

European Union Students Studying in English Higher Education Institutions

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National Foundation for Educational Research
with Helen Robertson Hobsons

DIUS Research Report 08 09

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ISBN 978 1 84778 997 9

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Acknowledgements

The authors would like to express their thanks to the members of the project steering group and, in particular, Deborah Beck, the project manager at DIUS, for their guidance and insights during the study.

We are most grateful to the participating higher education institutions that facilitated this study by contacting their non-UK European Union students and providing them with the link to the survey. Thanks are also due to Hobsons' liaison team, who contacted all English higher education institutions and provided ongoing support throughout the period of the survey, and to staff at trendence, who hosted the online survey. We are also most grateful to the students who helped with the initial development of the questionnaire and to those who took the time to complete it; their views made an invaluable contribution to the research.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to Mark Puncher at Hobsons, who was involved in many of the negotiations in the early stages of the research, and to staff at NFER, including Charlyne Pullen, who was involved in the design phase of the study including the focus groups and cognitive interviewing, Lisa O'Donnell and Laura Harries, who helped with the data analyses, and Sue Stoddart for her efficient administrative and secretarial support.

Executive Summary

This study aimed to identify the pathways, intentions and relevant perceptions of (non-UK) European Union (EU) students entering English higher education. It sought to identify why students wished to obtain an English HE qualification, their attitudes towards the uptake and repayment of tuition fee loans and their future career plans. Drawing on longitudinal data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and from a national survey of (non-UK) EU students in English Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), it aimed to provide a better understanding of their views on (and use of) the Student Loans system, in order to inform government policy and strategy in this area.

Key findings

An analysis of HESA data from 2002/03 to 2005/06 found that:

- There was a growth in the numbers and the proportion of young people from the Baltic States, Eastern Europe and late accession countries (including Cyprus and Malta) and a decline in both the overall numbers and the proportion of students coming from EU founder nations and other western non-founder nations.
- Business and administration studies appeared to be both the largest and fastest growing course, although the proportion of applicants for such places declined amongst the seven non-UK non-founder nations. The proportion of non-UK EU entrants to most STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) subjects (other than those related to medicine or biology), law and languages, in contrast, have seen a marked decline.
- The probability of a non-UK EU student staying in England to take part in further full-time study was greater than that of their remaining to work (whether full- or part-time), particularly for those studying maths, physics, languages, law, historical studies and social sciences courses.

For the survey respondents:

- The principal attractions for studying in England had been its perceived strong economic climate, the reputation of English education and universities and previous experience of England.
- Levels of awareness of financial support and tuition fee loans were highest amongst students from Eastern European countries and amongst those from the Baltic States; students from these countries were also significantly more likely to have applied for a loan than students from any other region.
- Loan applications also appeared to be higher from students studying subjects that were less clearly linked to professional qualifications or to courses that traditionally may have led to the potential for higher earnings.
- Concern about debt was evident, with nearly one-quarter of all non-UK EU students expressing worries about repaying existing or future loans. Those who expressed most confidence in being able to pay back tuition

fee loans within a decade of graduating were those with the best level of understanding of current financial mechanisms for students.

Methodology

The research team used both primary research and secondary analysis of other data sources to ascertain the mobility patterns, anticipated destinations and attitudes to student loan repayments of EU students. The study included analyses of:

- Publicly available HESA data, which includes comprehensive information on student enrolment, courses of study, degree classifications and destinations of those entering and leaving higher education in the UK.
- A detailed data extract from the HESA dataset for the period 2002/03 to 2005/06, obtained via the DIUS. This contained anonymised information on non-UK EU students following degree courses in English HEIs.
- Primary data from an online survey of current non-UK EU undergraduates, in order to obtain insights into their experiences, views, attitudes, aspirations and future intentions. A total of 2,136 full-time undergraduates submitted completed valid questionnaires over a seven-week period from May to July, 2007. This dataset was large enough (and representative enough) to be sure that the analysis was robust in relation to the views, attitudes and experiences of non-UK EU students.

