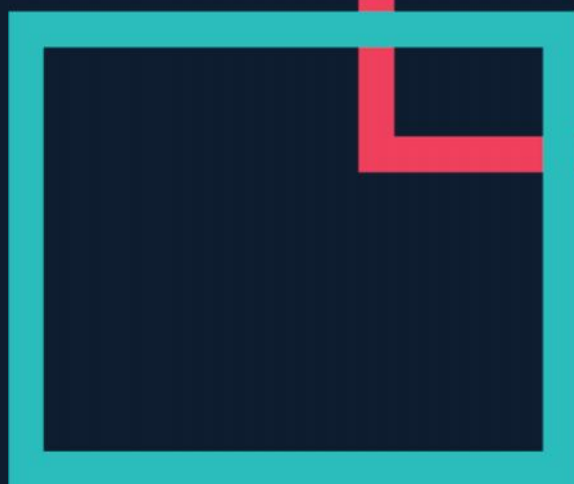


# International Education Scanning Report

Feb 2015



**NEW ZEALAND  
EDUCATION**

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Education New Zealand (ENZ) has contracted Education Directions (ED) to provide this monthly scanning report of the international education environment. The purpose of the reports is to develop a better shared understanding of the international education industry. Reports are intended to facilitate, not lead, discussion.

Feedback is welcome - contact Dave Guerin (ED), at 0800 500 552 or [dave@ed.co.nz](mailto:dave@ed.co.nz). If you wish to contact ENZ, please contact the Business Development Team [ebd@enz.govt.nz](mailto:ebd@enz.govt.nz).



## February 2015 Executive Summary

### Markets

1. Australian enrolments were up 12% in 2014, with commencements up 17%. UK visas were up 0.7% for Oct-Dec 2014, compared to Oct-Dec 2013. Japan had 9.5% enrolment growth in the year to May 2014, driven by increases from Vietnam and Nepal.
2. A Danish study showed net public economic benefits of US\$24m from international students in Denmark, but that was over 12-years! The low returns are due to low fees and high student support.
3. Two reports were released providing guidance on managing higher education partnerships (US), and joint degree programmes (EU) in the international space.
4. Commission payments by UK universities in 2013-14 were up 17% on 2011-12 according to a Times Higher Education survey
5. U-Multirank released internationalisation rankings, and promptly received criticism from institutions and a competitor ranking.

### Government

6. Irish regulations on private colleges continued to be debated, after a legal challenge in January struck down a policy. A compromise seems likely, allowing entry standards to increase, while still giving existing providers a reasonable pathway to entry.
7. Pressure in the UK is building for tougher entry standards and better protection for students when providers close. Providers have faced closure after the government deemed that booms in EU and non-EU students were sparked by non-compliance with funding and/or immigration rules. This has, in turn, created problems for the affected students and the reputation of the wider sector.
8. Denmark had a debate over the extent of support for EU students, which neared a cap agreed by political parties, and the number of courses taught in English.
9. New Zealand passed legislation on its Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International students, changing the way in which disputes are handled between providers and students, and between the government and providers.
10. The UK had another report on easing post-study work pathways (this one from a cross-party group of MPs), while visa changes in February slightly reduced the post-study work pathways available. Canadian regulations are making it harder for international graduates to get permanent residence.
11. UK language testing was also streamlined to include only IELTS and Trinity College London tests, to be carried out in test centres directly operated by the testing firms.

## Markets

### Market Size & Value

**Australia** The Australian Department of Education and Training published a [1-page end of year summary of international student enrolment data in 2014](#) (an [8-page version](#) has more data by sector).

- There were 589,860 enrolments by full fee paying international students in 2014, 12.3% up on 2013. The highest growth was in the VET, ELICOS and non-award sectors.
- There were 353,704 commencements in 2014, 17.4% up on 2013. Again, the highest growth was in the VET, ELICOS and non-award sectors.
- The highest percentage growth by market was from India, at 29.2% (it was the second biggest market). China, the biggest market, was up 8.4%.

English Australia was very pleased with the data, and noted that [records had been set for the totals and for various markets](#).

