

# Measures announced to boost international study and global opportunities

- Government bolsters International Education Strategy to grow global opportunities and help the sector build back better from the pandemic
- New measures to attract overseas students and plans for new international teaching qualification based on world-renowned domestic standards
- Next phase of the landmark £110 million Turing scheme unveiled, offering students of all backgrounds across the UK the chance to study and work abroad

New measures aimed at attracting more overseas students, boosting access to global student exchanges for thousands of people, and supporting international education partnerships have been announced today (6 February) by the Government.

Following the announcement in December of the new £110 million Turing scheme, a new website has gone live today with funding and eligibility details so that universities, colleges and schools to prepare for bids to open in Spring. The pioneering scheme will support students from across the UK and from all backgrounds to take advantage of the benefits of studying and working abroad from September 2021.

To help level up opportunities for more people, the scheme will look to target students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The updated International Education Strategy, led by the Department for Education (DfE) and the Department for International Trade (DIT), will work alongside the scheme, focused on supporting the education sector to build back better from the pandemic by boosting global growth opportunities.

This updated strategy reaffirms the Government's commitment to increase the amount generated from education exports, such as fees and income from overseas students and English language teaching abroad, to £35bn a year, and sustainably recruit at least 600,000 international students to the UK by 2030.

It also outlines plans for a new international teaching qualification (iQTS) so teachers around the globe can train to world-leading domestic standards and support growing international demand for high quality teaching. It also highlights recent changes including streamlining application processes and boosting job prospects for international students.

Universities Minister, Michelle Donelan said:

In these unprecedented times, having a proactive global education

agenda is more important than ever so we can build back better from the pandemic. Our world-class education is a vital part of our economy and society, and we want to support universities, schools, colleges and all aspects of the education sector to thrive across the globe.

We are committed to making sure our students, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, can benefit from studying and working abroad. Working with the British Council, we will open up the globe to our young people, and I look forward to seeing the exciting and enriching opportunities the Turing scheme will bring.

I am also pleased to launch initiatives to enhance the experience of international students at our universities, from the moment they apply, to the first steps of their careers.

Minister for Exports Graham Stuart MP, said:

The UK offers world-class education. Thanks to our global reputation for excellence and strong presence in international markets, our education exports – from EdTech to transnational education – reached £23.3 billion in 2018.

I'm proud to lead the Department for International Trade's education work, as our International Education Strategy aims to help the sector recover from the impacts of the pandemic. It's vital we help the UK's world-renowned education industry to build back better by exporting our brilliant goods, services, skills and innovation across the globe.

Schools, colleges and universities can now access details on the Turing Scheme including funding rates and eligibility criteria to help them to prepare applications for the new scheme ahead of the applications window opening in the next few weeks.

The updated Strategy's measures to boost the UK's world-renowned education exports include:

- Launching a consultation for a new international teaching qualification, International Qualified Teacher Status (iQTS), to enable teachers around the world to train to domestic standards, supporting the sector to meet growing international demand for its high quality teacher training;
- Promoting UK teaching methods for supporting those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) internationally;
- Setting out priority countries for the International Education Champion,

Sir Steve Smith, to work with, promoting growth for exports and addressing any barriers in the global market.

International Education Champion, Sir Steve Smith, said:

I warmly welcome this revised International Education Strategy. Not only does it show the progress we have made since the launch of the original strategy in March 2019, but it outlines concrete measures to support the entire education sector across all parts of the UK to achieve the goals of at least 600,000 international students coming to the UK, and educational exports rising to £35bn by 2030.

Changes to the visa arrangements, the new iQTS, a focus on a set of priority markets and the launch of the Turing mobility scheme will all support making the UK an even more successful and attractive educational powerhouse.

UK education providers can take advantage of schemes such as UK Export Finance's General Export Facility, an export guarantee scheme that can be used by firms to help cover the everyday costs linked to exporting.

Further export support includes enhancing the international student experience from application to employment, connecting international demand for chartered body qualifications to UK education suppliers, and identifying specific Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) export opportunities for UK businesses.

Attracting inward investment will also form part of the sector recovery plans, with the government building on its promotion of the UK Education Technology sector and expanding into new sub-sectors, further stimulating foreign direct investment into all corners of the UK.

The International Education Strategy is supported by the Government's 'Education is GREAT' trade promotion campaign, which represents the UK's offer of education provision to prospective international students or trade partners in other countries. As part of the campaign, DIT has developed a virtual programme to support the global recovery of the education sector's international activity.