Study findings

The analyses of HESA data and of the survey responses divided students into three broad groups, representing the founder states (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands), the other non-founder (non-UK) western nations (Austria, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Spain, Sweden and Portugal) and the Baltic States, Eastern European states and other late accession countries (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia). The findings from this study have been summarised in relation to non-UK EU students' choosing to study in England; non-UK EU students' understanding of tuition fee loans and their attitudes towards them; and respondents' future career and study plans.

Non-UK EU students studying in England

The numbers of non-UK EU students are growing. Between the academic years 2004/05 and 2005/06, for example, first year undergraduate enrolments from European Union (EU) countries increased by ten percentage points from 20,700 to 22,700 full-time students (HESA, 2007). Change has not been uniform, however, and over the last four years, there has been a notable shift in the balance of non-UK EU students coming to England. In terms of numbers and the overall proportion of the non-UK EU population, there has been a decline in entrants from western non-founder nations. The number of

students has declined from 48,589 out of 79,020 students (61% of the total) to 44,007 out of 92,627 (48% of the total). The percentage of founder nation students has declined from 38% (30,239 out of 79,020) to 35% (32,892 out of 92,627) although actual numbers of students has increased slightly. By contrast, there has been a growth in the numbers and the proportion of young people from the Baltic States, Eastern Europe and late accession countries from 0.2% (192 out of 79,020 students) to 17% (15,728 out of 92,627 students)..

The survey respondents were evenly divided across each of the three regions, although respondent numbers varied, with 326 responses from German students (the second largest source of non-UK EU students in English HEIs), yet only four from Maltese students and four from Slovenian students. Although now in an English HEI, more than three quarters of the respondents had considered other countries first, identifying, between them, over 30 different countries, both within and outside the EU. The reasons students gave for studying in a country other than their own were related primarily to:

- obtaining experience that would contribute to their future career
- poor career prospects (in their own country)
- a perception that the standard of education was higher in countries other than their own.

The particular attractions of England were:

- the perceived strong economic climate, potential career prospects and the opportunity to earn while studying and to get funding from England
- the reputation of English education and English universities
- social and cultural aspects and previous experience of having visited, lived in, or been educated in England before.

The draw towards specific courses did not emerge as significant, although by far the largest proportion of responding students were following full-time courses in business and administration (26%), with a high proportion on social science courses (15%). The numbers following STEM courses (science, technology, engineering and maths) ranged from eight per cent on engineering and technology courses, to around two per cent on mathematics courses, while, in total, around seven per cent were studying medicine or dentistry or subjects allied to medicine.

The dominance of business and administration studies was also evident amongst all non-UK EU undergraduates in the HESA data. Over the last few years, there has been a general shift in the courses being followed by non-UK EU undergraduates, a shift that has not been consistent, however, across all 26 non-UK EU countries. While business and administration studies, for instance, appeared to be both the largest and fastest growing course, the

proportion of applicants for such places declined amongst the seven non-UK non-founder nations. The proportion of entrants to most STEM subjects (other than those related to medicine or biology), law and languages, in contrast, have seen a marked decline.

Accompanying these shifts, there has also been a change in the pattern of applications, with post-1992 universities appearing to benefit most from the arrival of the students from the Eastern European countries, Baltic States and the late accession countries, but losing favour amongst other non-founder EU nations.

Non-UK EU students' and tuition fee loans

Seventy-six per cent of the students in the survey understood that EU students paid lower tuition fees than other international students. However, only a minority of the students had a clear understanding of the different sources of UK funding and support that might be available and few were clear about the financial arrangements related to tuition fee loans, suggesting a significant degree of misunderstanding and confusion (which may well be mirrored, of course, amongst UK students).

In total, just under one-third of the survey respondents (651) reported that they had applied for a loan, with 82% receiving the loan for which they applied. Loan applications appeared to be more forthcoming from students who had access to (and understood) the financial information on tuition fee loans and other sources of financial support, and were more likely to come from students from the founder countries, Eastern Europe or the more recent accession countries and from students following courses (such as education and creative arts) that appeared less clearly linked, traditionally, to high future earnings potential. Students following courses in mathematics and medicine were least likely to have said that they had applied for a loan.