**Canada** Citizenship and Immigration (CIC) Canada published [a dataset of the total number of international students by country of citizenship for the years 2000-2013](#). Like most Canadian data, it is well out of date – Australia is releasing Dec 2014 data as Canada is releasing Dec 2013 data!

The overall growth from 2000-2013 was 78%. Looking at the markets with over 1,000 students in 2013, the largest percentage increases were for Saudi Arabia (3,353%), India (1,235%), Nigeria (818%), China (434%) and the Philippines (385%). Some were off a small base, but most showed large absolute growth too.

**Denmark** A study by a Danish think-tank has concluded that [foreign students contributed more than US\\$24m to the Danish economy in the 12 years to 2008](#), after accounting for the costs of their education. The economic contribution is much lower than other countries, as the Danish government pays for many of the students' costs, but the report argued that the positive return allayed fears that international students were a drain on taxpayers. The contribution from the students grows if they spend longer working in Denmark after graduation, and the report's authors encouraged growth in that area. The [study is available in Danish only](#). This report should be read in conjunction with concerns about English-medium courses and the costs of grants for other EU students, provided on p.11.

**UK** The Home Office published [immigration statistics for October – December 2014](#), with study-related visas granted up 0.7% in Oct-Dec 2014, compared to the same period in 2013. China was up 3% (1st market by size), Malaysia was up 7% (4<sup>th</sup>) and Saudi Arabia was up 12% (6<sup>th</sup>) but the other 7 of the top 10 non-EU markets were all down.

Study-related visa extension grants dropped by 35% compared to the previous year, presumably due to tighter rules on student genuineness and declining enrolments in the area. The number of student visitor visas (for study of up to 11 months) fell by 5% in the year to Dec 2014, compared to the previous year.

**Japan** The Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) published data from the [May 2014 Annual Survey of International Students in Japan](#) long with a [22 page](#) PDF version.

- The number of international students was 184,155, up 9.5% compared to May 2013.

- China made up 51% of the students, but their share dropped from 58% in 2013. Vietnam had 14% of the students, up from 8%. South Korea had 9% of the students, down from 10%. Nepal had 6% of the students, up from 4%.
- Higher education institutions only grew student numbers by 2.7%, while Japanese language institutes were up by 37.8%.
- There were 5,008 short stay students (under 1 year) in 2013-14, up 11.9% on the previous year. Data was also reported on other short-stay students not on college visas (9,325 in fiscal year 2013, up 7.9%).

The statistics are a little dated, but they suggest that Japan is getting some traction in its ambitious growth strategies. It remains reliant upon China, although the rapid growth from Vietnam and Nepal is positive. Japan is not benefitting from rapid growth in the number of Indian students studying abroad – it has under 1,000 students from that market.

**South Korea** [Spending by South Korean students studying abroad hit a nine-year low after falling 14% in the last year to US\\$3.7bn](#), according to [new research from the Bank of Korea](#). The central bank analysed overseas funds transfers.

## Market Events & Commentary

**UK** The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) published an issues paper on [Global Demand for English Higher Education: Latest shifts and trends](#) (9 pages). It is a brief, but quite impressive, summary of trends. HEFCE concluded that international student numbers have recovered in England, driven by China and Malaysia, but the growth rate had slipped below the US. Postgraduate enrolments were also heavily reliant on China – they were almost equal with domestic enrolments on full-time taught master's programmes ([HEFCE Blog](#), [Times Higher Education](#)).

A British Council [report analysing higher Education Statistics Agency \(HESA\) and Home Office data](#) (4 pages) ([media release](#), [Times Higher Education](#)) looked in more depth into the UK's competitiveness with the US, Canada and Australia. It compared growth rates from 2004/05 to 2013/14 and suggested that the UK was doing well across the period, although the US was doing even better.

**Bertelsmann** Europe's largest media group, the German-based Bertelsmann, has [agreed to purchase a controlling stake in the US-based Alliant International University](#) as the first step in a plan to build a global network of universities. It has made education its top investment priority and aims to achieve €1b in education-related revenue by 2017. The company will face competition from Pearson and Thomson Reuters, which are already active in the space.

