EU Higher Education Staff and Students in the UK

August 2021

Contents

About the data in this report

Unless indicated otherwise, the data in this report is derived from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and has been extracted from multiple sources including:

- HESA open data releases
- Heidi Plus
- Tailored HESA datasets (HESA Student Records 2009/10 – 2018/19)

Neither the Higher Education Statistics Agency Limited, nor HESA services limited can accept responsibility for any inference or conclusions derived by third parties from HESA Data or other information supplied by the Higher Education Statistics Agency Limited or HESA Services Limited through Heidi Plus. Further information on specific data sources is outlined below.

HESA Staff and Student Open Data

The HESA staff record provides a breakdown of academic staff in higher education institutions by the cost centres to which their contracts are assigned. Conversely, the student data in this report is based on the Joint Academic Coding System (JACS) albeit with some variation, as is outlined below.

Changes to coding

In 2012/13, HESA changed the coding of courses from JACS 2.0 to JACS 3.0. The introduction and/or omission of particular codes in the move to JACS 3.0 may affect the continuity and/or accuracy of data for some areas.

More recently, as of 2019/20, HESA introduced a new subject coding system, ie the Higher Education Classification of Subjects (HECoS). The Common Aggregation Hierarchy (CAH) grouping was also introduced, with the aim of providing standard groupings across both HECoS and JACS subjects. However, HESA has since determined that the new CAH groupings are incompatible with previous datasets. It is therefore important to note that, while HESA 2019/20 statistics are referenced in the report, there is a break in continuity with earlier data releases.

Rounding and suppression

The data in this report uses the HESA rounding and suppression methodology to anonymise statistics for staff and students. This means that numbers are rounded to the nearest multiple of 5 and any number less than 2.5 is rounded to 0. Any form of percentages based on fewer than 22.5 individuals are not published. Due to the application of the rounding methodology, the sub-totals of a category may not correspond precisely to the sum of the total.

Executive summary

The UK's departure from the European Union (EU) presents an unprecedented challenge to the health of UK-based higher education institutions and UK research. Scholarship and research flourish in long-term stable and interconnected frameworks that support people and collaboration, which UK membership to the EU has provided for research, and particularly for SHAPE disciplines.[1]

The UK is currently a world-leading player in research in these disciplines, which help create and nourish a positive future for the people, the economy, and the environment. Research in these disciplines is outward looking and internationally engaged, benefitting from the exchange of ideas, people, methods, and practices across borders. The presence of EU students and staff in UK higher education contributes to the depth, the range of perspectives, and vitality to SHAPE disciplines, including through collaborative research and international exchange.

This briefing outlines the importance of EU higher education staff and students for UK research and higher education institutions and examines how the changing funding landscape and framework for the circulation of ideas and talent may impact the UK's ability to attract and retain UK and EU higher education staff and students as well as challenge its ambition to be a science superpower.

• EU higher education staff and students account for a critical share of the UK higher education sector and bring distinctive skills and perspectives as well as championing language learning, raising awareness of outward mobility and widening opportunities for studies and research. In 2019–2020, 17% of higher education staff were EU nationals while students whose residence prior to commencing their programme of study was in an EU member country accounted for 5.5% of undergraduate students and 6.8% of postgraduate students.

• Their presence and contribution to the UK higher education sector is manifest throughout the UK. EU higher education staff accounted for at least 10% of staff in every region in the UK with the highest percentage found in Northern Ireland with 33.4% of all higher education staff in 2019–2020. In addition to their cultural and intellectual contributions, EU staff and students benefit the UK economy through tuition fee income and non-tuition fee expenditure and generate vital economic activity.

• SHAPE disciplines have been particularly successful at attracting and retaining EU higher education staff and students, more so than other disciplines. In 2019–2020, four of the top five disciplines with the highest shares of EU higher education staff were in SHAPE disciplines (Modern languages, Economics & econometrics, Classics and Politics and international studies) while the top three disciplines or groups of disciplines with the highest shares of EU students were in SHAPE (Business and Management studies, Creative arts and design and Social sciences).

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1   SHAPE is a collective name for the Social Sciences, Humanities & the Arts For People & the Economy.

- The Erasmus+ programme has contributed to creating a vibrant environment for work and study and has been pivotal to the UK's ability to attract EU higher education students and staff. In 2018–2019, a total of 30,501 students came to the UK through the Erasmus+ programme to study or complete an internship while 4,090 higher education staff members came to the UK from EU countries.[2] 66.7% of incoming undergraduate students and 63.0% of incoming postgraduate students through the Erasmus+ programme opted to study a SHAPE subject.

