impetus to preserve global intellectual capital. “If one country’s intellectuals and academics are killed or scattered to the four corners of the world and end up working as taxi drivers, then we are all losing something – those people have something in their heads that is useful not just to their own countries, but more widely.”

Applicants to this scheme have to satisfy the UK’s stringent entry requirements – some are initially rejected but then succeed on appeal – and Cara, which is helping five or six people each week, says it hasn’t yet hit a wall. But clearly, in the current climate of hostility and panic about migrants, and with the Conservative government clamping down on entry routes, this can’t be an easy thing to navigate. Speaking at the Conservative party conference in Manchester earlier this month, home secretary Theresa May hardened her anti-migrant rhetoric and restated her determination to limit student visas – the current restrictions on which are already, critics say, adversely affecting universities trying to attract international students.

Michael Barer, professor at Leicester university's college of medicine, biological sciences and psychology, is closely involved alongside Cara with the process of sponsoring academics. "It's a lot of work to get these things to come home, so the system as I've experienced it isn't particularly comfortable with this," he says. "Every case is taken as new, so you're always starting from scratch." In his experience, there is a lot of willingness at the university end, but, he adds: "I've no doubt [the government] have made life a lot more difficult. I'd love it to be a lot simpler, so that we can find space for bright and able people who have a real academic contribution to make."

Now working with two sponsored Syrian researchers, Barer has in the past engaged with an Iraqi colleague who specialised in a groundbreaking diagnostic system for tuberculosis, with whom he is still in regular contact. He describes working alongside such academics as "a breath of fresh air, genuinely building capacity in intellectual life over shared intellectual aspirations".

Of course, the reality of the entry system to the UK is that not everyone is assisted. "If a Syrian academic gets sponsored through a British university, it is breaking the norm – which is that it is very, very difficult indeed [to get] visas," says Chris Doyle at the Council for Arab-British Understanding (Caabu), a London-based advocacy group. "It's almost a lockdown for Syrians coming here," he adds. "I've spoken to a lot of Syrians who have despaired, even for relatives trying to just come and visit them here."

Homs has been hit by fierce fighting between rebels and forces loyal to Syria's President Bashar al-Assad. Photograph: Reuters

Inevitably, this raises the issue of cherrypicking: whether it is only a certain kind of Syrian that the UK will help, and whether a charity such as Cara is reinforcing this sort of elitism. But, says Doyle, there is a wider appreciation of this approach, a realisation that "it is an investment ultimately in the future of Syria".

Academics from that country are here on the understanding that, when safe to do so, they want to return; they are committed to rebuilding Syria. "Getting the education system back up and running is going to be vital," says Doyle, of an

academic infrastructure that has been pummelled: many universities, outside of Damascus, are not currently functioning, and one in five schools have been rendered unusable by Syria's war. Moreover, Doyle adds, all sorts of academic research is going to be critical to efforts to rebuild Syria: "There's a raft of issues, including the psychological impact, agricultural research, environmental damage, legal and transitional justice issues – these are just examples. At some point, there's going to be a proper of assessment of what the academic and research needs will be."

The project, though, is premised on there being a postwar period that enables such rebuilding efforts – sadly, the experience of working with Iraqi academics, many of whom returned to that country when the fighting formally ended, has shown that is not always the case. When Islamic State took over Mosul last year, they shut down its acclaimed university and lecturers were sacked, arrested and tortured. Just last month, three academics from the university were executed by Isis. And in August, the group beheaded the 82-year-old, world-renowned antiquities scholar Khaled al-Assad, hanging his body in the main square of the ancient city of Palmyra, after he refused to reveal where precious artefacts had been stored for safekeeping.

Some international organisations – for example, the Committee to Protect Journalists and Reporters without Borders – have meanwhile been engaged in helping Syrian media workers who are trying to flee the war. And the Asfari Foundation is a notable example of a charity providing masters-degree grants in the UK for many young Syrians.

But while in the UK, academics from war-ravaged countries in the Middle East live an in-between existence, dedicated to their work in this country, but longing to go back home, to be with friends and family, to re-engage with their own academic networks, research, colleagues and students.

Now a student herself – her PhD is on drama as an aid to teaching English to refugee children, and she has been on research field trips to Syrian refugee camps in Turkey – Doukmak instantly smiles when she recalls her former students at

Homs university. “I miss the teaching, going home tired after classes,” she says. “There is a relationship that grows with the students – you had fun, they learned things, you see them develop skills and grow. You miss their laughter and their noise.”

For her, being on campus, even in another country, is soothing in its familiarity – the classrooms, the lecture halls, the continuity of sorts within an academic environment. Walking around the campus or the nearby fields, she says, always makes her feel better. She spends her spare time volunteering at a Coventry community centre, or involved in awareness- and fund-raising for Syrian refugees. Stopping for tea at the university’s arts centre, Doukmak says she feels supported and encouraged, but also helpless, wanting to do more for other Syrians. You get the sense that, glad of her current opportunities, Doukmak would not allow herself to complain, but also that, constitutionally, she isn’t really the carping type. She says that she finds the British obsession with timekeeping is a little curious, especially over mealtimes. “I see people so dedicated to lunchtime, to that hour of lunch, like they have a timer on their stomach,” she says. “What if you are not hungry? It’s good to be punctual but ...”

And on the subject of eating, well, there’s the matter of the food here itself – how, she says, so much of it is ready-made and cold: sandwiches instead of hot, home-cooked meals. What does she most miss? “Molokhia,” she replies without pause, referring to a hit Middle Eastern dish made from the gluey, green leafy vegetable that perhaps isn’t widely available in Coventry (although if that’s wrong, she’d love to know about it). “Mom gave me some when I was in Syria, but I finished it. Now, if I know someone is going to that part of the world, I ask them to bring me some.”

Scheduled to finish her PhD by the end of next year, the question of what she will do next is the only one she can’t answer. She tries not to think about it until there comes a time when she is forced to decide. Of course, she wants to return to Syria. “England is a really nice place to live,” she says. “But nothing is better than home.”

- This article was amended on 28 October 2015. An earlier version said Cara was set up to provide refuge for academics then fleeing Nazi Germany from Marthe Vogt to Max Perutz. Neither Vogt nor Perutz, who was Austrian, were helped out of Nazi Germany, but Cara provided help when they were faced with internment by the UK.

36

Students skip classes to show support for refugees

Nationwide demonstration over government's treatment of refugees includes mass walkout, talks and demonstration outside Daily Mail headquarters

The LSE student union is encouraging its members to spend the day performing charitable work for refugee organisations. Photograph: Aysha Fekaiki

Natalie Gil

Tuesday 17 November 2015 13.04 GMT Last modified on Thursday 9 February 2017 12.45 GMT

Students across the country have been walking out of their lectures and classes in solidarity with what they see as the government's poor treatment of refugees, migrants and international students.

The National Union of Students' international campaign, which organised the "day of solidarity", has received backing from the University and College Union, the academic workers' union and the National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts (NCAFC). The protesters are using the hashtag #students4migrants on social media.

Students at the London School of Economics (LSE) staged a mock border control point to show support for a world without borders. The LSE student union encouraged members to spend the day performing charitable work for refugee organisations.

Damien Kemfack, international students officer at LSE's student union, said: "With the highest percentage of international students in the country, the impact of a large number of participating LSE students should be tangibly felt."

Students at the Royal College of Arts demonstrated outside the Daily Mail's headquarters in Kensington, west London, to protest against its stance on immigration.

Miloslav Vorlíček, co-president of the RCA's student union, said: "The Daily Mail is noted for a long history of anti-immigration headlines. We hope to shine a spotlight on this paper's activities. Who knows, we might even convince one or two of its employees to walk away from the dark side!"

Students at Goldsmiths, University of London, are showing their support for refugees throughout November. Daniel Nasr, education officer at its student union, said: "[Today's protest] falls in line with November's refugee awareness month where there are tens of other events surrounding the struggle of migrants worldwide."

The union will host an exhibition on asylum seeking in the UK, a performance by the Middle Eastern group 47Soul, charity fundraisers and panel discussions that will include students from Syria and other war-hit areas.

Students in Essex, Sussex, Reading, Birmingham, Manchester, Sheffield, Liverpool, Plymouth, Cardiff, Glasgow, Edinburgh and elsewhere are also taking part in the day of protest.

Mostafa Rajaai, international students' officer at the NUS, said: "We want to send a clear message to the government that students in this country overwhelmingly reject the attitude and direction that the UK has adopted regarding immigration.

"The failure to respond adequately to the refugee crisis, the mistreatment of international students and the constant attacks on migrants' rights are all part of the wider anti-migrant sentiment which is on the rise in the UK political establishment."

Alex Norman, international student rep at the NCAFC, said: "The demand for free education is empty if it is not inclusive of migrants. We cannot solve the migrant

crisis and anti-immigration rhetoric by making small changes, we can only put it off. We have to have clear demands for the destruction of borders, free movement and full support for migrants.”

37

Paris rated best student city in the world

Melbourne takes second place in this year’s ranking of student-friendly cities, while high living costs see London tumble to fifth

Paris scores well for desirability and diversity. Photograph: Alamy

Natalie Gil

Tuesday 1 December 2015 07.00 GMT Last modified on Tuesday 1 December 2015 10.01 GMT

Paris has come out on top in the QS best student cities rankings for the fourth year running.

The ranking, compiled by higher education data experts QS, assigns cities scores based on the diversity of their student body, quality of life, opportunities for graduate employment, affordability and the quality of their universities.

Melbourne holds on to second place for the second year, while Tokyo has moved into bronze-medal position, from seventh last year.

London’s high cost of living has seen it fall to fifth place, from third last year, with Sydney pipping it to fourth.

The only other British cities to feature in this year’s top 75 are Edinburgh, Manchester, Coventry, Birmingham and Glasgow.

Paris scores well for its low student fees, favourable rank in the Mercer Cost of Living index, the employer recognition and quality of its universities, with 18 institutions in the top 75 – only London has more at 19. It scores well for desirability and has a strong ratio of international students but loses marks for its level of tolerance and inclusion.

Anna Greenburgh, an Oxford University graduate who is studying for a master’s degree in economics and psychology at the Sorbonne, said: “I’m getting more

perspectives on issues than I did at Oxford, where the majority of people on my course were raised in England.”

Anne Hidalgo, the mayor of Paris, said: “Paris is proud to be ranked as the best world student city. Our youth represents our greatest strength and incarnates our greatest hope. We carry an ambitious politic to make youth able to blossom, be successful, be able to choose and to build its future. We will continue to support students by offering them opportunities, in an open, dynamic and creative city.”

Speaking about the city’s place in the ranking, which was compiled before last month’s terrorist attacks, Thierry Coulhon, president of Paris Sciences et Lettres university, said: “I am glad to see Paris appearing as the top world student city for the fourth consecutive year. After the terrible attacks that this city has experienced, Paris is more determined than ever to defend its values of solidarity, freedom and creativity.”

Jacques Biot, president of École Polytechnique, said: “The Paris region has much to offer to international students – history, arts, culture – on top of its academic and scientific excellence. It is a unique place to learn, discover, study, engage and exchange, a place where dialogue, fraternity and freedom shall always prevail.”

To be included in the ranking, a city must be home to at least 250,000 inhabitants and two or more universities on the QS world university rankings. QS considered 112 such cities.

The US is the most represented nation, with 11 cities on the list, followed by the UK (eight) and Australia (seven).

The top 10 student cities

1. (1) Paris
2. (2) Melbourne
3. (7) Tokyo
4. (4) Sydney
5. (3) London
6. (15) Singapore
7. (8) Montreal
8. (5) Hong Kong
9. (16) Berlin
10. (10) Seoul

What makes Paris the best city in the world for students?

The French capital has topped a ranking of the best cities to study in – one student explains what makes it special

‘I can walk in Hemingway’s footsteps through the Jardin du Luxembourg, drink coffee at the same cafés as Simone de Beauvoir and Sartre.’ Photograph: Alamy

Henry Wong

Tuesday 1 December 2015 07.00 GMT Last modified on Sunday 17 January 2016 14.43 GMT

Like so many Parisians on 13 November, my friends and I stayed up the whole night, watching the news. We followed the tragedy of the terrorist attacks online and checked in with all our friends on social media, while sirens blared down the boulevards outside. Paris was different when we woke up. The few people who had ventured out onto the empty streets seemed tense, which was understandable; everyone knew of someone who had died or been injured.

By Sunday, Paris seemed to have returned to normal. My friend and I walked by Notre Dame, surrounded by Parisians and tourists, like on any other weekend. But as the several false alarms since have shown, an undercurrent of fear remains.

These brave faces displayed resilience among Parisians that didn’t surprise me. The attacks shocked Paris because they targeted a way of life. It’s a way of life that Parisians are (rightly) proud of, and one that continues to set the city apart from its rivals.

This year, the city topped the QS ranking of the best student cities in the world. Paris, which boasts 18 universities that can compete on a world stage (and often find themselves at the top end of league tables), is an especially great place for students. I recently moved here to study French language and culture at the Sorbonne, and though I am only two months in, I have not been disappointed.

Anna Greenburgh, an Oxford University graduate who is studying for a master’s degree in economics and psychology at the Sorbonne, says studying in Paris was

“a dream opportunity”. The chance to improve her French and the Sorbonne’s reputable course was a perfect fit.

Because of its world-class institutions, Paris attracts an international audience. In my class, there are students from America, China and Brazil. This means French is our common language, and I can’t fall back on English.

Greenburgh also enjoys the international scope of her course: “I’m getting more perspectives on issues than I did at Oxford, where the majority of people on my course were raised in England.”

Students flock to Parisian universities for both their quality and good value. Tuition fees in Paris averaged just \$2,400 (£1,594) in 2014. Experiencing a world-class education at a low cost comes at a price, though; international students are often surprised by French universities’ lack of resources.

Yannick Slade-Caffarel, a University of Sydney graduate who is studying for a master’s in political theory at Sciences Po, has found some of the university’s research facilities disappointing, though he admits that “the prestige is nice”.

Unfortunately, what you save on education, you might spend on accommodation. Expensive rent is unavoidable and, as Slade-Caffarel jokes, you may have to adjust “what one believes to be an appropriate amount of room for a human being to exist in”.

But as Paris is smaller than London, it is much easier to live centrally and my friends save money through flat shares. The internet is a student’s best friend; Appartager and La Carte des Colocs provide hundreds of student accommodation listings.

Excluding accommodation, student life in Paris comes chic and cheap. Even French haute cuisine is tailored to low student prices. Crous Paris, an organisation that aims to improve the living conditions of students in Paris, has 15 restaurants and 30 university cafeterias across the city. I regularly eat a remarkably good two-course meal for just over three euros.

For most students, Paris's main draw is its cultural cache. "You can see world famous bands for 10 euros," says Slade-Caffarel. The theatre is also good value for young people and the quality is world class.

Any day after class, I can walk in Hemingway's footsteps through the Jardin du Luxembourg, drink coffee at the same cafés as Simone de Beauvoir and Sartre, and venture to Shakespeare and Company, the legendary bookshop established by Sylvia Beach. That unconquerable way of living makes up Paris's charm – something that cannot be calculated into a ranking.

Although Jean Jullien's image of the Eiffel tower in a peace sign was re-posted throughout the world last month, a more intimately Parisian sentiment emerged with the hashtag #JeSuisEnTerrasse ("I am on the terrace"). It was a joyful rebuttal to the attacks: no matter what you'll do, we'll still be Parisians. After the attacks, eating outside at a restaurant isn't just a seating choice; it's a gesture of defiance.

Almost two weeks on from the attacks, I was *en terrasse* with three friends. Everything had mostly returned to normal. We talked about classmates and colleagues, our rent costs and how we really ought to attend more art exhibitions. There was still fallout in our conversation; my friend's train to the airport had been evacuated because of a bomb scare. But fear has mostly been replaced by Paris's charm; we're already talking about how we'd do anything to stay out here.

39

What makes Sydney such a great city for students?

With its multicultural society and perfect weather, Sydney is an obvious choice

The 10 best cities in the world to be a student

With Bondi Beach on your doorstep, it is no wonder Sydney is rated a top city for students.

Keegan Thomson

Wednesday 2 December 2015 10.48 GMT Last modified on Sunday 17 January 2016 14.43 GMT

I feel very lucky to have experienced student life around the world, but Sydney has always been the place for me.

When I applied to university, all the institutions I opted for were based in Sydney because I enjoy the wealth of opportunities and the lively culture the city offers students.

This year the QS best student cities rankings rated Sydney the fourth best city in the world for students, and from where I sit it's easy to see why.

The rankings are organised by four main categories: student mix, quality of life, employer activity and affordability. How does Sydney fare in each of these?

Social inclusion, diversity and tolerance

Australian universities have always held good ties with universities in Asia. Sydney, as one of the biggest student cities in Australia, has a large number of students from India and elsewhere in Asia, making for a multicultural student mix.

Western Sydney University (WSU) has campuses all around Sydney's vibrant and diverse western suburbs. Caitlyn Charles, 22, who studies journalism at WSU, says this multiculturalism has positively affected her outlook on life. "At WSU we have diversity week, which champions the kind of university it is – a diverse and accepting university that gives students the opportunity to expand their knowledge of other cultures," she says.

Sydney universities also offer a choice to students wanting to explore the city and its culture. Most of the five major universities – the University of Sydney, the University of Technology Sydney, the University of New South Wales, Macquarie University and Western Sydney University – have many different campuses around the city.

Lecturers genuinely seem to be chilled, and at my uni shoes seem to be optional

Imogen Leaning, student

Jacalyn Phillips, 21, who is also at WSU and is studying for a master's in primary education, has taken advantage of the 10 campus options available to WSU students. "Each campus has its own personality and culture," she says.

Quality of life

Many students flock to Sydney because of its laid-back culture and relaxed vibe. Imogen Leaning, 19, grew up in Australia but moved to the UK seven years ago. She has returned on a student exchange from the University of Nottingham to study in Sydney. “I agree with the cliché that Australian universities are more laid-back. Lecturers genuinely seem to be chilled, and at my uni shoes seem to be optional,” she says.

She adds that university in Australia is a lot more flexible for students wanting to study a wide range of subjects. “In the UK, people tend to start and finish uni on the same course, whereas in Australia people seem freer to change what they study,” she says.

Job opportunities

In recent years the New South Wales state government has invested millions of dollars in innovation, construction and technology. In addition, the government is investing millions of dollars into scholarships for university students.

According to City of Sydney data, 50,000 new jobs were created in Sydney between 2010 and 2014, with the state government promising 150,000 new jobs over the next four years.

The number of jobs in technology has increased dramatically, with 9,000 new jobs in tech created in Sydney over the seven-year period leading up to 2014.

Samuel Roberts, 22, who studies communication at the University of Sydney, says the city is full of promise for students. “The city is what you make of it. Sydney has so much to offer, and if you’re willing to throw yourself into it, you’ll always be able to find some great opportunities,” he says.

Affordability

Sydney is fairly expensive for students compared with other university cities, largely because of high fees and living costs.

The University of New South Wales says the average university student pays \$375 AUD (about £182) a week for on-campus accommodation in Sydney. An average

arts degree for an Australian student costs nearly \$19,000 AUD, with different rates for international students.

The high living and study costs require many students to take on part-time and casual work. Danielle Smith, 22, studying education at the University of Sydney, is approaching her final year and has to work to support herself.

“I can’t afford to study and live in Sydney without earning a part-time income. As well as paying for living expenses, I need to have money for my unpaid full-time internships, which are a part of my studies,” she says.

Unlike in other student-centric cities, it can be hard for students in Sydney to live near their universities. According to David Nolan, 21, who studies arts at Macquarie University, unless you share housing with other students it is often unaffordable.

“My options were either getting campus accommodation, which is really expensive, or moving closer to uni and working nearby. Neither was realistic without getting a group together,” he says.

Even so, students looking for a bustling, multicultural city with a chilled vibe should look no further than Sydney, Australia.

40

A glamorous global metropolis: why students love Hong Kong

The pearl of the orient boasts a unique cultural blend and some of Asia’s top universities – but life doesn’t come cheap

• The 10 best cities in the world to be a student

Temple Street food market in Kowloon, Hong Kong, bustles with activity day and night.

Eric Cheung

Thursday 3 December 2015 10.48 GMT Last modified on Thursday 17 March 2016 10.41 GMT

Proudly branding itself as Asia's world city, Hong Kong is famous for many things – from its savoury cuisine and efficient transport system to its modern city skyline, just to name a few. Under the glamorous billboards and ubiquitous skyscrapers of this fast-paced metropolis, the city is home to nine – soon to be 10 – universities, attended by hundreds of thousands of pupils.

“I chose Hong Kong because it's a global city,” says Anastasia, an Indonesian undergraduate student at the University of Hong Kong (HKU). “There are a lot of people from different backgrounds and many of them can speak English. That's why it is easier for foreigners to live here.”

The cosmopolitan city has been rated as the eighth best city for students in the world by the higher education data experts QS. But what sets it apart from the pack?

Strong academic reputation

Hong Kong is home to some of the best universities in Asia. The top three tertiary institutions in the city; HKU, the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) – are among the best on the continent, according to QS. These university rankings attract talent from all over the world.

A blending of east and west

Hong Kong is also renowned for its unique cultural blend. Henry Zhao, a second-year Australian student at CUHK, describes Hong Kong as “the melting point of western and Asian cultures”. He says the city has an advantage because of its close proximity to mainland China, and the fact that it remains largely free from the level of government censorship seen in the mainland.

“Hong Kong is like a huge hinge where you may get access to many other parts of the world,” adds Liu Zehui, a mainland Chinese student at Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU). Having studied in China for 17 years, she decided to further her studies in Hong Kong because she was fascinated by the city's cosmopolitanism.

Even though over 90% of the population is ethnically Chinese, the autonomous city still inherits influences from its colonial past. All universities in Hong Kong use English as the primary medium of instruction, and English is an official language in the territory, alongside Cantonese.

Hong Kong's cultural diversity is visible on the streets. Traditional Cantonese cuisine, such as siu mei (roasted meat) and dim sum, is available alongside western food like hamburgers, pasta, steak and pizza in almost every corner.

Student mix and student activities

Universities in Hong Kong are famous for their countless student activities. There is a popular saying among students that undergraduates should accomplish five “objectives” before graduation: study well, live in a student dorm, become an executive member of a student society at university, get into a relationship and work part-time. This highlights the vibrant lives students lead in the city.

Executive members of student societies have the fun – and pain – of organising activities for their members. This may include orientation camps for new students, annual dinner events, and games for students to mingle with one another.

Some students consider this a good opportunity to build up their social network. Wong Joey Noelle, a local student at HKU and an executive member of the sociology society, says it was “a worthwhile experience that can nurture students’ interpersonal as well as leadership skills”. She also says she has made many new friends through the society.

But not everyone is satisfied with the way students engage with one another at university. Some international students say they find it difficult to mingle with locals.

“I found it a bit hard to feel accepted in the local community because of the language barrier,” says Anastasia. “When I want to participate in some activities, they’re organised in Cantonese so I am unable to join.” Nevertheless, she says students are generally welcoming.

An expensive city with relatively low unemployment

The main downside to studying in Asia's world city, however, is that it's far from cheap. Earlier this year, Mercer awarded Hong Kong second place in its annual ranking of cities with the highest cost of living for expatriates. Depending on where you come from, you might find the city quite an expensive place to live in. Nevertheless, Hong Kong remains a lively place in which to study. Whether you are initially fond of its cosmopolitan lifestyle, its international significance, or simply its crowdedness, you might be amazed by what the pearl of the orient has to offer.

41

Luqman Onikosi's deportation shows we are all being asked to become border guards

Alana Lentin

A Nigerian student with a life-threatening illness is not being spared by Britain's border policies – which universities are being pressured to enforce

‘While my heart aches for Onikosi he himself has stressed time and again how his case is but one example of the failure of the immigration system.’

Friday 19 February 2016 10.58 GMT Last modified on Friday 19 February 2016 20.46 GMT

In 2013 I wrote an article in support of Luqman Onikosi, a young man from Nigeria I met while he was studying at Sussex University, where I was then teaching. Onikosi was facing deportation. He had been diagnosed with a life-threatening liver condition due to having contracted hepatitis B, an illness that had already seen the loss of two of his brothers back home. His condition, though debilitating, is manageable while he receives treatment. However, if deported to Nigeria, where such treatment is not available, it is almost certain he will meet the same fate as his brothers.

In 2012, with the help of his supporters across the UK, and from a lawyer working pro bono, Onikosi was able to submit a fresh leave-to-remain application on human rights grounds, and stay in the country for the time being.

A few days ago, I received news that he is again being threatened with deportation. After he returned to Sussex to study for a master's, the Home Office informed the university that his leave-to-remain application had been rejected. The university terminated his degree despite the fact that he was writing his dissertation at the time. Crucially, Onikosi did not find out about the status of his application. Only in late January 2016 did he eventually receive a letter – dated May 2015 – saying it had been rejected.

In my 2013 article I stressed the contributions Onikosi has made to British society through his unwavering activism and volunteer work. I also highlighted the UK government's hypocritical treatment of international students who serve as cash cows only to be forced to leave the country at a moment's notice as soon as they are no longer paying fees. However, most readers agreed that, while Onikosi's situation was unfortunate, rules were rules.

I agree. It has become pointless, and in fact undermining, to argue against the injustices of contemporary border control using the language of individual human rights. While my heart aches for Onikosi, and for his family and friends, he himself has stressed time and again how his case is but one example of the failure of the immigration system.

Seen in historical perspective, the UK, like all western countries, was built on the colonisation and expropriation of the resources of the majority of the world. More recently, its wealth and infrastructure has been strengthened in huge measure by immigrant labour. International students contribute £2.8bn a year to the economy of London alone.

So to argue that people such as Onikosi or Ama Sumani, a Ghanaian woman who died after being deported from the UK while undergoing treatment for terminal cancer, should be allowed to stay in the UK is pointless without placing their cases in the context of harsh border control policies. The border is now everywhere; no

longer just at ports and airports. Checks of “compliance” with visa regulations are an everyday occurrence. Over the past few years, universities too have been forced by the government to effectively become border guards by monitoring international students’ attendance or stand accused of facilitating “illegal immigration”. Thankfully, Onikosi has been supported by a number of academics at Sussex, but this is at their own risk of violating the terms imposed on universities by the state. Border controls can succeed when everyone is forced to become complicit in enforcing them, even institutions of higher learning that trade on being bastions of freedom and the pursuit of knowledge.