### Snippets

- **USA** The Chronicle of Higher Education [found no evidence that international students were displacing domestic students](#) after analysing enrolment data at 69 top universities. Their analysis was simple, showing that domestic/in-state enrolments grew slightly as international enrolments surged. International enrolment growth has been generating pushback from locals.
- **Australia** Australia's largest listed education services provider Navitas [reported EBITDA growth of 13% across the group during the second half of 2014 and was optimistic about 2015](#). CEO Rod Jones spoke to the PIE News [on the future of the higher education industry](#).

- **India** The WES Mobility Monitor covered [the changing segmentation of Indian students studying overseas](#), and particularly the growing segment of Indian “highfliers”. The argument is that, as incomes in India increase, parents will support offshore study by their children without the same recourse to student loans that are prevalent now.
- **Economic Impact** WES published a detailed article [analysing the economic impact of recent mobility trends on host countries](#), with a strong focus on the US.
- **Mergers & Acquisitions** The Institute of English Language Studies Malta (IELS Malta) [acquired English school Magister Academy \(which is also Malta-based\)](#). Hult International Business School and Ashridge Business School [have finalised a strategic alliance announced in Jul 2014](#), and plan to merge.
- **Paraguay...** is [attracting Brazilian and Angolan graduate students with its low tuition and living costs](#). 50 private universities have sprung up, but not all are accredited by the government.
- **Market Snapshots...** covered [South African ELT providers](#) (visa problems continued), [the rise of private education institutions](#) (a useful international overview), [Nigeria](#) and [Morocco](#).
- **India** [Engineering college BITS Pilani is opening enrolments to international students](#), announcing scholarships with a 30-80% tuition waiver - they're aiming at Bangladeshi students. ICEF looked at [whether India can become a destination country for international students as it reforms its education system](#).
- **London Accommodation** A trio of Russian billionaires are in negotiation with private equity firm the Carlyle Group [to purchase a string of student housing blocks in London for over £535m](#). The student rooms are [at the top end of the market](#).
- **New Zealand** Hobsons [identified what NZ can do to grow its international education industry](#). The overview is vague but you can access the full report.
- **Switzerland** The Swiss franc has appreciated by 15% following the removal of a currency cap pegging it to the euro in Jan 2015, and [Swiss education agencies say they are being squeezed](#).
- **Australia** The Australian Group of Eight, a coalition of leading Australian universities, published a policy note analysing [Changes in International Students from 2003 to 2013](#) (8 pages).
- **Diploma Mills** Al-Fanar Media reported that [a global network of fraudulent online universities is using high-pressure sales tactics and phony scholarships](#) to extract money from students who end up with worthless degrees, [supported by phony quality control agency the International Accreditation Organization](#). They're well-written investigative articles, exposing how the organisations work.
- **Malaysia** Academics have [rebutted claims by Education Minister II Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh that Malaysian universities are on par with those in the UK, Germany and Australia](#) because they enrol many foreign students, saying quantity is not an indication of quality.
- **US-Russia Partnerships** The Institute of International Education published a guidebook on [“How to Develop Partnerships between US and Russian Universities”](#) (49 pages). While the sentiment is admirable, the current diplomatic environment may not encourage such links.



## Transnational Education

**Global Review** The American Council on Education published [\*International Higher Education Partnerships: A Global Review of Standards and Practices\*](#) (48 pages). Rather than create a single set of guidelines, they reviewed a range of existing guidelines from the US and abroad to identify useful practices. The report provides advice and case studies of good practice. One case study, for instance, explored how Virginia Commonwealth University shifted from hundreds of MOUs to a smaller set of university-wide strategic partners, complemented by academic unit strategic partners (p.20).

**Joint Degrees** The Joint Degrees from A to Z project (by EP-Nuffic, for the EU) has published [\*Joint Programmes from A to Z: A reference guide for practitioners\*](#) (77 pages), an overview of good practices for coordinating joint programmes. The project involved 6 Erasmus Mundus national bodies in Europe, so drew on a wide range of expertise. The report has a practical focus and highly relevant sources (with links provided), and would be a very worthwhile read even for those outside the EU.

