

The Future of International Student Visas

International Higher Education Commission 2nd session

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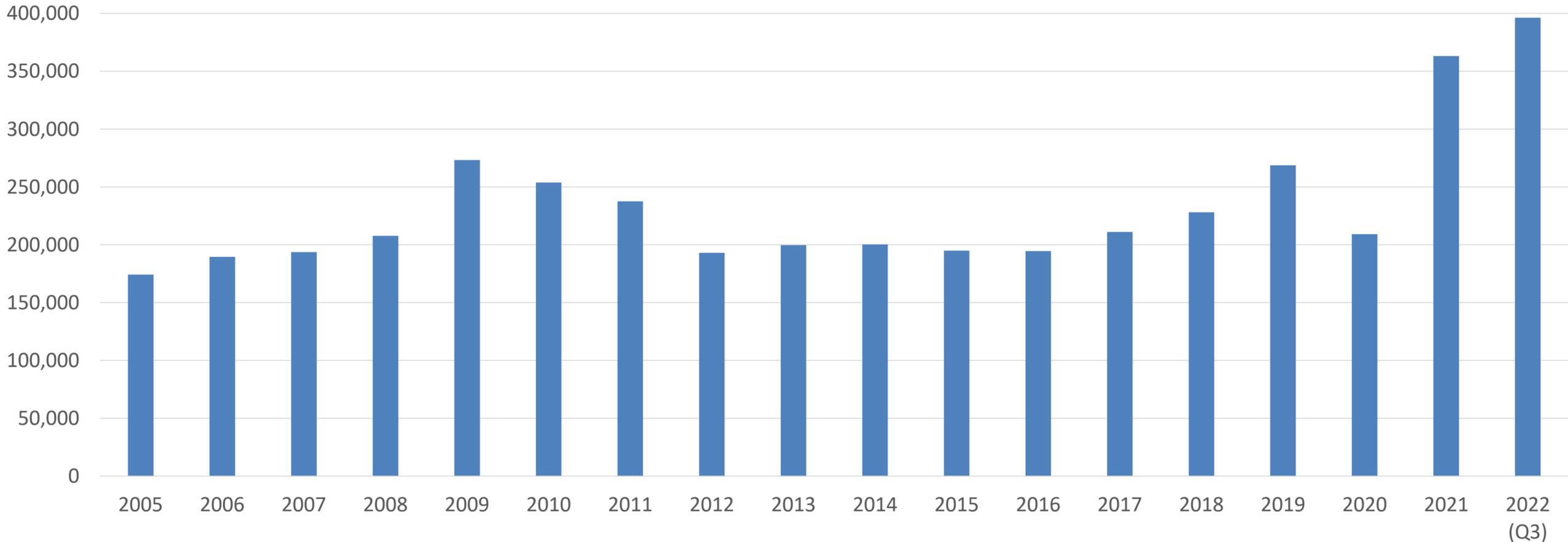
Issued student visas stats

Suppressed growth rates over a decade compared to other international study destinations

- Growth 2009 - 2019 1.7%
- Growth 2009 - 2021 33%

The reintroduction of the post-study work route in 2021 aligns the UK with other study destinations (Australia, USA, Canada, and most EU countries)

Issued visas (sponsored study, Tier 4) to main applicants, 2005 to 2022 Q3 (calendar years)



International student visa definitions and comparisons

Criteria	Australia	UK	USA
International student visa status	Temporary resident	Immigrant	Non-immigrant visitor temporarily in the USA to study
Right to bring dependents	Yes	PG students only	Yes
Work during study (term time)	Unlimited	20 hrs	On-campus only in the first year of study

Sources:

For Australia, see <https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/student-500#Overview>

For the USA, see [https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/students-and-employment#:~:text=F%2D1%20students%20may%20not,Curricular%20Practical%20Training%20\(CPT\)](https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/students-and-employment#:~:text=F%2D1%20students%20may%20not,Curricular%20Practical%20Training%20(CPT))

The international competitiveness of the UK international higher education

International students in the UK have a high continuation rate*

- ❑ The UK has a great competitive advantage over other countries regarding students' continuation rates**
- ❑ International students have a low non-continuation. However, there have been notable increases in the past year

Non-continuation of entry cohorts 2017 and 2018	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
International (non-EU) students	3.0%	3.9%	5%
EU students	5.0%	6.4%	6%
UK students	6.8%	7.7%	7%

Sources:

* Global Engagement Index measures the UK's global engagement across 30+ indicators, including sustainable development, carbon footprint and international student success
<https://www.educationinsight.uk/gei/index.html>

** Hillman, N. (2021), A short guide to non-continuation in UK universities; HEPI Policy Note 28; <https://www.hepi.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/A-short-guide-to-non-continuation-in-UK-universities.pdf>

The international competitiveness of the UK international higher education (Cont'd)

Student satisfaction is recovering

Region of domicile	Q27 Agreement Rate (2019)	Q27 Agreement Rate (2020)	Q27 Agreement Rate (2021)	Q27 Agreement Rate (2022)
EU (excluding UK)	81.28%	80.33%	75.15%	77.04%
Rest of World	84.05%	83.74%	77.74%	80.06%
UK	83.76%	82.68%	75.20%	75.80%

Sources:

- Global Engagement Index measures the UK's global engagement across 30+ indicators, including sustainable development, carbon footprint and international student success <https://www.educationinsight.uk/gei/index.html>
- Data sources: National Student Survey: 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 NSS results. Analyst: Office for Students, Information for Students Team. Response to FOI request. The data shows agreement with question 27 (overall satisfaction) in the 2022 NSS for all students, split by geographical region (UK/EU/Rest of World). For further information about the NSS data, see www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/student-information-and-data/national-student-survey-nss

Observations

- UK's international higher education advantage is the quality of education, measured by high continuation rates; high student satisfaction rates and graduate employability
- Visa data shows a strong rebound compared to the time of no growth; however, it is moderate compared to a decade ago
- EU and China are the largest sources of undergraduate students. Brexit has adversely affected EU demand; geopolitics is affecting the demand from China. This limits student demand to the next largest countries: India (population of 1.4 bn; Pakistan (236 million), and Nigeria (219 million)
- International students' status as immigrants is detrimental to UK's export agenda. Education exports are significant but invisible to the taxpayer, as they are reported under the Tourism
- This geographical shift in the global student demand favours masters level of study – this means almost all master=level students need to be replenished annually (i.e. high volume of visas)
- The UK is a world leader in transnational education, making a critical contribution to the world's sustainability agenda*. Many TNE students spend time on their degrees in the UK. The global economic downturn is likely to increase demand for cost-effective pathways to UK degrees – shorter study periods in the UK require a high volume of student visas
- UK's growth from a large number of countries through diverse pathways requires a change in the international student visa status

* See The Value of UK Transnational Education Partnerships https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/value_tne_fullreport.pdf and The Global Impact OF TNE <https://www.tneimpact.org/>



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Thank you!

Any questions?

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