If Onikosi is deported to Nigeria, this brilliant young man will most certainly die. And for those left in the UK, it will be another sign of the encroachment of the border into all areas of society.

42

Caught between two cultures, I'm a not-quite-international student

I’m a bit more British than my international student friends, but I’m still quite foreign to students who grew up in the UK

“I was at a loss when everyone reminisced about childhoods filled with Blue Peter.” Photograph: Chris Capstick/BBC

Anna Hollingsworth

Wednesday 24 February 2016 10.25 GMT Last modified on *Wednesday 24 February 2016 10.43 GMT*

What do you call someone who falls between a “home student” and an “international student”? It’s something I’ve often asked myself; four years ago, I packed up my life, which I’d spent in Finland, and transported it to chilly UK student accommodation. With a Finnish mum, a British dad, a stereotypically English surname and an accent that sounds part Finnish and part British, people have guessed I’m from places as disparate as Kent and Ukraine. But my situation

isn't only puzzling to other people; I'm still undergoing something of a dual culture shock myself.

According to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (Hesa), 13.4% of undergraduates at British universities were non-UK domicile in the academic year 2014-15, with an even higher number among the postgraduate population (38%). University websites and student blogs prepare international students coming to the UK for everything from finding funding to surviving the rainy weather and British politeness; while British students preparing for a year abroad are warned about the difficulties of adjusting to a new environment, or educated about the joys of discovering a new culture.

'Been there, done that' was how I felt when my new international friends posted photos of their cream teas on Facebook

Missing from these statistics is a diverse group who are neither "home" nor "international" students. Every year, British expats and those with other forms of British heritage – a British parent, for instance – travel to UK universities to experience a part of their cultural background first-hand. We don't know how many such students there are, as students are classified by country of origin or nationality, not their cultural heritage. However, these undocumented not-quite-international students face some unique experiences and problems that evade their peers.

I got a head start to my freshers' week with a few days dedicated to international students. Despite having never actually lived in the UK long-term, I couldn't empathise with my peers who were completely new to the UK. "Been there, done that" was how I felt when my new international friends posted photos of their cream teas on Facebook, or discovered – with a mix of horror and curiosity – the blandness of British food.

But once my UK-domiciled peers arrived, it turned out that I was equally not quite one of them. I was at a loss when everyone reminisced about childhoods filled with Blue Peter – I was more familiar with Postman Pat – and I was well into my first

term when I finally realised that the leavers' hoodies everyone was so proudly sporting were not, in fact, tokens of national level sports club membership.

Kate Bulteel, 23, who recently graduated from the University of Cambridge, is half-British on her father's side and hails from Maine in the US, and recalls similar experiences. "It wasn't until my third year that I realised that some British families still have a roast every Sunday. I thought it was a quaint, forgotten custom, but it turned out some people still took it totally seriously," she says. "Likewise with pancake day. Nobody does Mardi Gras in America except in New Orleans – why are Brits so keen?"

It's not all about culture, though. With student budgets having to meet increasingly high tuition fees, non-UK-domiciled students with a British background find themselves facing extra hurdles. Many expat students are frustrated that their British passports don't qualify them as home students for fees purposes. Instead, they are classified as international students and are liable for higher fees. At Bristol, for example, a home or EU student will pay £9,000 a year for a science course, while their international peers will be forking up double the sum.

As they're officially considered as "international", not-quite-international students are also unlikely to qualify for government-sponsored financial student support, such as tuition fee loans, or for other sources of UK-based funding. The main funding body for non-science courses at postgraduate level, the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), for instance, requires applicants to be resident in the UK in order to meet the eligibility criteria for a full reward.

That said, there's more to being not-quite-international than cultural confusion and financial hurdles. The intermediate status of students like Bulteel and me can also bestow upon us the role of a cultural mediator. "The international students all tended to say that the Brits came off cold and not particularly helpful when they were struggling to learn the British system and get more comfortable with English," says Bulteel. "I felt like a bit of a bridge between the two." When it comes to making friends, being able to build bridges between groups of fresh-faced students can be pretty useful.

I wasn't prepared for the culture shock of being an international student

I thought student life in the UK would be much the same as in the Netherlands. But small things began to catch me off balance...

‘A lack of information about public transport can turn a simple thing, like catching a bus, into a daunting task.’ Photograph: Simmi Simons/Getty Images/Vetta

Emma Lagarde

Wednesday 30 March 2016 10.32 BST Last modified on *Wednesday 30 March 2016 11.40 BST*

For any student, moving away from home can be daunting. But I didn't expect student life in Scotland to be all that different from my home of the Netherlands. After all, we get the same news and TV shows online.

However, when I moved from Amsterdam to study at the University of Stirling, I began to realise that a few small things were catching me off balance. I was suffering a minor cultural shock.

In my first year, I quickly found out my English was not as good as I'd assumed. Most of my flatmates were born and raised in Scotland, and I constantly found myself having to ask people to repeat themselves. Their Scottish accents didn't help and I was mispronouncing names and places all the time.

I also got confused about small cultural things. Much to my flatmates' amusement, it took me two Christmases to figure out that mince pies are not actually filled with minced beef.

The language barrier meant that public transport was tricky at first. I found the lack of information about bus prices and how and where to get tickets really surprising. It turned a simple 15-minute journey into a daunting task.

Ayumi Cristoph, from Munich, is studying psychology at the University of Stirling. She says she also struggled with public transport when she first arrived: "There was so little information about public transport. I didn't even know how to buy a bus ticket."

Then I had to adjust to a new social life. I was surprised by the campus culture in the UK – in the Netherlands, most universities don't have one main campus where you can attend university, as well as live and exercise all in the same place. But here, you never have to leave campus if you don't want to. I had to get used to everyone being so close to each other all the time.

Nights out are different here too. In the Netherlands, the less effort you put into getting ready, the better. I'd normally slip on my trusty Converse shoes, along with some clothes I could get away with wearing to class tomorrow, and wear minimal make-up. But, in my experience, clubbing is more formal in the UK. Your make-up needs to be flawless and your hair needs to be immaculate. You'll preferably be wearing a dress and heels, too. I was constantly having to borrow clothes off my friends just to fit in.

Eva Kriechbaum, also a psychology student at the University of Stirling, and from Tübingen in Germany, was surprised that in the UK a night out ends so early. "Clubs close at three and everyone just wanders off, whereas in Germany that would be the time I'd leave the house," she says. "I'm used to places closing at six or seven."

But it's not all early closing times and strange pastries. I've found lots of pleasant surprises in the UK too – and so have many other international students I know. Agnes Dybeck, studying psychology in Stirling, and from Sweden, was taken aback by how sociable people are. "I was shocked when complete strangers started talking to me at the bus stop," she says.

Eimear McCarthy, studying sport psychology in Stirling, and originally from Ireland, says she has been surprised by how smartly male students dress in Stirling. "The way guys dress is very smart compared to my friends at home," she says. However, on the downside, she was disappointed to find that Scottish shops don't sell her favourite Irish corn snack. "The UK doesn't have Meanies, which is just horrible," she told me. "Meanies are my life."

Culture shock can knock your confidence in the beginning. But you're not alone in taking time to adapt, and soon you start to get used to all the differences. Looking back, most of the shocks I experienced made good stories to tell my friends.

44

What student life is really like at a Spanish university

From the hardcore nightlife to the fiery debates in class, I've found that being a student in Spain is very different to studying in the UK

With such late nights and early starts, I've had to completely re-adjust my body clock to keep up with my Spanish peers. Photograph: Alamy

Emily Allison

Friday 1 April 2016 10.56 BST

Studying law abroad at the University of Valencia in Spain has been an eye-opening experience for me. As someone who doesn't speak Spanish fluently, being immersed in new traditions and festivals proved difficult at first, but it has turned into an invaluable life experience.

According to a report by the British Council, Spanish is the second most widely spoken language in the world, with 400 million native speakers as of 2010. So it's no wonder that so many students are choosing Spain or South America as destinations for their year abroad.

Spain was the most popular destination country for Erasmus students, with 40,202 incoming students in 2013, according to a report by the European Commission, which funds the programme.

I'm sure not every international student studying in Spain will have the same experience as mine. Spanish universities are as diverse as any other country's, after all. But here's what I've learned so far from studying at a Spanish university.

Student-lecturer relationships are less formal – and all the better for it

One of the first things I noticed was the informality of the classes. "Lecturers and students often call each other 'tio', which translates roughly in English as 'mate',"

says Lizzi Gold, 20, a chemistry student at the University of Bristol, who was also struck by the casual nature of lectures at Salamanca University.

“Professors in Spain will make an effort to memorise every student’s name, which we don’t see much of in the UK,” she adds.

After becoming accustomed to PowerPoint presentations, handouts and recorded lectures, stepping into the Spanish lecture theatre felt like I was travelling back in time. Our class was greeted by a cheery professor, a blackboard, a piece of chalk and a giant yellowing computer, which we later discovered didn’t actually work.

Seminars are lively, heated debates

Another thing I noticed about my Spanish university early on was the constant debate and argumentative nature of seminars. At Bristol, where I study, questions from our esteemed law professor are met with frightened silence and students afraid to speak up for fear of being wrong.

By contrast, my seminars in Spain resemble lively debates with opinions and questions being shouted across the classroom. It’s refreshing to encounter students who are eager to question and challenge their lecturers, rather than simply accept their viewpoint. After a while, you start wondering who’s teaching whom.

The exam process couldn’t be more different

When it comes to exams, you may as well forget your years spent essay planning and writing; end of year examinations often consist of 15-minute oral exams. Similarly with coursework, UK students are used to strict adherence to word limits and referencing. However, upon asking my Spanish professor about the word limit for my most recent piece of coursework, I was told that there was no word limit, and I could write as much or little as I felt like. To me, this was unheard of.

Alice Cottle, 21, a French and Spanish student from the University of Sheffield studying at the University of Valencia, was also surprised by the lax coursework requirements. “One of our teachers was surprised at the number of students apologising for submitting their coursework a few minutes late. He said that if he had received them days or even weeks later, no penalties would be applied,” says Cottle.

It's not all work – Spanish students definitely know how to party

Having made the mistake of going out at midnight in my first week, as we would in the UK, I quickly discovered that many clubs don't actually open or are completely empty until around 2am.

As well as adjusting to my new surroundings, I realised I'd have to completely re-adjust my body clock to cope with the incredibly late nights and early-morning starts (lectures often start at 8.30am). As a result, siestas have become an integral and welcome part of my daily life.

While being so different from home, studying in Spain has changed my view of education

After studying in the UK for so long, it's easy to become accustomed to solitary, independent learning. Developing square eyes from reading online legal journals for hours on end becomes the norm. Spain, however, has shed new light on the entire concept of studying.

Lax coursework guidelines, the informality of classes and the chance to deliver your own opinions allows for more freedom and innovation in your learning process. Once your Spanish starts flowing more freely, you begin to appreciate and understand the culture of Spain in a way you hadn't grasped before.

Not so long ago, students wouldn't have been offered the opportunity to study in another country. While this experience isn't exactly what I expected and has been difficult at times, I've learned invaluable lessons and I would recommend it to anyone.

Dear Home Office, please don't deport me to my death**Luqman Onikosi**

I'm studying in the UK and want to contribute to society here. If I am sent back to Nigeria I will die, as the medical treatment I need is not available there

Luqman Onikosi: 'My condition is quite advanced and so my only option for long-term survival is a liver transplant.'

Thursday 14 April 2016 13.29 BST Last modified on *Thursday 26 May 2016 14.10 BST*

I grew up in northern Nigeria but left nine years ago after becoming disenfranchised. I felt that the elite that run the country were deliberately underfunding education and the health system to undermine young people from humble backgrounds so that they do not have the opportunity to change the country. I left for the UK to study at the University of Sussex, where I completed an undergraduate degree in economics and international relations, before embarking on a master's degree. I had an audacious dream to return to Nigeria and use the knowledge I acquired at university to fight for social justice.

Getting to the UK in the first place was not easy. Like the majority of people who apply to visit or study in the UK from an African country, my initial application was rejected and it was only after three appeals that the Home Office finally granted me permission to study here. Had I not been so passionate about education I may not have persevered with fighting against all the roadblocks the Home Office placed in my path.

I have so much to contribute: I want to work and pay my taxes and make a positive difference to the UK

In 2008, while in the UK, I began to feel unwell. After a series of tests I was diagnosed with the blood-borne virus hepatitis B. I have no idea how I contracted it although it might have been from sharing razor blades back in Nigeria.

Tragically my two brothers also contracted the disease and died from it. It is hard to describe what a huge impact their loss has had on my life.

A protest against Onikosi's deportation.

Everything changed after I was diagnosed. Unfortunately my condition is quite advanced and so my only option for long-term survival is a liver transplant. In the meantime my condition needs to be closely monitored. The treatment I need to keep me alive is not available in Nigeria.

My student visa expired in 2011 and I applied to remain in the UK on medical grounds. Since then I have been involved in a series of unsuccessful appeals with the Home Office who issued me with a deportation notice earlier this year.

The Home Office is tightening immigration rules all the time. My university cannot support me to finish the final part of my master's because if it does so it will be in breach of the immigration rules and might have its licence revoked. In 2013, a campaign was launched to appeal to the Home Office to let me remain in the UK. Some of the students at the university who support me recently occupied one of the university buildings in protest against my threatened forced removal from the UK.

I am not a health tourist who has parachuted into the UK in search of free NHS treatment. I became ill part-way through a legitimate course of study and a legitimate stay in the UK approved by the Home Office. The thought of returning to Nigeria to my mother, who has already endured the emotional and psychological torture of losing two sons so that she can watch her third son die too, is unbearable.

I now consider the UK to be my home. I have laid down roots here and have incredible support from friends, colleagues and tutors. Thanks to my excellent experience at university I am well placed to work hard and get skilled employment here. I have so much to contribute: I have drive and ambition, I want to work and pay my taxes and make a positive difference to the UK. If I return home my deterioration will be rapid and I will not survive as the medical treatment I need to keep me alive is not available there.

The Home Office exercises discretion about who it decides can stay and who it forces to leave. In my case, it has the power over life and death. I am appealing to the Home Office to let me stay and be a useful and positive member of society here. In short I am asking the Home Office not to send me back to my death but to save my life.

- Sign the petition opposing Luqman Onikosi's deportation here

As told to Diane Taylor

46

EU students: how would Brexit affect you studying in the UK?

We'd like to hear from EU students about whether they'd still come to UK universities if Britain leaves the EU. Share your views below

UK universities such as the University of Sheffield are popular with non-UK, EU students. How might the EU referendum change this? Photograph: University of Sheffield

Guardian readers

Wednesday 18 May 2016 10.45 BST Last modified on Friday 17 February 2017 12.03 GMT

If you are a non-UK university student from the EU, we would like to know your views on what impact the EU referendum will have for you and your education.

There are roughly 125000 non-UK, EU students enrolled on degree courses in the UK, paying domestic fees and eligible for student loans. There's been a debate about whether Brexit would discourage European students from studying in UK in the future, or indeed impact those here already.

Fees, the application process, visa support issues and the general make up of staff and student bodies have all been discussed by academics writing in the Guardian, and we have previously heard from readers expressing concerns over their future ability to secure research grants from the EU. We want to hear from more of you.

Are you a non-UK, EU student in the UK? Are you planning on studying in the UK? If you had to pay more for coming to a UK university because fees were increased, would you still be interested in coming? Would potential changes to the process by which EU students apply for university places – and pay fees for them – put you off or is the course on offer what’s important, not the cost?

You can share your views by filling in the form below. We will use some of your responses in our reporting.

47

The great escape: five reasons to study abroad for a master's

Worried about money? There’s plenty of funding. Not a linguist? You don’t need to be. Overseas study isn’t as daunting as you might think

As well as academic study, you ‘learn through the life you are living’, says Gemma Silk, who relocated to Malaysia. Photograph: De Visu/Alamy

Tess Reidy

Wednesday 29 June 2016 17.14 BST Last modified on *Wednesday 29 June 2016 21.21 BST*

A master’s abroad is basically a year-long holiday, isn’t it? It involves little or no studying, costs a fortune and is largely spent drinking, partying and Instagramming, right? Wrong. These courses are not just for bilingual jet-setters; they offer the opportunity of life-changing learning for all kinds of people. Here are five reasons you should think about getting academic overseas:

1 You make global contacts

Anushka Fernando, 31, works for a charity that helps refugees. She studied for a master’s in international education policy at Harvard University in 2010 and says the experience was invaluable for making contacts around the world.

“International places draw international people,” she says. “I found a diverse community at Harvard, where students came from different walks of life from

disparate corners of the world. The work I do now has been boosted by them, for example by enabling me to recruit to volunteers to work on projects.”

2 You get the best accommodation

Undergraduates can walk around campus acting like they own the place, but in reality, postgraduates are boss. After all, they get the big rooms (often en-suite) in the best locations. Most universities guarantee a place in student accommodation for all international master’s students if the application is made within the deadline. And for those who want to find their own place to stay, universities often provide advice, including lists of approved landlords. They may even act as guarantors for private rentals if necessary.

Salih Bosca is from Turkey. He is currently studying a master’s at the University of Warwick and chose to live on campus.

“It has so many advantages,” he says. “I got to choose the best accommodation available and I am still in walking distance to cafes, restaurants and the cinema. I get to spend more time with friends rather than wasting my time on the bus every day.”

3 You discover new ways of learning

Studying abroad can bring lots of new experiences: you may be taking a subject that isn’t available in your home country, and are likely to encounter new teaching methods. Anushka Fernando says one of the most beneficial aspects is being exposed to the insights of people from different cultures.

“My classes were very international and the different perspectives and experiences resulted in a very rich and meaningful learning experience,” she says.

Others agree. Gemma Silk, 35, is studying for a master’s in educational leadership and management at the Open University, while living in Malaysia.

“I came to Kuala Lumpur for my job and then chose to complete my master’s at the same time,” she explains. “Living abroad has had such a positive impact on me. The course is based online, but you don’t only learn through the studying – you learn through the life you are living too.”

4 You can get financial support

Organisations such as Erasmus and DAAD offer numerous funding opportunities and awards. According to Dr Georg Krawietz, director of DAAD, there are about 20 scholarships available for UK students to study in Germany each year, and there are also many funding schemes available from research institutions such as the Max Planck Society.

But there are question marks over the future of programmes funded by the European Union, which may not be available once the UK has left the EU. Alternatively, many foreign students have part-time jobs to help them with the cost. “No one is supporting my master’s so I’ve kept a job alongside my studies,” says Silk.

5 You don’t have to know the language

Although living abroad is an opportunity to improve your linguistic skills, being able to banter in a foreign language isn’t essential. There are a huge number of courses taught in English – there are about 970 such courses in Germany alone, for example.

“My advice to anyone thinking about it is to go for it,” Silk says. “I have lived, worked and studied abroad and I’d say it’s the best decision I ever made.”

48

What does Brexit mean for students? We answer your FAQs

You’ve sent us lots of questions about the effect of Brexit on higher education in the UK and Europe. Here’s what we’ve found out so far

‘I was thinking of studying abroad in a few years’ time – should I hurry up now?’

Photograph: Alamy

Harrison Jones

Tuesday 12 July 2016 13.19 BST Last modified on Monday 13 February 2017 14.14 GMT

There is much uncertainty about what Brexit means for students, both those from the UK and from the European Union. We know because we've received a huge number of emails and tweets asking us about the topic since the referendum in June.

We've found the answers to your most frequently asked questions, from funding and loans to careers and visas, and the future of studying abroad.

'How will the vote affect my chances of getting a decent job?'

For UK students, this will largely depend on how exit negotiations with Brussels go, and whether a snap general election is called. Most experts predict a slowdown in the British economy – and perhaps even a recession – which would negatively affect job prospects.

The National Union of Students (NUS) released a statement on the subject, which says: “If some form of free movement remains, it could be that broadly the same opportunities will exist as now. If not, then much will depend on the visa and immigration rules put in place.

“In the short term, the British economy has notably weakened – the full picture is still emerging but it would seem recent graduates now face a tougher job market with fewer vacancies.”

'I want to study abroad. Will tuition fees in European universities be affected?'

Fees for British students will be the same as those paid by other EU students until the UK officially leaves. There is less certainty about what will happen after Brexit, especially if Britain leaves the European Economic Area (EEA).

For example, Maastricht University in the Netherlands recently stated that, if Britain leaves, its tuition fees “might” rise, from the current rate of £1,600 to between £6,300 and £8,360. Maastricht is also setting up a task force to monitor the impact of Brexit on its British students, whose numbers have quadrupled in the past five years to nearly 500.

But it's important to consider different EU countries separately: a change to fees is unlikely in Germany, for example, since study there is free to students of all

nationalities. In other EU countries, though, individual governments or institutions may take a harsher stance on British students' fees.

'Can EU students still get student loans?'

The government has said there will be no change for EU nationals currently receiving student loans – they will keep receiving funding until the end of their courses.

The Student Loans Company and Universities Wales say that the same holds for all students applying for student finance in England and Wales for the 2016-17 academic year. This includes loans to cover tuition fees, loans and grants for maintenance, and some other grants and allowances, including the new postgraduate loan.

EU students attending universities in Northern Ireland are still awaiting confirmation.

'What will happen to UK scholarships/bursaries for EU students?'

EU nationals currently in receipt of bursaries in England and Wales will continue to receive them until the end of their course. However, the scholarships and bursaries offered by universities may change as institutions set their own eligibility rules.

It's possible that EU students could be treated as non-EU international students are now, with no fee cap and no form of student support from any part of the UK. The NUS advises students to speak to their universities about changes that are anticipated as a result of the vote.

'What does Brexit mean for research funding?'

Russell Group universities received more than half a billion pounds a year in EU investment in 2014-15 and the future of that funding, while not immediately affected, could be in doubt after Brexit.

Nick Hillman, director of the Higher Education Policy Institute, warns that it is possible that some courses will "no longer be viable" without the funding that EU students bring, since their numbers are expected to fall after Brexit.

The NUS agrees: “UK universities receive a disproportionate share of EU research funding. Brexit, therefore, could mean less funding to universities and less opportunities for postgraduate study if we are no longer able to participate in the European research network.

“Non-EU states including Norway and Switzerland are part of the network, so it is not impossible – but some UK universities have already reported European partners pulling out of joint funding bids due to the uncertainty about the future.”

As for the EU’s biggest research funding scheme, Horizon 2020, the referendum result has had no “immediate” impact, according to Carlos Moedas, the European commissioner on research and innovation.

‘How will Erasmus be affected?’

Erasmus+ has stated that there will be “no immediate change” to the UK’s participation in programme and the UK National Agency will continue to manage and deliver it across the country.

The organisation confirms: “All participants and beneficiaries should continue with their Erasmus+ funded activities and preparation for the published application deadlines in 2016 and 2017.”

‘What impact would Scottish independence have on students who want to study there?’

If Scotland remains in the EU, it will have to continue letting EU students come for free but could discriminate against English students, according to Nick Hillman.

“If Britain and Scotland had associate membership of the EU, for example, it’s not an absolute impossibility that they’d have to let English students come in for free as well. If Scotland was not in the EU, they could do anything they want,” he adds.

The Scottish government and Universities Scotland have issued a joint statement saying: “We want to reassure EU students that there has been no change in current funding arrangements and that eligible EU students already studying in Scotland or commencing their studies in the coming months will continue to benefit from free tuition and, for those who meet the residency requirement, associated living cost support.

‘As an EU student, am I still welcome to study in the UK?’

Amid concerns of increasing incidences of hate crime in Britain, many universities have issued statements to reassure EU and international students.

Professor Sir David Greenaway, vice-chancellor of the University of Nottingham and chair of the Russell Group, says: “We simply will not tolerate abuse of this sort and any student or staff member who experiences racism or xenophobia on or off our campuses can be assured this will be taken extremely seriously.

“Now more than ever we should ensure our campuses are places where diversity is welcomed, cherished and respected.”

‘When Brexit goes ahead, am I going to be the only European left at my university?’

The government says that there will be “no immediate change” to the status of EU students. But whether the numbers of students from the EU studying in British universities remains constant is uncertain, and depends on what happens to freedom of movement when Britain leaves the EU.

And what about when you graduate? Theresa May has refused to rule out the idea of sending EU nationals currently living in the UK back to Europe – and has been accused of using them as a bargaining chip in assuring the rights of UK citizens who live in Europe.

‘Will I need a visa to study abroad?’

This all depends on negotiations and the decisions of individual foreign governments, but Nick Hillman predicts that universities abroad would “campaign hard to let British students come without visas”.

The Department for Business, Skills and Innovation, when asked directly about the possibility of students needing a visa, did not give any indication as to how likely it would be.

‘I was thinking of studying abroad in a few years’ time – should I go now instead?’

The situation is not going to change for at least two years, as the procedure to leave the EU takes at least that long.

An NUS spokesperson says: “If you are an EU student wishing to study in the UK and are able to commence study in that period, it may be worth considering doing so. The charity UKCisa has detailed information on funding and immigration rules for international students and it will be worth keeping an eye on their website.”

49

Overseas students learn English ways – archive

14 September 1957: Be punctual, avoid being ill and do not tip policemen: some of the advice for foreign students on ‘English life’ course

The quintessential Englishman, 1951. Photograph: Kurt Hutton/Getty Images

By our own Reporter

Wednesday 14 September 2016 05.30 BST

The Englishman abroad has been accused of believing that if he shouts loud enough the “native” will understand what he is trying to say. At the back of his mind, perhaps, is the determination not to admit that an Englishman can be a foreigner. What the Englishman does is the natural thing to do; what he does not do is suspect.

