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Europe Unit Conference, Tying it all together - you, the EHEA, and the wider world

London, England

11 February 2011

Collaborating with the Commonwealth

London, UK

15-18 February 2011

10th International Research Conference on Quality, Innovation & Knowledge Management

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

06-10 March 2011

International Leadership Development Programme

Hong Kong, China

09-10 April 2011

British Council-BecasChile-CampusFrance-DAAD, Expo-EuroPosgrads Becas Chile

Santiago, Chile

Will they still come?

European Union (EU) students are important to the UK's higher education sector. UK universities are keen to attract them because they enhance campus internationalisation, provide a more diversified student body as well as greater numbers of high quality students. They also represent a major source of postgraduate students, often in areas where it is difficult to attract UK students.

The most recent HESA data indicate that in 2008-09 there were nearly 138,000 EU students studying at UK universities and these represented about 30% of all international students enrolled. A vital question is, therefore, what might be the impact on EU enrolments of new fees' policies in the UK?

As the graph on the next page indicates there has been growth in enrolments at all levels since 2003-04, with undergraduate enrolments out-stripping others. In terms of total numbers, Germany (17,980), France (17,700), Ireland (15,850) and Greece (13,380) provided the most, followed by Cyprus (10,645), Poland (9,820), Spain (8,255) and Italy (7,705).

Enrolments from Greece halved over the last six years, but strong mobility growth from the new EU states* (particularly from Cyprus and Poland) have more than compensated, as has recent continued growth from Italy, France and Germany.

While there had been some decline in Irish enrolments, this appears to have stabilised. About 40% of Irish students in the UK study in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Considering subject areas of interest, business and related areas accounted for about 20% of all enrolments; interestingly this was most popular with German students (33% of all German enrolments). Other popular disciplines included social studies, engineering, technology and design.

UK universities are particularly keen to attract research students from the EU as the subjects in demand include those where there are UK shortages: chemistry, clinical medicine, physics and computer science and politics. The leading source countries are Germany, Italy and Greece but there are interesting country variations: engineering being most popular among Greek students, Italians are keen on physical sciences and economics, Germans opt for chemistry, physics and politics; for French researchers, chemistry is the most popular.

Feedback from staff at UK universities (10 senior staff at different UK universities were interviewed) was positive but not without concern: They were very keen to continue to attract EU students, particularly to postgraduate programmes, but were apprehensive about likely enrolment declines with the fee increases proposed for domestic and EU undergraduates.

While there has been no official mention of future fees for postgraduate programmes, there is belief that Masters' fees will need to increase to match those for undergraduates.[¥] Of note is that fees for some programmes, particularly in business disciplines, are already offered at the same (and 'full costs') rates for UK and non-EU students alike.

There have been suggestions that declines might be as high as one-third for undergraduates, but with some recovery with time as EU students learn how better to access the various loan programmes available. For postgraduate enrolments comments were mixed: although most expected declines, with UK institutions losing out to continental institutions offering English-medium degrees, there was some optimism for recovery.



*Will higher fees mean fewer EU students choose the UK?
Only time will tell.*

Will they still come? Continued....

The one-year UK Master's degree, even if it was to increase in line with Bachelor degree fees, to between £6,000 and £9,000, was still believed to be cost-competitive compared with programmes elsewhere.

A further consequence is that with UK fees up to £9,000, the erosion in the differential with non-EU international students is likely to result in many universities seeking to increase EU enrolments through proactive marketing initiatives.

Another consideration is the possible impact on Scotland if there is no change in Scottish fees' policies. Will higher fees in England result in more EU students seeking places north of the border and possibly 'displacing' Scottish students on programmes?