- The decision of the UK not to associate to the Erasmus+ programme and the exclusive focus on outward student mobility of the newly launched Turing scheme restrict outgoing opportunities for higher education staff as well as the UK's ability to attract EU higher education staff and students and requires further consideration from the UK Government. Similarly to the Erasmus+ programme, the Turing scheme will seek to provide mobility opportunities within and beyond the EU.

- The UK Government should consider how to address the detrimental effect of the UK's ability to attract and retain EU higher education students and staff due to changes to tuition fee status and eligibility for student loans, and the end of freedom of movement and the new immigration system.

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2   European Commission, *Erasmus + annual report 2019 – Statistical annex*, December 2020, https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/381dc9a5-3f4d-11eb-b27b-01aa75ed71a1/language-en

Introduction[3]

The UK's world-leading research excellence has been shaped by the UK's participation in the EU's long-term stable and interconnected frameworks facilitating the circulation of ideas and talent.[4] By strengthening research, bringing distinctive skills and perspectives as well as championing language learning, raising awareness of the benefits of outward mobility and widening opportunities for study and research, students and higher education staff from EU countries provide a critical value to the excellence and vitality of the higher education sector and benefits to the UK economy, society and cultural life.

As the data in this briefing shows, the UK has been an attractive destination for higher education staff and students coming from EU countries.[5,6] The UK's ability to retain and attract higher education staff is fundamental to its research and institutions and to future growth. Both staff and students provide distinctive perspectives, vital skills, and opportunities to collaborate and widen the networks of UK institutions. Through their different perspectives, language skills, and networks in other countries, they further opportunities for UK researchers to collaborate and enhance the impact of their career.

The UK's departure from the EU and changes to the framework for the circulation of ideas and talent with countries in the EU and beyond present an unprecedented challenge to higher education and research in the UK. These changes include a new immigration system and the end of freedom of movement as well as changes to the tuition fee status and eligibility for tuition fee loans for new European Economic Area (EEA)[7] and Swiss students, who from August 2021 will no longer be eligible for home fees status and tuition fee loans.[8]

These students will also be required to apply for a visa under the Student route as part of the new points-based immigration system to complete their course in the UK. Should these students wish to stay in the UK upon graduating, they will also be required to apply to the Graduate route (provided they meet the requirements of the route), which can allow them to remain in the UK for two years (three years for PhD graduates) to work at any skill level after graduation.[9] Higher education staff members wishing to come to the UK to work and who are not eligible for the EU Settlement scheme will also be required to apply for a visa through the immigration points-based system.[10]

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3   The authors would like to thank those who provided comments and reviews on earlier versions of the briefing. The Academy is grateful to them for their time and reflection.

4   The British Academy, Brexit Means…? The British Academy's Priorities for the Humanities and Social Sciences in the Current Negotiations, November 2017, https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/publications/europe-brexit-means/

5   EU higher education staff are EU nationals and include staff whose nationality was a country member of the European Union at the time when the data was collected. EU members include Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Gibraltar, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden. https://www.hesa.ac.uk/support/definitions/staff

6   EU domiciled students are those whose normal residence prior to commencing their programme of study was in countries which were European Union (EU) members as at 1 December of the reporting period. EU members include Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Gibraltar, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

7   The EEA includes EU countries as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway

8   Exceptions include Irish students who live in the UK or Ireland as well as EU/EEA and Swiss nationals who benefit from Citizens' Rights under the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement, EEA EFTA Separation Agreement or Swiss Citizens' Rights Agreement.

9   UK Government, The UK's points-based immigration system: An introduction for EU students, July 2020, https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-points-based-immigration-system-eu-student-information

10   UK Government, The higher education sector and the EU, October 2020, https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/guidance-for-higher-education-providers-during-the-transition-period-and-after-1-january-2021#guidance-for-nationals-from-the-eu,-iceland,-liechtenstein,-norway-and-switzerland

Additionally, while the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement provided a critical pathway for the UK's continued participation in a number of EU programmes for the period 2021–2027, such as Horizon Europe, the EU's key funding programme for research and innovation with a budget of €95.5 billion, it did not include a pathway for association to the Erasmus+ programme, the EU's programme supporting mobility in education, training, youth and sport.