If, however, any Englishman cares to see himself as a foreigner, he should join one of the courses on “English life” that are arranged at this time of year for the many students from overseas who are about to start their university or college life. Many of these courses are arranged by the British Council, but the course for the 86 overseas students at Blackburn Technical College is being led by Mr F. G. Gemmel, a lecturer in English and modern languages in the commercial department. After three of the seven days of it, the English observer begins to see his fellow-countrymen as more foreign than the students sitting near to him.

Self-disciplined

He finds it rather quaint on Monday to hear that “Lancastrians are self-disciplined; they believe in the holiday spirit and always go on holiday,” or that “the Englishman is a practicable individual and is proud of our justice; he visits the

courts of law” or that “welfare committees interest him; he is also fond of domestic animals and he supports the R.S.P.C.A.,” that the Englishman believes that cleanliness is next to godliness, treats women with respect, always shows respect to the State, and is hard-working, “mainly owing to the climate, and to his ancestors who were so hard-working.”

By the next morning, however, he is becoming immersed in English lore. He is no longer the objective Englishman but a man beginning to see England with fresh vision, as the lecturer tells the students “To a certain extent, you have to avoid being ill.” The lodgings supervisor begins her talk with the motto “He that expecteth, receiveth nothing” and he is hardly at all inclined to say that the English do not usually express themselves in aphorisms. He nods sagely as the lecturer makes her points.

“The purpose of an electric iron is to iron clothes, not for putting it in the bed to keep it warm... The electric fire is for heating the room, not for cooking on... Do not drink water out of the geyser or the hot tap... “What strange urges these English must have! But how kind they are! “Don’t come home with the milk, your landlady will be worried about you...” And how honest! “If you are a Mohammedan, explain to your landlady that you don’t eat pig. You can take her word for it, then, that any piece of meat she may give you, you can eat. Don’t tell her, ‘I think that’s pig.’”

The information comes out in torrents. You do tip the waitress, you don’t tip the civil servant, you do tip the hairdresser, you don’t tip the policeman (very dangerous, this). If your landlady asks for £3 10s a week you don’t bargain with her. If you give her a present, it must not be money. You offer to carry the coal for her, but she will be shocked if you come down to supper in your pyjamas. Where do you go to retrieve property left on a bus? If you run out of money, who will take an IOU? Where do you go for sums greater than can be obtained with an IOU? How do you get an Englishman to teach you to play bowls?

By Wednesday morning, the English observer hardly dares to speak to his friends or to walk across the town. Whom don’t I shake hands with? When don’t I raise

my hat? When do I use the word “Cheerio!” and when “Goodbye!”? In self-defence he begins to find fault with the lecturers. If he cannot prove to himself that they have nothing to teach him, he will be in as much of a social tangle as the centipede who tried to work out how he moved 100 legs without tripping over himself. “Conversation” is discussed. The observer picks up the lecturer on a dangerous piece of advice.

Talk of the weather

“It is important, when starting a conversation, not to choose controversial subjects. The weather is a suitable subject. And so is sport, as long as you talk about the local team. Everyone will agree with you about the local team.” Surely this is dangerous. If the local team is near the bottom of the league, even colonialism might be a safer topic of conversation. But the torrent of information rushes on. Don’t talk about the weather if you want to ask somebody for something – come to the point. If your host asks “Would you like to use the bathroom?” don’t tell him you had a bath yesterday.

Above all, be punctual! The lecturer turns on three students who missed a tour of the town on Tuesday. Two of them, it seems, went to the bank. “In England,” he says, “you must get used to the idea that when a time is stated we mean what we say. Besides, you missed a lot of things, including the birth-place of the person who introduced constitutional government in India. You see? You don’t know where it is, now. because you were unpunctual.”

50

Government policy offers UK universities’ competitors a rosy future

Jonathan Wolff

The Brexit vote has placed British higher education at a tipping point to international decline

International students protest in London after the EU referendum.

Tuesday 27 September 2016 07.15 BST Last modified on Monday 13 February 2017 14.08 GMT

Prior to email, how did you get in touch with a colleague at another university? You phoned the general switchboard and the operator would put you through. Typically this would involve several return trips while a misheard name was corrected through a process of elimination. A direct line was, at that time, simply out of the question, owing to the national phone number shortage. You may think I'm making this up but I'm not. When you moved house you often had to wait months for a phone number to become available.

On one memorable occasion I called a university in a modest-sized town to be greeted with: "The university". As I was making numerous calls that day, this gave me less reassurance than I sought. Yet I was, and remain, very struck by the response. This was clearly someone who, for much of the day, answered the phone to students wanting to know the time of a lecture or to ask for an essay extension, or to a friendly local trader following up an invoice. It was not a voice expecting, say, an offer of an exciting new opportunity, not that this was what was on my mind either. The mix of local civic pride and narrow horizons left a deep impression on me.

And it is an impression that has returned in post-referendum, immigration-control Britain. Having done so much to build up the international standing of the UK's universities, are we on a tipping point to proud insularity yet inevitable decline? Take, for example, the government's intention to reduce the number of visas for overseas students. This, alone, is virtually guaranteed to lead to a fall in the UK's standing in at least those of the international league tables for which the proportion of international students is one of the factors taken into account.

Rankings, though, matter much less than reality. Consider staff recruitment. Whether or not there are formal restrictions, the changing atmosphere will not be good for attracting the international staff that characterise highly successful departments. Universities often talk about bringing in the "world's best" but that can't really be the aim. After all, there are not enough of the very best to go round.

What we need is to bring in staff who are both excellent and rather different from what we already have, to refresh the gene pool and protect against complacency. At the moment we reap the benefit of having one of the most open academic job markets in the world.

Internationalisation of UK universities over the past few decades has been staggering, especially at postgraduate student level. To give a sense of the proportions, in 2014-15, 71% of full-time master's level students and more than half of PhD students came from overseas. This now makes it impossible to sustain our present university system on the basis of demand from home students alone. Falling demand will mean course closures, and perhaps even the closure of universities, most likely in those parts of the country that can least afford it, where the university is a major employer.

And if the overseas students cannot come to the UK, where will they go? Well, as they tell you at business school, today's customer is tomorrow's competition. Universities around the world, especially in the EU, have significant numbers of staff who were educated in the UK, and are fully capable of providing an innovative curriculum in English. In time UK universities would have felt this pressure in any case, but government policy promises our competitors a rosy future.

The apparent silver lining, I suppose, is that slackening of demand will make it easier for the rising generation of UK students to get the place of their choice. The cloud, though, is that when they get there, they will find even the best universities to be less interesting, diverse and dynamic places than they may have been expecting.

The Guardian view on foreign students: dodgy evidence, duff policy

Editorial

The new home secretary's conference speech will exacerbate fear and damage universities

'Amber Rudd, in a speech that was startlingly hard line, is planning a new attack on the numbers of students coming to Britain to study'.

Tuesday 4 October 2016 19.49 BST Last modified on Friday 17 February 2017 11.25 GMT

Theresa May has the admirable intention of restoring confidence in government by paying careful attention to the discontents of the 52% who voted Brexit. She recognises that many who voted leave did so from a sense that Westminster had yielded control of important policies, most notably immigration, to Brussels. That is partly the consequence of setting a target for net migration that was unachievable. Mrs May spent six years trying to make it work against internal opposition from the Lib Dems, and sometimes from George Osborne's Treasury. It was Mr Osborne who vetoed a manifesto pledge to prevent international students staying on after they had finished their studies. But international students stayed in Mrs May's sights, one of the few points of traction in the government's efforts to bring net migration down below 100,000.

Now her successor at the Home Office, Amber Rudd, in a speech that was startlingly hardline, is planning a new attack on the numbers of students coming to Britain to study. Ms Rudd wants to impose different tests for applicants to different universities and colleges. The net effect is likely to be a cut in the numbers taking shorter courses or attending the post-1992 universities that offer more accessible degree subjects, and a blow to their viability, since international students account for 30% of university revenue. This is a bad policy. It imposes new bureaucratic burdens on all universities, and might seriously undermine newer ones that serve

an important local role. It will be hard to enforce. Worse, it is based on flaky and contested evidence about how many students stay after they have completed their course of study: last year, just 11,100 people who previously held study visas were granted extensions to remain in the UK in a category other than study. But the government relies on the International Passenger Survey, which suggests as many as 100,000 international students might stay on. With such a dubious evidence base, it seems unlikely that these latest moves will dent the net migration figures – while further souring an atmosphere where anti-migrant attacks already appear legitimised by the Brexit campaign. A sceptical public will have yet more evidence that migration is a problem the politicians cannot solve.

Mrs May's Home Office legacy is the Immigration Act 2016, a piece of legislation expressly intended to create “a hostile environment for illegal migration”. Ms Rudd is on to it, announcing that the measures criminalising landlords who let property to illegal migrants and introducing compulsory immigration status checks on all taxi drivers will be in force by the end of the year. She made one positive announcement: a new “controlling migration” fund, at £140m nearly three times bigger than Jeremy Corbyn's proposal last week. But along with supporting hard-pressed public services, the fund will be used to help councils stamp down on wrongly claimed housing benefit and rough sleeping.

Of the great humanitarian crisis engulfing millions of refugees, or the slow progress on uniting unaccompanied children with their British-based families, Ms Rudd said not a word. And every time a minister announces a crackdown on illegal migration, they add to the impression of an ill-defined, uncontrolled threat. Ms Rudd was a banker. She should know the value of robust evidence and reliable statistics. That is the only basis for policy.

As an Australian, I'm a privileged migrant. But Amber Rudd's speech scared me

Kate Lyons

The home secretary is cracking down on the number of students from outside Europe. Does she realise how much we contribute to Britain's economy?

Home secretary Amber Rudd addresses the Conservative conference: 'Rudd is creating an impossible situation for migrants.' Photograph: James Gourley/REX/Shutterstock

Wednesday 5 October 2016 16.14 BST Last modified on Friday 17 February 2017 11.25 GMT

Amber Rudd has a strategy for reducing immigration to Britain: getting rid of me. The home secretary announced at Conservative party conference on Tuesday that among the measures she will be taking to reduce immigration to the UK will be a crackdown on the number of students from outside Europe and the families who come with them.

That's me. I'm Australian, and have been able to live and work in this country for the last two years because my partner, also Australian, is doing a PhD here.

Home secretary Amber Rudd targets immigration and foreign workers

My partner is on what's called a Tier Four student visa; I'm here on the Tier Four dependent spouse visa, which I've always thought was erroneously named. I can report that there is very little "dependency" involved in being the partner of an international student in this country.

Despite the fact that international students are worth an estimated £8bn a year to the economy, often pay tuition fees that are triple those paid by local students and supply roughly 30% of revenue for British universities, it is very difficult to get a visa to study here as an international student from outside the European Economic Area.

My Australian passport: ‘The message stamped on my visa and stuck inside my passport is “No recourse to public funds”.’

To qualify for a visa you first need to prove that you’ll cost the British government absolutely nothing. Applicants need to have a certain amount of money in their bank account to prove they can get by in case of an emergency without resorting to government help. The NHS isn’t free for them either; non-EEA migrants now also have to pay an “immigration health surcharge”, at the time of their visa application. This costs between £150 and £200 per year (though this was introduced after I arrived in the country, so it doesn’t apply to me).

It is also made clear to you before you apply to live in the UK that if you do, you will have no access to state assistance – no benefits at all. Indeed, this message is literally stamped onto my visa, right across the centre: “No recourse to public funds.” Why on my visa, which is stuck inside my passport and which I only see while waiting in queues at airports? I don’t know. In case I’m tempted to ask a border official for a financial handout as I head through customs, perhaps. The rules are that I may live here and work, but can expect no government help.

Which is fine by me. I like working. I am healthy and able and have been lucky enough to get a job I love. I pay taxes, I contribute to the economy; in short, I’m abiding by the rules laid out by the Home Office. Except it seems that those rules, or at least the goalposts, have shifted.

While announcing her proposed changes to immigration laws, Rudd observed with incredulity that “while an international student is studying here, their family members can do any form of work”.

Putting aside her disingenuous talk of “family members”, as if international students are bringing with them three generations of relatives, rather than the family members who are actually allowed to accompany them – a partner and dependent children – when did it become an outrageous thing for people coming to a country to get jobs, earn money and support themselves – and pay taxes?

Rudd is creating an impossible situation for migrants. Those who receive benefits are demonised, those who cannot receive benefits will now be demonised for

working. What is she proposing? That only those who have enough savings to support themselves for five years can move here? That international students and their families must live in a penniless unemployed limbo, filling their bellies with sheer gratitude at being allowed into Britain? That they can work, but only in a crummy job that pays minimum wage, assigned to them as they arrive at Heathrow? It's hard to see what she is suggesting a "good migrant" might look like and indeed, whether she believes they actually exist.

On the scale of migrant privilege I'm right up at the advantaged end. I'm not here seeking asylum, I haven't left a country rife with war or hardship. I'm white and speak English and, unlike some who move here (and indeed some who were born here) I've never had racism directed at me. I love living in Britain – beautiful, opportunity-rich, quirky place that it is – but if worse came to worst, I could leave and go home to a country where there is peace, economic prosperity and considerably better weather.

But despite my being among the most privileged migrants in the UK, Rudd's speech scared me. She asserted that these immigration policies were not about "pulling up the drawbridge", but I see no other way to interpret them.

The message from the Conservative party is that no matter how brilliant the research of international students, how much that work advances the reputation of British universities, how high the tuition fees they pay, how hard their partners work or how much we contribute in taxes, because we are not British, this country simply doesn't want us.

EU student funding in UK to remain same in 2017 despite Brexit vote

Announcement welcomed as higher education sector grapples with the uncertainty triggered by referendum result

EU students are the fastest growing proportion of young undergraduates in UK universities. Photograph: Chris Radburn/PA

Sally Weale Education correspondent

Tuesday 11 October 2016 11.43 BST Last modified on Monday 13 February 2017 14.07 GMT

EU students applying to study at English universities from autumn 2017 will continue to pay the same fees as domestic undergraduates and will remain eligible for the same loans and grants despite the Brexit vote, the government has announced.

Universities welcomed the announcement, which follows three months of intensive lobbying and provides much-needed breathing space as the higher education sector grapples with the uncertainty triggered by the UK referendum vote to leave the EU.

With the deadlines for applications for next year's university places approaching, vice-chancellors have been urging the government to clarify terms affecting future EU students in the hope that numbers will hold up. Applications for Oxbridge and most medical schools close later this week, while the deadline for most other courses is 15 January.

The higher education sector has become increasingly dependent on EU students, who have been the fastest growing proportion of young undergraduates in UK universities, at a time when the number of 18-year-olds in the British population has been reducing. In each of the past five years EU students accounted for more than 5% of undergraduates studying in the UK.

The government's announcement confirms that new EU students will be eligible for the same funding and support as they are now, and that their eligibility will

continue throughout their course, even if the UK exits the EU during that period. The same reassurance was given in June to existing EU students and those starting their studies this year.

The universities minister, Jo Johnson, said: “We know that the result of the referendum brought with it some uncertainties for our higher education sector.

“International students make an important contribution to our world-class universities and we want that to continue. This latest assurance that students applying to study next year will not only be eligible to apply for student funding under current terms, but will have their eligibility maintained throughout the duration of their course, will provide important stability for both universities and students.”

The announcement marks a brief respite for the sector. Last week universities were left reeling after the home secretary, Amber Rudd, outlined plans for new hardline restrictions on overseas students in her speech to the Conservative party conference, including two-tier visa rules affecting poorer quality universities and courses.

Dame Julia Goodfellow, the president of Universities UK, which represents 135 universities, said Tuesday’s announcement provided much-needed clarity for EU students applying to start courses at English universities in autumn 2017.

Jo Johnson said international students’ eligibility to apply for funds would be maintained throughout the duration of their course. Photograph: Lewis Whyld/PA

“It is good to see the government has recognised the value of EU students and acted positively to guarantee their access to financial support,” she said. “Every effort must now be made to ensure that this announcement is communicated effectively to prospective students across Europe.”

She highlighted the importance of international students beyond the EU to British universities. “European and international students are a valuable part of cultural and academic life on British university campuses and play an important role in UK towns and cities, creating jobs and supporting local businesses.

“Looking ahead, as the government develops plans post-Brexit Britain, a commitment is needed to ensure that students, from Europe and beyond, are able to continue to come to the UK to study without unnecessary bureaucratic burdens.

“The UK should be an attractive destination for all qualified international students that would benefit from UK universities and can support themselves to study.”

The University and College Union (UCU), which represents 110,000 staff, welcomed the clarity for students applying next year but warned that the continuing uncertainty about international students risked damaging the UK’s role as a key player on the international academic stage.

Sally Hunt, the UCU’s general secretary, said: “We don’t believe this measure can undo the damage that various proposals floated at the Conservative party conference last week may have done via headlines around the world.

“The news that the government was also seeking to ban leading foreign academics from advising the UK government over Brexit because they are not British nationals will have also done little to help our international standing.

“The government needs to think very carefully about the message it wants to send to the rest of the world at this challenging time. One good start would be to guarantee the rights of the many EU nationals working in our universities.”

Dr Wendy Piatt, the director general of the Russell Group which represents 24 leading universities, added: “European and international students make a vital contribution to our universities and UK society as a whole. We will continue to work with the government to develop a system which supports legitimate students who want to study here.”

Maddalaine Ansell, the chief executive of University Alliance group, said: “We look forward to working with the government to ensure the message that Britain remains open and welcoming to international students carries weight.”

No 10 rejects idea that foreign students should not count as immigrants

Downing Street says it is not looking at removing students from official figures after chancellor suggests definition of immigrant may be reviewed

Philip Hammond had appeared to suggest that the British public did not consider students to be migrants. Photograph: Justin Tallis/AFP/Getty Images

Rowena Mason Deputy political editor

Thursday 20 October 2016 18.01 BST First published on *Thursday 20 October 2016 13.38 BST*

Theresa May has dismissed the suggestion that foreign students should not be counted as immigrants, after the chancellor, Philip Hammond, suggested that such a move could be in line with public opinion.

Downing Street said it was not looking at whether to remove foreign students from official migration figures, despite earlier appearing to say this would be part of an overall review of the system.

It comes after reports of distance between No 10 and No 11 on a number of issues, from the approach to Brexit to May's comments about monetary policy in the most recent Queen's speech.

On Wednesday, Hammond told the Treasury select committee there were "conversations within government about the most appropriate way to record and address net migration".

"As we approach the challenge of getting net migration figures down, it is in my view essential that we look at how we do this in a way that protects the vital interests of our economy," he said.

"It is true that student visas have been abused in the past. The previous home secretary did sterling work tightening up on bogus educational institutions."

When asked if students should be counted among immigrant numbers, he said: "My view is, this is a question of public perception and the public's view. Clearly, immigration and the level of net migration is an issue of concern.

“The question we should be asking is, ‘What does the public understand should be included within that definition?’. It’s not whether politicians think one thing or another, it’s whether the public believe it.”

Andrew Tyrie, the chair of the committee, highlighted research showing that one-fifth of people thought students counted as immigrants and 59% were opposed to efforts to reduce their numbers, prompting Hammond to respond: “I think that’s very interesting information.”

However, a No 10 spokesman said on Thursday: “The government objective is to reduce annual net migration to the tens of thousands, and in order to deliver this we are keeping all visa routes under review.

“Our position on who is included in the figures has not changed and we are categorically not reviewing whether or not students are included.”

Asked whether May had changed her mind, her deputy official spokesman said: “The issue of migration, migrant numbers, who enters the country and under what terms, is very much subject for review as we go through the process of exiting the European Union.”

The prime minister has long stuck to the position that foreign students should be included in the figures showing overall net migration numbers, fighting off an attempt to take them out under the previous Conservative government.

55

Overseas student crackdown could hit LSE, King’s College London and Soas

Elite universities fear a low ‘silver or bronze’ ranking and restrictions on recruiting students from abroad

Universities say if elite institutions such as the LSE are prevented from recruiting overseas students, it could harm the reputation of UK higher education as a whole.

Photograph: Oli Scarff/Getty Images

Anna Fazackerley

Tuesday 25 October 2016 07.30 BST Last modified on Friday 17 February 2017 11.20 GMT

Some of Britain's world-renowned universities could lose their right to recruit as many international students as they want under new Home Office plans, vice-chancellors fear. Among those at risk are the London School of Economics, King's College London and Bristol University.

The home secretary, Amber Rudd, used her maiden speech at the Conservative party conference last month to announce a crackdown on the number of overseas students coming to study in the UK, which will include different visa rules for "lower quality" universities and courses. There are fears it will use the government's controversial new teaching rankings – expected to grade institutions "gold, silver or bronze" – to judge the "quality" of institutions.

The move, which vice-chancellors say they had been fearing since Theresa May became prime minister, has caused dismay in universities. According to Universities UK, the vice-chancellors' umbrella organisation, overseas students bring more than £10.7bn to the UK economy and non-EU international students make up 13% of universities' revenues.

Colin Riordan, vice-chancellor of Cardiff University, says: "Trying to restrict the numbers of international students coming into this country because they contribute to migration numbers makes no sense. The British people don't see students as migrants – or as a problem."

He says stopping a university recruiting overseas students would "be an absolutely devastating blow". "It would hugely reduce diversity, which really matters. It would reduce standards, as we need to recruit the best students wherever they are. And the financial effects would be serious – you would see wholesale job losses."

Anxiety is escalating behind the scenes that the Home Office may want to use the Teaching Excellence Framework – the new system for ranking universities' teaching – to decide which universities to cut. University heads warn this could have shocking unintended consequences, as some world-class research universities are not predicted to score well in the new teaching rankings.

The head of one Russell Group university, who asked not to be named, said: “Rudd’s speech was all about the quality of courses and institutions. How do you measure quality of teaching in a way that isn’t challengeable in the courts? You use the Teaching Excellence Framework. But some of the Russell Group do very badly on the TEF. And that means there is potentially a very big fight coming.”

Edward Byrne, president and principal of King’s College London, says King’s supports the TEF, but says: “There’s no rationale for linking it to the regulation of international student recruitment as it was not designed for this purpose. It would damage the UK’s attractiveness as a study destination in what is a very competitive global market place.”

King’s has high admissions standards that are equally rigorous for domestic and international students, he says. “Places at our institution are in great demand from students of outstanding quality around the world.”

Lady Amos: ‘Soas is a specialist, niche university. We don’t teach science and engineering. We don’t feature in certain rankings because of our size.’ Photograph: Katherine Anne Rose

Riordan says: “The TEF was never designed for this. It would be completely wrongheaded. Barely any of it refers to international students, who are mostly postgraduates.”

The TEF will rank university teaching based on factors including numbers of leavers who land graduate-level jobs and how students rate their institutions in the National Student Survey. This last measure is likely to hit some members of the Russell Group hard, because they have not scored well in the NSS in the past. This year the LSE, which consistently ranks highly in other league tables, dropped six percentage points in the NSS and was the lowest-performing major university, excluding small and specialist institutions. Any move to restrict LSE’s international recruitment could have a huge effect, as overseas students make up 70% of its student body.

Nick Hillman, director of the Higher Education Policy Institute thinktank, says the Home Office probably thinks using the TEF to judge quality is a “no-brainer”.

Hillman, who negotiated with the Home Office about the importance of international students during his time as special adviser to former higher education minister David Willetts, says: “They know very little about universities. So piggybacking on an existing education department measure would seem to make sense.” He says the Home Office is rigidly elitist about higher education, and likely to be unaware of the potential impact of such a policy on some of Britain’s most famous institutions.

In her speech, Rudd insisted she was “passionately committed to making sure our world-leading institutions can attract the brightest and best”, but added that “a student immigration system that treats every student and university as equal only punishes those we should want to help”. Hillman, however, comments: “The “brightest and best language is really pernicious. They mean: ‘We don’t mind future world leaders like Bill Clinton coming here but we really don’t want anyone else.’”

Valerie Amos, director of Soas University of London, which is also expected to come some way down the TEF rankings because of its NSS results, says that although Soas is committed to the student experience and teaching quality, “I worry the TEF is a rather blunt instrument”. She adds: “I worry about the concept of differentiation. We are a diverse sector. Soas is a specialist, niche university. We don’t teach science and engineering. That means we don’t feature in certain rankings because of our size.”

The Home Office told Education Guardian: “We will be consulting on what more we can do to strengthen the system to support the best universities, and those that stick to the rules, to attract the best talent. The consultation will invite views on how courses and institutions could be differentiated and we will use the feedback to inform our decisions.”

Battle lines may be drawn next week when the issue is due to be debated by vice-chancellors at a board meeting of Universities UK. There is likely to be little schadenfreude. Vice-chancellors fear that if one institution suffers big cuts it could

harm the reputation of the whole sector abroad, especially if that institution is one of the UK's big hitters.

Dominic Shellard, vice-chancellor of De Montfort University, who has tweeted under the hashtag #loveinternational since the EU referendum, called a staff meeting after Rudd's speech to denounce the "disturbing intolerance" coming from the Home Office. He warned that relationships were already being soured abroad, telling staff that the university's India office had sent him a local news article with the headline "Five reasons to revisit your UK college plan".

Shellard said: "Last week the Turner prize winning artist and De Montfort University graduate David Shrigley unveiled his new sculpture on Trafalgar Square's fourth plinth: it was a giant thumbs up. After Ms Rudd's speech it may well appear to the world that we are showing a very different finger. Because you can't use the kind of rhetoric that we have seen idly. Words remain."

56

We are competing with universities worldwide – and we may well lose

Chris Husbands

The government's threats against international students are putting the UK's higher education sector at a huge disadvantage

Universities across the world are ramping up their offers to students – so why is the UK making it harder for people to study here?

Tuesday 25 October 2016 16.32 BST Last modified on Tuesday 25 October 2016 16.58 BST

The students at my lecture were particularly attentive this week. Across the audience of some 70 students, not one – that I noticed – checked a smartphone. They scribbled notes. After the lecture, I asked them to spend a few moments talking to their neighbours about what I'd said about the role of universities in meeting the challenges of the 21st century, about the changing dynamics of knowledge creation and the implications for university missions.

Then I opened the lecture up to questions. The first came from a Bangladeshi student. The second came from an Indonesian student. The third came from a Ugandan student. The fourth and fifth came from Chinese students.

