

Recommendations to support UK Outward Student Mobility

Submitted to David Willetts by the Joint Steering Group on Outward Student Mobility, March 2012

The Joint Steering Group on Outward Student Mobility was formed at the end of October 2011, at the request of the Rt Hon David Willetts MP, Minister for Universities and Science. This followed earlier correspondence with Professor Colin Riordan (Chair, UK Higher Education International Unit and Vice-Chancellor, University of Essex), expressing sector concern over the future of the Erasmus fee waiver.

In his request, the Minister asked that the Group consider both the future of the Erasmus fee waiver and the broader incentives and obstacles to mobility. The Group was asked to identify action that individual institutions might take to increase the number of students deciding to go abroad.

Terms of Reference were then developed by BIS officials working with the International Unit, together with the identification of Joint Steering Group members. The first meeting of the Joint Steering Group took place on 13 October, with supporting expert groups meeting from 31 October.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND KEY MESSAGES

1. NATIONAL STRATEGY. The UK should develop and implement a national strategy for outward student mobility. The Steering Group further suggested that this strategy should be supported by a body designed to facilitate and promote best practice, effectiveness and professionalism in the support of student mobility.

Recognising the diversity of the sector, the new body should consistently promote mobility to students as well as higher education institutions and other relevant audiences including employers and parents. The body might also be entrusted with data collection and perhaps the setting of national mobility targets.

It would be necessary for any national strategy and/or body to complement those in place at the level of devolved national governments. Both sector ownership and employer engagement would be critical to success. The body could take a range of forms, from a fully-fledged agency to a light-touch website overseen by a steering committee with the potential to expand as necessary. Subject to the Minister's approval, the Outward Student Mobility Joint Steering Group will develop detailed options for submission to the International Education Advisory Forum (IEAF).

2. SUSTAINABLE FUNDING FOR MOBILITY. Taking into account the tight constraints on public finances, the strategy should include measures to deliver sustainable funding for student mobility taking the devolved administrations into account. Such measures could include philanthropy, support from business, enabling the portability of student loans and extending the availability of mobility scholarships. Furthermore, existing scholarships, bursaries and other funding schemes need to be mapped and publicised on a single website.

3. FLEXIBILITY IN THE CURRICULUM. There is a need to encourage greater flexibility in the higher education curriculum to make it easier for students to spend time abroad during their studies, and for their experience abroad to be more widely accredited and recognised (e.g. through the Higher Education Achievement Record and the Diploma Supplement).

4. COLLECTION OF DATA. There is a need for more comprehensive collection of mobility information at national level. There needs to be an agreed definition of mobility and consensus on which data are required. While recognising the burden of data collection, the absence of information on wider student mobility is a barrier to

effective strategy, support and the measurement of success. These data are also essential in the wider international context.

5. EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND DIVERSITY. There is an opportunity to deliver greater efficiency and effectiveness in the support of student mobility through the sharing of best practice as well as through greater inter-institutional collaboration. HE providers need to think creatively about how they include and credit mobility experience and be aware that mobility is not dependent on an additional year abroad.

6. PROMOTION PRIOR TO UNIVERSITY. There should be stronger promotion of international awareness prior to university at school level, in order to inspire and encourage interest before students enter higher education. A good way to do this would be to include foreign HE providers on UCAS applications. There should also be greater emphasis placed on language learning in primary, secondary and tertiary-level education. Efforts to promote mobility should also address part-time and mature students.

OTHER KEY MESSAGES

7. WIDENING PARTICIPATION. A number of the above recommendations have the potential to support the widening participation agenda. For example, a national strategy for student mobility supported by a new mobility body would allow WP activity to be integrated with the mobility agenda, extending opportunities to social groups that would otherwise be unlikely to participate.

8. INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE GAINED IN OTHER WAYS. HE providers and any national strategy should recognise the many forms in which mobility experience can be acquired, including insight gained within the UK. Employers are looking for students that can demonstrate a 'global mindset', but are less concerned with the route through which it is achieved.