### Snippets

- **Sweden-Hong Kong** Sweden's Karolinska Institute is [opening a medical research centre in Hong Kong](#) after a US\$50m donation from a Hong Kong businessperson. The article covered a potential conflict of interest involving Hong Kong's Chief Executive and his son, who works at the Karolinska Institute, but there is no apparent wrongdoing.
- **India TAFE South Australia** [signed an MOU with Indian organisations](#). The release is long on promise (potential to train 80,000 students pa), but short on details.
- **German Dual Programmes** The German body DAAD funded a study into the internationalisation of dual study programmes (involving learning at work and study). [The report](#) is in German and English, with the English version starting halfway through the file to which we have linked (66 pages). Few such programmes currently have an international component, and options were explored to increase such activity, and to build links with other countries.
- **New Branch Campuses** [The University of Warwick \(UK\) planned to develop a campus near Sacramento, California](#), with a goal of growing to 6,000 students by 2031. Heriot-Watt University (UK) [opened a campus in the Malaysian city of Putrajaya](#) – it replaced a temporary campus in the area. *Business Because* reported on [western business schools' efforts to establish campuses in fast-growing Asian economies](#). Iran will [open a branch campus of its University of Medical Sciences in Iraq](#).
- **Branch Closures** University College London announced [it will close its campus in South Australia's Adelaide within two years](#) ([University World News](#)). It will also close a Kazakhstan branch this year and is reviewing a Qatar campus. Instead of overseas campuses, it will partner with elite universities in 5-8 cities around the world.

## MOOCs

- **English Language Teachers** A course for English language teachers run by the US State Department [attracted about 24,000 people to the Coursera platform offering](#).



- **Microcredentials** Coursera [announced a series of capstone projects in collaboration with companies like Google and Instagram](#), which [Inside Higher Ed](#) describes as part of a trend toward “Microcredentials” for adult learners.
- **India** The VC of India’s BITS Pilani, a private institution, said that [MOOCs and SPOCs \(small private online courses\) are important for meeting surging demand for university study in India](#).

## Recruitment

**Agents and Commission** [UK universities’ commission payments to overseas recruitment agents reached £86.7m in 2013-14](#), up 16.5% on spending in 2011-12. The data was collected by Times Higher Education (THE). 139 of 158 institutions approached use agents to enrol non-EU students. The average fee paid per student was £1,767, which might mean a commission rate around 15% (that is our rough estimate only, given data limitations). Oxford and Cambridge did not pay commission.

THE also asked universities about whether they have investigated alleged agent impropriety. Universities said that they had [investigated 54 cases of suspected wrongdoing in the past 3 years](#), and 34 institutions had to take action over suspected wrongdoing. Fraudulent documents or qualifications were the main problem. Commentators differed on whether that was a small number, or whether under-reporting might be an issue.

Two academics from the UK’s University of East Anglia write an opinion piece about how [internationalisation strategies are increasingly shaped by marketisation](#). That is part of a wider project, for which they have [completed a scoping report](#) (21 pages). The paper is somewhat academic, but the wider project has potential.

### Snippets

- **British Schools Website** Which British School (WBS) is [a new online search platform for independent British boarding or day schools](#).
- **University Tours** ICEF Monitor reviewed [universities’ growing use of virtual campus tours](#). Study Group’s Embassy Summer division will [launch a new 3-day summer school mini-programme to allow students to visit some of the USA’s top universities](#).
- **France** Promotion agency Campus France and international French-language TV channel TV5Monde [signed an agreement to promote France as a higher education destination](#). Asia will be the first target market.
- **Australia-Europe Partnership** English Australia, Australia’s peak body for English language providers, [partnered with the European Association of Quality Agencies \(EAQA\) as part of its Partner Agency Program](#).

## Study Pathways

- **UK** Oxford International Education Group (formerly ISIS Education) [announced its second university partnership with Kent’s Canterbury Christ Church University](#). BPP University has

partnered with the Nigerian Law School [to allow graduates of the latter to convert their degrees to an LLM at BPP](#), via a 3-month top-up programme.

- **China** Chinese parents are [increasingly sending their children to junior boarding schools abroad to give them an edge in getting into a good college](#).