I wasn't lecturing in the UK. I was lecturing in the Sino-British College (SBC) at the Shanghai University of Science and Technology, to an audience of students who had opted, from three continents, to take their degrees at SBC. This time last year, I was lecturing at another Shanghai university, to students from Asia, Canada, the US and Africa.

The evidence is very clear. The reputations of Asian universities, and Chinese universities in particular, are on the rise. China's World Class 2.0 project, announced in August 2015, aims to strengthen the research performance of China's nine top-ranked universities, with the goal of having six of those institutions ranked within the world's top 15 universities by 2030.

After two decades in which China has been largely an exporter of students to Australia, Canada, the US and the UK, it is now increasingly attracting international students to study at its universities. And what is true of China is true of other countries too. Global flows of students are an increasing feature of the world's higher education systems.

Myriad benefits

These systems, and the young people choosing to study in them, have understood some important things about the power of university education.

You can see the recruitment of international students as an exercise in soft power – the education of the elites who will lead the world's governments and corporates in the future.

You can see the recruitment of international students as an exercise in global engagement – widening the perspective of all students as they develop knowledge and understanding together.

You can see the recruitment of international students as an exercise in global citizenship – building a set of approaches to analysing and solving common challenges in natural and social science.

You can see the recruitment of international students as a great exercise in language learning – what better way to learn, say, Mandarin, than studying in China.

You can see the recruitment of international students as the practical application of a challenge thrown down by the great American social anthropologist Clifford Geertz. “The next necessary thing,” he wrote “is to enlarge the possibility of intelligible discourse between people quite different from one another in interest, outlook, wealth, and power, and yet contained in a world where tumbled as they are into endless connection, it is increasingly difficult to get out of each other’s way”.

But just as the competition intensifies, what it would be ill-advised to do is to make it yet more difficult for promising students to come to the UK. To do so would be to abandon the field to our competitors, to acquiesce to the rise of universities beyond these shores, to see the dynamic excitement of knowledge creation move elsewhere.

Our competitors will be overjoyed if we make it easier for them to thrive. Certainly, my friends who lead universities in Australia, Canada and New Zealand are delighted when they read politicians’ rhetoric about making it harder for international students to come to the UK.

My audience in Shanghai was outstanding. The students were engaged, alert, thoughtful, challenging and perceptive. Just the sort of people I want to teach – in my own university in Sheffield.

The UK is becoming the nasty country, and our universities will suffer

Peter Scott

Why would talented academics want a career in Brexit-voting Britain, where a handful of refugee children provoke a tabloid firestorm?

Even before the EU referendum, our inability to evoke a moral response to global distress was deeply shaming. Photograph: Matthew Chattle/Rex

Tuesday 1 November 2016 05.45 GMT Last modified on Monday 13 February 2017 14.04 GMT

Banging on about Brexit five months after the referendum may be boring to Brexiters who have wrapped themselves in the red, white and blue flag of the “people’s will”. But it is such a threat to universities it can’t just be tidied away into a box labelled “summer madness”. The threat comes in three parts. The first can be managed, although with difficulty; the other two are more deadly.

First, the threat to the UK’s participation in European research programmes and student exchange schemes such as Erasmus. The government has given a semi-solid guarantee that research programmes will be protected, up to 2020 at any rate. The future of exchange schemes will depend on the willingness of the UK to contribute to the cost – and the enthusiasm for paying for a student mobility programme so intimately identified with the rejected “European project” may be limited.

Closely related is the future of staff and (non-Erasmus) students from other parts of the EU. Both are crucial. Teachers, and especially researchers, from the EU play a key role in maintaining the UK’s envious position in global league tables, about which we love to brag. Other European students fill deficits in domestic demand, typically in science and engineering.

Oxford vice chancellor worried about post-Brexit funding – audio

It is difficult to see even a Brexit government kicking out established staff from the rest of Europe, or placing significant obstacles in their way. But other EU students

are a different matter. They are likely to have to pay international student fees. But, because England already charges its own students the highest fees in the world in public universities, the gap between home (and currently EU) student fees and those paid by international students is much less than in the past – about £4,000 rather than more than £10,000.

The second threat is much deadlier. The UK is now established as a nasty country in the world's imagination. No amount of flummery from the foreign secretary about "openness" can cover that up. Nor can rather more honest claims by universities that they are open to all, Europe and the wider world, as evidenced by the remain votes in the referendum in university cities.

It is difficult to imagine why talented scholars and scientists, and students for that matter, should want to make their careers or study in a country unable to admit a handful of refugee children without a tabloid firestorm demanding dental checks. Even before the referendum our inability to evoke a moral response to global distress worthy of our history was deeply shaming. To Orwell, England was like a family with the wrong members in control – and so it increasingly seems since the Brexit vote.

The image and ethos of a country matter even if, as we must hope by relying on our sense of fair play, the direst consequences are avoided. German universities, probably the world's best before 1914, took at least three generations to recover their eminence and excellence after the world wars, the Nazis and the Holocaust. In a milder example, during the George W Bush neo-con era US universities lost out to rivals, including the UK.

The third threat relates to "taking back control", one of the Brexit mantras. The EU has never been good at "control", as the veto of the EU-Canada deal by the Walloon parliament in Belgium has demonstrated. Instead, it has a political culture characterised by compromise and consensus. The language of Europe is littered with "-ities": mutuality, solidarity, subsidiarity ... Power is diffused, for historical and cultural reasons we all understand.

But this EU culture has always been at odds with that elective dictatorship, the UK constitution. Fundamental principles, entrenched rights, legal scrutiny of political decisions, these had never been the English way (they may see things differently in Scotland); instead we rely on precedent and convention. These have protected the independence of the BBC, the courts – and the universities.

The danger is that Brexit will further empower the strong state of which the prime minister is an admirer. There is no better example than the higher education and research bill currently before parliament. Safeguards are being swept aside and conventions ignored, as the secretary of state accumulates unprecedented powers over universities.

There will no longer be even the semblance of a buffer body between universities and the state when the Higher Education Funding Council is replaced by the Office for Students. The dual-support system, which distinguishes between core research funding and research council grants, cannot long survive when both come from the same source, UK Research and Innovation (headed by a civil servant not a scientist). Universities can be stripped of their degree-awarding powers by ministerial fiat. A frightening demonstration of who, post-referendum, is “taking back control”.

58

Secret Teacher: I moved to Africa – and realised how flawed British education is

I am paid less than ever before and work with scant resources but it is bliss compared with my old schools in Britain

‘My students are making the sort of weekly progress that would make an inspector drool.’

The Secret Teacher

Saturday 26 November 2016 07.00 GMT Last modified on *Saturday 26 November 2016 07.03 GMT*

Ten years ago, I took my first job as an English teacher in an east London comprehensive next to a large council estate. I had gravitated towards the profession because it was in my family. My father was a lifer at his school and vastly improved the chances of thousands of students over 30 years; I wanted to be able to say the same for myself when I reached retirement age.

After a gruelling training year, I felt like I was on course to achieve that. I came home exhausted every day, but it was the type of satisfied exhaustion you get from putting your all into something you believe in.

Two economic downturns, two governments, two specification changes, three schools, five headteachers and six heads of English later, I found myself red-eyed and shaking as my GP filled out the paperwork to sign me off for work-related stress. She told me I wasn't the first teacher she'd had to do this for that week.

So I made the choice: I decided to teach abroad. It would wrench me from friends, family and a country that I love, but it was that or face the uncertainty of starting at the bottom of a new career. I trusted my gut, handed in my notice, and survived a hellish final term in a dysfunctional work environment. Then, last August, I jumped on a plane to east Africa.

What awaited me was the most under-resourced school I've ever worked in. We have no photocopier, limited internet access and my classroom is only separated from the neighbouring room by a thin wooden partition. But I am undeniably performing my job to a far higher standard than at any other point in my career.

It's a low-pressure, high-freedom environment that places absolute trust in its teachers' abilities. As a result, my students are making the sort of progress that would make an inspector drool.

Smaller class sizes are crucial to this. I am responsible for the education of roughly 75 students; two KS3 classes of 25, one Y10 class of 7 and two sixth-form classes of about 8. Last year, I had about 130 students to account for in classes of 30–32. It is hard to form meaningful relationships when your students barely fit in the room. As well as space, I have time. Working hours are not whipped away from me for emergency data-meetings, twilight Insets, morning briefings, and admin-centric

departmental meetings. They are not offset by an endless cycle of parents evenings nor eroded by the box-ticking exercises of bloated middle-management teams, insistent that Ofsted will have our guts for garters if we don't drop everything so we can Blu-Tack the school literacy policy on every inch of wall-space.

I've realised that, in the British schools I worked in, management was simply not doing a good job. The academisation (or deregulation, if you like) boom has flooded corridors with sharp-suited Machiavellis, clinging desperately to iPads and spreadsheets in the hope that they are projecting a credible image of what a manager looks like.

Here, I work for a team of leaders who encourage, support and involve the classroom practitioners in the running of the school. There are no sharp-elbowed struggles for crumbs from the promotion-table. There are certainly none of the Gestapo tactics which have British teachers fearful that the next "book-trawl" or "data-cycle" or "pupil voice questionnaire" or "learning walk" will mean that the wind has changed for them, and they are next in the firing line.

We do have lesson observations and performance management and all those other things, but they are used as constructive tools rather than leverage over the underlings.

We don't have have fallacious "like-for-like" league tables and whole-school shamings of departments, and we certainly did not begin the year with a state of the union address on whose summer results weren't up to scratch. Compare this to last year when my browbeaten department was told – in front of all of our colleagues – that we were to spend this year as a "serious concern" in light of exam results which, as it transpired, shifted unrecognisably after two months of appeals and remarks.

I am only able to write this article because I can complete all of my tasks by the end of each school day. I am not exaggerating – I work until 3.30pm every day and I finish every Friday with no outstanding work to grade (and I grade a lot of work).

If I see my colleagues outside of work, it is for enjoyable social activities and excursions. We don't talk about work, but rather about what books we are reading or news from our wider lives. We have wider lives over here.

I will wake up on Monday and look forward to the day's work ahead of me in the worst-paid and most under-resourced job on my CV. My friends back at home will wake up and ask themselves what they need to do to get through. But they have their limits.

Moving to another country saved my career and my health. But if this is the only answer that Britain's teachers are left with, what will be left in 10 years' time?

59

'They tell me not to speak Polish': students on life after Brexit vote

A rise in racist incidents and a crackdown on visas leave overseas students nervous about studying in the UK

UK students, who overwhelmingly voted remain, have rallied around their international and EU classmates. Photograph: Matthew Chattle/Rex/Shutterstock

Rebecca Ratcliffe

Sunday 27 November 2016 09.00 GMT Last modified on Sunday 27 November 2016 09.02 GMT

When Maciej Fabrycki, a student at Warwick University, spoke to his parents over the summer, they told him to be careful. His parents, who live back home in Poland, had read about a rise in racist abuse following the vote for Brexit.

“They tell me when I'm coming back from a night out not to speak Polish or not to show off the fact that I'm Polish because it might provoke some British people,” says Fabrycki, who came to the UK to study management and finance. “But they've never lived here, so what they hear is from the media, and the image in the media is negative.”

Fabrycki is one of 125,000 EU students studying at UK universities – a further 312,000 international students, who pay higher fees, come to the UK from outside

of the EU. He chose the UK because the course had a good reputation and he wanted to experience a new culture, but he's not sure he would make the same choice if he were a school-leaver today.

The vote for Brexit, endless headlines promising a crackdown on international students and a rise in racist incidents have left many students feeling unwelcome.

Saffy Allayna, vice-president for international students at Essex University Student Union, says some new students are "slightly careful". "They really try to behave, to avoid speaking too much of their own language, so that people don't say: 'You should be speaking English, you're in England'," she says.

Saffy Allayna says some new international students avoid speaking too much of their own language.

In the week following the Brexit vote the number of racist incidents reported to the police increased fivefold. Sorana Vieru, NUS vice-president for higher education, who is also an EU student, says the NUS is now helping student unions to become hate crime reporting centres.

"We are worried about any possible rise in racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and Islamophobia resulting recent votes in the referendum, US election but also the rise of the far right in France," she says.

UK students – who overwhelmingly voted remain – have rallied around their EU and international classmates by organising advice sessions and cultural events, adds Vieru. At Essex University, students are running special trips around the UK as well as Christmas events.

Fabrycki says that he does feel safe in his local area, where there is a big Polish community, but he knows others living in the UK do not. Some Polish friends have already turned down university places because they fear they are not welcome.

"There is concern about this, Polish people are worrying about racism."

They want our money, they want our trade, but they don't want the people

Rishabh Kumar, an Indian student

Although he enjoys his course and feels at home on campus, he adds: "The fact the majority of British people voted to leave the EU, and one of the main reasons was

immigration from eastern Europe – including Poland – this, in a nutshell, makes me feel less welcome.”

University application figures show the number of EU students applying for places on some of the most competitive programmes – including medicine, dentistry, and all Oxford and Cambridge courses – have dropped 9% on last year.

The EU referendum follows a series of policy changes that universities say have damaged their reputation abroad. Since the removal of post-study work visas in 2012, the number of Indian students in UK higher education fell by more than 50%, from 39,090 in 2010-11 to 18,320 in 2014-15. Last month, home secretary Amber Rudd proposed a further clamp down on overseas students while, during a visit to Delhi, prime minister Theresa May rejected calls to relax the rules surrounding Indian visas.

“What many people in India perceived was something like a postcolonial arrogance there,” says Rishabh Kumar, an Indian student who is studying economics at Sheffield University. “In the whole Brexit debate the government said we’ll have closer ties with the commonwealth. People were expecting after Brexit that the government’s attitudes would have changed, but it was the same story: they want our money, they want our trade, but they don’t want the people.”

Professor Michael Arthur, president and provost of UCL, says he is “intensely worried” about the UK’s image overseas and that the university has been working to reassure students.

“The international flavour, the culture of organisations, would change if there were fewer international students. We would feel that quite acutely. But there would be very significant financial pressures if the downturn was significant,” says Arthur.

Fees from non-EU students contributed nearly 30% of the higher education sector’s tuition income in 2013–14, despite international students accounting for only 13% of enrolments.

Increasing fees for home students would be “one possible outcome”, he says, though these are currently capped by government. “We would have to look at our

programmes and decide which ones we can no longer continue because we don't have enough students."

Arthur also fears that future researchers, who would previously have come to the UK for their postdoc or PhD, will go elsewhere.

Professor Simon Marginson, director of the Centre for Global Higher Education at the UCL Institute of Education, says the US and Australia are competing with the UK to attract students.

"If the UK cuts its international student numbers – and there's every indication there'll be some kind of major cut in non-EU students over the next few years – then they will simply give market share to other countries," he says. "If you suddenly decide in three years' time that you want to let more international students in, they won't necessarily spring back."

Mishark Orji moved to the UK from Nigeria.

Mishark Orji, who came to the UK from Nigeria to study, and is now at Birmingham City University, says that friends are already deciding to go elsewhere. "International students pay for visa fees to come here, sometimes they get denied, they don't get a refund back, they pay the institution fees, which are way, way more than UK and EU fees.

"I know a couple of people in my university who are in their final year – they're saying they're going to go to Canada and the US to do their master's."

Kumar says his university has done lots to make him feel welcome, but that national policies do not. "Other countries like Canada or Australia offer post-study work visas," adds Kumar. "Their wages are also the same. The standard of living is good there. Why would you want to go somewhere where you're not treated as well?"

The Guardian view on international students: too valuable to limit

Editorial

The statistics on immigration in general and overseas students in particular are not good enough to be the basis for a potentially ruinous British policy

Passengers going through UK border control at Heathrow airport. ‘IPS interviewers do not work overnight, which means that long-haul flights to countries that are a source of overseas students tend to be underrepresented.’

Wednesday 30 November 2016 19.52 GMT Last modified on *Friday 17 February 2017 11.11 GMT*

Tomorrow’s official statistics are expected to show that immigration to the United Kingdom continues to be far above the government’s often-repeated and recently re-adopted target of “tens of thousands”. So far, so familiar. In the ever more politicised context of Brexit, however, the figures – and the arguments about how they are compiled – are taking on a new and sharper significance. This is only likely to grow as the Brexit arguments deepen and become more intense, even though anxiety about immigration was just one element in June’s referendum vote. But Theresa May has now staked her prime ministership on being able to resolve it. She aims to show voters that, once out of the European Union, Britain can control its borders with measures and resources that will bring down the numbers coming into the country in the long term. Others in the Conservative party have differing Brexit priorities, but it is hardly an exaggeration to say that in Mrs May’s mind, every aspect of the forthcoming negotiation is subordinate to the goal of reduced immigration.

Migration numbers are not the only weapons available to Mrs May to help her make that case but they are undoubtedly one of the most important. This makes two things about her approach to the statistics both odd and unsustainable. The first is that the UK’s official migration data is so unreliable. The second is that she continues to resist calls to remove students from the overall migration numbers.

The net migration figures rely on interviews with departing visitors gathered for the International Passenger Survey, a count developed more than 50 years ago as a measure of tourism. IPS interviewers do not work overnight, which means that long-haul flights to countries that are a source of overseas students tend to be underrepresented. While nearly a million travellers a year are interviewed, only about 5,000 count as “long-term” migrants – that is, in the UK for more than 12 months. Such a small sample introduces a high margin of error. The Office for National Statistics knows there are limits to the IPS, but it is the only count available.

The case for removing students from all these numbers is even more stark. International students come here to study. That makes them different from migrants in three ways. First, they are temporary, returning to their own countries at the end of stays that are, in many cases, only of between one and three years. Second, they necessarily pay fees for the courses they study, and thus bring economic value to the UK rather than being a charge on public funds. Third, public opinion does not think of international students as immigrants and therefore does not worry about them in the same way as it worries about other migrants.

These would all be good reasons for removing students from the statistics. But now the case goes much further. International students are part of the lifeblood of British universities, for their intellectual and cultural contribution, but also for their fees. Britain’s universities are often rightly extolled by ministers, as they were again by Mrs May in her Guildhall speech last week, but their standing depends on their global status. That status is at serious risk from proposed migration policy changes.

Any policy to reduce immigration to the tens of thousands inevitably involves a large cut in international students. That would be hugely damaging to universities and to UK relations with the countries from which the students come (around a third of non-EU students come from China, for example). After Brexit, those cuts would also involve EU students who for now can study here and pay UK levels of fees, for which they are also able to get loans. But, after Brexit, who knows?

The chancellor of the exchequer, Philip Hammond, is currently leading efforts within government to exclude foreign students from the migration numbers. If only for the sake of Britain's universities, international students from the EU and beyond should indeed be removed from the immigration numbers.

61

UK considers plans to nearly halve international student visas

Home Office looks at slashing numbers from 300,000 to 170,000 under tougher student visa rules

Abhinav Paul Kongari is studying at Sheffield and hopes to use his engineering degree to help people in less developed countries. Photograph: David Sillitoe for the Guardian

Anna Fazackerley

Monday 12 December 2016 09.00 GMT Last modified on Tuesday 13 December 2016 00.05 GMT

The Home Office is considering cutting international student numbers at UK universities by nearly half, Education Guardian can reveal. The threat is being greeted with dismay by university heads, who say some good overseas applicants are already being refused visas on spurious grounds.

The home secretary, Amber Rudd, pledged a crackdown on international student numbers at the Conservative party conference in October, to include tougher visa rules for "lower quality" universities and courses. But senior university sources are warning that the cutbacks could be far more severe than expected. They say they have seen Home Office plans that model slashing overseas student numbers, with one option to cut the current 300,000 to 170,000 a year.

The Home Office says a rumour it had modelled even more severe cuts of two-thirds, to 100,000 students a year, are "categorically untrue". The rumour was discussed at private seminars last month by leading figures at the government's Higher Education Funding Council for England.

Home secretary Amber Rudd targets immigration and foreign workers. International students bring more than £10.7bn to the UK economy, according to Universities UK, the vice-chancellors' umbrella group. The head of one leading university, who asked not to be named, denounced the potential scale of the cuts as "insane", adding: "politics is trumping economics".

Prof Colin Riordan, vice-chancellor of Cardiff University, agrees: "The Home Office seems to have decided that cutting international students is the only way of delivering the manifesto target of getting net migration down to the tens of thousands. But it doesn't address people's concerns about immigration. The problems people are seeing on the ground are certainly not caused by international university students or staff."

Vice-chancellors say some bona fide students are already being turned away after difficult "credibility" interviews, which can be part of the visa process. University heads are frightened of speaking out about these decisions in case it counts against future applicants to their institution, but have shared examples with Education Guardian:

- An applicant was deemed not to be genuine because he did not know the university library opening times.
- Another was excluded for not knowing the name of the vice-chancellor at his university – a test many would-be domestic students would certainly fail.
- One applicant was refused a visa for "falling below the amount specified in a bank account by a couple of pounds on one day out of the 90-day period, even though his parents had huge funds and their accounts were also submitted".

Another vice-chancellor says the judgments being made by UK Visas and Immigration have changed significantly in the past few months. Indian students, in particular, seem to be having a tougher time. "They are telling some students there is exactly the same quality of course available in India so why are you coming here," one vice-chancellor says. "That is outrageous."

Even if students proved they had sufficient funds, some interviewers were questioning whether the chosen subject was an "appropriate" use of students'

money. “Some applicants are being asked questions we would never ask a domestic student ... about what they will be doing at 25 and 30 and what they will be earning at 40,” the vice-chancellor says. “This is all clearly designed to make the applicant reconsider.”

Sir Keith Burnett, of Sheffield University, one of the vice-chancellors who accompanied Theresa May on a recent trade delegation to India, says: “If we genuinely want to be open to the world and a global leader in free trade, we can only do so by welcoming talent. This cannot simply be our own assessment; international students need to feel welcome and that accessing the UK to study and for a period of work experience is easy. Even a hint that students are unwelcome and they will go elsewhere.”

Amber Rudd addressing the Conservative conference in October, where she promised to crack down on overseas student numbers. Photograph: Carl Court/Getty Images

He says other countries, including Australia and Canada, are already benefiting from the government’s “deeply damaging” current position, by welcoming excellent international students who will go on to secure leading jobs and be lasting allies of their countries.

“Our great British universities are great precisely because they are international – and we urgently need the government to recognise this, to honour the enormous benefit international students bring to the UK,” he says.

Abhinav Paul Kongari, from Jharkhand, India, is studying mechanical engineering at Sheffield University and says it is the best decision he has ever made. “I wanted really good work experience while I was studying,” he says. “And the system of education in the UK, and especially engineering, is much better than in many other countries. I was really excited that I could engage in research early on, too.”

He adds: “I’m hoping to use the knowledge I’ve learned helping make people’s lives easier in undeveloped countries like India or South America. But I want to retain my links with Britain.”

In her party conference speech Rudd said the government wanted to help “the best universities – and those that stick to the rules – to attract the best talent, while looking at tougher rules for students on lower quality courses”.

There is anxiety in universities that the Home Office may rely on the Teaching Excellence Framework – the government’s new league table – to decide which “lower quality” institutions and courses to cut. Vice-chancellors warn this could have shocking consequences as some world-class research universities, including the London School of Economics, Bristol and King’s College London, are not predicted to score well in the new “gold, silver and bronze” rankings.

Rudd’s reference to universities that “stick to the rules” is widely thought to be a signal that the government will also crack down on institutions and courses with higher visa refusal rates. Under current guidelines universities will lose their licence to recruit international students if more than 10% of the students they recruit are refused visas. Two senior university sources said the Home Office was considering reducing this to 7%, and had looked at dropping it to 4% or 5%. A number of institutions could fail if the bar were this high.

The Home Office said: “Claims the Home Office is modelling cuts to reduce international students to a third [ie 100,000 a year] are categorically untrue. We want to strengthen the system to support the best universities – and those that stick to the rules – to attract the best talent. The British people have sent a clear message that they want more control of immigration and we are committed to getting net migration down to sustainable levels in the tens of thousands.”

Riordan says shifting the visa rules is unnecessary. “There is already a system that is stopping any abuse. If they are refused a visa, they aren’t coming here, so where is the problem?”

This article was amended on 12 December to remove a line at the request of the Home Office.

Oh yes they are! Foreign students prepare for a British Christmas

Many international students will spend the holidays with host families in the UK, playing games and watching their first pantomimes

Miriam Jaffe, a student from America at Queen Mary University, plans to enjoy pantomimes and Christmas markets. Photograph: Miriam Jaffe

Abby Young-Powell

Tuesday 20 December 2016 16.58 GMT Last modified on *Tuesday 20 December 2016 17.51 GMT*

Abhinav Kongari, 19, a student from India at the University of Sheffield, is nervous about playing board games this Christmas. He's looking forward to staying with a local family – something the international student committee at his university has organised – but says if they get board games out, he won't know what to do.

"I never had the experience of playing any," he says. "So I'll probably sit there with a blank stare, oblivious to everything, trying to understand what's going on. Hopefully they won't throw me out because of that."

Like Kongari, many international students will spend Christmas away from home this year. For some, it's the first time they will experience Christmas in another country, and the first time they will take part in British traditions such as board games or presents. So what are they up to?

Miriam Jaffe, 20, a student from America at Queen Mary University, will spend Christmas in London with a friend from school. She says she's "toying with a lot of different plans" involving Christmas markets and pantomimes.

"I'm looking forward to seeing the air of Christmas here," she says. Back home, her family go to the cinema together on Christmas Day, but this year her parents will see the new Harry Potter film without her. So Jaffe says she might read a Harry Potter book "just to be doing something vicariously that my parents will also be doing".

Marta Berbel Gallego, 19, a Spanish student at University College London, will spend Christmas with her mum, who is flying to London to be with her. She plans to take her to see the evensong in Cambridge and to a pantomime.

“In Seville we have no snow,” she says. “So I’m looking forward to seeing a London with snow hopefully, as well as the Christmassy spirit in England.” Gallego wants her mum to fall in love with the country like she has. “She doesn’t like the UK very much,” she says. “I think she thinks of London as the city that stole her daughter from her, but I’m going to make sure she has fun.”

It will be different from Gallego’s Christmases back home, where her family gathers to watch the King’s Christmas address before a dinner of canapes, seafood and lamb. “My grandfather is very keen on the King, so you have to be quiet,” she says.