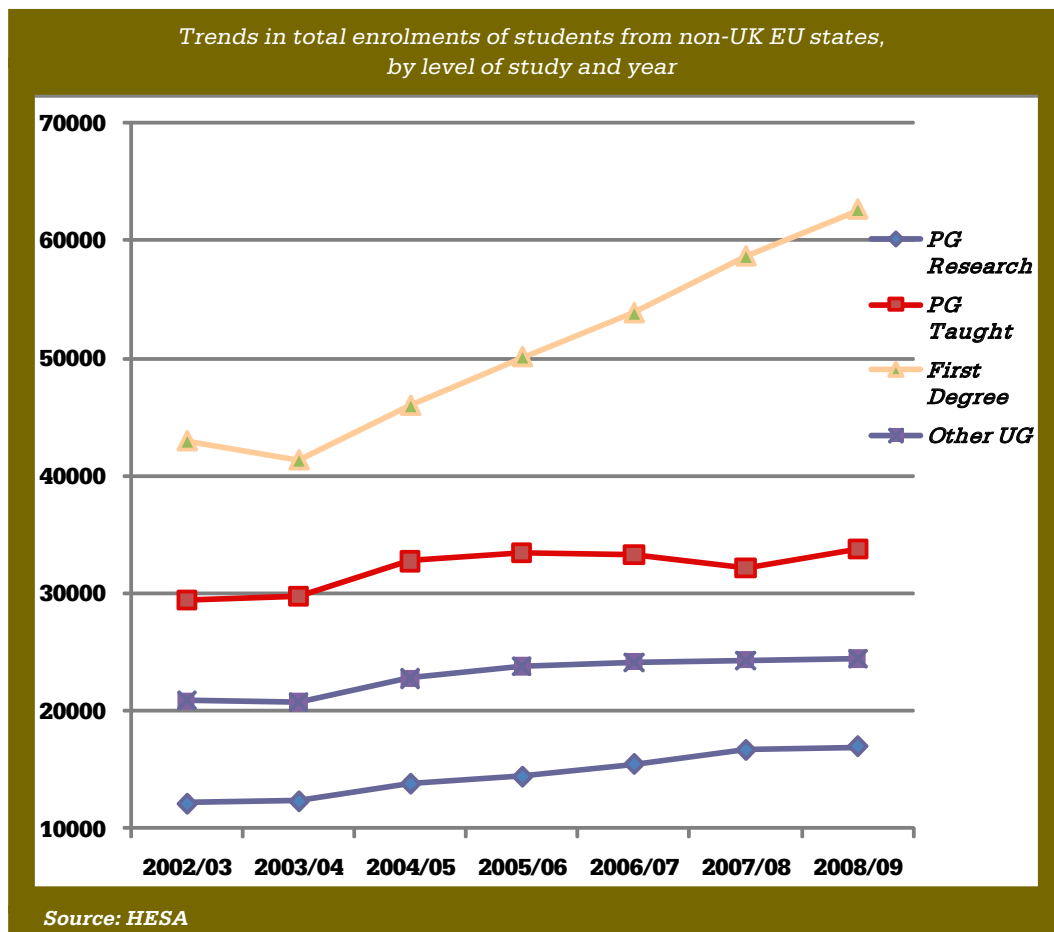
Looking at EU enrolments according to university group, there are differences when EU students as a proportion of all international students are considered. For example in Russell and 1994 Group institutions there are relatively larger proportions of EU students on postgraduate taught programmes (about a 25%) while Million+ institutions have much higher proportions of EU undergraduates (about 45%).

While the importance of EU students for both education and research reasons is understood, there also appears to be financial benefit: EU student living expenditure and contribution to fees results in a net addition to the UK economy, even allowing for loans and other subsidies. Moreover, EU students are entitled to stay on in UK for employment, thus contributing as researchers, academics and professionals - and paying taxes.

The conclusion is that the new fees' policies across the UK will have a significant effect on UK institutions, probably impacting greatest on undergraduates and in Million+ institutions. What is needed, and would be much welcomed by the sector, is dialogue with government and its bodies to review policy implications for EU student recruitment. Importantly this would also need to include considerations of the Bologna Process reforms, Erasmus (and low UK outward student mobility) and the EU's 2020 Strategy.

*Those states that have joined the EU since 2004: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia.

‡Also refer to: "Taught postgraduate degrees may soon be preserve of the rich", Times Higher Education 14 January 2011 (page 6 and 7).



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Markets & Intelligence

Hong Kong: Expressions of interest invited for new HE site

Hong Kong's Education Bureau has invited expressions of interest for the Queen's Hill site near Fanling for the development of self-financing higher education projects.