INTRODUCTION

Context of the report

It is well known that the UK is strong at attracting international students. But while 10% of the world's foreign students in tertiary education choose to study in the UK, we lag behind when it comes to encouraging UK students to be mobile themselves. The UK ranks just 25th in the world for the number of students studying abroad, and while we are among the main receivers of students under the EU's Erasmus mobility programme, the number of outgoing UK Erasmus students was under 12,000 in 2009/10, compared with 31,158 from Spain, 30,213 from France, and 28,854 from Germany.¹

The two major obstacles to student mobility are financial constraints and linguistic barriers.² The UK's language deficit is also salient when it comes to employability. As a 2010 education and skills survey by the CBI points out "over two thirds of employers (71%) are not satisfied with the foreign language skills of young people and over half (55%) perceive shortfalls in their international cultural awareness".³

At a time when it is more important than ever for the UK to be more competitive internationally, there are a number of clear advantages to tackling these obstacles and promoting student mobility. UK businesses have recently been vocal in espousing the value of skills acquired during work and study abroad, and a report by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has shown that students undertaking an Erasmus mobility period are more likely to be either in employment or further study six months after qualifying, and that their average salaries are higher.⁴ Studying, working or volunteering elsewhere in the world will position UK students more advantageously in the international labour market.⁵ There is also evidence to

¹ *International student mobility literature review*. Research and Report to HEFCE and co-funded by the British Council UK National Agency for Erasmus, Allan Findlay, Centre for Applied Population Analysis, University of Dundee, Russell King and Jill Ahrens, Sussex Centre for Migration, 2010

² *International Student Mobility Report*, by the Sussex Centre for Migration Research, University of Sussex, and the Centre for Applied Population Research, University of Dundee, HEFCE, July 2004

NUS/HSBC Student Experience Research 2008-11 Reports:
<http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/campaigns/highereducation/learning-and-teaching-hub/teachingandlearningresearch/>

³ *Ready to grow: business priorities for education and skills*, 2010, <http://www.cbi.org.uk/pdf/2010-cbi-edi-ready-to-grow-business-priorities-for%20education-and-skills.pdf>

⁴ Attainment in Higher Education, Erasmus and placement students, HEFCE Nov 2009

⁵ The CBI asserts that: 'Language skills and an ability to work in a multi-cultural environment are also valuable in an increasingly globalised workplace. Foreign language proficiency adds significantly to a candidate's portfolio of skills, not just in terms of conversational ability, but also general cultural awareness and sensitivity.' *Study/work abroad and employability*. Coleman, J. March 2011

show that students achieve a higher grade point average if they have some international experience.⁶ International experience may also improve language skills. Promoting student mobility will lead to graduates who are better educated, more well-rounded and more employable global citizens.

Student mobility does not just mean intercalating a year abroad and studying at an overseas university. It could include industrial placements, internships or work experience undertaken either in the summer vacation or as part of a structured intercalary year. Studying could involve an intensive vacation language course in China. Volunteering on a recognised project overseas during the vacation can provide many of the benefits outlined in the previous paragraph whether or not the acquisition of language skills is involved. Student mobility can involve a combination of studying and working, or working and volunteering, or a permutation of the three.

While there is no set pattern or template for student mobility, the evidence set out above clearly indicates that spending time abroad in a structured way improves student outcomes and prospects in ways that make its encouragement a valid aim for both HE providers and government. This report takes into account the dramatic changes presently in train. At the national level the impacts of recent increases in the tuition fee cap remain as yet unknown, with the possibility that students may see them as a disincentive to extending their degree to encompass a period of mobility. Significant change is also underway at the European level, where the European Commission is in the process of reviewing and enhancing its programmes to support mobility through the proposed Erasmus for All initiative.⁷ However, the value in principle of encouraging student mobility remains constant.

Scope of the report

While the report recognises that there are many different forms of mobility the recommendations in this report are made primarily with undergraduate students studying at UK providers of higher education in mind. However, the report recognises the importance of postgraduate mobility, and that mobility should be encouraged at all stages across all subject areas, not only languages. Furthermore, while the group was initially asked 'to identify action that individual institutions might take to increase the number of students deciding to go abroad', the group's recommendations recognise that a wider national effort is necessary in order to promote international student mobility.