People are definitely mad about Christmas here. They’re very very keen

Marta Berbel Gallego

Many universities put on festive events for international students, including ice-skating and Christmas dinner in Newcastle, lunch in Durham Castle and film screenings in Southampton.

Meanwhile, Host, a charity that aims to promote cultural exchange, arranges for international students to spend Christmas in volunteers’ homes.

The charity has organised for Megumi Yamazaki, 20, a student from Japan at Oxford Brookes University, to spend Christmas Day with a married couple in Salisbury. “I heard that British people spend Christmas with family, but lots of Japanese people spend it with friends,” she says. “My host family said they’re preparing typical British Christmas dinner. In my country we don’t really have Christmas food, so I’m looking forward to it.”

Host, a charity that aims to promote international friendship, arranges for international students to spend Christmas with UK families. Photograph: Host Yamazaki isn’t the only one trying new food this year. Kongari says he’s looking forward to British Christmas dinner, but he’s heard mixed reviews. “I’m just excited and maybe that excitement will pull me through the food,” he says.

Kongari hopes for snow, but is not expecting it. “I’ve spent a year-and-a-half in wet England, so I don’t believe we’ll have snowfall,” he says. “But who knows, it might be a Christmas miracle.”

Christmas for international students stuck in university halls can be a lonely time. Naman Jain, 24, a UCL student from India, says he’ll probably be homesick. “I’m in halls and most of the other students won’t be here. So I’ll spend time outside and explore the city. I’m just hoping the weather is OK for that.” Despite his worries, Jain says he’s looking forward to Christmas and hopes to make new friends over the holidays.

Whether from India, America or Japan, students were united in their shock at how early British people start celebrating Christmas. “At the beginning of November there was Christmas stuff everywhere,” says Jaffe. “But I didn’t mind because it’s not throwing Christmas in your face.” But Gallego says perhaps celebrations do start a bit too early. “People are definitely mad about Christmas here. They’re very very keen,” she says. “But it’s nice.”

Locals have been friendly and full of Christmas cheer, the students say. Ifeanyi Austine, 25, a student from Nigeria studying at the University of Manchester, says he loves Christmas time back home. “In Nigeria it is something else. It’s a time where you come back to your origin and share your experiences. It’s a time to reflect, share and eat.”

This year he plans to go to Christmas markets and to do lots of sightseeing. People have made him feel at home in Manchester, he says, and they are even friendlier now it’s Christmas time. “I never expected them to be so nice,” he says. “Now I’m noticing it even more. I think it’s the Christmas mood, to be more expressive and welcoming.”

Gallego says people are sympathetic towards international students who might be alone during the holidays. “It’s fantastic that so many people understand or empathise with what it would be like to spend Christmas in a different country.”

Kongari also says locals have been warm and welcoming. “That’s one of the reasons I’m staying here and not going back,” he says. He just hopes they stay friendly when the Monopoly comes out.

63

Folly of a crackdown on international students

Home secretary Amber Rudd. ‘International students not only support our universities, they also contribute to our soft power,’ writes James Pitman.

Photograph: Ben Stansall/AFP/Getty

Letters

Tuesday 20 December 2016 19.01 GMT Last modified on Friday 17 February 2017 11.05 GMT

Limiting the numbers of overseas students would see us pulling up the drawbridge not just on our overseas visitors but also on our own prosperity (Secret plans to slash overseas students by almost half, 13 December). By its very nature, higher education is international and people want to come to the UK to study because they are attracted by the quality of higher education available. As highly skilled people, those who stay also make an invaluable contribution to our economy, paying taxes which support public spending.

Of course students should be removed from the net migration target rather than targeted in this way, but government must also show it actually values the contribution those from abroad make rather than viewing them as a political problem. When one considers these latest plans alongside the disastrous higher education and research bill, which would expand for-profit education and undermine university autonomy, it is almost as if this government is determined to destroy one of the few world-beating sectors this country still has.

Sally Hunt *General secretary, University and College Union*

- Rumours regarding international education are harmful; the latest ONS statistics reveal the number of people immigrating to study fell by 15.5% this year to

163,000, the lowest estimate since 2007, over which period the global market demand has grown by 60% – a massive missed opportunity for the UK that is the result of damaging policy and rhetoric. International students not only support our universities, they also contribute to our soft power: one in seven countries has a leader who studied in the UK.

It would be utter folly for the Home Office to pursue an unjustified and arbitrary crackdown on student visas: an unpublished Home Office report allegedly revealed that only 1% of international students overstay their visas, rather than the 100,000 suggested by ONS data, so it seems likely that they are net neutral to net migration numbers and certainly not the “immigrants” that certain elements of the government seem to like to portray them as.

James Pitman *Managing director, HE – UK and Europe, Study Group*

- For some years, while taking student lodgers, we have encountered a number of interesting, industrious and very friendly graduate students – several from Thailand and occasional ones from Taiwan, China, Japan, Iraq and even Kazakhstan. The young women have studied astrophysics, tax harmonisation, the influence of family firms, intellectual property law but also the social context of Taiwanese pop music. The men, education skills, Thai xylophone bands, but also landslides. A lot of the time the house has smelled like a superior Thai restaurant.

We are sad that Amber Rudd thinks this country would be a better place if half of these people (who incidentally pay far higher fees than native students) could be kept away by erecting quotas, persuading them that they would be better off studying at home, or inventing questionnaires with trick questions. (She could always send vans around with threatening inscriptions.) Does she think foreign tourists should be discouraged? Certainly, the more closely we approximate to North Korea, the more in control we shall feel.

Joyce and George Schlesinger *Durham*

- Courses offering opportunities to UK students would not run without the presence of international students, especially at postgraduate level. The current policy reflects a totally uncoordinated approach on the part of government. Why

spend millions on marketing UK education overseas at the same time as attempting to drive down the number of student visas? The solution to reduce overall immigration figures is so simple: remove students from the migration statistics and place them in a separate classification in the same way that many of our competitors do. Net migration figures would be reduced at a stroke at the same time as preserving a major contributor to the UK's economy.

David Cronin *Stockport, Cheshire*

- What the government should be doing is to evaluate Britain's economic strengths in order to provide a Brexit parachute, and three obvious areas are education, research and the arts. In 2008-09, tuition fee income to the UK from foreign students was worth over £4bn, and 18% of the £26.4bn spent on research and development in the UK in 2010 came from overseas (£4.8bn). The UK's creative industries are now worth £84.1bn per year to the UK economy, or almost £10m per hour. Why therefore limit the number of foreign students who can come to the UK and cut back on arts education in schools and colleges? We need a quick and entirely objective reappraisal of government policy in these areas, for purely economic reasons if nothing else.

Dr Richard Turner *Harrogate, North Yorkshire*

- Surely the typical overseas student comes to the UK to study for three or four years and then goes home again. I do not see therefore why slashing their numbers would make any difference (other than temporary and cosmetic) to net immigration figures, for in any given year new students coming are cancelled out by old students going.

Tony Ridge *York*

Anxious international students turn away from UK

UK universities were the destination of choice for many global students. But the politics of immigration are forcing them to look elsewhere

Tess Reidy

Wed 4 Jan 2017 15.31 GMT Last modified on Wed 25 Jan 2017 17.20 GMT

International students are rethinking their study choices because they no longer feel welcome in the UK. Photograph: Alamy

Students from the rest of the world have been flocking to UK universities for decades, eager to get the most out of doing a degree here. In 2014-15 alone, some 437,000 students came to the UK from other countries to study. But this number is shrinking.

To the dismay of universities, there have been recent reports that the government is considering cutting international student numbers by nearly half in an effort to meet the immigration targets set by prime minister Theresa May.

Foreign students from within the European Union are concerned that the UK's Brexit decision will leave them stranded. But students from outside the EU have already begun to turn away from the UK and consider more welcoming countries with renowned universities, such as the US and Australia.

And that's because of strict visa rules introduced when May was home secretary.

What changed?

Until 2011, the number of students coming to the UK had been growing by 3-4% annually, but the rate has pretty much stagnated in recent years. This is down to changes introduced in 2012 that tightened the rules on foreign students staying on once they had completed their degrees.

Before the changes, a post-study work scheme allowed non-EU students who graduated in the UK to stay on and work for two years. Since then, there's been a big drop in the number of people moving from study visas to work visas.

Amreet Shah (not his real name) moved to the UK from India to study a masters in ICT at the University of Manchester. He came over on a dependent visa, as his wife was on a four-year PhD programme in the UK.

Shah says Britain offers the best opportunities for his subject. “Outside of the UK, India and the US are possible places for my line of work. But in the UK, opportunities are more concentrated and there are more university programmes within my research interest.”

Though India’s prime minister Narendra Modi has urged May to open up British universities to more of the country’s students and liberalise the visa system, students such as Shah are now facing strict conditions.

“Since coming to the UK to study, the rules have changed. At the time when I got this visa, dependants of students could get their own visa sponsorship once they landed a job,” he says. “But the rules were changed after I moved, and it has unfair consequences on my future prospects.”

Dominic Scott, chief executive of UK Council for International Student Affairs, thinks the changes are counterproductive and damaging. He points to research showing that the public does not see students as “immigrants”.

“If everybody accepts that students aren’t migrants... that they come here to learn not to earn, and that they are subject to particular rules, it seems absolutely bonkers that somebody is trying to reduce the number,” he says.

How easy is it for international students to work in the UK?

For non-EU students, the rules on moving from a student visa to a work visa are pretty strict. Essentially you’ve got to have a graduate job, with a graduate salary, with a licensed Home Office employer.

These criteria are hard to meet. For starters, the graduate salary needs to be a minimum of £20,800, which for a first job is pretty difficult, especially outside of London.

“We had a student with an MSc in marketing who was offered a job with a top firm as a marketing assistant. But that is not a graduate job – you’ve got to be a

marketing manager,” explains Scott. “And you can’t just work for a little tech company down in Hackney.”

Currently, non-EU students can work part time for 20 hours a week and full time in vacations. If they go to a private college, they’re not allowed to work at all. This was one of the measures introduced last year in a Home Office “crackdown on visa fraud”, targeting students at “bogus” private colleges.

What about EU students?

At the moment, EU students have the right to work in the UK. Students must apply for a national insurance number, although they don’t need this to arrive before they start work. However, these rules are likely to change when the UK leaves the EU. The worst-case scenario is that they will face the same rules as other international students.

It’s unlikely there will be changes any time soon though. Last month the government offered reassurance to EU students in relation to their fees. It confirmed that those applying to study at English universities from autumn 2017 will continue to pay the same fees as domestic undergraduates and will remain eligible for the same loans and grants, despite the vote to leave the EU.

But do students feel welcome working in the UK?

In October, the home secretary Amber Rudd prompted criticism when she proposed that businesses should disclose how many foreign workers they employ. The government has since rowed back from the suggestions, but universities fear that this kind of rhetoric will put many young people off wanting to come to the UK.

Nigel Carrington, vice-chancellor of University of the Arts London, is especially worried about EU students’ perceptions of the UK. “Art and design students come to Britain because they think our creative industries and universities are the most influential, open and connected in the world.

“But we’ve already had worrying indications that some EU students don’t sense this connection any more, with a small but notable drop in the number taking up

their places. We need to rebuild international perceptions of Britain as connected to Europe and the world.”

Kent Roach, careers and employability consultant at Sheffield Hallam University, says: “The students from countries overseas that I speak to are very, very aware of the social and cultural impact of Brexit and conscious of how the debate is being framed. People’s perceptions of the overall social, cultural and economic environment here is going to shape their experience and could well in the future put people off wanting to study and remain in the UK.”

Students like Shah are now having to reconsider their future plans. Although he is currently doing a PhD part time and working full time, he is stuck on a dependent visa and will not be able to continue working in the UK after his wife’s study comes to an end, unless he secures sponsorship.

“If I had known this, I would have remained in the lucrative job I had in India or at least applied to EU universities where settlement is a possibility,” he says. “By 2017, we will have been in the UK for five years, but it does not get counted for settlement. Unless you come to the UK as a single student and hitch up during your time here, the Home Office just counts you as immigrants.”

Shah now fears that he might have to give up on an academic career. “If it is not possible to remain in research, I will have to go back to data analytics,” he says.

65

Am I eligible to work in an internship as an international student?

As well as potential visa restrictions, I’m struggling to discover intern opportunities

Mon 9 Jan 2017 07.00 GMT Last modified on Mon 9 Jan 2017 07.03 GMT

I have been scouring every advert I can find, but internship opportunities seem to be very rare.

Twice a week we publish problems that will feature in a forthcoming Dear Jeremy advice column in the Saturday Guardian so that readers can offer their own

advice and suggestions. We then print the best of your comments alongside Jeremy's own insights.

I am an international student planning to study in the UK with a view to a career in fashion. According to my visa (Tier 4), as I understand it, I am not allowed to work during the course – I am only eligible to do so in holidays and during seasonal breaks. I want to know if there are any summer internships I could apply for in fashion.

I have seen a lot of online profiles of people who have proudly listed two-month internships at Vogue, Cosmopolitan, Harrods and so on, but although I have been scouring every advert I can find, these opportunities seem very rare. How do I find them?

Do you need advice on a work issue? For Jeremy's and readers' help, send a brief email to dear.jeremy@theguardian.com. Please note that he is unable to answer questions of a legal nature or to reply personally.

66

Tougher stance towards overseas students 'could cost UK £2bn a year'

Potential gains from charging higher fees after Brexit would be wiped out if Home Office tightens visa numbers, says report

Richard Adams Education editor

Thu 12 Jan 2017 00.01 GMT Last modified on Wed 14 Feb 2018 15.49 GMT

Cambridge is among those warn of early signs of a fall in overseas student numbers from outside the EU. Photograph: Andrew Parsons/PA

A tougher stance by the Home Office towards overseas students studying at British universities could cost the country up to £2bn a year, according to forecasts published by the Higher Education Policy Institute.

Its report also found that UK higher education could increase revenue from higher fees for foreign students after Britain leaves the EU. But the potential gains would be wiped out if the government insists on tightening student visa numbers.

Nick Hillman, director of Hepi, said: “Were the Home Office to conduct yet another crackdown on international students, then the UK could lose out on £2bn a year just when we need to show we are open for business like never before.

“Removing international students from the net migration target would be an easy, costless and swift way to signal a change in direction.”

The study, which examined the forces affecting international study at British universities, estimates that 20,000 potential students could be deterred by further efforts to restrict student visas, as part of its larger strategy of forcing down immigration.

While universities would lose almost £500m a year in fees from 20,000 fewer international students, the UK as a whole would lose a further £600m a year in the lost spending outside of fees, such as rent and food.

But the largest loss would be the more than £900m a year foregone in what the report calls “the detrimental impact on universities’ supply chains” through lost spending – the multiplier effects of what the analysts describe as “indirect and induced effects on the wider UK economy associated with this source of export income”.

Alistair Jarvis, deputy chief executive of Universities UK, representing the higher education sector, said: “This report provides a stark warning of the potential economic loss associated with policies that restrict European or international student numbers. If universities are to continue to boost the economy and benefit communities, they need the right support from government.”

John Pugh, the Liberal Democrat education spokesperson, accused the government of damaging universities through “populist pandering”.

“Brexit already poses a huge risk to our world-leading universities, the government should aim to mitigate this damage not increase it,” he added.

Earlier, a committee of MPs heard warnings from university leaders that Brexit risked setting British universities back decades, with other EU countries already actively looking to poach talented staff and students.

Asked about the probable impact of a hard Brexit, Prof Alistair Fitt, the vice-chancellor of Oxford Brookes University, said: “It would probably be the biggest disaster for the university sector for many years.”

Prof Alastair Buchan, the University of Oxford’s incoming head of Brexit strategy, said: “We need to be leading, and we have been leading as universities in the past 10, 20 years. Thirty or 40 years ago we weren’t, when we joined the EU. To lose that would be absolutely shooting ourselves in the foot – we must not do that.”

Buchan, the dean of Oxford’s medical school, takes up his new role on 20 January. His seniority and the status of the post is a clear sign of the gravity with which Oxford and other universities are treating the potential impact of the UK leaving the EU.

The Hepi report, which was compiled in conjunction with the consultancy London Economics, argues that while students numbers could fall in the event of Brexit, with EU students no longer given access to the same terms as British students, incomes at institutions such as Oxford could actually rise because of the higher fees charged to international students.

But Catherine Barnard, a professor of EU law at the University of Cambridge, told the education committee hearing that the early signs were of a decline in student numbers, including those from outside the EU.

She cited a survey by Cambridge of potential international students who did not take up a place, with a number of respondents mentioning “anti-immigrant sentiment” as one reason.

“Particularly in the field of maths, the German universities are really looking to tap into the pool of talent that we are getting from Hungary and Poland,” Barnard said.

Buchan told MPs that the Brexit department and the Department for Education had no way of communicating with universities about the problems they faced.

“In the Department for Exiting the European Union, there is no structure of who we can talk to, there’s no base camp, there’s no one responsible for research or education in universities,” he said.

“Likewise, in the Department for Education, there’s nobody really responsible for leaving the EU. So there’s a real need to see who is the channel or the portal for information.”

67

Dear Jeremy – your work problems solved

Our careers expert – and you the readers – advise a worker on how to leave a failing company on good terms, and an international student seeking an internship

Jeremy Bullmore

Should I just leave and let him sort out the mess by himself? A reader is struggling with a dilemma.

I want out of a dysfunctional two-man firm, but don’t want to leave on bad terms

I work for a two-man consulting company – my boss is a friend from university and owns all the business. Over the past 12 months he seems to have lost all interest and has not been performing at all. He has had many problems in his personal life involving a bereavement, and hasn’t been interested in winning new business or seeing to it that our current client work is done properly.

I’ve always been paid an extremely low salary, way below market rate, on the understanding that future business success could make up for this. However, now I feel that I’ve been taken advantage of, with my boss taking our client fees at market rate and using my low wage to subsidise himself. I have no proof of this, however: we don’t have an office, so we work from home and I very rarely see my boss, and he doesn’t always answer my calls or reply to my texts. We’ll meet, allocate tasks, then they just won’t get done.

I’ve been offered a good, stable job at another company and have decided to go full time with them in March. However, until the end of February I have one client for whom I need to do a report, but I need the help of my boss – and try as I might to ask him, nothing gets done. I feel completely isolated, responsible for a project

which I know will fail without help from someone who seems a million miles away.

Should I just leave and let him sort out the mess by himself, knowing that I'll be fine as I'll be starting with my other company soon? Or is there anything I can say to give my boss that burst of motivation that's needed to at least get this project over the finishing line, after which we can wind up the company and go our separate ways?

I don't want to let down a friend, but this is a nightmare, and by failing on this project I'd also be letting down a high-profile client who doesn't deserve this treatment. I've considered informing the client about the problems, but it would be very embarrassing at this late stage. Any help would be appreciated.

Jeremy says

It says a lot for your good nature that you can still think of your boss as a friend and be concerned about letting him down. From what you tell me he's hugely in your debt and you owe him nothing. I suspect you've been altogether too good natured for too long. I'm relieved you've been offered a good, proper job and have decided to take it.

In the meantime you're left with the problem of your high-profile client, and here your concern is wholly justified. Given that the project will fail without input from your boss, and given his absolute absence of responsiveness to date, I can see no possible solution that doesn't involve the client.

By that, however, I don't just mean informing them about your problems and tacitly conceding that you're unlikely to be able to complete the project satisfactorily. I think your best chance of jolting your boss back into action is through a personal intervention by the client, and that means taking them into your confidence. Tell them about your boss's private problems, including the bereavement. Don't be at all censorious, be very sympathetic and understanding. Say that you need your boss's help to complete the task and that only a direct appeal from the client is likely to have the desired effect. Draft a letter to your

boss, for the client to sign, that makes it crystal clear, though without overt threat, that the client regards your boss's involvement as imperative.

It should work. But if it doesn't your client is at least be aware that you've done everything you could to complete the project. If the result is unfavourable word-of-mouth about your boss and his business, you'll know you gave him every chance to retrieve the situation.

Readers say

- Level with your boss. I would frame it in terms of informing him you are moving on and agreeing a transition plan, including successful delivery of the project. I would steer clear of talking about his underperformance or the unfair allocation of salaries. These things are only worth mentioning if you want to fix them. If you have decided to move on, then do so as friends.

Don't badmouth your boss or company to the client, but do let them know they'll be working with your boss from now on as you have decided to move on to a great new opportunity. **neeny**

- Somehow seeing the project through to the finish is in the best interest for you, your boss and the client. Tell your boss you're leaving and set out a plan for completion of the project. Tell him all the reasons why it's important to do it well: the high-profile client, both of your names are associated with it, the payment you'll get from them. Maybe the company has run its course, but you can still go out with a bang. **Jodie Houghton**

- 1) My friends generally respond to my emails/texts/calls etc fairly quickly, so this chap is not really your friend, is he? 2) Give him your notice in writing with recommendations as to how to finish the project in time. 3) Inform the client that all communications should be with your boss after the end of February; say how good it was to work with them and hopefully your paths will cross in the future. 4) Think about how you will use the extra salary. **DavidRennie**

I'm an international student struggling to find a fashion internship. Any ideas?

I am an international student planning to study in the UK with a view to a career in fashion. As I understand my Tier 4 visa I am not allowed to work during the course, but can work full-time in holidays and seasonal breaks.

I'd like to know if there are any fashion summer internships I could apply for. I've seen a lot of LinkedIn profiles that proudly list two-month internships at Vogue, Cosmopolitan, Harrods and so on, but although I've been looking, these opportunities seem to be rare. How do I find them?

Jeremy says

Guardian readers may know of such opportunities but I'm afraid I don't. However, I can suggest spending some time working on a presentation of yourself. It's obvious what you would gain from a fashion-related internship – now give some creative thought as to what you could offer in return. If you can present yourself as an unusually attractive and inventive person, with flair and drive, you'll greatly increase your chances of landing one of the few opportunities that do exist.

Readers say

- A standard Tier 4 visa will allow you to work for 20 hours a week in term time and full-time during holidays. Do double check as you may have unusual restrictions on your visa! **procrastcreate**
- Check Graduate Talent Pool, a government-funded internship site where all vacancies pay at least the national minimum wage. Fashion is under represented, but it may be worth looking.

I talk to a lot of students/graduates looking for internships and my first question is always "Have you been to your careers service?". It is often the first port of call for local recruiters looking for students, and ultimately it's their job to get you a job. It's also worth trying Enternships, Step, or Inspiring Interns. **edwardprichard**

- Getting a part-time job selling higher-end clothes could give you an advantage asking about internships. **ajchm**

Studying at Aleppo University: 'You get used to seeing blood on the floor'

When Enana al-Assaf was bombed during an exam, she made herself carry on writing. Now doing a PhD in the UK, she worries every day about her family in Syria

Abby Young-Powell

Thu 2 Feb 2017 11.35 GMT Last modified on Sat 14 Apr 2018 18.54 BST

Enana al-Assaf was just five minutes into a pharmacy exam at Aleppo University when a bomb exploded next door. The then 22-year-old student says she'd heard the deafening noise of a military plane before the bomb hit. Then the building shook, glass smashed down on top of her, and screams and shouts erupted from the floors above.

As she sat frozen in shock and shaking, the invigilator gave her a choice: she could make her way to safety and repeat the exam in the summer, or stay there amid the chaos and finish it.

“What are you going to do?” Assaf asks. “Education was number one in my life. I wasn't going to stop just because it's dangerous.” So she, along with most of her classmates, stayed and completed the exam. As they worked, a second bomb exploded outside. And when they left hours later, they passed blood and ambulances on their way home.

Now 26, and living in the relatively peaceful city of Norwich, Assaf says she wants to help Syrians missing out on their studies due to the conflict.

She herself has been offered a scholarship to study a PhD in cancer research at the University of East Anglia (UEA) and says the opportunity has changed her life. “We have so many smart people in Syria who can't continue their studies,” she says. “They really want to finish their degrees, but can't.”

Universities are struggling to operate amid the war. Where they can, students try to complete their degrees but for most it's not easy. Assaf lived close to an air force intelligence building, a target for bombs and snipers. “You get used to seeing

blood on the floor,” she says. “And you just say: ‘thank God I wasn’t there five minutes ago, otherwise I would have been hit.’”

Assaf had to move in with her aunt in western Aleppo after she came home from university one day to find a shell had landed in her living room, destroying her whole house. Her aunt lived next to a hospital, and Assaf recalls seeing dogs crawling over bodies in the bins outside.

University was no safer. Assaf would run to the basement every time there was a threat of danger and many of her friends were killed. “Half my friends were detained, some left the country, and some of them were shot dead in their house.”

There was no electricity, water or heating at the university. “You don’t have anything in the lab,” she says. “And we ended up being taught by unqualified teachers, who just had a bachelor’s degree but were taking the position of university doctors.”

I used to wake up every night having flashbacks

Enana AlAssaf

Despite this, Assaf wasn’t able to transfer to a university outside Syria. “I tried every option. I tried to go to Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, but they wouldn’t take my degree,” she says. “It’s also very expensive.”

The Institute of International Education has called on universities to do more to help Syrian students access education abroad. Although some universities, including UEA, now offer scholarships, Syrian students still often face language, visa and funding challenges.

Assaf was lucky enough to get support, gaining a scholarship from the Asfari foundation in 2014 to study for a masters in molecular medicine at UEA. But the problems didn’t stop when she arrived at her new university.

AlAssaf says she was depressed and had to seek counselling. “I wasn’t psychologically stable because I had been in a war zone and then suddenly I’m in a very nice place,” she says. “I used to wake up every night having flashbacks and feeling like I was back in Syria.”

And she felt disconnected from other students. “There’s a big gap between what’s going on there and here. Sometimes I’d tell people I came from Syria and they wouldn’t understand,” she says. Her marks suffered. “I’d never written an essay in my life, and I didn’t know how to reference or do simple things,” she says. Plus, she struggled with lectures in English.

