

News Release  
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## **It's not just university students who are vital to the UK economy, says English UK**

Any moves to remove international students from migration figures would have to include English language students as well as those at university for the sector's continuing success.

English UK, which represents more than 450 fully-accredited state and private language centres, says almost 60 per cent of successful university applications come from students already studying in the UK, usually on English courses.

The organisation supported an influential report by the IPPR, published earlier this month, which recommended that international students be removed from immigration statistics unless they applied to remain permanently in the UK, as happens in competitor nations including the US, Canada and Australia.

This week almost 70 universities have written to the Prime Minister to ask that students be removed from the migration figures, warning that there is a real risk to the sector if they go elsewhere as a result of the Government's drive to reduce migration to "the tens of thousands". International education is worth upwards of £10bn to the UK, with English Language bringing in more than £2.5bn in its own right.

Tony Millns, chief executive of English UK, said: "It is not just the universities which are vital to this export market. We know that 59 per cent of their international students come from lower-level courses in this country, which prepare them in many ways for university study in the UK.

"Equally, many English language students enjoy their time here, study hard, and go home taking with them a very positive view of the UK, which does us a great deal of good in the long run. And while they're here, every cup of coffee or sandwich they buy in their local cafe is an international export. They pay local families to stay with them, they pay for teaching, they pay for travelling, sightseeing, and entertainment. All of that is an export for the UK."

Mr Millns said the risks once posed by bogus colleges and bogus students had more or less disappeared. "Our own research shows that the number of non-accredited English language colleges has dropped by around 95 per cent in the past four years, and visa changes such as the use of biometric data and stringent proof of funding means that the students we're getting are genuine ones."

He added: "The Government's decision to count students as migrants is damaging the UK's international education business, which is an economic powerhouse. People in the UK are intelligent enough to see international students as quite different from true migrants who come here for work and family reasons, aiming to settle permanently and adding to the UK's population. It is this long-term migration that people are concerned about, and rightly want the Government to do something to control and reduce."

"If the USA, Canada and Australia can treat students differently, so can -- and should -- the UK. Otherwise, we stand to lose out when the UK has great potential to earn more for our

struggling economy from growth in international education. The brightest and the best want to come here to study, but the Government is stopping them for short-term political reasons."

### **Notes to Editors**

1. English UK is the world's leading language teaching association, with more than 450 accredited centres in membership. It covers university and further education college language departments, international study centres in independent schools, educational trusts and charities, and private sector colleges. English UK is a UK registered charity ([www.englishuk.com](http://www.englishuk.com)).
2. For more information, please contact Tony Millns, Chief Executive of English UK on [Tony@EnglishUK.com](mailto:Tony@EnglishUK.com).