

New international study pilot to open doors for even more Welsh students

The announcement comes as figures show that only 2% of Welsh students at universities currently spend time abroad studying, volunteering or undertaking work experience as part of their studies.

Developed alongside British Council Wales, the £1.3m pilot – which will run for three years from 2018/19- will offer a mix of opportunities for Welsh students at Welsh HE institutions. These will include study, volunteering and internships, ranging from 2 or 3 weeks to 8 weeks.

The opportunities are designed to attract students who, for reasons such as caring responsibilities or employment, may not have considered an opportunity abroad.

The pilot has been developed as part of the Welsh Government response to the Diamond Review's recommendations on support for students who choose to study overseas.

In a statement to plenary today, the Cabinet Secretary will say:

“At a time when it's never been more important for our students and graduates to be global citizens, we need to ensure that international opportunities are an aspiration for many more students.

“As someone who benefited hugely from time studying abroad as an undergraduate, I know how such an experience broadens horizons, expands key skills and ensures connections that last a lifetime.

“Research from Universities UK points out that these gains are particularly significant for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. However, it is these students who too often miss out on, or don't even apply for, these transformational opportunities.

“This new pilot will allow us to reach out to these students and ensure that they too can now take full advantage of these opportunities.

“I want to see the number of Welsh students who spend time abroad as part of their studies, double by the end of this government. This pilot is just one of the ways in which we're trying to achieve that aim.”