The Erasmus+ programme has provided incoming and outward looking opportunities to study, train and work in 34 EU and associated countries, which are full participants of the programme, and up to 156 countries elsewhere in the world. It has provided a holistic framework for student and staff mobility, offering opportunities for UK universities to increase their connections and competitiveness.[11] In December 2020, in lieu of association to the Erasmus+ programme, the UK Government announced the launch of the Turing scheme, which is restricted to outward student mobility. Its £100m budget for 2020–21 is designed to provide funding for around 35,000 students in universities and colleges,[12] starting in September 2021. The Irish Government has committed to supporting students at Northern Ireland higher education institutions interested in taking part in outgoing mobility through the Erasmus+.[13] In March 2021, Wales also announced that it will seek to sustain opportunities for incoming and outgoing mobility for higher education staff and students through the newly launched International Learning Exchange programme.[14]

The changing funding landscape and framework for the circulation of ideas and talent and possible disruptions to these circulations, which may be exacerbated by COVID-19 and its aftermath, requires us to understand and examine the contribution of EU staff and students to higher education throughout the UK and across disciplines.

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11   UK Government, Agreements reached between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the European Union, December 2020, https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/agreements-reached-between-the-united-kingdom-of-great-britain-and-northern-ireland-and-the-european-union

12   The Department for Education and The RT Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP, *New Turing scheme to support thousands of students to study and work abroad*, 26 December 2020, https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-turing-scheme-to-support-thousands-of-students-to-study-and-work-abroad

13   BBC News, Brexit: Students in NI can continue in Erasmus scheme, December 2020, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-55442685

14   Welsh Government, New International Learning Exchange programme to make good the loss of Erasmus+, March 2021, https://gov.wales/new-international-learning-exchange-programme-make-good-loss-erasmus
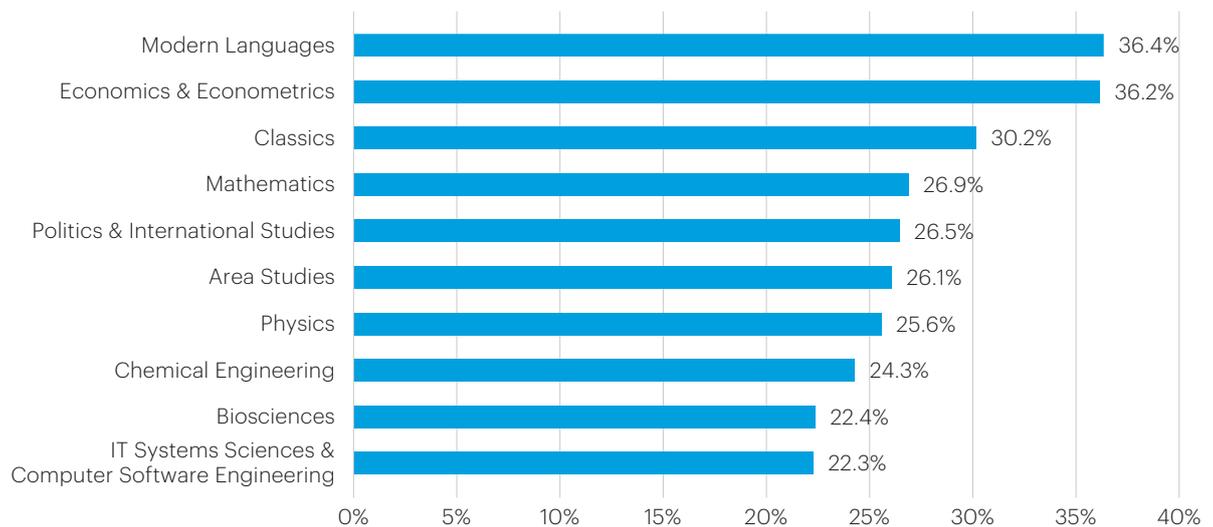
EU higher education staff

EU higher education staff in the UK occupy a wide range of roles, including teaching, research, and across other fields such as IT, finance, catering, security, administration, archives and alumni relations.[15] They play a fundamental role in the work and vitality of higher education institutions in the UK. UK universities score highly in international rankings in large part due to their ability to attract an international talent pool.[16]

In 2019–2020, 17% of academic staff employed in the higher sector were EU nationals while 14% were from outside the UK and EU. SHAPE subjects are critical in attracting EU staff with four out of the top five and six out of the top ten academic disciplines with the highest proportions of EU staff (Figure 1).

EU higher education staff members play a key role in the UK's ability to gain funding, including from the European Research Council and Framework Programmes more broadly, to develop research collaboration with partners elsewhere in Europe and beyond, and reinforce the liveliness, excellence, and global renown of UK research.[17] The British Academy's flagship postdoctoral fellowship scheme, which is open to nationals of the European Economic Area (EEA), includes a high number of EU nationals among former and current award holders. In 2020, 37% of the successful award holders were EU or European Free Trade Association (EFTA)[18] nationals. The percentage has increased steadily over the last 3 years.

