

Westminster Higher Education Forum policy conference:

Next steps for international students in the UK

Timing: Morning, Thursday, 18th September 2025

Taking place online



WESTMINSTER
HIGHER EDUCATION
FORUM

Agenda subject to change

8.30 Registration

9.00 Chair's opening remarks

Christine Jardine MP

9.05 Recruitment and retention of international students and proposed immigration changes - impact on UK universities and the wider education sector

assessing current market trends / stakeholder responses to proposals in the Immigration White Paper regarding international students / potential impact of strengthened sponsor institution requirements on international recruitment / next steps for the UK's International Education Strategy / options for reforming and streamlining application processes / strategies to improve institution financial sustainability / the contribution of international students to UK higher education institution finances and alternative options / clarity on eligibility frameworks / assessing Erasmus+ participation and options for UK-EU youth mobility schemes moving forward / supporting strategic long-term planning / immigration frameworks / maintaining global institutional reputation and competitiveness / developing institutional compliance with enhanced visa requirements / addressing the design of action plans / potential implications of imposing limits on international student recruitment

Vincenzo Raimo, International Higher Education Consultant

Shara Pledger, Legal Director, Pinsent Masons

Dr Caroline Baylon, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, International, University of Reading

Anna Zvagule, Head, Communications and External Affairs, NCUK

Emma Meredith, Director, Skills Policy and Global Engagement, Association of Colleges

Questions and comments from the floor

9.55 Chair's closing remarks

Christine Jardine MP

10.00 Break

10.10 Chair's opening remarks

Dr Scott Arthur MP

10.15 Priorities for maintaining UK higher education competitiveness for international students - assessing and meeting expectations across the sector

Anne Marie Graham, Chief Executive, UK Council for International Student Affairs

Questions and comments from the floor

10.45 Next steps for improving the international student experience

current international student expectations / how the UK can meet expectations / creating welcoming and inclusive campus cultures / tackling harassment and isolation / strategies for improving cultural and academic partnerships / priorities for teaching, learning and support / developing cross-sector engagement and incorporating feedback to improve services / sharing and learning from international competitors and best practice

Lily Rumsey, International Higher Education Consultant

Dr Tabet Newman, Senior Research Consultant, Jisc; and CEO, Timmus

Sanam Arora, Chair, National Indian Students and Alumni Union

Questions and comments from the floor

11.30 International student careers and employability post-university

implications of the graduate route length reduction / support and guidance post-graduation / impact of proposed changes to English language requirements / next steps for the skilled worker route and supporting students to find graduate skill-level employment / considering proposed changes to skilled visa threshold / reviewing post-study work thresholds / strategies to support future global engagement and research partnerships / improving professional development routes / options for sector-specific funding moving forward / priorities for improving provider and employer engagement in placement design and delivery

Tripti Maheshwari, Co-Founder and Director, Student Circus

Laxmi Limbani, Director, Fragomen

Paul Grattrick, Head, Operations, Student Experience and Enhancement, University of Liverpool

Evie Matthews, Senior Policy Advisor, Confederation of British Industry

Stephen Isherwood, Joint CEO, Market Intelligence and Insights, Institute of Student Employers

12.00 Questions and comments from the floor

12.30 'International students and graduates: immigration policy challenges'

Dr Madeleine Sumption, Deputy Chair, Migration Advisory Committee; and Director, Migration Observatory, University of Oxford

Questions and comments from the floor

12.55 Chair's and Westminster Higher Education Forum closing remarks

Dr Scott Arthur MP

Sean Cudmore, Westminster Higher Education Forum