Chief Executive of Association of Colleges, David Hughes said:

The Turing scheme opens the world's door to work and study placements for college students. This is an important part of 'levelling up' the life chances for all of our young people – whatever their background.

International mobility motivates and inspires young people to understand their place in the world, develop their life skills and build confidence and ambition. I strongly encourage colleges new to

international exchanges to consider participating in Turing and hope that those who have been involved before can use this to extend opportunities for students.

Vivienne Stern, Director of Universities UK International, said:

I am very supportive of the International Education Strategy, which represents the next step in a joint effort by Government and the education sector to build on the international success of our education system and our attractiveness to international students. This approach has delivered real benefits already, including the introduction of the graduate route, and improvements to the visa system. Despite a very difficult year, interest in UK study has grown as a result.

The strategy is not only about attracting students to the UK. We particularly welcome the launch of the Turing Scheme, which will create new opportunities for students in UK universities to gain valuable international experience. We know these opportunities enable graduates to develop the skills employers need, and that the benefits are most pronounced for those from less advantaged backgrounds.

We look forward to continuing to be partners, working with our members, Government and others across the sector, to deliver the strategy.

Colin Riordan, Cardiff University Vice-Chancellor, said:

The government's commitment to outward mobility for UK students is very much to be welcomed. The new Turing scheme will help our students achieve more in their degrees and become more employable, but the benefits are more than economic. Anybody who is involved in outward student mobility knows that spending time abroad can be a positively life-changing experience for our students.

Studying abroad enhances their intercultural awareness, their language skills, their tolerance and their professional networks. It also boosts confidence, self-awareness, independence, curiosity, flexibility and adaptability. The focus on widening participation in Turing is a major positive. The UK has never had its own, government-funded outward mobility scheme. Turing presents a historic opportunity to shape our own destiny, and we should seize it.

Kate Ewart-Biggs, British Council interim Chief Executive, said:

The Strategy is a welcome route map for where UK international education should put its efforts in the coming years. Importantly, the new Turing scheme, which the British Council will help to deliver, will enable thousands of students to study around the world. It will target and provide support to students from disadvantaged backgrounds, making life-changing opportunities accessible to everyone across the country.

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## Interim Libyan executive authority: P3 + 2 statement

The Governments of France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States of America welcome the agreement reached by the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum on a unified interim Libyan executive authority charged with leading the country to national elections on December 24, 2021.

This critical step towards reaching a negotiated, inclusive political solution is the result of a genuinely Libyan-led and Libyan-owned process, the mediation of the United Nations, and the support of the Libyan people.

In this respect, we commend the extraordinary commitment of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya and of Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General Stephanie Williams. We look forward to fully supporting the work of Special Envoy Ján Kubiš.

We call on all current Libyan authorities and actors to ensure a smooth and constructive handover of all competences and duties to the new unified executive authority.

Since the Berlin Conference, Libya has made significant progress toward securing lasting peace and stability, including through the reopening of the energy sector, the nationwide ceasefire agreement of 23 October 2020, the roadmap for holding national elections in December 2021, and now the selection of a unified, interim executive authority.

A long road still lies ahead. The unified executive authority will have to implement the ceasefire agreement, provide essential public services to the Libyan people, initiate a program for meaningful reconciliation, address critical national budget needs, and organize national elections. The new interim government, to be proposed by the designated Prime Minister, should be truly inclusive, allowing all Libyans to be represented, including with regard to gender, ethnicity and regional origin.

We call on the delegates of the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum to maintain their important function, guaranteeing the focus of the new unified executive authority on preparing and holding elections as decided by the Forum.

At the Berlin Conference on Libya last year, the international community committed to supporting a resolution to Libya's conflict. In the spirit of that commitment, all participants of the Conference should now support the new executive authority in fulfilling its duties to the Libyan people, fully implement the arms embargo, and support the immediate withdrawal of all foreign fighters and mercenaries.

We stand ready to hold to account those who threaten stability or undermine the political process in Libya.

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## PM call with President Macron: 5 February 2021

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to French President Emmanuel Macron.



The Prime Minister spoke to French President Emmanuel Macron this evening.

The leaders discussed the fight against coronavirus. The Prime Minister emphasised the important role world leaders will play in ensuring that vaccines are rolled out effectively so that we can defeat the pandemic. The leaders agreed that a successful global vaccination programme will require a collaborative effort between governments.