Figure 1: Proportion of EU academic staff in 2019–2020 by discipline

Discipline	Percentage
Modern Languages	36.4%
Economics & Econometrics	36.2%
Classics	30.2%
Mathematics	26.9%
Politics & International Studies	26.5%
Area Studies	26.1%
Physics	25.6%
Chemical Engineering	24.3%
Biosciences	22.4%
IT Systems Sciences & Computer Software Engineering	22.3%

15   The British Academy, Brexit means…? The British Academy's Priorities for the Humanities and Social Sciences in the Current Negotiations, November 2017, https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/publications/europe-brexit-means/

16   The Student/Part of Times Higher Education, THE World University Rankings explained, September 2018, https://www.timeshighereducation.com/student/advice/world-university-rankings-explained

17   The British Academy, Brexit means…? The British Academy's Priorities for the Humanities and Social Sciences in the Current Negotiations, November 2017, https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/publications/europe-brexit-means/

18   EFTA is composed of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland.

EU higher education staff provide a critical contribution throughout the UK. Northern Ireland is a distinctive situation that requires special consideration with 33.5% of EU higher education staff in 2019–2020, the highest share of any jurisdiction in the UK. EU staff accounted for 20.4% of all staff in Scotland, 16.9% of all staff in England and 11.1% of all staff in Wales.

Staff from the Republic of Ireland represented the highest percentage of EU staff in Northern Ireland (70.9% of EU staff) and the second highest percentage (23.7%) of the entire staff body, after the UK (52.7%).[19] Staff from the Republic of Ireland accounted for 9.7% of all EU staff in England, 10% of EU staff in Scotland and 15.2% of EU staff in Wales.

The diversity of researchers in SHAPE disciplines is also expressed in the location of EU researchers across the whole of the UK. At least four of the top five disciplines with the highest proportions of EU higher education and staff within each of the UK jurisdictions are in SHAPE (Table A).

Table A: Proportion of EU staff 2019–2020 by discipline across UK jurisdictions

Discipline (by HESA Cost Centre)	Proportion of EU academic staff (England)
Economics & Econometrics	36.4%
Modern Languages	36.2%
Classics	29.2%
Politics & International Relations	26.2%
Mathematics	26.2%
Discipline (by HESA Cost Centre)	**Proportion of EU academic staff (Northern Ireland)** [20]
Archaeology	56.5%
Sociology	52.3%
Politics & International Relations	51.1%
Modern Languages	45.1%
Discipline (by HESA Cost Centre)	**Proportion of EU academic staff (Scotland)**
Modern Languages	41.2%
Economics & Econometrics	38.2%
Classics	37.5%
Archaeology	36.4%
Chemical Engineering	33.3%
Discipline (by HESA Cost Centre)	**Proportion of EU academic staff (Wales)**
Classics	33.3%
Pharmacy & Pharmacology	30.8%
Politics & International Relations	28.6%
Modern Languages	27.3%
Philosophy	25%

19   Further HESA data shows that in 2019–2020, there was 830 academic staff from the Republic of Ireland out of a total of 3,515 in Northern Ireland.

20   The stated figures for Northern Ireland do not include Economics & Econometrics. This is because the denominator for this discipline is under 22.5 and so the percentage has been suppressed in accordance with the HESA rounding strategy.

Freedom of movement within the EU for researchers has offered a competitive advantage to SHAPE subjects in the UK, to the UK economy and to our society and culture. Researchers, in particular at the early stages of their career, face uncertainty and insecurity. Short-term postdoctoral positions require researchers to be looking at the job market for a succeeding position, which calls for some certainty if they wish to pursue their career and research in the UK and has been increasingly challenging as the UK has negotiated its futures relationship with the EU.

The Erasmus+ programme has also played a critical role in attracting EU higher education staff across roles. In 2018–2019, 4,090 members of staff across roles came to the UK from the EU, accounting for 10.7% of EU staff members that year and contributed to the strength of the UK research sector, to the liveliness of UK campuses and to enriching UK intellectual and cultural life.[21] Through the Erasmus+ programme, incoming staff provide UK-based students and staff with greater cultural and educational enrichment through exposure to and connections with individuals from a range of other countries. Incoming staff establish an affective link which helps enhance the profile of the UK across the world and create a catalytic effect on attracting other students and academic staff members to the UK.[22]

The Turing scheme, the UK's alternative to the Erasmus+ scheme, does not include funding for incoming higher education staff, and the UK will need to continue to find ways to facilitate the circulation of talent and ideas including for short-term mobility.