The expression of interest exercise is open to post-secondary institutions in Hong Kong and other interested parties, including those from overseas.

The announcement follows the publication of the Hong Kong University Grants Committee (UGC) report, 'Aspirations for the Higher Education System in Hong Kong'. The review, which was convened by Sir Colin Lucas, former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford, provides a blueprint for the development of higher education in Hong Kong, including the publicly-funded and self-financed sector.

The report contains forty recommendations covering a range of issues including the post-secondary education system; internationalisation; relationships with Mainland China; teaching and learning; research and role differentiation and quality. The recommendations are now being considered by government and Hong Kong higher education institutions.

The Queen's Hill site is 100,000 square metres and is suitable for the development of higher education institutions. It is expected to provide approximately 8,000 self-financing degree places; institutions operating at the site should be non-profit making.

The site is a former British barracks close to the Shenzhen border of Hong Kong and the Education Bureau is organising a site visit 18 February 2011.

Click [HERE](#) to download an expression of interest form. Submission deadline: 31 March 2011. Click [HERE](#) to download the UGC's report which provides valuable insight for those interested in the new campus.

University releases International Exeter film

The University of Exeter has released a film about the growing international nature of the university.

Narrated by Jonathan Dimbleby, the seven minute film encapsulates the international strengths of Exeter as a leading research-intensive university, combined with an illustration of its campuses and environs, for an international audience. Exeter is now ranked for the first time as a World Top-200 University.

Produced by Penzance-based Three S Films, the movie is aimed at a diverse international audience, including senior management at university partners, overseas research agencies, alumni, corporate sponsors and governmental and non-governmental bodies. It is not intended to be a recruitment film, although its creators admit it make prove attractive to international students.

Commenting on the rationale of the film, Dr Shaun Curtis, Director of International Exeter, said, 'While the University of Exeter has a very strong national reputation, its international profile is less pronounced. Our Internationalisation Strategy recognises the need to imprint the city, region and university on international audiences.'

The university has over 4,000 international students from 130 countries and has 500 international staff. In 2010 it opened project offices in Shanghai and Beijing and will open representation in Bangalore in April 2011.

Click [HERE](#) to view the film.



Research & Collaboration
Sheffield strengthens ties with Taiwan

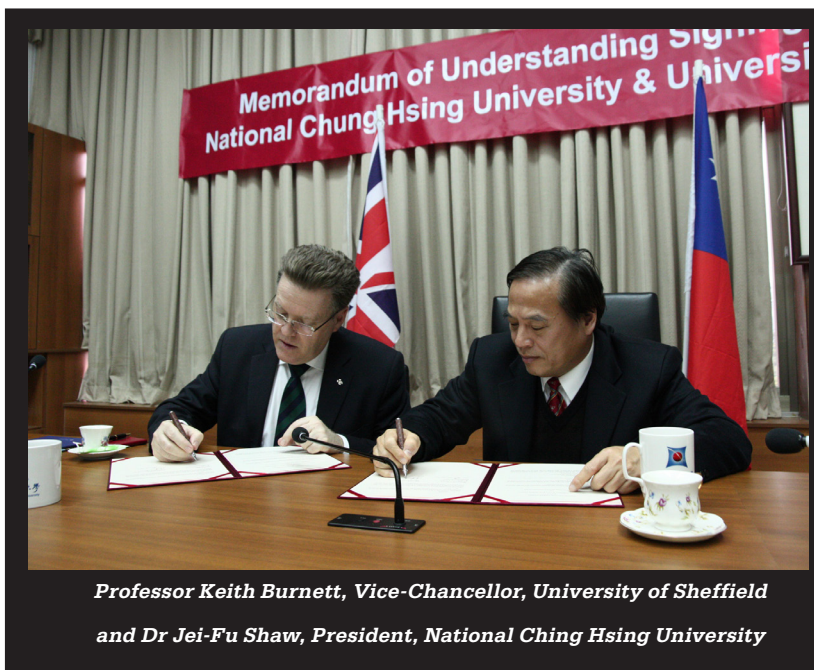
The University of Sheffield has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with National Ching Hsing University in Taichung, Taiwan, which will encourage staff and student exchanges, collaborative research and summer schools.

