



STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-23

UK Council
for International
Student Affairs

UKCISA

VISION

UKCISA's vision is that every international student who comes to the UK has a positive experience and is able to tell friends and families that the UK is a welcoming place to study, and live.

To help achieve this, we work towards a transparent immigration system which is easy to navigate, whatever the level or length of study, and an inclusive and competitive post study work offer that enables our world class education system, in schools, colleges and higher education institutions to attract and retain ambitious and talented individuals from across the world.

We are passionate about supporting our members to deliver an excellent student experience, from application to completion of study, and curating a body of evidence that demonstrates the value of international students and internationalisation in education.

FOREWORD

2020 brings a new perspective on international students in the UK. UKCISA's three-year strategic plan will help us deliver our vision for a world class international student experience in the UK, and enable us to support international students and our members to navigate the dynamic global policy context to access opportunities and address challenges.

Our strategy will ensure UKCISA remains flexible and responsive to the external context, while continuing to deliver our high quality services to international students and member organisations.

It's not just the UK's place in the world that is changing, but UKCISA itself. This strategy will empower us to build on our strengths and further develop our expertise and our services to consolidate our reputation for highly trusted information, advice and guidance on and for international students in the UK.

I'm delighted to share our strategic plan with you, to support not just the work of UKCISA but the whole education sector, enabling us to demonstrate that the UK is a welcoming and world-leading destination for international students. I look forward to working in collaboration with members, governments and partner organisations to deliver it, and welcome ideas and suggestions for collaborations and strategic partnerships over the next three years.

Anne Marie Graham
Chief Executive



UKCISA STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2023

WHAT WILL 2023 LOOK LIKE?

FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- A streamlined visa and immigration system, clear and accessible at all points of the complex international student lifecycle
- Our grants programme supports research and projects that enhance the international student experience
- Metrics on international student satisfaction demonstrate the sector's investment in the international student experience
- Our international student ambassadors inform our work and help UKCISA shape policy

FOR OUR MEMBERS

- We retain 100% of UK universities as our members, and over 90% of our membership in further education
- Over 90% satisfaction with UKCISA, with members in all categories able to articulate the benefits of UKCISA membership for their institution or organisation
- Over 90% of our members report that our events and training are high quality, and represent value for money
- Members can access a range of cross-sector networks, expert communities and professional development opportunities
- Increased understanding across all membership categories of UKCISA's core services and member benefits, and how UKCISA works on their behalf
- A new continuous professional development framework for staff in member institutions recognises expertise and career progression in international student support

Our strategy will ensure we are recognised by international students, members, governments and partners across the sector as the number one source of information, advice and guidance for international student support.

FOR UKCISA

- Over 90% of our staff recommend UKCISA as a place to work
- Improved business processes enable us to support international students and our members in a scalable and responsive way
- Our expert communities and regional networks provide us with unrivalled intelligence to inform our work and influence policy
- A sustainable and healthy work environment promotes physical and mental wellbeing

FOR OUR FUNDERS AND PARTNERS

- #WeAreInternational campaign supports a continued increase in the number of international students coming to the UK, from Europe and the rest of the world, with international students reporting in surveys that they feel welcome in the UK and would recommend the UK as a place to study
- UKCISA partnerships with relevant sector bodies deliver added value for the UK education sector and its international strategies
- More non-members access our resources and training programme, improving knowledge across the board
- UK governments have regular dialogue with UKCISA and its membership, and can articulate how UKCISA's work contributes to the delivery of policy objectives and government strategies

OUR MISSION

To inform, advise and support international students and the institutions, students' unions and organisations who work with them

OUR VALUES

QUALITY

- We maintain the highest possible standards for our staff and our members who work directly with international students

INNOVATION

- We evaluate and refresh our services, to ensure we deliver maximum value for our members

COLLABORATION

- We work collaboratively with our members, UK governments and partner organisations to provide a world class experience for international students

TRUST

- We act with integrity and commitment to provide advice, guidance and training that international students and our members can depend on

OUR OBJECTIVES



INFLUENCING POLICY

UKCISA works with UK governments, relevant government agencies and sector organisations to ensure the UK remains attractive and welcoming to prospective and current international students. We monitor policy related to international education and immigration, and advise on implementation of policy and related guidance. UKCISA will continue to work with its members and partner organisations to help UK governments achieve their ambitions for international education in the UK. We

will advocate for policies that facilitate the best possible international student experience and uphold the UK's reputation as a world class study destination, from a transparent and consistent immigration system, with clear fees and pricing structures, to a competitive post-study work offer which will ensure that the UK education system can continue to attract talented students from across the world.