But despite her initial struggles, she completed her master’s, and last month UEA offered her a scholarship to do a PhD in cancer research. Assaf says it’s “the best thing that has ever happened” to her and plans to work hard to find affordable cancer treatments for displaced people. “I called my family in Aleppo and my mum cried,” she says. “Even though she’s under so much stress and fear, she was always praying that I would fulfil her dream and do my PhD.”

Assaf has been joined by her husband, a fellow pharmacist whom she married in front of a large crowd of well-wishers in Syria after graduating. “People had had enough of the sadness, and wanted to celebrate,” she says.

But her heart is always with family back home. “The first thing I do when I wake up is check the news,” she says. “Then I check when my mum and sister were last online. If it was yesterday, I have to call and check they’re OK. Days pass when I’m in constant worry. I think every Syrian has this worry in their heart.”

And she wants to do what she can to help other Syrian students. “I just really want to emphasise that I hope there’s more support for refugees outside. I was lucky to get a scholarship to continue, but there are other students [still] there,” she says. “And if you give them education, they are going to contribute to rebuilding the country.”

Senior MPs accused of damaging UK with divisive rhetoric

Brexit committee chair Hilary Benn says Rudd and Hunt talk of crackdowns on foreign students and doctors is disastrous

Rajeev Syal

Mon 6 Feb 2017 12.01 GMT Last modified on Wed 14 Feb 2018 15.47 GMT

Jeremy Hunt told the Conservative party conference he would replace foreign doctors with British ones. Photograph: Matt Cardy/Getty Images

Senior government ministers including Amber Rudd and Jeremy Hunt are damaging the UK's standing in the world with their divisive rhetoric, the chair of the Commons Brexit committee, Hilary Benn, has said.

The former shadow foreign secretary said the Conservative party's annual conference was an "absolute disaster" because senior politicians portrayed an image of the UK that was insular and aggressive towards foreigners.

Indicating that such language could influence negotiations with the EU, Benn said making pronouncements about what the government would achieve from its discussions would harden attitudes towards the UK among European politicians and officials.

Speaking at the Institute for Government's headquarters in central London, Benn said: "When I reflect upon a certain week in Birmingham in the autumn, where people of a particular political party gathered and made speeches, I thought that was a disastrous week for Britain's reputation in the world. Absolutely disastrous.

"Because to produce headlines saying 'Crackdown on foreign students' – when I last checked I wasn't aware that foreign students were a problem that we need to crack down upon, it is ridiculous to have them in the net migration target – or saying that doctors who have brought their skills to this country can stay in the interim while we train more of our own doctors – it sent a message at that point

that we are closing in on ourselves as a nation. That's not who we are, it is not what Britain is. We will thrive in the future by being a welcoming country."

He said ministers should stop claiming they would achieve certain goals from the Brexit negotiations before they began because it would only harden the opinions of those with whom Britain was negotiating.

"The second difficulty has been people sitting there saying: 'We are going to get the following'. Well, the 27 [other EU member states] are thinking: 'We will see about that' ... It would be prudent to change the tone," he said.

In October, Rudd, the home secretary, told the party conference that the Home Office would shortly consult on the new student immigration system, and on tightening the resident labour market test that companies have to pass before recruiting employees from overseas. The moves were part of the drive to reduce net migration, which currently stands at 327,000, to "sustainable levels".

"The test should ensure people coming here are filling gaps in the labour market, not taking jobs British people could do," she said.

Hunt, the health secretary, told delegates he would recruit more UK-trained doctors to replace those who were being employed from abroad. "Is it right to import doctors from poorer countries that need them, while turning away bright home graduates desperate to study medicine?" he asked.

Benn said that while politicians should take on board the views of many Britons who wished to see curbs in migration, immigration targets were unhelpful because migrant labour was still needed in many sectors, including agriculture and social care.

He said he had seen first-hand the vital work migrants do as he nursed his father, the Labour veteran Tony Benn, who died in March 2014.

"When my father was dying, almost all who helped care for him were born outside of the UK. Who will look after us in the future?" he said.

The 10 best cities in the world to be a student in 2017 – in pictures

What's your ideal city to study in? University experts QS have released their annual student cities rankings, based on criteria including affordability, student experience, job prospects and friendliness to international students

Imran Rahman-Jones

Tue 14 Feb 2017 21.01 GMT Last modified on Thu 22 Feb 2018 05.58 GMT

- 10. Vancouver

Vancouver is among the most naturally beautiful regions in the world to study in, with a stunning backdrop of the North Shore Mountains on one side and the Strait of Georgia on the other. But only 44% of students stay in the city after graduation – by far the lowest in the top 10.

- 9. Munich

Munich is the second most affordable place for students on the list – beaten only by another German city. Public universities in Germany charge almost no tuition fees, but get there quickly: a director of Germany's Institute for Education and Socio-Economic Research predicts that Germany "will have reintroduced tuition fees by 2020."

- 8. Boston

MIT and Harvard aren't really in the city of Boston, but they are included in the Boston metropolitan area. Given they rank first and third respectively in the QS university rankings, they're probably the main reason Boston makes the top 10. The city scores highly in the student experience category, but it's let down by the worst affordability rating in the top 10 – largely due to the extortionate tuition fees charged in the US.

- 7. Tokyo

This bustling metropolis (population 38 million) has a high cost of living, which might help explain why many international students tend to prefer Hong Kong or

Singapore as places to study in Asia. But it rates very well in the student experience category (provided you can afford it). The incredible food helps.

- 6. Berlin

More and more young people are flocking from abroad to this hipster haven, but not that many are students; only 16% of Berlin's university population comes from outside of Germany. But with public universities in Germany being free – for now – and a low cost of living, Berlin is the most affordable city in the top 10.

- 5. Melbourne

High tuition fees and increased living costs mean every Australian city has fallen in this year's rankings. But Melbourne still proves popular, with 220,000 students making up a substantial 5% of the total population.

- 4. Seoul

Like Tokyo, Seoul struggles to attract international students, who only make up 7% of the university population. But 86% of graduates stay on in the city after their studies – the highest proportion in the top 10.

- 3. London

A huge 41% of students in London come from overseas – whether this number stays the same post-Brexit remains to be seen. Despite eye-watering rents and huge living costs, London has managed to jump two places in this year's table.

- 2. Paris

This is the first time Paris hasn't topped the rankings since they began in 2012, due to a fall in both its desirability and affordability ratings. But studying here can still be a good career move: degrees from Parisian universities are looked upon favourably by both domestic and foreign employers.

- 1. Montreal

To top off a good year for Canadian universities, Montreal has climbed six places to take first place. It may not boast universities as prestigious as those in London or Paris, but students have rated the city highly for its nightlife and its friendliness – not to mention the lowest cost of living in the top 10.

2VCs: How do we win back anxious international students?

Tough UK visa rules and harsh rhetoric have seen numbers plummet. Two vice-chancellors tell Anna Fazackerley why they think the tide may be turning

Anna Fazackerley

2VCs: In this series, two vice-chancellors get together to hammer out the knotty problems of higher education

Wed 15 Mar 2017 09.00 GMT Last modified on Tue 18 Apr 2017 16.36 BST

Last October Amber Rudd, the Home Secretary, pledged a major crackdown on international student numbers at UK universities, linking the right to recruit foreign students to the quality of courses. The public consultation has yet to materialise, and how the government will evaluate courses remains unclear.

In the first of a new monthly series in which two vice chancellors discuss the big issues facing their institutions, Professor Colin Riordan, vice-chancellor of Cardiff University, and Professor Dominic Shellard, vice-chancellor of De Montfort University (DMU), reflect on what the future holds for the all-important overseas student market.

Research-intensive Cardiff University and modern, Leicester-based De Montfort may be very different types of institution, but they are both heavily dependent on international student recruitment, and fiercely proud of the multicultural nature of their campuses.

There are currently more than 7,100 overseas students at Cardiff, making up almost a quarter of the student body. The university's 2016 intake saw students arrive from more than 130 countries and key markets outside the EU are China, Malaysia, India, Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, the US, Iraq, Pakistan and Kenya.

The picture at De Montfort is similar with 4,391 international students from 135 countries, making up 20% of the total student population. The university's biggest markets outside Europe are China, India and Nigeria.

Can we win back the confidence of international students?

I ask the two vice-chancellors whether they are on a charm offensive abroad, given the uncertainty hanging over the international student market.

We've decided we've got to try and shore up some of our existing markets and reach out to new ones

Dominic Shellard

Dominic Shellard kicks off with a cautionary tale about travelling to China to do an event for Universities UK in October, shortly after Rudd's speech. China remains a relatively buoyant market judging by sector-wide recruitment figures, and he wasn't prepared for the "extraordinary hostility" of the journalists he met there.

"They used a phrase about Theresa May being 'an international student slayer'," he says. "They were using a vocabulary I've never experienced before as a vice chancellor. But I think there's a lot to be gained by actually going out to countries to face up to some of this stuff."

And that's exactly what he's doing. "I'm just doing masses of travelling," he explains. "Looking at this turbulent environment, we've decided we've got to try and shore up some of our existing markets and reach out to new ones. We launched a campaign straight after the referendum called Love International, because so many staff and students were pretty bereft about the result. I've been doing a series of trips to European capitals, and wider."

This June, around two months after Theresa May has indicated she will trigger Article 50, Prof Shellard will take 1,500 De Montfort students to Germany. "We're basically saying: 'Look, we're here, and we're going to do lots of engagement.' We've got to find a way through this even if, at the moment, at the very highest level – the rhetoric on international students and migration being a good example – the government is just not pressing the best buttons for higher education."

Is the government softening its stance?

Colin Riordan is hopeful the government may be quietly back-peddalling on some of the aggressive talk about cuts to international students numbers. "This may be

excess optimism, but I've detected a bit of a change of tone in the government's approach towards international students and the whole question of what it means to immigration," he says.

I'm hopeful there may be recognition that international students are not the only lever to make changes to net migration

Colin Riordan

"I do agree that it is probably the biggest danger we face. But I have noticed that since the Prime Minister's visit to India [in November], the rhetoric has been largely absent – we haven't really heard much about international students."

I ask him whether the Home Office, which has locked horns with higher education ministers in recent years over its determination to class overseas students as migrants, has suddenly decided that this is a market that needs protecting. After all, international students bring more than £10.7bn a year to the UK economy according to Universities UK, the umbrella organisation of university leaders.

But Prof Riordan's reasoning is more political. "I'm hopeful there may be some recognition that the world has now changed, and international students are not the only lever available to make changes to net migration," he says. "It's quite clear students from Europe won't have the same access to student loans or be treated like domestic students after Brexit. In other words, the government will have levers over migration from other EU states they don't have now. To my mind, that means international students become less of this single big issue. It might allow us to have a more sensible debate."

"I'm also more optimistic in the longer run than I was six months ago," agrees Prof Shellard. "But most universities' international recruitment at the moment is under a degree of strain. My concern is that there is going to be a lot of short-term damage which will take time to recover from."

Can Indian recruitment recover?

Recruitment from India has been one of the markets to slump most dramatically in recent years, almost halving over five years following the removal of the post-study work visa by the coalition government in 2012. Previously, non-EU students

were allowed to remain in the UK after finishing their studies, but under the new rules they must leave the country and apply for a work visa if they wish to return.

The latest figures from the Higher Education Statistics Agency show that new Indian student numbers are continuing to fall - down 10% in 2015-16 on the year before. I ask the VCs whether India is a particular concern for them.

“There has certainly been a slump, but we are seeing a steady recovery,” Riordan says. “If we live up to this talk about being open to the world, and if we can get back a post-study work visa of some sort, there’s absolutely no reason why the Indian market shouldn’t recover. We have seen a bounce because of the big drop in the value of the pound, which makes us better value for money.”

Shellard has made promotional trips to India three times in the last year. He tells us that his university has done a huge amount of work to boost this market – a natural one for an institution in Leicester, which has a large Indian community. They went from 168 Indian students to 306 last year, and are hoping for nearly 400 in 2017-18.

“It’s exactly what you’re saying Colin, you go to India and say: ‘Look, we’re the value proposition, we’ve pretty much got the best universities in the world and we’re 20% cheaper than we were six months ago’,” he says.

“Indian students really want to come to the UK. Institutions like DMU just need to be getting on planes to these countries and offering positive reasons for coming to the UK, beyond their lingering and understandable resentment about the abolition of post-study work visas.”

Shellard was one of the VCs on the Prime Minister’s delegation to India in November. “It was clear that Indian prime minister Narendra Modi’s feeling was that our government wanted their business, but they didn’t want their people. I think that was such a catastrophic line for us to take,” he recalls.

So are they both confident that the government will listen to the sector’s lobbying – and that of the Indian prime minister – and reinstate post-study work visas after Brexit?

“I think confident would be going too far,” Prof Riordan says. “But we do have much better arguments now, particularly as the whole visa system is clearly going to have to be looked at as part of the repositioning of the UK after Brexit. I would hope we’d be able to find some way of reinstating if not exactly what we had, then something which offers many of the same advantages.”

“I’m actually quite bullish on this,” Shellard chips in. “From the nadir of the visit, I think there emerged a real sense – particularly in the Department of International Trade – that this is ridiculous. You can’t just turn around to a market like India and say: ‘Great opportunities for us to engage with you now after Brexit,’ and offer absolutely nothing.

“And the clear thing they request is a recognition that for Indian students to be able to afford to undertake an international education, they need some work opportunities, even if just for six or 12 months.”

He adds: “Look at what Canada and Australia are doing. They are advertising nakedly in India now, basically saying come to us and not the UK to study as we will give you the opportunity to work afterwards.”

Is Theresa May viewed in the same light as Donald Trump?

“Are we coming across as a country that truly wants to be welcoming?” I ask. “Or is there a danger that Theresa May has seemed more like President Trump when it comes to international students?”

“Well, we look more welcoming than we did before Trump!” Riordan laughs. “What’s going on over there is breathtaking in terms of the impression it makes internationally about America’s openness and willingness to welcome students – as much as anyone else – across the world.”

Shellard agrees. “I think Trump and his executive order has given us an ethical, moral and commercial opportunity. As soon as it was passed, we agreed to have a 24-hour vigil on our campus as our students were just so outraged. I don’t think I’ve ever seen anything which has so galvanised our staff and students.

“It all demonstrates that basically we are still an open and tolerant society. I think that’s one of the really sad things, that we’ve allowed ourselves to convey overseas

that we are not. But look at the tolerance to minorities in this country, and look at the way our universities are such special communities. It's a massive asset, and I think it's something we could really capitalise on."

Colin Riordan

What was your first degree and where did you study?

German at Manchester University

What did you want to be when you were 18?

An officer in the Green Howards

Which football team do you support?

Liverpool if pressed, but I don't really follow football these days

Name three things you love about your university city

- Bute Park - you can walk down to Cardiff Bay or up to the Brecon Beacons along the Taff Trail
- Milgi for its vegan dishes
- The atmosphere in the Principality Stadium just before a rugby international

What book is on your bedside table?

Do No Harm by Henry Marsh - a gripping account of life as a neurosurgeon

Best way to spend a Sunday?

A long country walk (12 miles is about right) then a film at home in the evening

Dominic Shellard

What was your first degree and where did you study?

English and German, St Peter's College, Oxford

What did you want to be when you were 18?

Stan Bowles' successor

Which football team do you support?

QPR (I'm a season ticket holder)

Name three things you love about your university city

- Leicester's diversity - we have 140 nationalities on campus and the city is famous for its United Nations feel
- Leicester City - for the elation and angst they bring their fans

- The revitalised city centre - full of bars, theatres and good shops

What book is on your bedside table?

John Bew's biography of Clement Attlee

Best way to spend a Sunday?

Roast dinner with my partner, then lying on the sofa watching a good football match

How do we show international students they're still welcome in the UK?

If the government won't do it, the higher education sector needs to convince overseas students that the door is open

Jeremy Cooper Managing director at Hobsons EMEA

Wed 17 May 2017 07.00 BST Last modified on Fri 20 Apr 2018 22.16 BST

International students generated £11bn for the economy in 2016. Photograph: Mike Park

When the government decided against excluding international students from immigration targets through the Higher Education and Research Act, the higher education sector reacted with dismay. Now we are hearing that the Conservative manifesto commitment to cut net migration to tens of thousands is to be repeated. Responsibility for making international students and staff feel welcome in the UK must therefore fall to universities themselves.

Government decisions are sending out the wrong message to the rest of the world. This is a shame, since international students and academics who come to study or work in the UK have greatly enhanced the higher education sector, British society and our economy. They also help make the UK a world leader in innovation, scientific research and collaboration.

But the education select committee [pdf] recently reported that the number of EU undergraduates had dropped by 7.4% over the past year, and this is likely to continue amid Brexit uncertainty. This was confirmed by Hobsons' research last

year, which found that 36% of prospective international students said they would be less likely to study in the UK after the Brexit vote.

There is comfort to be taken, however. This year's annual survey of more than 27,000 prospective international students found that only 13% were less interested in studying in the UK. This may indicate that sentiment towards the UK is less negative now than it was nine months after the referendum.

Our research also showed that sector-wide publicity campaigns aimed at promoting UK universities as welcoming destinations such as #WeAreInternational and #LondonIsOpen were having a measurably positive impact – 84% of respondents said these campaigns had persuaded them that the UK was welcoming. It confirms that more can be done by universities and by all of us with an interest in UK higher education to encourage international students to keep on coming. It's in the country's interest as well – according to Universities UK, international students generated some £11bn for our economy in 2016.

There are a number of practical steps that universities can take to try to ensure that international students keep coming to the UK. We know that when choosing a destination, overseas students are motivated by how welcome they feel. Universities should build on the success of campaigns like #WeAreInternational by expanding these efforts. We believe that projecting a strong, welcoming message in all marketing materials through digital campaigns, social media and on the global stage could help attract some of the students considering studying in the US to the UK.

There are many other factors besides rankings that influence international students' perceptions of quality, and there is potential to appeal to overseas students by demonstrating the strength of an institution's offer in alternative terms. Highlighting teaching quality, staff qualifications and student satisfaction in all communications with prospective international students during their enquiry and application journey can have a significant impact.

Indeed, communications are key. Our research suggests email remains the most important channel for prospective international students, so universities should

provide a rapid response alongside regular proactive communications. This should be supported by a strategic approach to social media, tailored to different groups. Universities must also consider the potential impact of the Teaching Excellence Framework ratings exercise. This may have a negative impact on overseas students looking to study in the UK, given that the majority of universities will receive silver or bronze awards in the TEF rankings when they are announced next month. This risks creating an increasingly confusing and uncertain picture for international students considering coming to the UK.

While this will be challenging for some institutions, it could result in opportunities for others. Our research found that 80% of prospective international students considering the UK would choose excellent teaching quality over a high-ranking university. So lower-ranked institutions may be able to increase their appeal by showcasing their track record in teaching quality and highlighting their welcoming culture.

73

There is hope for universities in the Tory manifesto

If universities can convince Theresa May they are the solution to problems set out in the manifesto, they could play a key role in delivering her agenda

Alistair Jarvis Deputy chief executive, Universities UK

Sun 21 May 2017 13.00 BST Last modified on Wed 31 May 2017 15.39 BST

The policy proposals provide universities with a platform to showcase their value to the UK. Photograph: Alamy Stock Photo

It would have been easy for me to write a piece on why the Conservative manifesto spells doom and gloom for universities. Attacking the prime minister might even have gained me a headline or two (and some new friends in the sector). But this approach would have been a crude and unconstructive response. It would have underplayed the impressive ability of universities to adapt, innovate and have a lasting impact on individuals, local communities and the economy.

On a first read of the manifesto, some worrying statements on an important issue for universities jump out from its 84 pages. The pledge to keep international students in net migration targets coupled with tougher visa requirements for students are a painful double whammy for universities. If these manifesto words become policy, we must ensure the focus remains on visa compliance rather than any move to deny qualified international students access to UK universities.

There is also an urgent need for reliable data to identify the extent of any overstaying. The current work by the Office for National Statistics should solve this problem and in turn reduce net migration figures if it shows (as the Home Office's unpublished internal data does) that the number of overstayers is far lower than official figures state.

Despite this, there is a clear commitment to encourage the world to study in the UK. Universities should seize this as an opportunity to drive an ambitious expansion of government-backed international marketing campaigns to promote the UK as the best destination in the world to study. University leaders can work with politicians to communicate a welcoming and consistent message to international students.

Anchor institutions

On second reading, it becomes clear that the manifesto provides opportunities for universities. Rather than containing universities in a typically short peripheral section on "higher education", the role of universities is embedded across the manifesto. This acknowledges the significant role of universities in enabling a prosperous UK. It provides opportunities for universities to promote their role as institutions that are vital to a successful post-Brexit Britain.

The challenge for universities is to show how they can make a major contribution to delivering economic prosperity; creating jobs; underpinning the industrial strategy; strengthening the UK's global influence; building cohesive local communities; fuelling innovation; attracting inward investment; and developing workforce skills. This could seem like a daunting task list, until you recognise that universities are already delivering on each these issues, day in, day out. Moreover,

universities are constantly innovating and developing ambitious new plans to deliver greater economic and social value. This isn't a challenge for universities – it's a platform on which to showcase our value to the UK.

Support for science

There is also support for universities in the manifesto. The pledge to meet the OECD average of R&D investment of 2.4% of GDP within 10 years, with a longer-term goal of 3% is a commitment that university and research leaders have long called for to ensure the UK remains the best place in the world to do research. This will support universities to conduct more life-changing research and drive economic growth.

There is an important commitment to “increase the number of scientists working in the UK and enable leading scientists from around the world to work here”. The manifesto proposes that universities lead the expansion of R&D capacity in the UK by creating new university investment funds to commercialise research. There is an encouraging nod towards the importance of continued collaboration with the EU on science and innovation. Equally, a pledge to protect foreign aid spending comes with recognition that British scientists have helped address “some of the greatest challenges facing the world's poorest people”, and commits to “significantly increased” funding for UK-led research.

Upskilling the workforce

The manifesto signals a renewed focus on enhancing the skills of the British workforce. Universities have been at the forefront of developing high quality vocational qualifications and training. They can play a lead role in creating a further expansion of high quality courses that meet the needs of students and employers, in partnership with industry.

There is a focus on the key role that universities play in their local communities. The challenge to open up “opportunities for local people, especially those from ordinary working backgrounds” is one universities are already engaged in through their widening participation work. But the proposal that all universities must “sponsor academies or found a free school” feels unnecessarily prescriptive and

fails to recognise that over half of English universities are already engaged in school sponsorship. Any future development of this policy must involve close consultation with universities and schools, consider local needs, and be based on evidence of what good school-university collaboration looks like.

If Theresa May is returned to power, there are challenges and obstacles for universities on the horizon. But there are also major opportunities for higher education to play a central role in delivering an economically successful, globally-engaged post-Brexit Britain. I can see a future where there are far more opportunities for universities to work with a future Conservative government to build a more prosperous Britain than there are issues that divide us. The challenge for universities lies in making the case that they are the solution to the questions being asked.

74

How do international students shape UK towns and cities?

Universities need to start shouting about the mutual benefits that overseas students bring to their local communities

Rebecca Hughes

Rebecca Hughes is director of education at the British Council

Tue 23 May 2017 07.30 BST Last modified on Tue 23 May 2017 09.46 BST

International students bring many tangible benefits to the classroom and beyond

Photograph: University of Glasgow

International students are the lifeblood of the places in which they live in many ways. They live and learn cheek by jowl, providing universities with unprecedented opportunities to mobilise the expertise of people from diverse backgrounds. This allows them to open new research and policy dialogues that spread knowledge across their local area. But how much do people living in UK towns and cities really know about the ways in which overseas students engage with the local community beyond their studies?

Through international students, each city across Britain shares in an estimated £25bn in direct and indirect economic benefit and the support for 200,000 jobs, according to recent research by Universities UK. And on average, UK universities host students from over 90 different countries – and the figure is closer to 130 in Russell Group research-led institutions.

There is a huge range of cultural, social and business assets sitting in the three or four tertiary institutions that most cities host. International students have a direct financial impact, yes, but they also bring many tangible benefits to the classroom and beyond. They volunteer in local schools and work with the elderly and refugees. They bring new cultural perspectives to issues in the classroom, and they form networks of alumni who support businesses and take home memories of and fondness for cities and regions around the UK.

How do universities leverage their global student network?

Community engagement happens at several levels, from students on a single course to the whole institution. Large or small, the activity is characterised by being able to combine local benefits and global thinking at the same time.

An example at course level is a regular intake of US visiting students on a programme in Manchester Metropolitan University. Visiting academics provide UK schools with insights linked to a range of programmes, for instance on different approaches to inclusive education in the US and the UK. Meanwhile, the US students, many of whom have never left the US before, gain an international perspective on their work to take home. The activity also forms a bond with local primary schools through Skype sessions to US schools giving pupils on both sides a window on a different and distant part of the globe.

In Newport, the University of South Wales actively promotes volunteering among international students across a wide range of local organisations from Tenovus cancer care to befriending the elderly or working with the Red Cross. These activities are directly linked to community need and help the students to build their CVs and gain better inter-cultural skills to take home or build their professional careers in the UK.

In Queen Mary University of London, which welcomes 155 different nationalities, community engagement is a core part of the university mission for home and international students alike. QMUL students have taken part in over 1,500 work placements and internships over two years, allowing local organisations to access expertise while enhancing student employability. This includes an average of 130 project-based placements in charities and non-profit organisations and 350 internships and part-time roles in businesses every year.

Showing the impact of overseas students

The burning question for the British Council and for universities themselves is whether we are doing enough to explain the reciprocal benefits that international students bring to cities and communities. I don't think we are.

The idea of youngsters sitting in ivory towers for then flying off to live a gilded life as global citizens is far from the mark for the vast majority of the international students. Many learn about UK values and modes of social cohesion that are unfamiliar to them. Not all societies are familiar with the concept of volunteering; and many women come from parts of the world where their contributions in public, business or sports are not encouraged.

We learn from these impressive young people who come far and wide to learn with us that there are many different ways to see the world, to solve problems and to understand each other. This is something we all benefit from, and we should do more to celebrate it.