Fifty-nine per cent of students specifically reported that they didn't apply for a loan. Nearly half (47%) of these students stated that they didn't need a loan because they were either using their own savings to pay their way, had received financial support from their family or had funding from their home country. Amongst those who had taken out loans, those who appeared to have put most thought into ways in which they might pay back the loan and who expressed most confidence in being able to do so within 10 years of completing their course, were those with the best level of understanding of current financial mechanisms for students.

Non-UK EU students future career and study plans

The indications from the HESA data were that the probability of a non-UK EU student staying in England was greater if they were female, from a Western (non-founder) or Eastern European country, studying full-time (especially in

London or in post-1992 institutions) and entering sales and customer service occupations, personal service occupations or administrative and secretarial occupations.

The analysis also suggested that the probability of a non-UK EU student staying in England to take part in further full-time study was greater than that of their remaining to work (whether full- or part-time), particularly for those studying maths, physics, languages, law, historical studies and social sciences courses. Older students, by contrast, and those studying medicine or dentistry were more strongly associated with entry into full-time work.

These probabilities were also reflected in the reported plans of the surveyed undergraduates. Just under half of the 2,136 undergraduates believed that they would still be in England six months after completing their current course, whether undertaking post-graduate studies, in a full-time career post or in part-time or temporary work. Two years on, fewer (35%) thought they would still be in England, and the balance was more towards work, with fewer thinking they would still be pursuing their studies in England at that stage.

Potential implications

The analyses of HESA data and the outcomes of the survey of non-UK EU students have highlighted four areas that may have implications for future HE provision for EU students. These relate to the ways in which HEIs may need to consider:

- **Future course provision** (both undergraduate and post-graduate). To what extent will existing patterns of non-UK EU student recruitment persist? Will business and administration remain a growth area? Will English universities continue to be able to capitalise on potential career premiums? What steps do they need to take (if any) to ensure that the courses that they are offering maintain this advantage? Will there be a continued growth in progression to higher education from non-UK EU students, or will there be a shift towards young people taking up full-time employment opportunities? Will the apparent lessening popularity of the STEM subjects amongst non-UK EU recruitment (other than those related to medicine or biology, which are significantly related to the take-up of full-time employment) herald a move away from postgraduate recruitment amongst non-UK EU students?
- **Guidance and support for students.** Is there a need for guidelines on the balance between full-time study and working hours? Should these be drawn up by individual HEIs? Should they be made available for all non-UK EU students and all HEI students - and for employers who recruit such students?
- **Promoting tuition fee loans and other forms of financial support.** How best should tuition fee loans be marketed to potential students in non-UK EU countries? What strategies have proved effective and what lessons can be learnt about the effectiveness of marketing from those students who have applied for loans (whether or not they received them)?

1. Introduction

Following the introduction of the Bologna process in 1999 (to which the UK is a signatory), the stated aim to create a European Union Higher Education Area (EHEA) by 2010,¹ and in the context of increasing European collaboration and the facilitation of inter-country mobility, it is not surprising that more and more European students are choosing to come to England to pursue a higher education qualification. Between 2004/05 and 2005/06, for example, first year undergraduate enrolments from European Union (EU) countries increased by ten percentage points from 20,700 to 22,700 full-time students (HESA, 2007). While there was no change in the proportion of first year post-graduate enrolments for full-time courses, which remained steady at 18,500, this was nonetheless an increase from the figure of 15,800 postgraduate students recorded by in HESA 2001/02.²

By EU law, EU students are required to pay tuition fees at the same level as domestic students (and not at the higher level paid by their international [non-EU] counterparts). However, in England, they are also eligible for loans to cover these tuition fees, indicating a government commitment to encouraging the participation of such students in English higher education institutions (HEIs). This is a promising movement from an economic perspective (promoting the growth of UK higher education as a global export), particularly given the UK's changing demography and the implications that this carries.³ It also poses challenges for education providers and policy makers alike, in terms of new, tailored strategies for marketing and attraction, enquiry management, and student support arrangements.