## Retention & Achievement

- **English Skills** According to a THE Best University Workplace Survey, 31% of scholars [do not believe that international undergraduates in their departments speak and write English at a level that is adequate for degree-level study](#).

## Post-Study Outcomes

**European Mobility** The Austrian and Slovak national student unions have [explored the challenges of student mobility in Europe](#) (90 pages), with government funding support. The document has a series of chapters written by different people, each exploring an issue. The quality and focus is uneven, but its student perspective is valuable, and relatively rare.

**Lower UK Settlement** The [fifth Migrant Journey report](#) by UK Visas and Immigration (the fourth came out in Feb 2014) showed a continuing decline in the proportion of students who had leave to remain in the UK 5 years after being issued a study visa (see section 8). Only 15% of those gaining a visa in 2008 still had leave to remain in 2013, down from 21% for the 2004 cohort. 1% of the 2008 cohort had been granted settlement, compared to 3% of the 2004 cohort.

Looking at the data by country of origin, 28% of Pakistani students granted visas in 2008 still had valid leave to remain in 2013, compared to 19% of Indians, 19% of Saudis, 18% of Chinese, and 7% of Americans.

The decline in the number of students remaining in the UK reflects a tightening of immigration rules, and a weaker economic climate.

### Snippets

- **Australia** Five Sydney-based universities [received \\$50k grants to develop an entrepreneurship program for international students to help with future employability](#). The grants were from StudyNSW, a new body supporting international education in New South Wales.
- **Work Visa Fraud** An Australian was arrested after [allegedly targeting international students with false promises of a subclass-457 work visa in exchange for cash](#).

## Study Abroad

**Generation Study Abroad** The Institute of International Education (IIE) has [launched a drive to involve 1,000 elementary and secondary school teachers in its Generation Study Abroad campaign](#). The aim is to build students' interest in overseas experiences. Ireland [has signed up as the first "Lead Signature](#)

[Partner” to the IIE’s Generation Study Abroad initiative](#), and has pledged \$100k to the fund, to be used for scholarships matched by education institutions.

Inside Higher Ed [summarised presentations on study abroad issues](#) at the Assn of International Education Administrators’ annual conference. Contributors debated the value of short and long-term programmes, and whether US students were being challenged enough in their experiences.

**Mobility Outcomes** [Academic perspectives on the outcomes of outward student mobility](#) (108 pages) explored UK academics’ perspectives on what students gained after studying abroad. The report was commissioned by the UK’s Higher Education International Unit (IU) and the Higher Education Academy (HEA). There were 56 survey responses and 14 interviews, so it was a small scale study. It would be a good read for those reviewing, or seeking to establish, mobility offerings.

### Snippets

- **London** Mayor Boris Johnson [announced a new mentoring scheme for top US students studying in London](#), and urged US students to come to the capital in “ever greater numbers”. The PIE News earlier reported on the [efforts behind Johnson’s New York announcement](#), which was facilitated by a group of London universities. At the same meeting, Google research showed that [London is the world’s most searched-for city among US students looking to study abroad](#). The research covered universities and locations.
- **Cuba** [UCLA and UC Davis have become the first US institutions to offer study abroad programmes based in Cuba](#), following the reduction of trade sanctions between the countries.

## Rankings & Indices

**U-Multirank**...[released rankings on International Orientation](#), with 27 organisations getting a perfect ranking (the [full list](#) now seems to list 41 institutions with perfect A marks). The rankings are based on student mobility, international academic staff, international joint publications, and international doctorate degrees.

U-Multirank has potential, but it still needs to get buy-in from many institutions (top UK and US universities do not participate), and especially those outside Europe. It also needs better design - the list has confusing design elements which make it hard to decipher the rankings, and has a key that is at the end of a 17-page table. A competitor, Phil Baty of THE, [criticised the European focus of the rankings](#), but U-Multirank’s Frank Ziegele pointed out that his rankings drew from a wider range of institutional types.