Theresa May's vision for universities? More inward-looking, less independent

The Conservative manifesto wants universities to serve local rather than global needs. But the two can't be separated

Andrew McRae Head of English, University of Exeter

Thu 1 Jun 2017 07.30 BST Last modified on Thu 1 Jun 2017 11.24 BST

The Conservatives want universities to keep the messy business of globalisation at arm's length. Photograph: Alamy Stock Photo

Universities make Theresa May's Conservatives uneasy. Their manifesto might set out promises for research funding, but it is also full of sticks with which to beat higher education. Read closely, it gives us a Tory vision of a perfectly British, post-Brexit university: one that looks inward at local communities, rather than outward at global networks.

For universities, their ideal vision for higher education would be a world with frictionless movement of students, researchers and ideas. Meanwhile, vice-chancellors have spent much of this century fantasising about freedom from state control.

But May's Tories aren't having it. Moving higher education into the Department for Education was symbolically important, indicating a view of universities not as independent businesses but as part of a national educational system. This manifesto goes one step further, introducing policy levers to get universities to address government priorities, from niche industrial research to training more doctors.

Reading between the lines is necessary, since the manifesto is devoid of detail. For the revived technical education sector, do they have in mind a system of differential fees according to an institution's record of repayment? Or maybe it will never happen. Perhaps they would rather like us to think of government as a strict headteacher, with a big stick behind the door.

The issue that has rightly focused attention across the sector is international students. The manifesto proclaims: "We will toughen the visa requirements for

students, to make sure that we maintain high standards.” The curious thing about this sentence is not just the commitment, but the justification.

What does it mean? Is it concerned with standards of visa compliance or standards of education? Or perhaps there’s something more fundamental at work here. It’s an anxious sentence. It says: “Don’t go thinking you know better than me.”

This is not to say that all their ideas are bad. Indeed, Universities UK has responded positively to some of them. There’s a proposal to “build up the investment funds of our universities”, enabling them “to enjoy the commercial fruits of their research”. There’s also a reiteration of the industrial strategy’s commitment to targeted research funding in certain fields.

But even these proposals are still fundamentally aimed at focusing universities on serving their local area. Universities would argue that global recognition and local influence are symbiotic. But the Tories, trailing their distaste for “citizens of the world”, are suspicious. They want to ensure that universities create “opportunities for local people, especially those from ordinary working backgrounds”. They want technical colleges to partner with “leading” universities (a phrase that would have me worrying if I were at a “non-leading” one).

Ultimately, the manifesto is a determined effort to remould an idea of the university from the clay of British exceptionalism. After all, this is a document that positions the UK as a “champion of free trade”. It even uses a metaphor from medieval chivalry to make a former colonial power seem distinctive. It’s about remembering we’re a little bit special after all. Accordingly, we’re given a university of “high standards” and Nobel laureates, recognised in global league tables while maintaining an arm’s length approach to the messy business of globalisation.

At one moment the manifesto declares that the government must “enable top scientists to work here”. What’s perhaps most revealing about this statement is its easy assumption that top scientists will actually want to buy into the Tories’ model of a British university. They – like international students, existing academics in

UK universities, and all those other potential migrants – may very well decide to go elsewhere.

76

Top 200 universities in the world 2018: the UK's rise and fall

As the latest QS world university rankings are released, we look at the big story from this year's results – the UK slipping down global rankings

Jack Moran PR executive at QS Quacquarelli Symonds

Wed 7 Jun 2017 21.00 BST Last modified on Wed 14 Feb 2018 15.38 GMT

Fifty-six of the UK's 76 universities have seen a decline in applications from international students.

When UK citizens go to the polls on Thursday, their thoughts will be dominated by the big issues of the election campaign: Brexit, social care, migration, health provision. Few will have higher education at the forefront of their minds. Jeremy Corbyn's pledge to abolish tuition fees and reintroduce maintenance grants notwithstanding, discussion of the future of the UK universities has been limited in the run-up to the election.

Wednesday's launch of the 14th QS World University Rankings provides a timely reminder that whoever triumphs in the election will require all of their political nous to revive the UK's flagging higher education system.

Last year's QS results proved dispiriting reading for those concerned about the future of the UK's universities, and this year's are no more encouraging: 51 of the UK's 76 ranked universities fall. The UK is now home to fewer top-400, top-200, and top-100 universities than last year. In the rankings' uppermost echelon, the University of Cambridge drops to 5th position – its lowest rank since the inaugural QS World University Rankings of 2004.

Rise and fall

Why does QS's Intelligence Unit find the UK higher education system, while still objectively the world's second best, to be decreasing in its competitiveness?

It cannot be put down to Brexit as this represents a second year of UK regression, and we are still in the union. The most consistent decreases in score are found for QS's citations per faculty indicator. This measure of institutional research impact and intensiveness sees lower relative scores than last year for 57 of the UK's 76 universities. Put simply, this year's results indicate that UK universities are becoming less competitive as research-driven institutions.

This could be attributed to years of real-terms funding stagnation. These rankings indicate that the institutions that perform most strongly are those which receive adequate funding – whether public or private. We note, for example, that public research funding in the UK has still not returned to 2010/11 levels in cash terms – let alone in inflation-adjusted real terms.

It is true that injudicious spending can result in inefficient research programmes. However, this ignores the fact that institutions and nations that have seen rankings improvements this year – such as Russia's Lomonosov Moscow State University, which returns to the top 100 – have benefitted from targeted increases in government investment.

The declines are also the result of the increased use of adjunct staff at UK universities to support expansion. These staff members help to reduce the teaching burden on senior academics, but are able to devote less of their attention to research. They increase the staff count without improving the citations count by a proportional amount.

The international question

The other worry for UK institutions is the level of internationalisation recorded in the first meaningfully post-Brexit edition of the rankings. QS's raw data shows that the higher education world is becoming a more internationalised one: the global international student ratio (accounting for 5% of each institution's score) has again increased.

The UK's 76 universities do not follow this trend. 2017's data shows that 56 UK universities have seen their international student ratios drop year-on-year, and the UK average is also below last year's total. This corroborates evidence from

elsewhere. Earlier this year, UCAS noted that EU applications to the UK had dropped by 7%.

But the UK is not alone. The US has also seen its rate of inward student mobility decrease this year. Of its 157 universities, 107 recorded lower relative scores for international student ratio. Furthermore, evidence from business school application figures and US college application statistics suggests that international students are expressing doubts about the desirability of the US as a study destination in greater numbers than before. This suggests there could be a relationship between the drop in international student applications and recent political events.

The Brexit effect

Internationalisation affects the quality of a higher education system in a number of important ways. The first, and most crudely quantitative, is financial. While universities in both the UK and US are navigating a world in which public funding is increasingly scarce, premium tuition rates paid by international students help ensure that these institutions can remain financially competitive.

The second is the impact on research quality. In 1981, approximately 90% of UK citations impact was produced domestically. This figure has decreased to less than half: the majority of UK citations impact is now produced through internationally co-authored papers. The citations impact of a purely domestic paper is minimally better than the global average, but international co-authored papers do substantially better – and the difference is increasing.

Internationalisation is also a valuable means of fostering global relationships and improving national soft power, improving the renown of UK higher education. A sector regarded as insular and parochial will see its proportion of international faculty and students decrease. If the UK government is resolute in ending freedom of movement, access to key funding programs like Horizon 2020 may be threatened, as was the case for Switzerland. These factors, for the reasons outlined above, will adversely affect more substantial metrics like citations per faculty and academic reputation.

Irrespective of political affiliation, navigating the threat that Brexit poses to UK higher education has to be a priority for institutions that want to be tomorrow's winners.

Jack Moran is closely involved in the auditing and analysis of the QS World University Rankings alongside the QS Intelligence Unit

77

Don't fear British sarcasm – and other advice for overseas postgrads

Moving countries for a degree is a formidable challenge but it's immensely rewarding. Here are some lessons I learned

Hadas Elber-Aviram PhD student

Sat 22 Jul 2017 10.00 BST Last modified on Thu 5 Oct 2017 10.24 BST

'I was warned that the British are stand-offish, prim and take offence at the slightest social misstep.'

In my year group as a postgraduate, I saw half of the non-UK students drop out. This far exceeded the class's drop-out rate for UK students. It helps put into context the scale of the challenges that international students face in coming to the UK to do a postgrad degree. Having recently faced those challenges myself, I have some advice.

Making friends is easier than you think

As I prepared to emigrate to the UK, I was repeatedly warned that the British are standoffish, prim and take offence at the slightest social misstep. These cautionary tales were reinforced by funny articles insisting that the British use words to say the opposite of what they mean. As a result, I remained silent and petrified during my first few months.

It's best to dispel this ridiculous stereotype at once. This is not to say that every Briton wants to be your best friend, but neither are they likely to murder you for adding both lemon and milk to your tea. (They may do for queue jumping, though.)

That said, you might find it helpful to befriend fellow non-UK postgrads, as they are probably in a similar situation and equally eager to make new friends. Some postgraduate programmes actively support such connections by running mentorship programmes.

Don't blame yourself

Unless you are superhuman, the going will get tough. Completing a master's or PhD is a gargantuan task under the best of circumstances. You will have to manage everything involved in settling in the UK: keeping up with immigration bureaucracy; finding somewhere to live; opening a bank account; registering with the NHS; arranging travel cards for public transport; maybe managing a language barrier; probably hunting for and holding down a part-time job. If you are self-funded at the overseas rate, you will also be burdened by the knowledge that you are paying an enormous amount for your degree.

It is perfectly natural, even unavoidable, that at times you will feel overwhelmed, anxious and even depressed. Talk to your international colleagues and you will likely discover that they share your anxieties.

You have much to learn, but still more to teach

One of the big differences between international students who pursue an undergraduate degree in the UK, and those who come for the first time to do a postgraduate degree, is their starting position. Every undergrad knows nothing about higher education, and their degrees are structured and paced accordingly. This is not the case for postgraduate degrees. You may well find yourself envious of students who have studied in this system before, who know the inside track and might even be on a first-name basis with staff.

Be prepared to unlearn some habits you acquired at your home institution, and to adopt some of the unfamiliar ways of UK universities. But don't abandon your academic background entirely. I often found I had the advantage of a fresh perspective or a rare piece of knowledge. So don't be afraid to speak up.

Plan ahead for your career

There are different steps you should take during your postgraduate studies, depending on whether you intend to return to your country of origin or stay on in the UK to work. Either way, planning ahead is crucial.

If you intend to return, you should maintain professional as well as social ties with your home country. These include presenting at conferences back home, and returning for work experience or internships. You may not feel it yet, but postgraduate studies in the UK can earn you a fair amount of respect.

If you intend to stay, cement connections with contacts in the UK. On top of all that, make sure you research the UK immigration rules that apply to your country of origin. If you come from a country outside the EU or commonwealth, staying in the UK might prove difficult. Many graduate-level jobs can be too poorly paid to sponsor work visas.

Finally, allow yourself a moment of pride for making a courageous decision. For an international student, completing a UK postgrad degree is a formidable challenge, but it is immensely rewarding. It will, quite simply, change your life. How and in what way is largely up to you.

78

Shaky science shouldn't dictate international student numbers

Government needs to link datasets on international student migration to build a true picture – otherwise they could be turned away for no reason

Hollie Chandler Senior policy analyst at the Russell Group

Tue 1 Aug 2017 07.30 BST Last modified on Tue 1 Aug 2017 07.32 BST

Only a small proportion of interviewees for the International Passenger Survey are students. Photograph: Steve Parsons/PA

Last week, the Office of Statistics Regulation added its voice to concerns over the quality of student migration statistics, recommending that the Office for National Statistics downgrade the official measure of the number of overseas graduates leaving Britain. Earlier, a House of Lords committee warned that without

improved statistics on immigration, “the government will be formulating policies in the dark”. Why is visa policy for international students based on evidence that isn’t robust?

Controversy over the statistics on international students and graduates in the UK is not new. It has been a feature of the immigration debate for a number of years. The reason for this is that the UK’s estimates of immigration and emigration of non-EU nationals come from ONS data, which is based on the International Passenger Survey (IPS).

A major limitation of this survey is its sampling: only 0.2% of travellers entering and leaving the UK are interviewed, of which a very small proportion (around 0.6%) are long-term migrants and an even smaller number are students. The IPS also doesn’t capture students on overnight flights, which will have a particular impact on certain markets such as China, which sends the most international students to the UK.

According to the report from the statistics regulator, the survey also fails to capture a number of emigrating graduates. A graduate might identify as a worker when they leave the UK, if they were in employment for a period after they completed their studies. Equally, a masters student who arrived for a 12-month course and was classed as a long-term migrant, but left the UK after 11 months, may appear as short-term immigrant on departure.

If you take these blind spots and combine them with poor sampling, estimates of net flow based on the IPS should be considered approximate at best. The ONS has stated that IPS estimates should not be taken as a measure of the long-term contribution of students to net migration (pdf). Other data sources are used to verify IPS data, but cross-checks are not a perfect science.

These sources include the Home Office’s own figures. It releases information on the number of student visas issued each year and their length, but granting a student visa doesn’t mean the student will definitely come to the UK to study. In some cases students change their mind. A UK Border Agency report in 2010 estimated this may be true for 9% of students (pdf).

Home Office data on grants of extensions to stay can help indicate the number of graduates intending to stay for work or further study and who are granted visas to do so. This will form part of a new international graduate student survey to be launched by the Home Office this year, which is also expected to provide rich information on the post-study intentions of new graduates.

But neither of these data sets will give conclusive information on whether these graduates actually stay or leave the UK, and when. They are each valuable in their own way, but they were not designed to serve as authoritative sources on whether people are staying in the UK after university or leaving the country.

Perhaps more promising are exit checks, which were introduced in April 2015. Since then data on departures from the UK has been flowing into the Home Office; applying to over 100 million travellers a year, by air, rail and ferry. These checks will provide evidence on departures of all non-EU nationals and the first analysis of the data should be published in August. If linked to other data on entry, length of permitted stay and type of visa, this data has the potential to give a comprehensive picture of the flows of international students for the first time.

At the least, exit check data will indicate how many students are breaking the terms of their visa and not leaving the UK. However, there are still caveats: this might not easily distinguish between those overstaying for one day and those staying illegally for the long-term. Some media reports have suggested the overall proportion overstaying is as little as 1% (1,500) per year based on early analysis of exit checks data.

Instead, linking data sets will be key. This is why it's so welcome that the ONS and other government departments including the Home Office, the Department for Work and Pensions and HMRC are working together on this. Only by doing so will we realise the potential of exit check data and ensure a firm foundation of evidence to inform government policy.

How immigration data is collected is of more than academic interest. Decisions over student immigration – and other areas of skilled migration – will help decide the sort of Britain we are able to build outside of the European Union. If we want

to attract the best and brightest to study, work and innovate in the UK then we need to be working from a proper evidence base on international students.

If we are going to get policy solutions that reflect genuine need, it will take more than anecdotal data and flawed metrics.

79

Expert panel to assess impact of international students on UK jobs

Home Office's migration advisory committee will crack down on abuse of visas by poor-quality institutions, says Amber Rudd

Jessica Elgot @jessicaelgot

Thu 24 Aug 2017 00.01 BST Last modified on Thu 24 Aug 2017 17.06 BST

Visa applications for Russell group universities rose by 6% last year. Photograph: Alamy

Migration experts will be asked to examine the impact of international students on the UK job market, in a Home Office review that campaigners warned may lead to tougher restrictions.

The migration advisory committee will be asked to examine the effect that both EU and non-EU students have on the labour market and economy while in the UK, the department said on Friday – though it will not report back until next September.

The home secretary, Amber Rudd, has previously pledged a crackdown on international student numbers, including tougher visa rules for “lower quality” universities and courses.

Theresa May has repeatedly rejected suggestions that the UK could exclude international students from the official migration figures, a move that would make it more viable for the government to meet its long-delayed target of reducing net migration to the tens of thousands.

The chancellor, Philip Hammond, is believed to favour such a move, telling the Treasury select committee last year it was “a matter of public perception”.

The Labour MP Peter Kyle, a supporter of the pro-EU Open Britain campaign, said the report should not be used as a path to further restrictions on genuine students.

“International students are a huge boon, both to our world-class universities and our economy,” he said. “That’s why any attempt to make it harder for them to study in the UK would be a disaster. Our economy would suffer, and so would Britain’s reputation as a tolerant and welcoming country.

“The migration advisory committee is meant to be an independent, expert body. Any attempt by ministers to use their report as a fig leaf to try and justify a crackdown on international students would be a disgrace.”

Announcing the report, Rudd said the government wanted to keep the door open to genuine students but would crack down on abuse of visas by poor-quality institutions.

The committee will be asked to examine the impact of tuition fees and other spending by international students on the local and national economy, as well as the role students play in contributing to economic growth and the quality of education for domestic students.

Rudd said the UK’s status as the second most popular global destination for international students was “something to be proud of” and said the sector was a key export for the UK. “That’s why we want to have a robust and independent evidence base of their value and the impact they have,” she said.

Last year the UK saw an increase of 6% in visa applications for Russell group universities, and visa applications sponsored by universities are 17% higher than they were in 2010.

However, it emerged last month that an official measure of the number of overseas graduates leaving Britain was to be downgraded amid concerns it was unreliable.

Doubts were raised over the measure after a gap appeared – averaging about 110,000 a year – between the estimated number of people entering the UK to study and the number of former students leaving the country, raising questions over whether graduates were remaining in the country beyond the end of their courses.

The immigration minister Brandon Lewis said the government’s commitment to reducing net migration “does not detract from our determination to attract

international students from around the world” but said the government was still cracking down on systemic abuse.

Alistair Jarvis, the chief executive of Universities UK, welcomed an examination of the net benefits of international students. “This is an opportunity to build on the considerable evidence that shows that international students have a very positive impact on the UK economy and local communities,” he said.

“International students also enrich our campuses and the experience of UK students, culturally as well as economically. Many return home having built strong professional and personal links that provide long-term soft-power benefits to the UK.”

80

UK immigration levels may be lower than thought, new border checks find

Fresh evidence that 97% of international students leave country after finishing studies throws previous figures into doubt

Jamie Grierson @JamieGrierson

Thu 24 Aug 2017 10.40 BST First published on Thu 24 Aug 2017 08.25 BST

Passengers going through the UK border at Terminal 2 of Heathrow airport.

Photograph: Steve Parsons/PA

Ninety-seven per cent of international students leave the UK after finishing their studies, new border checks have reportedly found, suggesting levels of immigration in the UK are much lower than previously thought.

It has been claimed that tens of thousands of international students remain in the country illegally after completing their studies but exit checks introduced last year found evidence to the contrary, the Telegraph reported.

Citing Whitehall sources, the newspaper said the overall net migration figure, which stands at 248,000 in the most recent estimate, could be tens of thousands lower after taking into account the new exit checks.

The figures, published on Thursday, come as the Home Office unveils separate plans to ask migration experts to examine the impact of international students on the UK job market.

The migration advisory committee (MAC) will be asked to examine the effect that both EU and non-EU students have on the labour market and economy while in the UK and will report back next September.

Announcing the report, Amber Rudd, the home secretary, said the government wanted to keep the door open to genuine students but would crack down on abuse of visas by poor-quality institutions.

The committee will be asked to examine the impact of tuition fees and other spending by international students on the local and national economy, as well as the role students play in contributing to economic growth and the quality of education for domestic students.

Rudd said the UK's status as the second most popular global destination for international students was "something to be proud of" and said the sector was a key export for the UK. "That's why we want to have a robust and independent evidence base of their value and the impact they have," she said.

Last year there was a 6% increase in visa applications for Russell group universities, and visa applications sponsored by universities are 17% higher than they were in 2010.

Alistair Jarvis, the chief executive of Universities UK, welcomed an examination of the net benefits of international students. "This is an opportunity to build on the considerable evidence that shows that international students have a very positive impact on the UK economy and local communities," he said.

"International students also enrich our campuses and the experience of UK students, culturally as well as economically. Many return home having built strong professional and personal links that provide long-term soft-power benefits to the UK."

Tim Bradshaw, acting director of the Russell Group, said: "This exit check data confirms that in addition to helping create a diverse learning environment and

making a big economic impact, an overwhelming majority of international students comply fully with the terms of their visas.

“The first step towards ensuring we have a system that is fit for purpose is accurate data. The decision to reintroduce exit checks was a welcome move on the part of the Home Office in this regard. This publication is an important step forwards, as is the announcement of a MAC review of the value of student migration to the UK.

“We have always been clear that international students are good for universities and good for the UK. We look forward to making this positive case to the MAC.”

The Labour MP Peter Kyle, a supporter of the pro-EU Open Britain campaign, said the report should not be used as a path to further restrictions on genuine students.

“International students are a huge boon, both to our world-class universities and our economy,” he said. “That’s why any attempt to make it harder for them to study in the UK would be a disaster. Our economy would suffer, and so would Britain’s reputation as a tolerant and welcoming country.

“The migration advisory committee is meant to be an independent, expert body. Any attempt by ministers to use their report as a fig leaf to try and justify a crackdown on international students would be a disgrace.”

81

Net migration to UK drops to lowest level for three years

More EU citizens leaving UK after Brexit vote, as research reveals impact of international students on net migration is much lower than thought

Jamie Grierson @JamieGrierson

Thu 24 Aug 2017 11.50 BST First published on Thu 24 Aug 2017 09.44 BST

Net migration to the UK has fallen to its lowest level in three years, as significantly more EU citizens left the country in the wake of the Brexit vote, official statistics have shown.

The headline net migration figure of 246,000, which is the difference between immigration and emigration, was 81,000 lower than the 327,000 recorded in the March 2016 according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

Liberal Democrat leader Vince Cable said the figures were evidence of an economically damaging “Brexodus” of EU workers.

“These figures show a deeply worrying Brexodus of EU citizens who have made the UK their home. This is largely a result of the failure of Theresa May’s government to guarantee EU citizens’ right to stay,” Cable said.

“This government must act urgently to give assurances to skilled and hard-working EU citizens, before any more damage is done to our already weakened economy.”

The change was driven by a marked fall in net migration of EU citizens to the UK, as more left the country and fewer arrived in the months after the country voted to leave the European Union on 23 June 2016, statisticians said.

Related research also revealed that the impact of international students on net migration is much lower than previously thought as 97% of students from beyond the European Economic Area (EEA) leave before their visa expires.

Two complementary reports released at the same time by the ONS and Home Office have cast doubt over previous estimates of international students who remain in the UK once their studies are completed, contrary to previous suggestions that tens of thousands were illegally remaining.

The Home Office paper on “exit checks” data – a proper count of all people who are actually known to have left the UK – found 176,317 – 97.4% – of 181,024 international students from outside the EEA left on time.

Meanwhile, the ONS found “strong evidence” that the current methodology used is likely to “underestimate student emigration” and therefore figures on the contribution that students make to net migration is likely to be an overestimate.

The findings have led to confusion over the government’s stance on international students. Theresa May, as home secretary and now prime minister, has insisted international students should continue to be included within official migration

estimates, on the assumption that a significant minority flouted rules and overstayed their visas.

Previous estimates put the level of overstayers as high as 100,000-plus, when according to the exit checks analysis, this figure is more likely to be under 5,000. Home secretary Amber Rudd has launched an investigation into the economic impact of international students.

The perceived presence of student overstayers has driven Tory immigration policy since Theresa May entered the department with curbs on student visas increasing over the last seven years.

Diane Abbott, the shadow home secretary, said: “Tory migration policy is a shambles. Against all advice, Theresa May continues to insist in maintaining an arbitrary net migration target of under 100,000, which has never once been met.

“Now it seems that her long-running campaign to malign international students is based on fantasy, with no evidence of a major issue with students overstaying. Some in government appear to be waking up to the idea that overseas students make a valuable contribution to our country and have belatedly asked the Migration Advisory Committee to gather evidence.

“Labour will offer fair rules and reasonable management of migration; prioritising jobs, growth and prosperity, not bogus net migration targets.”

Brandon Lewis, the immigration minister, said: “People who come to our country to work bring significant benefits to the UK, but there is no consent for uncontrolled immigration.

“That is why we have reformed routes to the UK from outside Europe and will negotiate the right deal in the national interest when we enter Brexit negotiations.”

Elsewhere in the statistics, emigration of EU citizens increased by 33,000 year-on-year to 122,000 – the highest outflow for nearly a decade.

There was a particularly sharp rise, of 17,000, in departures of citizens from the so-called EU8 countries, which joined the union in 2004 – the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

At the same time there was a 19,000 decrease in immigration from the EU, although this was not statistically significant.

Jonathan Portes, the economist, said: “These statistics confirm that Brexit is having a significant impact on migration flows, even before we have left the EU or any changes are made to law or policy.

“EU nationals, both those already here and those considering a move to the UK, are understandably concerned about their future status in the UK. My earlier research suggested that Brexit was likely to lead to a large fall in EU migration to the UK, with a significant negative impact on the UK economy.”

82

The immigration stats blunder shows how far perception is from the truth

Abi Wilkinson @AbiWilks

New figures show fewer immigrants in the UK than was thought – but it’s doubtful this will change media reports that warp public understanding of reality

Thu 24 Aug 2017 12.24 BST Last modified on Wed 14 Feb 2018 15.34 GMT

‘The border checks introduced by the government last year show that 97% of international students leave once their studies are completed.’ Photograph: Steve Parsons/PA

It turns out that net migration – the number of people coming in and out of the UK – may be much lower than previously thought. We now know that the Home Office has ordered an official review of the effect of international students on the British labour market. Apparently, it was formerly assumed that tens of thousands remained in the country illegally after graduating. However, the border checks introduced by the government last year show that 97% leave once their studies are completed. International students are one of the largest groups of immigrants in the UK, but this information also casts doubt on other UK immigration statistics.

So now we know, what difference does it make? Not that many of us seem to pay attention to the official figures anyway. Even before this information came to light,

opinion polls consistently found that the general public massively overestimates the percentage of foreign nationals living in the UK. One such survey, conducted by Ipsos Mori in 2016, found that voters believed, on average, that 15% of the population were non-UK EU nationals. (Those who intended to vote leave estimated an average of 20% and remain voters guessed 10%.) Official figures at the time put the number closer to 5%.