¹ See http://www.europeunit.ac.uk/bologna_process/signatory_countries.cfm

² Higher Education Statistics Agency (2007). *Higher Education Student Enrolments and Qualifications Obtained at Higher Education Institutions in the United Kingdom for the Academic Year 2005/06* (National Statistics First Release SFR 107) [online]. Available: <http://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php/content/view/119/161/> [21 November, 2007] The reference is to Table 2 - *First year student enrolments on higher education courses by level of study, mode of study and domicile, 2001/02 to 2005/06*.

³ The UK's population is ageing, due to declines both in fertility rates and in the mortality rate, which means that the number of under 16 years olds is falling (from 25% in mid-1971 to 19% in mid-2004) and the proportion of people aged 65 and over is increasing (from 13% in mid-1971 to 16% in mid-2004). Of relevance to the higher education sector, this means that the number of school- and college-leavers (and therefore the number of prospective HE students) to attract into higher education is decreasing.

Specific challenges relate to student funding, to loan payments and to repayment strategies, for instance. Tuition fee loans are a key measure in balancing the introduction of variable fees (of up to £3,070 per year) with the need to make higher education an attractive and viable option for UK students from all backgrounds. With an interest rate which is linked to inflation, and with repayment only commencing once a UK graduate is earning in excess of £15,000 per year, they are seen by policy makers as a viable support mechanism for students wishing to undertake a higher education qualification. It has been suggested by various higher education institutions that these benefits are also valued by EU students, who are entitled to the same loan (although they can not apply for maintenance support), with the expectation that this eligibility would be a motivator in the decision-making processes of prospective EU students considering study in the UK. In the context of the global expansion of UK higher education, it is hoped that the loans system, funded centrally, would benefit both the students hoping to undertake a UK degree and the institutions seeking to provide it to them.

As with all large initiatives of this type, however, the success of the loans system will be determined by the effectiveness with which it is managed. Administered by the Student Loans Company Ltd (SLC) under a new arrangement, it is anticipated that the system should now be more accessible to students and other affected groups, with a more transparent and straightforward application procedure and greater efficiency in loan payments to recipients. Clearly, the system will be judged not only on the efficiency with which it provides loans to UK and EU students, but also on its performance in securing repayment of the loans provided. For graduates working in the UK, the repayments begin once the individual (as indicated above) is earning £15,000 per year, and are paid directly to the Inland Revenue via the PAYE system (meaning a relatively passive role for the graduate repaying the loan). However, for graduates working outside the UK, the repayment threshold changes (according to the living costs of the country in which the graduate is employed) and payment is made directly from the borrower to the SLC, a process which will be particularly common for EU (non-UK) students, many of whom may leave the UK following completion of their studies. Any debts still outstanding after twenty-five years will be written off, although it is currently unclear what specific measures will be taken (and on what scale) to recover loans from borrowers who should have paid, but who did not. On the assumption that some borrowers, deliberately or otherwise, may not actively

seek to begin (or continue) repaying the loan, this translates to a potentially complicated and resource-intensive challenge of tracking the mobility of graduate borrowers outside of the UK, maintaining contact with them, and securing loan repayments at the right level and at the right time.

1.1 Research Aims

This study, funded by DIUS and carried out by NFER in partnership with Hobsons, sought to identify the pathways, intentions and relevant perceptions of (non-UK) EU students entering English higher education. In particular, it sought to identify why students wished to obtain an English HE qualification, their attitudes towards the uptake and repayment of tuition fee loans and their future career plans. The analysis that was undertaken aimed to provide information to contribute to an understanding of factors that might contribute to the effective management of the student loans system, and to inform government policy and strategy in this area.