The MOU was signed last week by Professor Keith Burnett, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sheffield and Dr Jei-Fu Shaw, President of National Ching Hsing University.

National Ching Hsing University began as an agricultural college more than 85 years ago and is now one of the top universities in Taiwan, with a range of colleges covering areas including engineering, social sciences and veterinary medicine. There are plans to establish six research centres, specialising in environmental restoration and disaster reduction, nanoscience and biotechnology.

The agreement will strengthen Sheffield's ties with Taiwan and open up the potential for closer research collaboration in biotechnology, bioengineering, nanotechnology, medical devices, energy and low carbon.

Professor David Hornby, Chairman of the university's Department of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology, is pursuing research collaborations in Taiwan, and there are currently five postgraduate research students from the country in the department.


Australia and South Africa top ranking of academic staff salaries

Results of a recent survey of Commonwealth universities reveal that the purchasing power of the average academic in South Africa is now higher than those in Canada, the UK and New Zealand. South African academics earn on average only 6% less than their counterparts in Australia, the top-ranked country, when cost of living is taken into account.

The survey, the seventh undertaken by the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), looks at academic salary scales and associated benefits in 46 institutions across seven Commonwealth countries: Australia, Canada, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa, and the UK.

The differences in average salaries between the countries has reduced, pointing to increased international competition for academic staff, as well as efforts within individual countries to improve academic salary levels. The rate of growth in Canada, the UK and New Zealand has been higher than in Australia since the last survey – South Africa saw the highest rate of growth, at 51% since 2006-2007.

The provision of discretionary bonuses or market adjustments has increased significantly from the previous survey, and is now offered at 63% of institutions (compared to 41.5% in 2006-2007), with several institutions also highlighting specific recruitment and retention strategies, further pointing to the increased importance of attracting and retaining academic staff.

Australian universities continue to have some of the best pension and leave conditions, while Malaysia is notable for its extensive use of additional benefits on top of base salaries, including set entertainment and housing benefits, as well as generous medical entitlements for employees and their dependents.

Click [HERE](#) to download the executive summary of the 2009-2010 Academic Staff Salary Survey. The full report will be published in early 2011.

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Recruitment

Accepted international applicants at UK universities creeps up

Final end of year figures from the University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) show a double digit rise in the number of overseas students accepted into UK universities.

The total number of accepted overseas applicants for the UCAS 2009 cycle was up 10.4% on last year.

Lithuania, Latvia and Romania reported the greatest increases, up 70.6%, 60.7% and 56.7% respectively.

Other countries reporting a significant rise include China (27.8%), Saudi Arabia (24.1%) and Singapore (20.4%).

Overall, 62,695 overseas students have been accepted to UK universities through UCAS compared to 56,791 at the same point last year.

Accepted applicants from overseas domiciled applicants by country of domicile*

Country	2010	2009	% change
China	8,321	6,509	+27.8%
Ireland	2,992	2,823	+6.0%
Hong Kong	2,928	2,575	+13.7%
France	2,696	3,194	-15.6%
Cyprus	2,626	2,610	+0.6%
Germany	2,402	2,415	-0.5%
Malaysia	2,296	2,390	-3.9%
India	1,802	1,843	-2.2%
Nigeria	1,638	1,592	+2.9%
Greece	1,608	1,527	+5.3%
Romania	1,529	976	+56.7%
Lithuania	1,527	895	+70.6%
Bulgaria	1,515	1,283	+18.1%
Singapore	1,429	1,187	+20.4%
US	1,398	1,330	+5.1%
Norway	1,135	959	+18.4%
Poland	1,032	1,238	-16.6%
Italy	1,019	873	+16.7%
Pakistan	1,014	1,081	-6.2%
Canada	997	914	+9.1%
Spain	975	869	+12.2%
Saudi Arabia	958	772	+24.1%
Sweden	931	808	+15.2%
South Korea	718	618	+16.2%
Latvia	715	445	+60.7%
Belgium	622	605	+2.8%
Not known	1,502	1,189	+26.3%
All overseas	62,695	56,791	+10.4%

*countries with 600 or more acceptances in the 2009 cycle)