Now it seems that even those figures are overstating the truth, it's becoming increasingly clear that the national panic over immigration is more akin to a tabloid-driven, collective fever dream than anything grounded in concrete reality. Research has found that attitudes are most negative among people in areas with very low immigration. British nationals in places with a relatively large migrant population are far less likely to see immigration as a problem. Younger people are also far more likely to view immigration positively. Perhaps because when you live, work or study alongside people from other countries, you realise that's all they are: people. The less contact you have, the more probable it is you'll believe in the bogymen presented by the rightwing press.

It's interesting to look at data tracking the percentage of the population who view immigration as one of the "most important issues facing Britain today". The figure peaked at 56% around the time the Brexit referendum was announced. Since we voted to leave the EU it has dropped fairly steeply, with roughly a quarter of the population still citing it as an important issue. Though (now questionable) government figures do suggest net migration fell in the period since the referendum vote, the reduction isn't large enough that ordinary people are likely to have noticed a difference.

Nor have any of the problems falsely blamed on immigration, such as housing undersupply and overstretched public services, significantly reduced. If anything, things have got even worse. Homelessness continues to rise. The NHS is facing an unprecedented staffing shortage as a direct result of the Brexit vote – as European workers have been deterred from applying to work in the UK.

What has changed is the way the issue is covered by the media. Newspapers that campaigned for Brexit inform their readers they've succeeded in "taking back control". Publications which agitated for years about migrants "taking all the jobs" switched to worrying about labour shortages – in some cases suggesting quite extreme solutions, such as one particularly maddening Sun editorial suggesting prisoners should be forced to pick fruit, to replace migrant workers who previously did the job.

In recent years, the UK "immigration debate" seems to have been a lesson in how much media can warp public understanding of reality. To build a better, more integrated society we need to find more effective ways to counter the poisonous narratives pushed by certain outlets.

Today's figures only show how far perception is from the truth.

- Abi Wilkinson is a freelance journalist
- This article was amended on 25 August 2017. It originally stated that in a 2016 Ipsos Mori poll people thought the proportion of immigrants in the UK was 15%. This should have said non-UK EU nationals.

Exit checks data raises questions over May's focus on student overstayers

Cracking down on 'bogus colleges' made for good headlines but limitations of migration estimates have been well known for years

Heather Stewart Political editor

Thu 24 Aug 2017 18.06 BST Last modified on Mon 27 Nov 2017 18.02 GMT

Theresa May at the 2015 Conservative party conference.

“Students, yes; overstayers, no.” That was the blunt message from Theresa May, then home secretary, to Conservative party members at their conference two years ago.

“Let me be clear about students – we welcome students coming to study,” she said. “But the fact is, too many of them are not returning home as soon as their visa runs out. If they have a graduate job, that is fine. If not, they must return home. So I don’t care what the university lobbyists say, the rules must be enforced.

“Students, yes; over-stayers, no. And the universities must make this happen.”

Limiting immigration was a Conservative manifesto pledge and, her cabinet colleagues say, a personal crusade for May. Vince Cable, now the Liberal Democrat leader, who sat in cabinet alongside May in the 2010-15 coalition government, has described her as being “obsessed” with it.

And while voters appeared to be more concerned about cut-price EU workers rather than students, cracking down on “bogus colleges” made for good headlines. To justify tough action, May repeatedly used estimates from the Office for National Statistics that around 100,000 students a year overstayed their visa rather than getting a job or going back home.

Except, we now know, the figure was wildly out of kilter with reality. The ONS’s latest estimate, published on Thursday and based on new exit checks at Britain’s borders, is that fewer than 5,000 students, or 3% of the total, overstay.

Policy experts and some of May’s former cabinet colleagues, including Cable, argue that this shouldn’t be a surprise. The limitations of immigration data have been well known by policymakers for years. In particular, the lack of any exit checks when people leave the UK has made it difficult to ascertain with any certainty how many of those who come here on visas allowing them to remain for a limited period end up staying much longer.

In 2006 the then governor of the Bank of England, Mervyn King, told a House of Lords committee that the government's reliance on the International Passenger Survey, based on interviews carried out at ports and airports, meant it was impossible to judge how many people were in the UK.

“We need to know both those coming in and going out. This is in no way a criticism of the ONS but we simply don't have the ability to measure accurately at the moment the size of the UK population.”

Jonathan Portes, professor of economics at Kings College London, said the Home Office had had better data available but continued to rely on the IPS. “This issue was well known,” he said. “[May] knew at the time that this was a stupid policy based on bad data.”

In his book *Coalition*, the former Lib Dem minister David Laws describes the Home Office's reluctance to establish working entry and exit checks, and recalls being told by a senior civil servant in 2013: “Theresa May is saying that entry and exit checks would be expensive and embarrassing and would distract attention from tackling serious criminals and terrorism.”

It is these exit checks that have now provided the ONS with the extra data it needed to make a much better estimate of the proportion of students who overstay.

As well as raising questions about the Home Office's focus on battling against student overstayers, the new data also eliminates one of the key arguments against removing students from the net immigration figures – something a series of senior Conservatives including Philip Hammond and Liam Fox have argued for in the past. In 2015 when he was foreign secretary, Hammond said driving away students was causing “immense damage” to Britain's reputation.

Since this year's general election, which wiped out the Tories' majority – taking much of May's authority with it, the party's Scottish leader, Ruth Davidson – as well as the former chancellor George Osborne, have questioned the wisdom of the

net immigration pledge and in particular the inclusion of foreign students in the target.

The home secretary Amber Rudd's decision to commission a formal study of the economic benefits of foreign students appears to be aimed at building up an evidence base for a shift of emphasis away from cracking down on overstayers.

The ONS estimate will intensify the pressure on May to abandon her long-held insistence that foreign students must be counted as migrants. Otherwise she will risk appearing to put hunch, anecdote and the preoccupations of the rightwing press before hard evidence.

84

Theresa May under fire as student visa myth exposed

Prime minister left looking isolated as figures show fewer than 5,000 foreign students stayed on in UK after visas expired

Heather Stewart, Rowena Mason and Jamie Grierson

Thu 24 Aug 2017 20.06 BST Last modified on Tue 13 Mar 2018 17.53 GMT

Undergraduates at Aberystwyth University. The UK government has been accused of exaggerating numbers of 'overstayers'. Photograph: Alamy

Theresa May's determination to continue counting foreign students in the government's immigration target left her increasingly isolated on Thursday night, after official figures revealed that fewer than 5,000 a year stay on after their visa expires.

A string of Conservative and opposition politicians called on the prime minister to end the focus on overseas students as it appeared the government had been drastically overestimating the risk that they remain in Britain illegally.

New data, published by the Office for National Statistics and based on recently created exit checks at Britain's borders, showed just 4,600 overstayed their visa last year. Estimates for previous years had been close to 100,000.

The Liberal Democrat leader, Vince Cable, called on the prime minister to apologise for the Home Office crackdown on foreign students. Cable, who served in David Cameron's cabinet alongside May, said: "We spent five years trying to persuade the Home Office that the figures they were using as evidence were bogus, but they persisted nonetheless on the basis of these phoney numbers.

"The consequences were very serious. I would hope they would not just apologise to the individual students, many of whom have paid large fees and even found themselves deported in some cases, but simply acknowledge that the figures are grossly distorted and wrong."

The prime minister has repeatedly rejected the idea, mooted by cabinet ministers including Philip Hammond and Boris Johnson, of excluding students from the Conservatives' target of bringing net migration down to the tens of thousands.

May has long believed that removing students from the figures would prompt accusations that she is moving the goalposts. The tens of thousands target was included in the party's 2010, 2015 and 2017 manifestos, but Conservative governments have repeatedly failed to meet it.

Nicky Morgan, who chairs the Treasury select committee, said Thursday's data suggested "the reasons given for including students in the net migration numbers don't really ring true".

Bob Neill, a Conservative MP and former minister, said: "I think there is a growing realisation in the party that it is not realistic to be counting students because it is pretty clear that the vast majority return home. And, secondly, there is a recognition that post-Brexit our education sector, our higher education sector, is a big selling point.

"We actually ought to be attracting talent. A lot of these people will go back but have connections with the UK and that works in our country's interest in terms of trade. It is classic soft power."

The Scottish Tory leader, Ruth Davidson, recently called for the immigration target to be dropped altogether or at least for students to be dropped from it; and former chancellor George Osborne has criticised the target as economically damaging.

Amber Rudd, May's successor as home secretary, announced an expert review into the economic benefits of students on Thursday, which is due to report in a year's time – and which many Conservative MPs hope will provide intellectual cover for the prime minister to change her stance.

They believe including students in the target has distorted government policy, leading the Home Office to regard the higher education sector with suspicion, rather than welcoming its contribution to the economy.

The education secretary, Justine Greening, welcomed the review as a “sensible approach” in a tweet and Jo Johnson, the universities minister, welcomed it as “good news”.

The shadow home secretary, Diane Abbott, said: “I think there's long been a consensus on the Labour side, but also among most Tories that think about these issues, that you shouldn't have students in migration targets. The one person that wasn't convinced was Theresa May and I think these figures show that she's wrong.”

May's former senior adviser Nick Timothy argued in a series of tweets on Thursday that the fact that students were overstaying their visas was less important than those who legitimately made the UK their home after graduating.

“Exit check data shows relatively few students overstay their visa. That's good. But debate is about how many stay in the country legally once their studies have finished. That's why they need to be included in the immigration stats and why there is a legitimate policy debate about whether their freedom to stay and work after study should be controlled or not,” he said.

The migration data released on Thursday showed that net migration has fallen to its lowest level for three years, partly driven by an increase in the number of EU migrants – particularly those from central and Eastern Europe – leaving the UK.

The headline net migration figure of 246,000, which is the difference between immigration and emigration, was 81,000 lower than the 327,000 recorded in the March 2016, according to the ONS. Cable said the figures were evidence of an economically damaging “Brexodus” of EU workers.

Emigration of EU citizens increased by 33,000 year on year to 122,000 – the highest outflow for nearly a decade. There was a particularly sharp rise of 17,000 in departures of citizens from the so-called EU8 countries, which joined the union in 2004 – the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. At the same time, there was a 19,000 decrease in immigration from the EU, although this is not statistically significant.

Economist Jonathan Portes said: “These statistics confirm that Brexit is having a significant impact on migration flows, even before we have left the EU or any changes are made to law or policy.”

The furore about international student numbers came as figures compiled by the Economist showed that immigration has fallen to about half what it was before the Brexit vote.

At the same time, a new report from MPs has found the “poisonous tone” of the EU referendum debate has fuelled the demonisation of immigrants and created obstacles for social integration.

The study by the all-party parliamentary group on social integration said migrants should be treated as potential British citizens rather than viewed as security threats. It recommended the councils should have a legal duty to promote integration and the government must encourage “meaningful social mixing” between immigrants and Britons, while businesses employing large numbers of immigrants should pay a levy that could be used to help ease the strains of migration on communities.

Chuka Umunna, the Labour MP who chairs the group, said: “The demonisation of immigrants, exacerbated by the poisonous tone of the debate during the EU referendum campaign, and after, shames us all and is a huge obstacle to creating a socially integrated nation.

“We must act now to safeguard our diverse communities from the peddlers of hatred and division while addressing valid concerns about the impact of immigration on public services, some of which can contribute to local tensions. We must start by valuing the contribution of all ethnic and minority communities to the UK. Rather than being seen as security risks, immigrants should be viewed as

Britons-in-waiting, keen to participate in their community. The best way to do this isn't to leave newcomers and their communities to sink or swim, but to offer migrants more support to integrate into our society.”

85

Home Office wants EU students crackdown, Brexit leak reveals

Document dashes hopes of more liberal approach to overseas students after myth of widespread overstaying was demolished

Alan Travis Home affairs editor

Wed 6 Sep 2017 13.22 BST Last modified on Wed 14 Feb 2018 15.33 GMT

The crackdown on international students from outside the EU has cut numbers coming to the UK from 246,000 in 2011 to 136,000 in 2016. Photograph:

The Home Office wants to introduce a crackdown on overseas students from the European Union for the first time after Brexit, the official document leaked to the Guardian on future immigration policy reveals.

Officials say it will be necessary to introduce checks on academic ability, English language skills and ensure that students have sufficient funds before they are granted a residence permit to study in Britain.

“The government welcomes and encourages EU citizens who wish to study in the UK and does not wish to restrict their access per se. However, we will need to ensure that study does not allow circumvention of any new controls on work,” says the leaked Home Office document dated August 2017.

“Therefore we may need to introduce some restrictions to ensure students are genuinely intending to study in the way that we do for non-EU students, by checking academic ability, English language skills and sufficiency of funds.”

The disclosure will dash hopes that the government was considering a more liberal approach to overseas students raised by the home secretary, Amber Rudd, last month when she announced an independent study of the contribution overseas students make to the economy and the labour market.

As the study was announced, Home Office research based on new border exit check data demolished the myth that a large proportion of overseas students stay on illegally after the end of their courses. The report showed that 97% of students left the country when their visas expired.

The leaked Home Office document on future immigration policy makes clear officials' fears that their proposal to issue only two-year residence permits to skilled and semi-skilled EU migrants and take away their right to settle in Britain will lead to increased abuse of the student route.

Under the Home Office post-Brexit plans, EU overseas students who come to Britain after the two-year transitional phase starts in 18 months' time will also require an official biometric residence permit but it could last longer than the two-year limit, which will apply to more than 80% of EU migrants who come to work.

“Arrangements will also be made for EU students whose courses finish after the implementation period in order for them to be able to complete their studies in the UK without risk of interruption,” it says.

The crackdown on international students from outside the EU has reduced numbers coming to the UK from 246,000 in 2011 to 136,000 in 2016. The sharpest falls in non-EU student numbers have been in further education colleges, independent schools and English language schools, where numbers have dropped by up to 60%.

86

How can universities help international students feel at home?

Brexit and harsher visa rules are making overseas students feel unwelcome. It's up to universities to help them settle in

Ruth Stokes

Mon 18 Sep 2017 07.30 BST Last modified on Mon 18 Sep 2017 07.31 BST

At Nottingham Trent University, international students lecture other students on their home cultures. Photograph: Nottingham Trent University

There's never been a more important time for UK universities to nurture their international student population. With the number of applications from EU students falling after Brexit and the government's approach to immigration deterring some of those from further afield, the quality of the student experience is key for recruitment and retention.

As the British Council's Anna Esaki-Smith explains, the global education sector is becoming more competitive. "China, Japan and Malaysia are now aiming to increase inward mobility by providing international students with English-language curriculums, scholarships and less-expensive tuition fees when compared to those of the UK or US," she says.

"In that kind of environment, it's important for established universities to ensure that the international student experience meets expectations. Do universities deliver on the vibrant photos of engaging campus life being viewed by international students who have never left their home countries? Are home students aware of the benefits of an internationalised campus and encouraged to welcome their international counterparts?"

Starting together

Universities are currently employing a variety of methods to help their international students settle in. These range from alternatives to alcohol-based socialising and buddy schemes to innovative integrated approaches to on-campus services. They've also been emphasising the importance of the start of the academic year. Across the sector, there has been a move to get international students arriving at university the same week as home students, rather than offering separate orientations.

Bournemouth University's student centre is a one-stop shop for international and home students alike. Photograph: Philip Hartley/Bournemouth University

Bournemouth University made a conscious decision to bring home and international students together at this time. "We used to have a separate induction programme for these students, but we felt that it was isolating them," explains Mandi Barron, Bournemouth's head of student services. "Now we just badge some

events that we think would be particularly useful for international students, but non-international students are welcome to attend if they want.”

The university runs webinars on topics such as visas and UK culture for students before they arrive, and trains staff to be aware of the different cultural needs they may encounter. But it is also wary of treating international students differently. “We try not to focus on a homogenous group, and more on individual needs,” says Barron. “Rather than having an international students department, we have a one-stop shop service for all students, because if you’ve got an accommodation problem you’ve got an accommodation problem, and a complaint is a complaint, whether you’re international or British.”

Sharing experience

At Kingston University, a buddy scheme (PAL) is open to both domestic and international students, who make up 50% of the institution’s intake. PAL offers both social and educational benefits for those involved. During lectures, for example, a PAL may be assigned to lead a small group discussion. Over time, groups become more able to discuss the lecture concepts, and students report feeling more prepared and confident in later sessions. The university considers the programme an important part of its overarching strategy. It even pays the PALs £10.22 an hour, which Graham Walker, a lecturer who helps run the programme, describes as a “fantastic investment, based on the support they’re able to provide”.

Thinking in terms of what international students can bring to university life as well as what universities can offer them is one of the drivers behind a project at Nottingham Trent University. The project, which is funded through a UKCISA grant, sees international students lecture other students on aspects of their home culture, helping them gain academic confidence while educating others. UKCISA director of policy and services Julie Allen explains: “It’s very small scale because it’s the first year they’ve done it and they didn’t have huge numbers, but this is a really good example of recognising the resources that these students are bringing rather than thinking that students who’ve come from outside the UK are in deficit or need additional support.”

Living shoulder-to-shoulder

One of the key challenges is helping domestic students see the positives that international students can bring to university life. This year's HEPI Student Academic Experience Survey, asked[[pdf](#)] whether students feel they benefit from studying alongside international students. Only 36% said yes, while 32% were neutral and 32% said they didn't see any benefits.

Leeds University is seeking to educate home students on the benefits of a multicultural environment through its student accommodation offer. The Ellerslie Global Residence hall gives 50% of its space to international students and 50% to domestic students. There are just under 100 students in the hall, which has three common rooms and communal catered dinners. They also run events aimed at assisting integration. These include Meet to Eat, where students join an arranged trip to visit a restaurant, a global afternoon tea, Chinese calligraphy and origami workshops, and City Chase, a treasure hunt-style quest where students work together to answer questions.

While the hall hasn't yet had the excess of demand it would need to expand, the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. "Not all students necessarily think they want an intercultural experience, but we always get fantastic feedback," says head of the international student office Katy Manns.

Training staff is important too – in particular, making more people aware of potential cultural differences and how they may impact on experience and learning. This is something that Helen Spencer-Oatey, one of the authors of a 2014 Warwick report for UKCISA on promoting the integration of campus [[pdf](#)], says there needs to be more of.

"At Warwick, our approach to training is not to say 'This is how it's done, this is what international students are like' – it's a question of trying to be more observant and more aware of preferences for turn-taking, styles of speaking, different basic assumptions about what the role of the teacher is and what the role of the student is, and how we believe people learn."

What works best?

And how about measuring success? According to Spencer-Oatey, this is what the sector really needs to work on. One of the findings from her research was that despite the availability of student satisfaction data, such as the iGraduate student barometer, there's not enough detailed analysis of what works and what doesn't. In response, Warwick has created the Global Education Profiler, now run by iGraduate, which measures integration and internationalisation, and aims to give a more detailed analysis than other available tools.

“There are lots of activities going on, but there's no real evaluation,” says Spencer-Oatey. Institutions should make sure they are using a reliable tool to track integration systematically, while also having an ongoing dialogue with students and the students' union – getting comments, suggestions and feedback, she suggests. “At the moment, we do simple things like report that x% of international students attended an event, and you tick the box and say success. But whether that's really integration is another matter.”

87

Is the teaching excellence framework shaping international student choice?

UK students have been unfazed by the new ranking, but international students are taking the results seriously, which could damage bronze universities

Aaron Porter Director of insights for the Hotcourses Group

Mon 16 Oct 2017 08.00 BST

The teaching excellence framework seems to be influencing international student choice. Photograph: Alamy Stock Photo

The teaching excellence framework ratings have been around since June, but their impact on choices made by prospective domestic students seems muted so far. When it comes to international students, however, it's an entirely different story: there are some striking early changes in the way they research their potential choice of university.

Between July and September 2016, Tef gold institutions made up 19.1% of all global searches looking at the UK across sites listed on Hotcourses, which accounts for more than 32m searches each year and is used by universities to estimate their volume of applications and enrolments.

In the same time period for 2017, following the introduction of the Tef medals, gold institutions accounted for 24.5% of all searches to the UK, a much higher proportion than would have been expected.

There are also sharp differences by country. For students who are researching UK universities from India, Thailand, Turkey and Brazil there are particularly noticeable increases in interest for Tef gold institutions. For prospective students from India looking at the UK, Tef gold institutions have increased their share of searches from 23.7% to 36.9%, from a country known to be particularly sensitive to reputational signals.

Why is the Tef gaining traction with international students?

International students rely more heavily on rankings as a means to make choices about what and where to study. Many UK-based prospective students will already have a sense about the hierarchy of institutions and what may be best for them. Conversely, international students tend to be less familiar about the selling points of specific universities, their academic strengths and what the campus, town or city may have to offer.

The issue for prospective students isn't necessarily the availability of information, but rather their ability to understand and navigate the large volumes they receive. This may partly explain why rankings, as a simple, digestible and easily accessed medium, end up being so heavily relied upon by students and their advisers.

League tables and rankings need to be seen in the context of other information that is available. In isolation, they have significant limitations. Prospective international students are unlikely to be following the controversy over the viability of the methodology underpinning the Tef. Taken out of context, they will see the exercise as a government-endorsed ranking of teaching excellence.

This places a considerable responsibility on the upcoming review of the Tef. It is crucial that whoever is tasked with leading it undertakes in-depth engagement with prospective and current students to understand why they used Tef and what they thought it represented.

What does the Tef mean for brand UK?

The UK is fortunate to be widely regarded as having a first-rate higher education system, so the inter-relationship between Tef medals and the perception of quality for UK universities will be an important one. It is still too early to tell whether universities that received a bronze medal will be regarded as third-rate, but this danger should not be overlooked.

Although the likes of the London School of Economics and Southampton were given a bronze medal, the Tef medal alone is hardly going to undermine the international reputation these universities enjoy. But for others institutions lacking their international profiles it could be more significant. The government will need to keep a close eye on whether the medal rankings they endorse undermine the international perception we have built for quality across the sector.

88

Can living abroad close the attainment gap for BAME students?

A new campaign aims to get universities to double the proportion of students on overseas placement, and to increase the diversity of those who go abroad

Rachel Hall @RachelHall_HE

Thu 2 Nov 2017 17.44 GMT Last modified on Wed 8 Nov 2017 13.00 GMT

Students who spend time abroad are 9% more likely to gain a 1st or a 2:1 degree.

Photograph: Alamy Stock Photo

When Fatima Afzal was offered a chemical engineering job in the US, she worried what it would be like to transfer to a country where people might never have seen a British Muslim before. She moved, and found her suspicions confirmed in an environment dominated by “very big alpha males”. It was challenging, but she

coped. She credits her confidence to a placement year spent abroad, in Malaysia, during her undergraduate degree at Aston University: “If I hadn’t taken that first step I would be closing doors because of my own fear.”

It’s students like Fatima who are being targeted by a new campaign to double the proportion of students at UK universities undertaking placements abroad by 2020, to reach 13% of the student body. The campaign, run by Universities UK International, is particularly focused on getting universities to make international experience accessible for students from backgrounds which are underrepresented, for instance those who are BAME, disabled or from low socio-economic households.

This is despite the fact that studying or working abroad can make a major contribution to closing the attainment gaps that exist between different groups of students. Across the board, students who go abroad are 9% more likely to gain a 1st or 2:1 degree, and they are 24% more likely to be employed after graduation – which rises to 41% for black graduates.

“It’s not good enough if the opportunities are only taken up by a small subset of the student population, or that they’re the preserve of a small group of predominantly wealthy students,” says Vivienne Stern, director of Universities UK International. “We’ve got a responsibility to spread the benefits. If we don’t we’re compounding inequality.”

According to UUKi research, the main barriers to study abroad are cost, fear of isolation and interrupting friendships. While all students experience these, they are further compounded for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. So although lots of students will need financial support, some disadvantaged students may need a larger package, for instance.

The importance of ensuring opportunities are accessible for all students is underscored at Aston University, which has just completed a research project exploring how to close the attainment gap between white and BAME students. Although the university, which has a majority BAME student body, has a gap half

the size of a national average, it found that the only effective means of redressing the balance is through work placements, both national and international.

Leading on the research was Prof Helen Higson, deputy vice-chancellor and member of Universities UK's outward mobility board. She says the university is building on the findings by introducing targeted placements for BAME students, many of which are abroad.

“The main thing is working with them early on in university, in the first year, to persuade them it's a good idea, and also to persuade their families,” she says. “We get a lot of role models – like Fatima – who have been through placements to go out to schools and meet with our first-year students to encourage them to see what will happen, the opportunities they will get, and to show them the stats.”

Aston University also aims to address fears of moving overseas by offering additional support tailored for different student groups. These include peer-to-peer mentoring; pre-departure preparation meetings targeted at students identified as needing extra support adapting to a new culture; and networks connecting students to others undertaking a placement in the same city. Once students are in-country, they are normally visited by a member of staff at least once, and kept in touch with via Skype.

At Aston, outward mobility is closely linked to the widening participation agenda. Higson says the university has lobbied to have studying and working abroad included in the guidance for the Office for Fair Access agreements, which universities need approved to charge the maximum £9,250 tuition fee level.

According to Rose Matthews, head of global opportunities at Cardiff University, it's essential that outward mobility is a key component of institutional strategy. The university is fortunate in that its vice-chancellor, Prof Colin Riordan, led the government review that resulted in the UK's first student outward mobility programme. Matthews says: “This has been crucial in terms of raising the profile of this agenda and galvanising support across institution.”

This includes widening participation activity, which is primarily focused on financial bursaries targeted at disadvantaged students and expanding the range of

opportunities available to students. Matthews adds that the right mental health and wellbeing packages are crucial for students who may face additional emotional barriers to life in another country. “It’s important for students abroad to be informed that they are still our students, that they can still access all our support services, like our counselling services which have been adapted to their needs through Skype and telephone.”

Part of the problem, according to UUKi, is that expertise such as this isn’t always shared. As part of its campaign, it is encouraging universities that are experienced in outward mobility to get better at talking about best practice and sharing case studies. These include a range of approaches, such as the short-term exchange programmes at Edinburgh Napier University, aimed at enabling a wider range of students to participate in experiences overseas, and a scheme at De Montfort University giving every student the opportunity to learn one of five languages on offer to stimulate interest in life abroad.