⁶ GLOSSARI Project, http://www.frontiersjournal.com/issues/vol10/vol10-04_SuttonRubin.pdf

⁷ Erasmus for All, Com (2011) 787 Final, <http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus-for-all/>

RECOMMENDATIONS AND KEY MESSAGES IN DETAIL

1. NATIONAL STRATEGY

The UK should develop and implement a national strategy for outward student mobility. It should make the case for student mobility, setting out a consistent narrative and set of messages not only for students, but also for HE providers, for employers and for parents on the benefits of mobility. The full range of advantages are not well understood nor is the evidence well known. The UK is traditionally weak in this area and clear, strong arguments need to be articulated and well publicised. The Steering Group further suggested that this strategy should be supported by a body with objectives to facilitate and promote best practice, effectiveness and professionalism in the support of student mobility.

Countries that do best at outward student mobility internationally are those that have a national strategy in place, administered by a national mobility agency. Currently, various bodies in the UK are concerned with student mobility but there is no single agency that focuses exclusively on it. The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) was cited as providing a leading example of such a national agency, promoting inbound and outbound student mobility in general. Its action programme for 2008-2011 sets out the German aims for a comprehensive higher education internationalisation.⁸ Part of this is the ongoing German student mobility campaign “Go out” started in 2006 by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) with the DAAD.⁹ The campaign sets a target of a 50% overall international mobility rate among German graduates. It also specifies a further objective: that 20% of all German students complete at least a full semester at a foreign university. In 2010, 31% of all graduates of German universities had completed a mobility period.¹⁰

A national agency would bring together key stakeholders from the HE sector, government and devolved administrations, business, and other institutions. Any national strategy should include targets for student mobility, noting the current EU target that 20% of HE graduates should have had a 3-month study or training placement abroad.¹¹ The key issue here is to agree a definition of student mobility that suits the purposes of the UK and stipulates both a minimum acceptable period and circumscribes activity deemed to be acceptable.

⁸ See http://www.daad.de/presse/de/aktionsprogramm_englisch.pdf

⁹ See <http://www.go-out.de/de/index.html>

¹⁰ Source: Report from DAAD London for Expert Group

¹¹ *Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve, 28-29 April 2009*, http://www.ehea.info/Uploads/Declarations/Leuven_Louvain-la-Neuve_Communique%C3%A9_April_2009.pdf

The strategy should exploit the already strongly international nature of UK higher education. Inspiration and encouragement often comes from personal contact with students and staff that already have international experience. This could include returning UK mobility students, British Council Erasmus Ambassadors, NUS 'Student Leaders' and international students. 'Buddying' systems can also be useful in creating the initial link to a possible mobility placement and can also enable sharing of useful overseas perspective and overseas contacts.

A single portal website would highlight and provide links to the various schemes on offer and promote mobility messages. The recent 'HEGlobal' initiative which provides a central point in the UK for advising HE providers and business on transnational education opportunities might provide a model in this respect.¹²

2. SUSTAINABLE FUNDING FOR MOBILITY

The question of how to fund increased mobility will need to be addressed. In the context of much reduced availability of public funding, avenues such as sponsorship from business need to be systematically addressed. This has already proved successful in a number of national contexts. In Spain, for example, private banks contribute to the promotion of mobility through regional networks or national-level programmes. A notable example is the Santander Universities Network which operates its own university exchange network, the 'Santander Universities Global Division', including mobility scholarships. This initiative also operates in the UK, with 46 UK HE providers currently participating.¹³

While many UK HE providers already have strong links with business, the small business landscape is less well understood. Working Group discussions suggested a significant opportunity to engage with small business, where mobility placements and linkage with international students in the UK could support SME export and international aspirations.