Finally, a survey of European University Association members on the new U-Multirank system found [concerns about the resources required to collect the data and the interpretation of the indicators](#) (18 pages). While U-MultiRank is intended to have a broader focus than other rankings, and recognise institutional distinctiveness, it has stirred some of the same reactions as other rankings.

## Government

### Overarching Strategies

- **Egypt...** [wants to quadruple its number of Arab and African students from 53,000 to 200,000 over the next 3 years](#), as part of a new international recruitment strategy ([University World News](#)). The plan seems ambitious, given Egypt's many economic and political challenges.
- **Scotland** European students are [increasingly taking advantage of Scotland's fees-free tertiary education system](#) (and the universities are encouraging them to apply). This will create challenges for local Scottish students to gain entry, especially at the highest-rated universities.
- **Ukraine** University World News reported on how Ukraine's 'Law on Higher Education', passed last July, [set Ukraine's education sector up to engage internationally](#).
- **New Zealand...** signed education agreements with [an education agreement with Qatar](#) and [the United Arab Emirates \(UAE\)](#).

### Regulatory Issues

**Ireland** The newly-formed Private College Network is [calling on the Irish Government to abandon plans to introduce an 'interim list' of providers allowed to recruit internationally](#) and instead bring forward the rollout of its new International Education Mark (IEM) regulatory framework. The Dublin-based Academic Bridge and National Employee Development Training Centre Ltd, which lead the Private College Network, [have launched a legal challenge against the interim list that has delayed its launch](#). The IEM scheme is currently planned to start in January 2016, but that might prevent colleges without an existing accreditation for staying in the market between now and then.

As we have noted before, there's a balance here between the Irish government's desire to raise entry standards quickly, and the provision of a fair transition for existing providers. There may be reasonable concerns about the standards of some of the providers without existing accreditation, but assuming that all are poor quality is unlikely to be a fair solution. A compromise seems likely.

**UK Reforms and Problems** A Universities UK task group has published [Quality, equity, sustainability: the future of higher education regulation](#) (46 pages) ([media release](#)), arguing that the UK's current system of regulation is becoming outdated and reform is needed in order to protect its international reputation for quality. Recommendations included: a compulsory register of providers (with tougher entry standards than at present); and protection of students when a provider closes (with a focus on transfer to alternative courses, rather than student fee protection).

The Universities UK report is timely, as February had several examples of regulatory action that affected students, and the wider sector reputation.

- [More than 500 students from one provider are being asked to pay back free grants or face bailiff action](#). The students' courses were halted after the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (Bis) stopped all student funding to ICE Academy in January 2014. ICE Academy was part of the boom in enrolment of EU students on weak or sham courses in the UK. Some of ICE Academy's students accessed government grants for courses/campuses that were not approved for such funding.

- [Private provider St Patrick's College also lost its Tier 2 and Tier 4 sponsor license to recruit international students](#) after an investigation was launched by the Dept for Business Innovation & Skills (BIS) and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). £96m of student loan and maintenance grants was paid out to 7,000 EU students at the college in 2013. We have covered reports in recent months on the explosion of such funding, and the limited focus by the colleges involved on student attendance and education.
- Other students have also been affected by a lack of clarity over provider closures. The National Union of Students (NUS) published [a report on the Home Office's crackdown on visa sponsorships](#) (19 pages). It said [more than 12,000 international students were affected](#), while only 5,000 were covered by the Sponsorship Working Group (SWG) set up to assist genuine students. NUS participated in the SWG and the report was produced due to their concern about the support given to students.
- The crackdown on visa sponsorships came after the Feb 2014 Panorama documentary that exposed fraud in English language testing in the UK, and related areas. The NUS argued that the crackdown dragged in many students who were at no fault, but nonetheless lost their fees from colleges that closed, and found it difficult to access alternative courses. A tool to help find alternative courses was, for example, not made available until after the deadline by which many students had to find an alternative course. As with the recent Irish regulatory situation, it appears that the government erred on the side of harsh regulation, rather than taking a more balanced approach

The problems are complex, but the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) has published a helpful document: ["A Manifesto for International Students"](#) (4 pages). The election-related paper set out recommended principles, along with changes to rules and procedures designed to attract more international students to the UK. The overall themes were that students should be excluded from immigration targets, existing rules should be simplified or eased, and students should be made to feel welcome.

