

## **Anonymous – Written evidence (FTS0050)**

*\*The views expressed in this submission are of the individual and do not reflect the view(s) of any current or previous employer.*

### **3. What effect will arrangements on the mobility of professionals have on trade in services between the UK and EU?**

- The UK government's refusal to the EU's offer to secure 'additional mobility chapters' to ease the mobility of certain groups of professionals and sectors (including students and young people) will significantly incumber the UK's attractiveness as a study abroad or exchange destination to prospective European or international students as part of the Turing Scheme.
- Since no concessions were agreed for the mobility of students for the purposes of exchanges, European and international students wishing to undergo an exchange placement (study or work placement) in the UK now must apply and enter the UK under the relevant visa category.
- Despite the government's announcement of its Turing Scheme which will fund student mobilities for periods of 1 to 12 months, there is no dedicated immigration route for the purposes of student exchanges. Any student entering the UK for a study placement of longer than 6 months will need to enter under the Student Route visa, which is a route designed for full degree courses of 3 – 4 years and is therefore not fit for shorter periods of study. For work placements too, students will now need to enter under its new Tier 5 government authorised exchange route.
- These additional barriers (including visa costs and the NHS surcharge) are may detract from the UK's attractiveness as a study exchange destination, particularly for European students where additional costs are required to study or undergo a work placement in the UK, and students may choose destinations such as Ireland or Scandinavia, where previously they would choose the UK.
- Combined with the decision to preclude funding to inbound exchange students, the substantial mobility barriers to entry to the UK significantly reduces the UK's attractiveness as a study destination to exchange students and raises significant questions to the future success of the Turing Scheme.
- In order to stabilise this issue, the government should consider introducing an 'Educational Exchanges Immigration Route' dedicated to the more easily facilitate the entry of students for the purposes of exchange for either study or work placements on Erasmus+ (through funding secured through the Withdrawal Agreement Bill) or the Turing Scheme.

**11. Under the future relationship agreement, the UK will become an associate member of Horizon Europe but will not associate with the Erasmus+ programme. What impact will this have on the UK's research and education sector and students in the UK and EU?**

- It's disappointing that the contribution of incoming Erasmus students was not taken into account in the UK's assessment of the Erasmus+ scheme as value for money. DfE's data on the revenue received through UK educational exports shows receipts from incoming Erasmus students' living expenses<sup>1</sup> alone amounted to £440 million in 2018 – a figure that has increased 71% since 2010. Offsetting these receipts against the entry cost as a non-EU Erasmus Programme country, the UK would receive a net return on far more than it contributes.
- As the Turing Scheme will not offer any funding for inbound students and the new points-based immigration system poses additional regulatory challenges for entry, there is a risk that UK education exports will decrease significantly if the UK is therefore seen as a less attractive, and more expensive, destination for exchanges.
- Notably, the UK will have significantly limited access to participate in the Key Action 2 strand of Erasmus+ (international strategic, innovation and cooperation partnerships), whereas previously they could participate fully. This will not be replaced in the DfE's new Turing Scheme. This lesser known area of Erasmus+ allowed funding for collaborative research partnerships and allowed smaller universities and colleges to develop their international portfolio of partners and scale up their research capacities. Examples of funded projects include:

Improved Healthcare provision: patients with disfigurements

Promoting inclusion in healthcare provision through better awareness and training

Enabling young learning-disabled artists and making art truly inclusive

Transforming people's lives and tackling the obesity crisis through a health and wellbeing programme

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-revenue-from-education-related-exports-and-transnational-education-activity-2018>