21   European Commission, *Erasmus + annual report 2019 – Statistical annex,* December 2020, https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/381dc9a5-3f4d-11eb-b27b-01aa75ed71a1/language-en

22   The British Academy, *Association to Erasmus: Challenges and Opportunities,* August 2020, https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/publications/association-erasmus-challenges-and-opportunities/

EU undergraduate and postgraduate students

The UK has the second largest net inflow of international students worldwide, second only to the United States of America.[23] The UK has had a long-standing comparative advantage in attracting international students, drawing on its membership of the EU, the primacy of the English language, the high quality of the courses provided, as well as the strength of its research community and liveliness of its campuses.[24]

The UK's departure from the EU and measures regarding tuition fees and mobility vis-à-vis EU students as well as the exclusive focus of the Turing scheme on outward mobility threatens the UK's attractiveness as a destination for EU students in a context of increasing competition emerging from other countries worldwide.[25] This challenges the UK's position in the world, its ability to maximise opportunities for students and staff, and for the UK's universities to retain their attractiveness to international students from the EU and beyond.

The UK Government launched an updated International Education Strategy in February 2021 that sets out the ambition to increase the number of international students to a minimum of 600,000 by 2030 compared to 556,625 in 2019–2020.[26] However, according to the Department for Education, the combined effect of policy changes as a result of the UK's departure from the EU is estimated to reduce tuition fee income from EU sources by approximately £62.5 million, with 35,540 (57%) fewer first-year EU enrolments.[27]

Recent data also shows a 40% fall in the number of applications for undergraduate degrees from EU nationals in the first year after the UK's departure from the EU. The data covers applications received before the main January 29 application deadline for courses starting in Autumn 2021. While restrictions related to COVID-19 in many countries will have likely had an impact, the drop could also attributed to a significant increase in tuition fees for EU students starting undergraduate and postgraduate degrees from the 2021–22 academic year.[28]

In 2019–2020, the UK counted 556,625 international students: 147,800 were EU students and 408,825 were non-EU students. EU students accounted for 5.5% of all undergraduate students and 6.8% of all postgraduates in the UK. However, the percentage is far higher in certain universities and in certain courses.

23   International students coming to the UK minus UK students studying abroad. Migration Advisory Committee, Annual Report, December 2020, https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/migration-advisory-committee-annual-report-2020
24   Idem.
25   Universities UK, *International student recruitment data*, https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/International/Pages/intl-student-recruitment-data.aspx#:~:text=%E2%80%8B%E2%80%8B-,How%20many%20international%20students%20are%20there%20in%20the,where%20do%20they%20come%20from%3F&text=In%202018%2F19%20there%20were%20485%2C645%20international%20students%20studying,and%20342%2C620%20were%20non%2DEU.
26   Department for Education and Department for Trade, International Education Strategy: 2021 update: Supporting recovery, driving growth, February 2021, https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-education-strategy-2021-update/international-education-strategy-2021-update-supporting-recovery-driving-growth
27   Department for Education, EU exit: estimating the impact on UK higher education, Research report, February 2021, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/958998/EU_exit_estimating_the_impact_on_UK_higher_education.pdf
28   UCAS, 2021 CYCLE APPLICANT FIGURES – 15 JANUARY DEADLINE, February 2021, https://www.ucas.com/data-and-analysis/undergraduate-statistics-and-reports/ucas-undergraduate-releases/applicant-releases-2021/2021-cycle-applicant-figures-january-deadline

SHAPE subjects are particularly strong at attracting EU students in the UK with 57.7% of EU students opting to study a discipline in those subjects in 2019–2020. They accounted for six out of the top 10 subject areas with the highest proportion of EU students coming to the UK in 2019–2020 at all levels of study (Figure 2). The top 5 SHAPE subjects selected by EU students coming to the UK in 2019–2020 were Business & Management (35.4% of EU students within SHAPE), Creative Arts and Design (18.1%), Social Sciences (16.8%), Law (7.8%) and Language students (7.6%) (Figure 3).