**Singapore Law** [Law degrees from eight English universities will no longer be recognised for admission to the Singapore bar](#). The eight universities were chosen because they had lower rankings than the 11 UK universities remaining on the list. The move was seen as a measure to reduce the supply of law graduates in Singapore, where more students apply for entry to legal practice roles than there are places available.

**Denmark** The anti-immigration Danish People's Party (DF) [has called for Denmark's universities to stop offering courses in English](#). The proposal was opposed by others, but with 58% growth in enrolments in such courses (from a low base), some opposition is to be expected. The DF has recently received over 20% support in political polls.

In a related story, the number of EU citizens receiving funding from the Danish Students' Grants and Loans Scheme [has grown more than tenfold between 2012 and 2014, from 441 to 4,647](#). The increase follows a ruling in the European Court of Justice that Denmark should be paying grants to European students who earn an income in Denmark. The students must produce records of employment and many have had grants withdrawn as a result. Even so, this is a political issue, with the current funding only available up to a cap, after which political parties may request a renegotiation.

#### Snippets

- **EU Loans** The EU will [facilitate lending of €3b to Erasmus+ Masters students](#) via guarantees to financial institutions. Lenders were invited to apply to the scheme in Feb 2014.

- **Australia** Australian academic Gavin Moodie said [international student fees won't act as an effective cap on domestic fees if fee structures are deregulated](#), because they can be easily manipulated to benefit the circumstances of individual institutions.
- **UK Admissions** [The UCAS admissions system will change its rules to allow UK students to apply through it to European universities](#). At present UK students wanting to study at a European university have to apply directly to individual institutions.

## Quality Assurance

**New Zealand** New legislation was passed relating to the New Zealand [Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students](#). The [legislation](#) will replace existing appeal bodies open to students with a dispute resolution scheme that may have quicker outcomes, and clearer enforcement. Detailed Code requirements were deleted, with these to be set by regulation in future (the net effect should be minor, but it gives the Minister and officials more flexibility and power). Providers face tougher sanctions and enforcement from the Code Administrator, rather than having an external body make such decisions. The Bill also adjusted refund and quality assurance requirements for private training establishments.

### Snippets

- **Mauritius...** was [reforming its Tertiary Education Commission](#), partly in order to support its goals to be a Knowledge Hub (the country already has several branches of foreign institutions).
- **Korea** [Four universities in South Korea have been banned from recruiting overseas for a year](#), after failing to comply with the government's International Education Quality Assurance System. The affected universities include Hansei University, Jeonbuk Science College, Gyeongnam National University of Science and Technology, and Taegu Science University. The factors considered included illegal overstaying by students, student language skills, providers' financial position and the diversity of the student body.
- **UK** The QAA published [findings from its investigation of allegations of special treatment for a group of international students sponsored by their governments at the University of Bedfordshire](#) (5 pages). It found none of the original allegations could be upheld, but did identify many areas for improvement.

## Transnational Education Regulation

- **India** G.P. Hinduja, co-chairman of the Hinduja Group (valued at \$25b), [urged India's government to establish a policy and legislative framework for foreign providers to establish universities](#). He said the Hinduja Group has been approached by several institutions. Such a framework has been unsuccessfully pursued in India for some years.
- **Cyprus, Greece and Malta** The UK's Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) announced [its next overseas review will be on Cyprus, Greece and Malta](#) (release early 2016). QAA takes an in-depth look each year at a country or region with significant UK transnational education.
- **Sri Lanka** The new government [encouraged private universities to open](#), in an environment where local university places are well behind demand.