## **12. What is your assessment of the Turing Scheme - the Government proposed domestic alternative to Erasmus+?**

- Though Erasmus+ association was the clear preference, the funding committed by the UK government to replace student mobility is welcomed, and it is encouraging to see that the government recognises the value of outward student mobility in its International Education Strategy and funding of a UK alternative to Erasmus+ in the form of the Turing Scheme.
- It is also reassuring to see the British Council and ECORYS contracted as the delivery partners for the Turing scheme. To date they have accrued significant amounts of experience and expertise in managing and administering the Erasmus+ scheme on behalf of the Department for Education.
- The £110 million to facilitate 35,000 placements for the first year of the programme is a sensible figure looking at the proportion of allocated previously allocated vs the number of placements funded and taking account the current situation with regards to COVID-19.
- However, given the programme's focus on widening participation and international exchanges (see later points), this amount of funding will be spread thin in future years, particularly when compared with the increased budget for the EU's Erasmus+ programme. The government should ensure that the Turing Scheme is allocated adequate funding in subsequent yearly spending reviews.
- Notably, the level of funding already committed is significantly less than the UK receives in current participation in the Erasmus+ programme, and when compared to the EU's future iteration of Erasmus+ (which will see an almost doubling of the overall budget to €26bn over 7-years and therefore the UK would have seen increased receipts had it associated), the funding allocated to Turing does not compare. For example, in the Erasmus+ 2017 call, UK universities, colleges and schools received a total of €124 million<sup>2</sup> for Key Action 1 (mobility funding). It is therefore doubtful that the funding allocated to Turing will be able to match the increasing demand of students wishing to undergo a mobility exchange, particularly as recovery from COVID-19 takes hold.
- The budget for the Turing Scheme also does not account for the extra expenses involved in international travel. Expanded opportunities for international mobilities are welcomed in principle, but in practice, heavy promotion of international mobilities may result in astronomical travel expenses, visas fees and in the case of Anglophone destinations, steep cost of living – all which require a far greater investment than DfE's £110 million.

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/file/14125/download>

- The grant rates in Turing for widening participation students are welcomed and generous and are in line with the current Erasmus+ programme. As the future Erasmus+ has not been fully ratified into EU law, we cannot provide a comparison at this stage. However, additional costs are an inevitability in the implementation support for cohorts of students who would not be able to go abroad without this in place. With the current limited budget, institutions may be placed in the uncomfortable dilemma of offering fewer overall opportunities to students or targeted places for widening participation students as a result of the restricted funding in comparison to Erasmus+.
- One of the key recommendations of Universities UK International's report Widening Participation in UK Outward Student Mobility was to implement short term mobility (1–4 weeks) in order to broaden the offer of a study abroad experience. However, in higher education the minimum duration of a study abroad placement is 1 week under the Turing Scheme. DfE should consider reducing the minimum duration in line with UUKi's recommendations particularly as the new Erasmus+ programme will offer a minimum duration of 5 days physical mobility with a follow-up of a virtual mobility when back in the students' home country.
- In practice it may not work to align UK trade policies in identifying key target countries for the Turing Scheme. Universities are autonomous institutions with their own priority markets and therefore may not always align educational markets with that of the UK governments. For example, as a study abroad period is a compulsory component of a language degree. If a student is studying German, for example, a placement in Asia would not be appropriate.
- A key, and perhaps the greatest concern is the lack of reciprocity in the Turing Scheme. The government has committed to fund only outward mobilities, and this coupled with the additional immigration barriers may pose significant challenges to the successful implementation of the scheme. The success of any exchange programme is based on the mutual willingness of exchanges. When the Swiss were ejected from Erasmus, in order to sustain this element of reciprocity the Swiss resolved to fund both incoming and outgoing students to ensure the success of their scheme. Since then, the Swiss have resolved to re-join the Erasmus+ programme recognising the limitations of a national scheme.
- The l'Université Grenoble-Alpes, amongst other European institutions, is reportedly already sourcing alternative placements for their students where, unlike for the UK, there is no requirement to obtain a visa and students are automatically entitled to receive the full Erasmus+ grant. There is a risk that many other universities will follow suit.

- From the details available on the Turing website, the programme follows a similar model to the Erasmus+ programme. Notably, there is an absence of funding for staff mobility and exchanges, which is a key aspect of the Erasmus+ programme. Staff exchanges are key to the genesis of new international mobility partnerships and also act as a precursor to collaborative research projects or more long-term strategic partnerships between universities.
- There is currently no funding for Adult education and Youth mobility in Turing which is also the case under Erasmus+.

**14. The EU has granted the UK a six-month data adequacy 'bridge' to allow the free flow of personal data until the EU determines whether or not to grant a data adequacy decision to the UK. How would the absence of a data adequacy decision at the end of this bridging period affect trade in services?**

- If data adequacy is not offered to the UK, there risks a significant barrier to the exchange of students for the purposes of study and traineeships. Whilst data exchanges from the UK to EU will be unaffected, UK institutions will need to agree to adopt the EU's standard contractual clauses in order to legally receive students' data from the EU or access EU platforms.

*February 2021*