1.2 Research Methods

EU students currently represent a small but significant proportion of the population of English HEIs. In most institutions, they form less than ten per cent of the undergraduate student populace. This varies according to the type of institution; EU students constitute a greater part of the student body in some specialist HEIs, such as arts centres, for example. In 2005/06, the median number of such students across all English universities was 322 (3.9% of the roll), although actual numbers on roll ranged from 1,537 (nine per cent of the undergraduate population of one London institution) to none (in seven institutions, only two of which recruited undergraduates). The pattern of EU student enrolment, the courses onto which they enrol and their subsequent destinations is not, therefore, uniform.

Using both primary research and the analysis of secondary data sources, the research team sought to ascertain the mobility patterns, anticipated destinations and attitudes to student loan repayments of EU students. The study included analyses of:

- Publicly available HESA data, which provides a comprehensive dataset of student enrolment, courses of study, degree classifications and destinations of those entering and leaving higher education (whether in HEIs or FE colleges providing tertiary qualifications) in the UK.
- A detailed data extract from the HESA dataset, obtained via the DIUS, which contained anonymised information on non-UK EU students following degree courses in English HEIs.
- Primary data from an online survey of current non-UK EU undergraduates, in order to obtain insights into their experiences, views, attitudes, aspirations and future intentions.

1.2.1 Analysis of publicly available HESA data

Publicly available HESA data was used to inform the sampling framework and targeting strategy for a survey of EU students in English HEIs. An initial analysis of the HESA data for 2004/05 by institution, mode of study, level of study, gender and domicile, indicated that, while the highest proportion of the 79,525 EU students in English universities during that academic year were based in and around London, over 80% of all HEIs in England had at least 100 such students, while over one fifth of them had more than 1000 EU students.⁴ The overall geographical distribution of post-graduate (37,875) and undergraduate (41,650) EU students in that year was broadly similar, with around one-third of all such full-time students in central London institutions. The relative population of individual HEIs varied, however. While City University hosted the highest number of post-graduate EU students (1,215) in London in 2004/05, for instance, London Metropolitan University had the highest number of EU undergraduates (1,385) in London in that year.

In order to address the research questions for the study, and to provide accurate estimates for the responses of non-UK EU students as a whole (that is, for our estimate of percentages to be correct to within 5% at least 95% of the time), it was important to ensure that respondents to the study were representative of the population of all non-UK EU students. Given the number of other studies in the field at the time, it was anticipated that not all HEIs

⁴ It should be noted that the sampling exercise for the study was undertaken before the publication of the 2005/06 data and all estimations and power calculations for the sampling exercises undertaken for this study, therefore, were based on published data from 2004/05. It should be noted, however, that this initial analysis of the 2004/05 data did not include students from the EU accession countries, or from Bulgaria and Romania. Updated data from HESA, which incorporated these accession countries, suggests that the population of non-UK EU students in 2004/05 was higher, at 88,272.

would be able to participate, and that not all non-UK EU students in participating HEIs would respond to the survey.

The research team drew, therefore, on the HESA breakdown of non-UK EU students in each institution to provide the basis upon which the estimates for the sample size for the survey and the identification of the sub-sample of priority institutions would be made. Details of these estimates are presented in Appendix 1 and are summarised in Section 1.2.3 (the online survey).

1.2.2 Analysis of HESA data extracts

HESA data for the years 2002/03 to 2005/06 was used to build up a longitudinal profile of non-UK EU students. Detailed, anonymised student record data, at individual student level, was analysed to gain an overall understanding of individual variables (including country of origin, age, gender, previous qualifications and the courses being studied) and to provide a comparison, exploring similarities and differences, with English students. In addition, the data was used to determine the destinations of those non-UK EU students who had attended English HEIs. In addition to providing basic information about their destinations, a multilevel modelling approach was used to identify those background characteristics (including demographic variables) and the courses of study that appeared to be most strongly associated with the future destinations of these and UK students (both in terms of their occupation and the country of employment or further study).

Results of the modelling analysis were also used to predict the probability of non-UK EU students entering different destinations after studying in England (i.e. the likelihood of staying in England in paid employment or of continuing in further study and so on). Naturally, any estimation of this kind is subject to some uncertainty; historical trends in the relationship between background variables and destinations may not continue in the future. Courses that appear to lead directly to employment at present may not prove to be so advantageous in a few years time, for instance.