It was noted that there were already examples of good links with SMEs through regional schemes. The British Council was also connecting to SMEs with student Erasmus Ambassadors. Findings from the current Wilson Review also point to huge progress in the area of business-university collaboration in the last decade.¹⁴

¹² See <http://heglobal.international.ac.uk/>

¹³ See http://www.santander.co.uk/cs/cs/Satellite?appID=abbey.internet.Abbeycom&c=Page&canal=CABBEYC&cid=1210609061003&empr=Abbeycom&leng=en_GB&pagename=Abbeycom%2FPPage%2FWC_ACOM_TemplateA2

¹⁴ It is also worth emphasising that the Wilson Review also recognises the importance of international experience in the form of internships and placements abroad (see reflective recommendation 12). For further information see <http://www.wilsonreview.co.uk/review/>

The portability of student loans, scholarships and student support is also integral to the promotion of student mobility. The Government should look at ways in which students could be encouraged to use existing funding mechanisms to acquire international experience and scrutinize the regulations governing the student support in this respect.

The German example is instructive in this regard. Not only does the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) provide support for outbound student mobility (in 2010 this support amounted to €72 million), German students are also supported by a fully portable needs-based maintenance funding scheme (BAföG). Provided by the Federal Ministry for Education and Research, the maintenance grants and loans which apply at undergraduate and at Masters level are fully portable for full degree study at universities inside the EU and for a study abroad period of a maximum of 12 months in countries outside the EU. In 2008, 28,026 students received BAföG-funding for studying abroad (Auslands-BAföG) which accounts for €73.3 million in total. Recent figures for 2010 indicate a further strong increase in BAföG-supported outbound mobility with 30,586 students studying in EU countries alone as opposed to 18,453 students in 2008.¹⁵

The Australian scheme OS-HELP, whereby students have access to portable loans of up to 5684 A\$ per six month study period is also a useful example to bear in mind for the UK context.¹⁶

Finally, extending the availability of scholarships, for example through the National Scholarship Programme (NSP), due to come into effect from autumn 2012, to contribute to mobility costs is also an opportunity, especially in the light of its potential to foster widening participation.

All of the above would need to be complemented by an accessible database of scholarships and financial support available. This could be efficiently administered by a national mobility agency, as is the case in Germany.

3. FLEXIBILITY IN THE CURRICULUM

Increasing outward student mobility requires greater flexibility in the curriculum, to enable the accreditation or other recognition of activity, for example via the HEAR. Some HE providers are already leading the way in setting an expectation for mobility, by incorporating mobility options into all their programmes or working towards making

¹⁵ Report from DAAD London for Expert Group

¹⁶ See <http://studyassist.gov.au/sites/studyassist/helppayingmyfees/pages/os-help-loans-and-study-overseas>

all programmes Bologna compatible. However, particular difficulty was cited for students studying highly technical subjects in health and STEM – which can often limit the scope to study abroad, because of the need to complete modules in the UK or the availability of relevant overseas facilities and perceived quality of study. Measures to address this should be developed in close consultation with the accreditation and professional qualifications bodies.

There was a sense that change would also be driven through student demand for programmes that could offer the right mix of opportunity and recognition. Here credit transparency may also become an important factor in helping students to choose their options.

Promoting the use of the Diploma Supplement and Higher Education Achievement Report could be a small but significant step toward addressing the issues that currently arise regarding the recognition and accreditation of mobility experiences.

4. COLLECTION OF DATA.

There is a need for more comprehensive collection of mobility information at national level. While recognising the burden of information collection, the absence of wider student mobility data was cited as a barrier to effective strategy, support and to measuring success.¹⁷ Erasmus is the only area where there are reliable statistics. Data collection depends on there being a widely accepted definition of mobility. Much of the work to achieve this has been done, for example in a report produced by HESA, as well as work done in the context of the Bologna Process.¹⁸ The next step must be to decide on a final definition and to publicise it widely. That will then enable the collection of data on student movements.

5. EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND DIVERSITY.

Student perception of high fees and debt might drive demand towards three-year degree courses, with reduced demand for the additional year abroad. HE providers will therefore need to think creatively about how they include and credit mobility experience and be aware that mobility is not dependent on an additional year abroad.