WE WILL DO THIS BY

- Advising government departments, devolved administrations and related government agencies on the development and implementation of policy related to international students, including a new visa and immigration system, and its impact on international students and UKCISA members
- Representing student and member interests in high level advisory groups and responding to formal consultations and calls for evidence
- Collaborating with other sector organisations on national initiatives to support an enhanced international student experience
- Convening innovative networks and forums with practitioners, students and employers to shape policy recommendations
- Commissioning, conducting, and providing research and analysis to inform policy development in government, sector organisations and member institutions



OUR OBJECTIVES

2 DELIVERING WORLD-LEADING ADVICE AND TRAINING

UKCISA is proud of its reputation for high quality advice, guidance and training. We deliver a national training programme that is relevant and responsive to the external policy context, with a team of experts from within UKCISA and its member network, and provide comprehensive online guidance for members. Our advice lines are open to our members and to the public, offering a unique route to experts in the field of international

student support. UKCISA will further enhance our training programme to meet the evolving requirements of our diverse membership, to support them through changes in the visa and immigration system, and increased demands on their resources. We will create a new professional development route for staff in member institutions to recognise expertise and encourage career progression in international student support.

WE WILL DO THIS BY

- Developing an innovative training programme in consultation with our membership, adding new online training options, and extending bespoke training for member institutions and expert communities to maximise access to the latest information and guidance
- Delivering a diverse and accessible training programme that builds capacity in our member institutions, and increases the number of non-members who access our training
- Creating a new accredited continuous professional development framework for those working with international students
- Enhancing quality assurance of UKCISA's advice and training, to maintain excellence in provision across existing and new activity



OUR OBJECTIVES

3 EMPOWERING OUR MEMBERSHIP

UKCISA has members from across the education sector, all committed to the highest standards of international student support. We aim to reflect the diversity of our membership in our advocacy work, and in the services we provide. We will create new channels for members to communicate with us, to ensure we can represent

the full range of issues they face to policymakers and provide regular updates on the results of our lobbying and advocacy work. We will inspire our members to work towards UKCISA's mission in their own institutions, and help individuals promote UKCISA services within their institution and other professional networks.

WE WILL DO THIS BY

- Increasing the number of thematic, national and regional practitioner communities that support UKCISA
- Investing in new technology to facilitate targeted and relevant member communications across different communities, and improve our responsiveness to member issues
- Creating a toolkit to help UKCISA members articulate the importance of investment in international student support within their institution or organisation
- Identifying a network of UKCISA champions from across our membership, and help them represent member and student interests in their own institutions and professional associations
- Conducting regular member surveys to measure the quality of our services, better understand our impact and inform our planning
- Funding research and projects across our membership to enhance the international student experience



OUR OBJECTIVES

4 DISSEMINATING OUR KNOWLEDGE

UKCISA works to ensure that the voice of international students and those that work with them is heard. We will highlight the experience of international students and our members across a range of platforms and forums. We will promote the work of UKCISA as an organisation across the UK education sector, beyond those who work with us on a regular basis. We will expand our

communications and campaigning activity to profile the contributions international students and our members make to UK education, to raise awareness of UKCISA as an organisation across senior leadership teams in our member organisations and to help our members deliver a whole-institution approach to supporting international students.

WE WILL DO THIS BY

- Expanding the #WeAreInternational campaign beyond higher education, in partnership with other sector organisations, to promote the UK as a welcoming place to study and live and profile the outstanding contribution that international students make to the UK
- Providing trusted advice and guidance for international students and those who work with them, through our advice lines and website
- Promoting UKCISA and its services in the UK and internationally to international students, non-members and partner organisations
- Engaging senior level staff in our member institutions to increase understanding of the value of UKCISA membership



OUR OBJECTIVES

5 DEVELOPING EXCELLENCE

Our staff are at the heart of what we do. Their commitment and expertise are highly valued by international students, members, partner organisations and governments. To deliver our strategy, we will promote a culture of continuous improvement to ensure that our staff remain engaged and motivated, and understand how their individual objectives align with those of their team and the overall vision of

the organisation. UKCISA will set out a business improvement programme to maintain excellence in service delivery, ensure financial sustainability and good governance, while developing and supporting our staff. We will use technology and other resources to achieve our objectives in an innovative yet efficient and sustainable way.

WE WILL DO THIS BY

- Embedding a suite of policies that ensure transparency, equality, and diversity across the organisation
- Developing a learning and development policy for all staff, to support their professional and personal development
- Enhancing our staff engagement through improved objective setting and appraisals, and measuring our progress through an annual staff survey
- Facilitating a healthy workplace to support staff wellbeing and good mental health
- Conducting a sustainability review of our premises and our processes, minimising the impact of the organisation on the environment

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UKCISA is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (Company Number: 4507287) and a charity registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales (Charity Number: 1095294). Its registered office is at 3-5 Islington High Street, London N1 9LQ.

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