1.2.3 The online survey

Initial contact was made, via invitation letter in March 2007, with all 132 HEFCE-funded HEIs. A sub-sample of 99 institutions, selected using the publicly available HESA data, was also targeted for detailed follow-up in case of non-response (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 5). All responding institutions

were asked to provide, where possible, data on the number of EU non-UK students (by country) that were currently enrolled at their institution, in order to provide a cross-check with HESA data and help in estimating possible response numbers. In order to ensure confidentiality and secure anonymity, however, all direct approaches to the students were conducted solely through the HEIs. Since this HEI involvement in the research process was crucial to the study, an intensive contacting and support process was put in place.

During the recruitment phase for the study, the questionnaire to be used for the online survey was designed. This was, in part, informed by existing surveys, but questions on sensitive issues, such as those on financial issues, student loans and student debt, for instance, were devised during a series of focus groups with 14 non-UK EU students (involving both undergraduates and graduates). This led to the inclusion of a number of scenario building questions, forced-choice questions, agree-disagree statements and questions which were designed to elicit the extent to which survey respondents might or might not be informed about the issues, without putting them into a situation in which they might be unhappy to disclose information.⁵

The draft questionnaire was then tested during detailed one-to-one cognitive interviews with a further five non-UK EU undergraduates, to ensure that the questions were unambiguous, that they obtained the data that the research team sought and that the majority of survey respondents would be willing to complete them. A short period of online testing took place, before the survey 'went live' in May 2007.

Details of the online survey, including suggested text for the invitational e-mail to students, were sent to each of the 86 HEIs that initially agreed to participate. Of these, 67 took part in the study, confirming that they had sent out the email invitation to their non-UK EU students. Fifty-six of these HEIs were included in the sub-sample of 99 targeted HEIs. The invitational email contained a URL link, embedded in the text, specific to the individual institution; this allowed students to access the survey and enabled response rates to be monitored by institution. HEIs were also provided with a follow-up email to send to students to encourage any non-respondents to take part in the survey.

⁵ It was anticipated that questions around finance and debt might lead to a lower response rate than other questions and so much work was done to try and elicit responses sensitively and in non-threatening ways.

The survey was live between Friday 18th May and Friday 6th July, 2007. During that seven week period, completed questionnaires were submitted by 2,968 respondents representing 67 HEIs, with a further 1,234 respondents starting the questionnaire but not submitting it. Of the 2,968 who submitted the questionnaire, 671 provided substantially incomplete or invalid questionnaires and these were removed from the database, since they did not include data that would have contributed to the study. These included 618 students (representing 24 of the 26 EU countries) who were following post-graduate courses. Most of these were working towards a post-graduate degree, whether as a taught course (42%) or as a research degree (49%). The remainder were working towards a post-graduate qualification, such as a PGCE. The mean age of these respondents was 27.8, compared with the mean age of 22.7 of those respondents following the undergraduate courses. Survey respondents were, on average, marginally younger than the non-UK EU student population as a whole; in 2005/06 the mean age for non-UK EU post-graduates was 29.6, for undergraduates, it was 24. They were also marginally younger than the mean for all English postgraduates (34.9) and undergraduates (24.8).⁶

After data cleaning, a further 109 respondents were also removed from the survey, 65 of whom had indicated that they were of British nationality, had been educated in England and/or had lived in England for more than three years prior to starting their current course. Others (44 respondents) were removed because they provided insufficient information about themselves or their courses to allow meaningful analyses.

While some analysis was conducted on the 2,188 respondents who remained in the survey, the full analysis was carried out on only those young people who indicated that they were currently in full-time study at an HEI (those on part-time courses would not be eligible for tuition fee loans); this meant that the final dataset for the analysis was 2,136. This dataset is large enough to be sure that our analysis is robust in relation to the views, attitudes and experiences of non-UK EU students. It should be noted, however, that while we can be secure in undertaking analyses at EU-level or in relation to founder nations, non-founder Western European nations and Eastern European, Baltic States and late accession countries, we cannot be certain of making

⁶ It should be noted that these figures include students at the Open University, the average age of whom is likely to be higher than those of young people in other universities.

accurate estimates at individual country level (see Appendix 2 for a list of EU member states by region and dates of accession). Where specific percentages of respondents from individual countries are given, these should be regarded as indicative only.