¹⁷ The recent ACA study *Mapping mobility in European higher education. Volume II: Case studies*, Eds. Ulrich Teichler, Irina Ferencz and Bernd Wächter, June 2011, states the following on data collection in the UK:

'Whilst data on incoming mobility are very comprehensive, limited national statistics are available on outgoing mobility. Although HESA obtains data on outgoing exchange students and, since 2007/08, has included a field on the country of destination of exchange students, there is a lack of full and detailed British data on outgoing student mobility from the United Kingdom.' p.229

Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/more-information/doc/2011/acaannex_en.pdf

¹⁸ See http://www.hesa.ac.uk/dox/datacoll/studentStream/consultation_2011/Mobility_report.pdf

The dissemination of best practice in the promotion and management of student mobility within institutions would help to make supportive mechanisms more widespread within the sector.

The group noted the resource intensive nature of supporting mobility and that in many HE providers such resource was limited and fragmented. Responsibility often fell to small offices or individual academic staff, with few supporting incentives.

The availability of student mobility schemes might be improved through creating a network not only to share best practice, but also to share services.

Examples were cited from the USA where one HE provider might act as a broker to support mobility on behalf of several others. Third parties might also provide a service of this kind to a group of HE providers. To some extent this was driven by the high fee costs in the USA, where students demanded a high level of service, which in turn encouraged HE providers to look for the most effective way to deliver. Higher fees in England may initiate similar 'consumer' demands from students in the UK.

6. PROMOTION PRIOR TO UNIVERSITY.

There should be stronger promotion of international awareness prior to university at school level, to inspire and encourage interest before students enter higher education. A good way to do this would be to include foreign HE providers on UCAS applications. There should also be greater emphasis placed on language learning in primary, secondary and tertiary-level education. Efforts to promote mobility should also address part-time and mature students.

Encouraging language was identified as key in promoting international awareness. Aside from financial barriers, linguistic barriers constitute the second major barrier to outward student mobility. It is noteworthy that other national systems where language is a compulsory feature of secondary education have higher outward student mobility rates. This also has a profound impact on the uptake of Modern Foreign Languages at university-level, a strategic priority for the UK government.¹⁹

For degree mobility, students need to be provided with the necessary information to make an informed decision when applying for higher education. In this context, the inclusion of foreign HE providers in the UCAS application process could be a sensible way in which to strengthen applicants' international awareness.

¹⁹ BIS, *The Allocation of Science and Research Funding 2011/12 to 2014/15*, <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/science/docs/a/10-1356-allocation-of-science-and-research-funding-2011-2015.pdf>

More comprehensive information on international opportunities must be available for credit mobility too. Students need to have information about what the options are when they choose their course and HE provider.

Finally, it was noted that many forward-thinking schools were already connected with the international agenda, for example through the British Council's 'Connecting Classrooms' initiative.²⁰ Here students could be inspired through teaching and supervised social media, teleconferencing and IT to recognise the advantages of international experience.

OTHER KEY MESSAGES IN DETAIL

7. WIDENING PARTICIPATION. A number of the above recommendations have the potential to support the widening participation agenda, for example:

- Development of a national strategy for student mobility and supporting body that would identify, join up and support WP related activity.
- More varied sources of funding will help support a greater range of mobility opportunities from underrepresented social groups.
- Loans should be made fully portable so that they can be used to go abroad as part of a recognised student mobility programme.
- Provision and recognition of wider forms of mobility enables a wider diversity of students to participate. Shorter trips abroad and experience gained in the UK could particularly offer opportunity to students that are parents, carers, studying part time, etc.
- Once reliable data has been collected, it would be possible to identify which activity most benefits less advantaged students and those who are unable to take a significant mobility period abroad.

8. INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE GAINED IN OTHER WAYS. HE providers and any national strategy should recognise the many forms in which mobility experience can be acquired, including insight gained within the UK. Employers are looking for students that can demonstrate a 'global mindset' – but are less concerned with the route through which it is achieved.