## National Scholarship & Research Schemes

- **US-Mexico Mobility** Inside Higher Ed reported on [three overlapping governmental initiatives for academic mobility and scientific collaboration between US and Mexican institutions](#). They linked to the [end-of-2014 report on the FOBESII student and staff mobility project](#).
- **AfricaFrance** The AfricaFrance foundation's [first programmes](#) started to roll out ([University World News](#)). They included LeAD Campus (management education provided by French and African institutions) and HR-Excellence Africa (workforce training). The foundation was set up by French and African governments.
- **Iraq** The Kurdish minister of higher education and scientific research [called for greater support from UK universities for the Kurdish government's fully funded postgraduate scholarship scheme](#), which currently has 1,500 Kurdish postgraduates studying at UK institutions. UK universities were perceived as less collaborative than German institutions, which had far fewer scholarships students.
- **Fulbright** The US State Department [wanted to involve more community colleges in Fulbright Program exchanges](#).
- **UK-Israel Fund** UK Prime Minister David Cameron [announced funding of £3.2m for 8 bilateral medical research projects between UK and Israeli institutions](#), as part of the British Council's £10m Britain Israel Research and Academic Exchange programme (BIRAX).
- **Holland Scholarships** [The Netherlands launched the €5m annual Holland Scholarship scheme](#) to provide funding for international students to study a full degree, and Dutch students to complete internships or research outside of Europe. It will fund 768 scholarships for non-EU students and a further 768 scholarships for Dutch students.
- **Qatar** [The Qatar National Research Fund's Abdul Sattar Al-Taie said it will continue with a collaborative research model](#) despite the Qatar Foundation indicating it wants to use a more independent model as it expands postgraduate provision (ie education by Qatari institutions).

## Immigration

**UK** The UK had a new report on post study work, along with visa rule changes.

- The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Migration (APPGM) released [UK post study work opportunities for international students](#) (47 pages). The report is mainly a rehash of historic UK post study work policies, and the 2012 closure of many options for students. Some newer work showed that most employers who become sponsors of foreign graduates are in or around London, and that some industries found it hard to recruit graduates. As with the APPGM's other recent reports, they suggested easing up on student and graduate visa regulations. In the lead-up to the UK election, there is little chance of the ideas being taken up. While the report may not have much immediate outcome, it has drawn upon a wide range of evidence and is well-written.
- The UK government announced **changes to language testing for visa applications**. IELTS and IELTS Life Skills (a new test) have been approved for visa purposes, and can only be taken at authorised centres ([IELTS](#)). Trinity College London (TCL) will be the [other approved test](#)



[provider](#). City and Guilds, and Pearson, tests will be excluded. A Home Office condition was that all exam centres used in secure testing be brought under the direct control of exam providers – as a result [TCL acquired the national chain English Exam Centres](#).

- The Home Office published a [Statement of Changes in Immigration Rules HC 1025](#) (243 pages), and the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) published summaries of [the main changes for students](#) and [changes affecting work routes for students](#). Most of the changes take effect from 6 and 24 April but some regarding administrative review are effective as of 2 March. Some significant changes are listed below.
  - The “student visitor” routes will be renamed the “short-term student” route.
  - Graduate Entrepreneur visa applicants must not intend to run property development/management businesses.
  - The list of subjects covered by the Academic Technology Approval Scheme will be greatly expanded.

### Snippets

- **Cyprus** Private colleges say [visa procedures for prospective international students are too demanding and time-consuming](#), and that Cyprus is losing its chance to become a regional education centre. The story has considerable detail, showing the growing pains in Cyprus as they seek to develop systems in a hurry.
- **Canada** New regulations placing international students in the same pool as other skilled workers [make it more difficult for international students who have recently graduated from Canadian universities to qualify for permanent residence](#). While provincial visa programmes still give preference to those who studied in Canada, the federal programme is now stricter, and is likely to deter some students.

## Trade Issues

- **Europe** Higher education leaders were [concerned about the implications of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnerships \(TTIP\) and the Trades in Services Agreement \(TiSA\)](#), both currently being negotiated. Opponents are shadow-boxing at present, as no details are available publicly, but the issue will spark a major debate in time.

## Political Risk

- **Saudi Arabia** Inside Higher Ed explored opinions about [whether Western institutions should engage with regimes with questionable values](#). It's a long article, and has considerable detail about issues around operating joint campuses or staff exchanges with Saudi Arabia.
- **Public Diplomacy** US Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs Evan Ryan said [educational and cultural exchanges are key to anti-ISIL efforts](#). That is a heroic evaluation of the impact of such programmes.

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