

29 July 2026

The Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

Dear Andy,

UKCISA letter to the Prime Minister Andy Burnham

On behalf of the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA), we warmly congratulate you on becoming Prime Minister. We welcome your call for a more collaborative approach and a renewed sense of common purpose. International education succeeds through that same principle: partnership between government, education providers, communities and students themselves.

International students are integral to the UK's prosperity and global standing. [New Higher Education Policy Institute \(HEPI\) research](#) estimates that the international students who began their studies in 2024/25 will generate £9.70 in economic benefit for every £1 of estimated public cost. This represents a net economic benefit of £40.4 billion for the UK over the course of their studies, supporting jobs and growth in every nation and region.

Their contribution extends far beyond economics. International students enrich our campuses and communities, bring skills, ideas and cultural perspectives, and create lifelong connections between the UK and countries around the world.

As Mayor of Greater Manchester, you recognised this wider value. The Greater Manchester International Strategy made international students a strategic priority, seeking not only to attract international students, but to help them build lasting connections with the city-region. The Greater Manchester Student Partnership also gave students a route to engage with you and the Combined Authority on decisions affecting their lives.

UKCISA is the UK's national advisory body on international student affairs, combining specialist policy and regulatory expertise with insight from nearly 400 member educational institutions and international students themselves. Through our #WeAreInternational campaign and Student Ambassador network, we work directly with students and education providers to shape national policy and institutional practice, ensuring international students are recognised not simply as economic contributors, but as partners in our institutions, communities and shared future.

UKCISA already contributes directly to the delivery of the Government's international education ambitions. As an adviser to the Education Sector Action Group, we are already

contributing to the delivery of the UK's 2026 International Education Strategy, including its commitment to sustainable recruitment and high-quality student experience. We will continue to bring evidence, expertise and student insights to its implementation to review, helping translate these ambitions into effective policy and practice.

Your Government can build on this foundation by providing a stable, welcoming and joined-up policy environment across education and skills, immigration, trade and communities, with the international student experience and student voices at its heart.

We look forward to continuing our established work across government, and to working with you and your Cabinet to ensure that the UK remains a world-leading place to study, where every international student is welcomed, supported and enabled to contribute and succeed. We wish you every success as Prime Minister and in building a more prosperous, inclusive and internationally engaged United Kingdom.

Yours sincerely,



Lord Karan Bilimoria CBE DL

President

UK Council for International Student Affairs

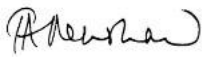


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