The Prime Minister outlined the UK's priorities for our G7 Presidency, including working together to build back better from coronavirus and tackling climate change ahead of the UK-hosted COP26 Summit in November.

The Prime Minister welcomed the agreement of the UK-EU Trade Deal in

December. The Prime Minister said that the UK's departure from the EU offered a huge opportunity to deepen and widen our bilateral relationship with France and the leaders looked forward to working together to realise that opportunity.

The leaders discussed a number of international issues including Iran, Yemen, Libya and Russia. They agreed that European leadership from the UK, France and others continues to be instrumental in making the world safer and more secure.

The Prime Minister and President Macron agreed that cooperation remained crucial as we tackle the challenges ahead and resolved to stay in close contact.

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## **Hammersmith Bridge Taskforce meeting, 4 February 2021**

News story

Joint statement on progress made by the taskforce at its meeting on 4 February 2021.





The latest meeting of the Hammersmith Bridge Taskforce was held yesterday (4 February 2021).

It was chaired by Transport Minister, Baroness Vere. Attendees included the Project Director Dana Skelley, plus representatives from the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, the Greater London Authority, Transport for London (TfL) and the Port of London Authority.

Dana Skelley, speaking on behalf of the Hammersmith Bridge Taskforce, said:

At yesterday's Taskforce, I updated members on the programme review sessions conducted with TfL. These sessions were designed to explore the specifications and designs for repair, and associated costs and timescales. Further to the completion of these sessions, there was agreement to using TfL funding, as provided by the Department for Transport (DfT) through the Extraordinary Funding and Financing Package agreed last October, to carry out activities which will de-risk the works programme.

In addition, the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham provided an update on the feasibility study commissioned into the Foster & Partners and COWI temporary bridge proposal. We currently expect this study to be completed in the next 3 weeks.

DfT was grateful to have received the most recent business case for the bridge repair from TfL on 29 January, but it was accepted that



a final and comprehensive case cannot be produced while other options are still under consideration and while DfT awaits further detail from LBHF on the financial case.

The Taskforce also heard the latest from TfL regarding the procurement for the temporary ferry service, with details of the 3 shortlisted bidders expected to be announced in the next few weeks. The timing for services beginning will depend on the winning bidder's proposals, though the need to have the ferry running as soon as possible is universally recognised.

Lastly, we clarified why river users were unable to travel under the bridge while engineers were onsite due to the potential for their work to accidentally trigger the acoustic monitoring alarms. The activation of an alarm would cause the bridge to be evacuated and any transits to be stopped.

The Hammersmith Bridge Taskforce was set up by the Department for Transport in September 2020 to work towards safely reopening the Hammersmith Bridge. The taskforce is chaired by Baroness Vere and includes representatives from TfL, London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, Network Rail, the Greater London Authority and the Port of London Authority.

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## [Five year project to sell surplus public sites exceeds its target](#)

- Target of raising £5bn for public funds is exceeded by almost £200m
- Surplus public sites to be re-used for a range of projects, including the development of new housing
- More than 2,100 sites have been sold in the past five years

In 2015, the government said it would raise £5bn by 2020 through selling off surplus sites for redevelopment projects, including the construction of new housing, commercial developments and the creation of new open spaces.

The [Annual Land and Property Disposals Transparency Report](#), which has been

published by the Cabinet Office this week, shows that target has been exceeded by almost £200 million.

Cabinet Office Minister, Lord Agnew, said:

Through the Land and Property Disposals Programme, we have taken publicly owned sites which were no longer needed by the public sector and given them new purposes, including as sites for much needed new housing, business developments and the creation of new open spaces.

Vitally, we have also put £5.2bn back into the public purse, which will help to fund the public services that people up and down the country use every day.

Since the Land and Property Disposals Programme began, more than 5,200 hectares of land and hundreds of under-used and empty buildings which no longer had a purpose for the public sector have been sold.

In the last year alone, a total of 277 surplus sites, including many previously used brownfield plots, were sold, taking the total number of receipts over the past five years up to 2,206.

Almost a quarter of the sites sold in the past year were bought by private individuals or small businesses.

The top ten house builders in the UK bought a further four per cent of the sites while housing associations purchased two per cent, helping to push forward the government's commitment to bring forward the new housing the country needs.

For further details access the [Annual Land and Property Disposals Transparency Report](#).