

Professor Alan Manning
Chair, Migration Advisory Committee
Second Floor, Peel Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

26 January 2018

Dear Professor Manning,

University Alliance letter to MAC consultation on International students in the UK

This is a letter in support of the Universities UK (UUK) response to the MAC consultation on 'International students: economic and social impacts'.

University Alliance represents a group of modern civic universities in England and Wales with a commitment to excellence in technical and professional education. In 2014/15, there were 15,500 EU citizens studying at our institutions (12% of the UK total), of whom 68% were on first degree courses and 23% were on postgraduate taught programmes.

The evidence in UUK's submission highlights the importance of the international market to UK higher education. The economic evidence is clear with international students representing £10.8 billion in export value, 206,600 jobs and a net economic benefit of £20.3bn. The value is also social as international students contribute to diverse campuses, aiding the preparation of home students for an international workforce, and extending the UK's soft power abroad.

As the UK embarks on a future outside the EU and competitor countries adopt growth strategies that threaten the UK's market share, it is crucial that the government works with the sector to attract international students.

While most return to their home country following their studies, international students who remain in the UK make a valuable contribution. Many international researchers and academics in UK universities came initially as students and now form part of our globally leading research base. They also contribute to the dynamism of our business sector with many developing their own businesses under the Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur Scheme. For example, at Coventry University alone, 40 students have been supported to develop their own companies, 26 of which are currently trading. Of these students, seven have obtained a Tier 1 Entrepreneur Visa, meaning they have created two full-time jobs that existed for at least 12 months.

International students have a positive impact on universities operationally as well as culturally. The fees received from international students help to fund taught programmes, research agendas and local employment at our universities. In South Wales, where the University of

South Wales is based, over 6,850 jobs are dependent on tourism generated by international students.

In summary, international students are highly beneficial to the UK. We should encourage them to study in our universities and create appropriate post study work routes.

In line with UUK, we believe the government should take positive policy decisions to support universities to grow their international student numbers, as follows:

- Launch an ambitious, cross-Government strategy to increase international student numbers
- Enhance post-study work opportunities
- Provide additional financial backing to market the UK offer overseas
- Reduce the compliance burden on sponsors of international students
- Remove students from the net migration target

We look forward to engaging with the MAC as the commission on international students progresses throughout the year.

Yours sincerely,



Maddalaine Ansell

Chief Executive, University Alliance