Figure 2: Proportion of EU students by discipline in the UK 2019–2020
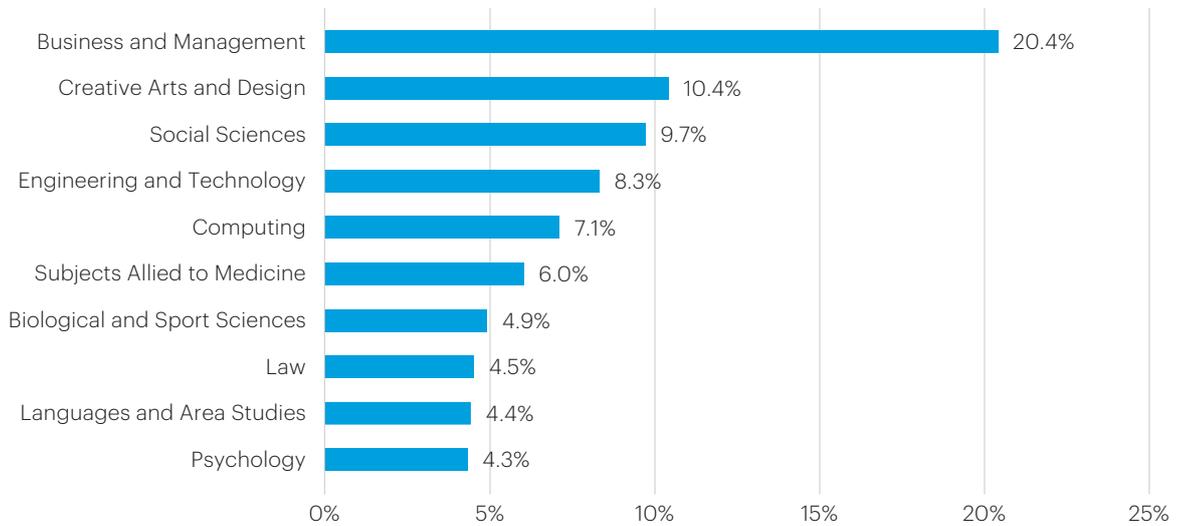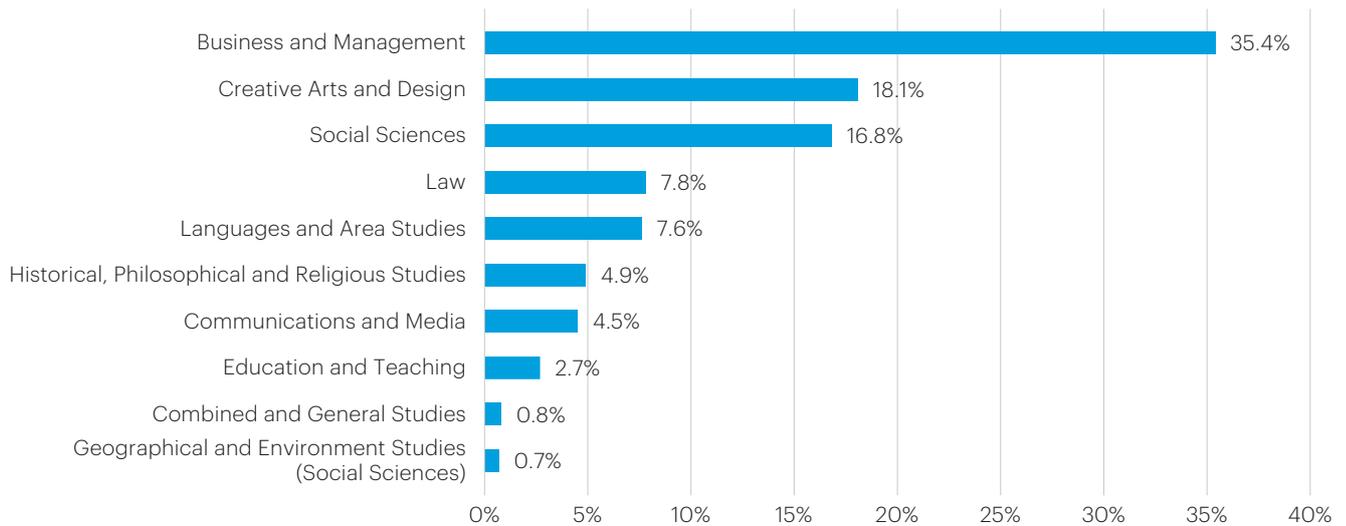

Figure 3: Distribution of EU students across SHAPE subjects in the UK 2019–2020

In 2018–2019, a total of 30,501 students came to the UK through the Erasmus+ programme (2014–2020).[29] While 12,067 students completed a traineeship in the UK, bringing distinctive skills to the UK, including critical language skills, 18,434 studied at UK higher education institutions, which accounted for 12.42% of all EU students in the UK. While the International Learning Exchange Programme [30] launched by Wales seeks to sustain inward and outward student mobility to and from Wales, there are currently no provisions to retain or develop such opportunities in the rest of the UK through the Turing scheme.[31]

SHAPE disciplines accounted for six out of the top 10 subject areas with the highest proportion of incoming Erasmus+ students coming to the UK in 2018–2019 across levels of study. In total, these disciplines accounted for close to 2 in 3 of incoming Erasmus+ students to the UK with 66.7% of incoming undergraduate students and 63% of incoming postgraduate students.[32] This diversity creates a vibrant environment for work and study and is fundamental to the liveliness of the UK research sector.