Employers are looking for students with a global mindset, with an awareness of different cultures and an ability to operate and communicate in diverse contexts. In this context, there is an opportunity to exploit the opportunities provided by Britain's multicultural society through connection with its various communities. Such UK based experience would offer international opportunities for students unable to travel abroad.

²⁰ See <http://www.britishcouncil.org/learning-connecting-classrooms.htm>

NEXT STEPS

Subject to the Minister's approval the Outward Student Mobility Joint Steering Group will develop a document outlining a range of options regarding the possibilities outlined in Recommendation One to develop and implement a national strategy for outward mobility, including the options for a national body. The Group suggests that such a document might be submitted for consideration by the International Education Advisory Forum (IEAF).

ANNEXES

These annexes are intended to give a high-level summary of the discussions of the Expert Groups. However, they are not exhaustive. The work of the Expert Groups informs the entirety of this report.

ANNEX A BARRIERS AND INCENTIVES TO STUDENT MOBILITY



Focus	Driver	
	Incentive	Barriers
HEI	Student experience contributes to score in int'l league tables Attracts international staff Reputation and international profile Development of joint research portfolios / joint courses Ability to link up with top EU and Int'l HE providers International recruitment Reputation supports employability of students EU funding	Low expectations for mobility Lack of curriculum flexibility Lack of mobility scope within some subjects (health, STEM) Perceived quality of teaching overseas vs. UK (trust in UK quality) HE provider Buy-in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perceived benefit to HE providers - Resource to promote / support Int'l experience / outlook of staff Finding the right partner Mechanisms to organise placements Confusion over roles of Int'l offices
Students at HEIs	Employability Personal development Linguistic development Cultural awareness EU grant and fee waiver – for Erasmus year abroad students only	Fees - cost of prolonging course Accommodation costs / arrangements Perception of value for money Limited funding Parental buy-in to the benefits when they are supporting costs Absence of credit for some activity Student experience / expectations of support when overseas Demographic (financially disadvantaged), personal circumstance (parents) and type of course (part time) Language skills
Cross Cutting – need for / absence of language skills cut across all the above		

ANNEX B UK and INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES

UK BEST PRACTICE The group offered the following simple framework to HE providers as a set of issues to consider when seeking to improve, promote and support student mobility.

a) Institutional commitment to mobility and articulation

There needs to be visible leadership across the HE provider, with support and key messages being driven from top of the institution, perhaps through embedding in the mission statement or strategy, and by providing a suitable level of resource and funding. HE providers also need to consider how their business model supports mobility objectives and benefits – through provision of resource and support to deliver the HE providers' international objectives.

b) Promotion of mobility and the infrastructure to facilitate uptake

Inspiring student ambition requires consistent promotion on multiple levels: through effective media and channels, consistent messages, connection to students with international perspective and effective signposting to opportunities. Promotion is needed through both the traditional and new routes: careers advisors, business leaders, alumni, social media, etc. to communicate on a level that best engages students' interest and aspiration.

c) Curriculum design

Curricula need to be flexible to allow students to take a mobility period, and need to be articulated in such a way as to make taking a mobility period / experience expected, and for it to be credited or recognised.

To strengthen joint working and confidence in partnerships with overseas HE providers (i.e. in relation to marking assessments), UK HE providers might consider:

- Focus on developing limited number of strong and compatible links.
- Develop jointing / cross marking with the overseas HE providers
- Support staff mobility to enable strong partnership and understanding

d) The need for HE providers to recognise / credit the value of mobility activity

There are many forms in which mobility experience can be acquired, including insight gained within the UK, such as field trips, volunteering, and summer schools. Even if these are not formally accredited as part of programmes, HE providers can record them, perhaps on a student's Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR).

e) The need for a recognised structure within HEIs to promote outward mobility

HE providers are independent autonomous bodies and have varying structures. It is not always clear to students or others who is responsible for outward mobility. Best (or most efficient) practice might mean that study abroad and international offices should be collocated with the internship office to assist in the arrangement of work placements abroad. HE providers might also consider the opportunity for joint working or partnerships with other UK HE providers to drive effectiveness from limited budgets.

INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICE

National strategies

The **German** Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) is an example of a centralised national agency. Its action programme for 2008-2011 sets out the German aims for a comprehensive higher education internationalisation²¹. Part of this is the ongoing “Go out”²² campaign which sets the target of a 50% overall international mobility rate among German graduates. In 2010, 31% of all graduates of German universities had completed a mobility period.²³

Scotland, which has higher mobility rates than England and Wales,²⁴ has initiated a range of campaigns targeting student mobility, including the Scottish Government’s Year of Mobility campaign for higher education in 2012-13, Students Without Borders and Developing Scotland’s Global Citizens. All of these are led by NUS Scotland and designed to promote outward mobility. These initiatives propose to develop a national mobility strategy²⁵, in line with the approach being advocated through the Bologna Process.

Student financing: fees, loans, scholarships, student support

In **Spain**, private banks contribute to the promotion of mobility through regional networks or national-level programmes. Spanish students do not receive state loans to support them while studying. In 2008-2009, private funding for outward mobility

²¹ See http://www.daad.de/presse/de/aktionsprogramm_englisch.pdf

²² See <http://www.go-out.de/de/index.html>

²³ Source: Report from DAAD London for Expert Group

²⁴ See <http://www.nus.org.uk/en/campaigns/campaigns-in-scotland/learning-and-teaching-campaigns-page/students-without-borders-european-engagement/>

²⁵ See <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/UniversitiesColleges/16640/Intlifelonglearnstrategy/StrategicInvestmentFund>

amounted to €4.01m (or 3% of all mobility funding), while local or state banks contributed a further €7.1m (or 7.1%).²⁶

Another means by which funding for mobility has been diversified is through mixed models involving business and government co-funding. The **United States Fulbright scholarships**, for example, combine US state funding with foreign government contributions and private sources, encompassing US universities, foundations and corporations.

The **Australian government** is also an active co-funder, alongside private business, of opportunities for study abroad. The Endeavour Cheung Kong Student Exchange Programme, for example, a partnership between property investment company and the Australian government, aims to support undergraduate and postgraduate student exchange between students in Australia and Asia. It involves match-funding shared between government and investor.

In the **UK**, private financing of mobility for professional and vocational qualifications is already common and should be extended to more generalist degrees, as well as supported in itself.

Portability of student loans

Financial obstacles are consistently underlined in the literature as being among the top obstacles hindering outward student mobility from the UK.²⁷ In light of this, the Group considers that the portability of student loans, scholarships and student support is integral to the promotion of student mobility.

The **German example** is instructive in this regard. Not only does the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) provide support for outbound student mobility (in 2010 this support amounted to €72 million), German students are also supported by a fully portable needs-based maintenance funding scheme (BAföG). Provided by the Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF), the maintenance grants and loans apply at undergraduate and at Masters' level, as well as for work placements. These are fully portable both within and outside the European Union.

In the **USA**, no such maintenance grant exists. Students are entitled to take out loans to cover the full cost of their studies, regardless of their place of study.

²⁶ Data from the Annual Report of the Spanish National Agency for 2008-09 available at: <http://www.oapee.es/oapee/inicio/servicios/publicaciones/publicaciones-erasmus.html>

²⁷ See [International Student Mobility Literature Review](#), Report to HEFCE, 2010

In **Australia**, a scheme exists called OS-HELP, whereby students have access to a portable loans of up to 5684 A\$ per six month study period from the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR).

Scottish students are entitled to increased loans from the Students Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS) depending on the country they choose to study in. These student loans are only portable for exchanges, however, not for full degree mobility.²⁸

Curriculum-related

The **Scottish** government has recently committed to increasing language learning in Scottish schools which currently varies vastly across the country.²⁹

US students can study abroad in their second, third or fourth years and the modular curricula common at US HE providers incentivise mobility.

On Widening Participation

It was found that widening participation as a concept was uncommon in other national contexts.

²⁸ See <http://www.saas.gov.uk/>

²⁹ Source: Report from Scotland for Expert Group