EU students, including Erasmus+ students, help enhance diversity in the classroom, on campus and in local communities and contribute to enriching and driving excellence in SHAPE subjects. They create a formative experience for UK-based students and help champion language learning, raise awareness of the benefits of outward mobility and widen opportunities to study and carry out research.[33] Incoming Erasmus+ students make a significant contribution to the academic, intellectual, and cultural vibrancy of UK universities.[34] Furthermore, there are important soft power benefits of having EU students come to the UK. By studying or working in the UK, they build critical connections that last long after they return home and become ambassadors for the UK and the UK university system, strengthening international links to the benefit of the UK.[35]

Scotland received the highest number of incoming Erasmus+ students in 2018–2019 with 2,904 students, followed by London (2,204 students), South East England (1,934), Yorkshire and the Humber (1,567) and West Midlands (1,232) (Figure 4). These figures reveal the broad spread of Erasmus+ students throughout the UK.

29   European Commission, *Erasmus + annual report 2019 – Statistical annex*, December 2020, https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/381dc9a5-3f4d-11eb-b27b-01aa75ed71a1/language-en

30   Cabinet Statement, Written Statement: An International Learning Exchange Programme for Wales, March 2021, https://gov.wales/written-statement-international-learning-exchange-programme-wales
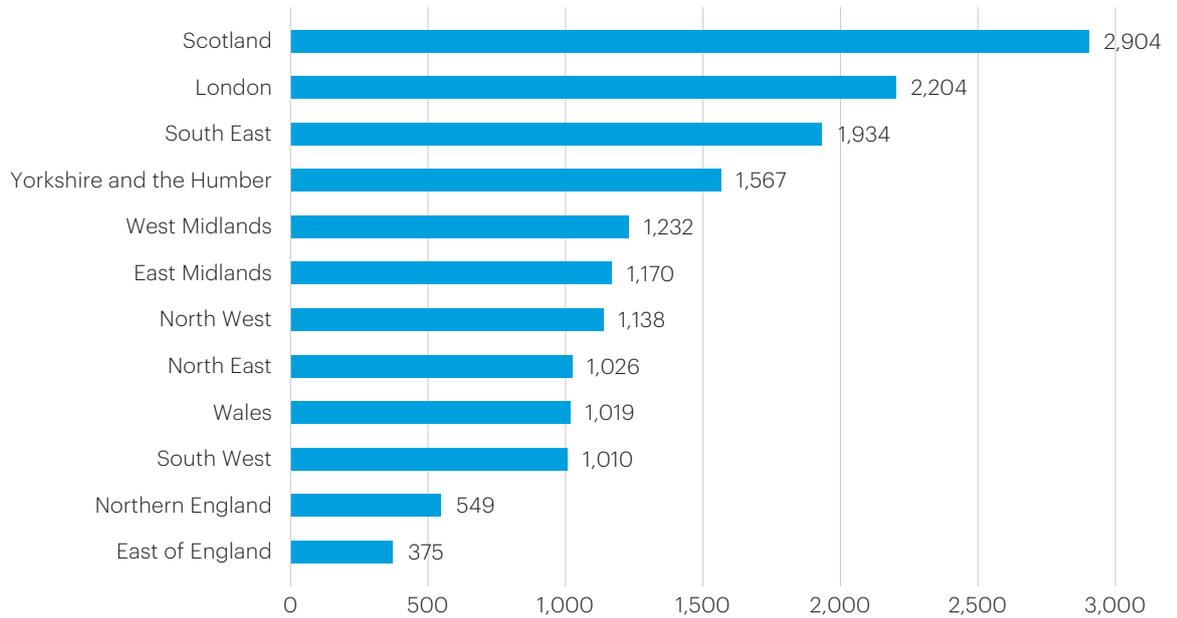
31   UK Government, The Turing scheme, https://www.turing-scheme.org.uk/about/

32   HESA data on Incoming Erasmus+ Students to the UK and distribution per discipline in 2018/2019

33   The British Academy, Languages in the UK, A call for action, February 2019, https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/publications/languages-uk-academies-statement

34   The British Academy, Association to Erasmus: Challenges and Opportunities, August 2020, https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/publications/association-erasmus-challenges-and-opportunities/

35   Russell Group, Why Erasmus is important for students, February 2018, https://russellgroup.ac.uk/news/the-importance-of-student-exchange/

Figure 4: Incoming Erasmus+ students by region in 2018–2019

Region	Students
Scotland	2,904
London	2,204
South East	1,934
Yorkshire and the Humber	1,567
West Midlands	1,232
East Midlands	1,170
North West	1,138
North East	1,026
Wales	1,019
South West	1,010
Northern England	549
East of England	375

In addition to their intellectual, cultural, and societal benefits, EU and Erasmus+ students have provided a significant economic contribution throughout the UK. EU students provide a net contribution to the UK economy, generating £3.4 billion in 2018. This represented 14.5% of the UK's total education related exports and transnational education activity in 2018.[36]

36   Department for Education, UK revenue from education related exports and transnational education activity in 2018, December 2020, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/944966/SFR_education_exports_2018_FINAL.pdf

Issues to consider

EU staff and students provide an invaluable contribution to the academic, intellectual, and cultural vibrancy of the UK. Recent changes to the funding landscape and framework for the circulation of ideas and talent may impact the UK's ability to retain and attract EU staff and students. In particular, the UK Government will need to consider the following:

- **Inward mobility:** The end of freedom of movement, the decision of the UK not to associate to the Erasmus programme as well as the Turing scheme's exclusive focus on outward mobility challenge the UK's attractiveness and ability to establish critical research, cultural and economic partnerships with countries elsewhere in Europe and beyond. Disruptions to the UK's ability to retain and attract scholars and students from the EU affect geographical areas and disciplines differently.

  For instance, EU, EEA, and EFTA students face increased costs due to the change in the home fee status and eligibility for tuition fee loans. Prior to the end of the Transition period, EU, EEA, and EFTA students were able to study in the UK without a visa. The new Student route that applies to all international students (EU and non-EU), will cost £348 for a student visa from outside the UK and individuals in addition to the Immigration Health Surcharge.[37] These additional costs and administrative requirements can challenge the attractiveness of the UK as a destination for EU-EEA-EFTA incoming mobility and as a welcoming environment for study and research in a context of increased global competition for attracting higher education staff and students.

  The cost, complexity and perception of the UK's immigration system are important factors which influence prospective students and higher education staff members' decisions to apply to study or (continue to) work in the UK. If the UK wishes to boost its international collaborations and networks, then the UK's immigration system must avoid closing down such opportunities and raising burdens and barriers for what is required.[38]

- **Outward mobility:** The end of freedom of movement, the decision of the UK not to associate to the Erasmus programme as well as the Turing scheme's exclusive focus on student outward mobility represents a loss of opportunities for higher education staff.[39] Outward mobility allows careers and research to strengthen by enhancing language and interpersonal skills, by developing critical research networks and partnerships and by widening research dissemination. Outward mobility is also critical to the liveliness and strength of higher education institutions and their staff and should seek to be strengthened by the UK Government.

37   UK Government, Student Visa, https://www.gov.uk/student-visa
38   The British Academy, UK Research and Development Roadmap: A response from the British Academy, August 2020, https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/documents/2629/Research-development-roadmap-consultation-response-August-2020.pdf
39   Russell Group, Why Erasmus is important for students, February 2018, https://russellgroup.ac.uk/news/the-importance-of-student-exchange/

The end of the freedom of movement and the additional costs related to healthcare, visas or tuition fees to be incurred by higher education staff and students, including language assistants, wishing to go to a EU country may also prevent future outward mobility and require careful consideration, action and support from the UK Government.

- **Turing scheme:** The UK Government should seek to develop and/or enhance opportunities for students and higher education staff as part of the Turing scheme, including outgoing and incoming student and higher education staff mobility, and facilitate the circulation of ideas and talent as well as consider reciprocity fee waivers, visa costs and healthcare coverage.
The Erasmus+ programme has helped enhance language skills and ensured that UK-based students across disciplines and academic staff could work across different cultures and within a diverse workforce as well as establish critical international partnerships. The ambition of the Turing scheme to allow mobility worldwide, including to non-Anglophone countries, could have implications for the development of language skills in the UK. Given the recognised decline in the UK's capacity in languages other than English, and the limitations this places on the UK's ability to engage economically, diplomatically and culturally with many countries across the world, the Government should ensure that the Turing scheme strongly promotes links with non-Anglophone countries.
The Turing scheme's budget will be £100 million in 2021–2022 and does not include a long-term commitment like it is the case for the Erasmus+ programme under the EU's multiannual financial framework. Under the Turing scheme, funding for subsequent academic years will be set out in future spending reviews. A longer-term commitment is critical to renegotiating reciprocal arrangements with partner higher education institutions/countries and to supporting recruitment in modern languages.

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