1.3 Structure of the report

The report combines the analyses of both national HESA data and data from the survey of non-UK EU undergraduates. Chapter 2 provides a national profile of non-UK EU students studying in England, the courses they were following and their post-graduation destinations, where known. It also provides a profile of the non-UK EU students who responded to the survey, examining their routes to higher education in England, their reasons for coming to England and their expectations with regard to academic, economic and social provision in English universities.

Chapter 3 explores the financial circumstances of non-UK EU students, looking at their expectations and experiences, their knowledge and take-up of financial support mechanisms (particularly tuition fee loans) and their approaches to debt and to the repayment of loans. In Chapter 4 the report looks at the factors that appear to be predictors of the post-graduation status of both UK and non-UK EU students, drawing on the HESA destinations survey data, before exploring the plans of the non-UK EU students who responded to the survey. Finally, in Chapter 5, the implications of the findings from the study, particularly in relation to student pathways, intentions and financial and occupational behaviour, are summarised and explored.

Throughout the report, references are made to the tables that can be found in Appendix 3.

2. European Union Students: a Population Profile

Since the start of the academic year 2002/03, there has been a marked change in the profile of EU students in English universities. Between 2002/03 and 2005/06, the total numbers from non-UK European backgrounds increased from 79,020 to 92,627, an increase of 17.2%. Over that same time period, the number of English students rose from 1,817,487 to 1,944,432 (a seven per cent increase) while the total number of students entering English universities increased from 2,037,320 to 2,198,967 an increase of 7.9%. The numbers and relative populations of students from the six founder nations (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands), from the other Western European nations in the EU (Austria, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Spain and Sweden) and from the Eastern European and Baltic States, however, present very different stories (see Appendices 2 and 4).

2.1 Non-UK EU students - national data

The analysis presented here (and in Section 2.2), and which provides the context in which the research study was undertaken, is based on the longitudinal HESA dataset from 2002/03 to 2005/06 for some 335,763 students from non-UK EU countries.

2.1.1 Student numbers: The EU founder nations

Amongst the six founder nations, the total number of students in English universities continued to increase over the period 2002/03 to 2005/06, but the rate by which they increased from some countries was relatively slow, with a one percentage point increase for Italian students (from 5,897 to 5,973). The proportional growth rates amongst students from France (9,607 to 10,813) and Luxembourg (288 to 326) were greater, with an increase of 13 percentage points from each country over the time period. Overall, while numbers of students from the six founder nations remained high in 2005/06, contributing over 35% of the total non-UK EU population in English HEIs, their relative contribution had nonetheless declined by three percentage points since 2002/03.

2.1.2 Student numbers: Western European nations

Over the four year period, both the total numbers of students coming from the other non-founder Western European nations and the relative contribution of these students to the non-UK EU population in English HEIs, showed a decrease. In 2002/03, such students made up 61% of the non-UK EU student population (48,589 of the 79,020 non-UK EU students): this had decreased by 13 percentage points to 48% by 2005/06 (44,007 of the 92,627 non-UK EU students). The only exceptions to this general decline were seen in the numbers of students coming from the Republic of Ireland (with an increase of 45 percentage points from 6,510 students to 9,417 students), Portugal (from 2,193 to 2,496 - 14 percentage points) and Austria (from 1,110 to 1,307 - 18 percentage points). The most marked decreases were seen in the overall proportions of students coming from Greece (with a 26% decrease) and from the Nordic countries of Denmark, Finland and Sweden, with between a 10% and 12%% decline in the numbers from each of these three countries in English universities.

2.1.3 Student numbers: Eastern Europe, the Baltic States and other accession states

By contrast with the rest of Northern and Western Europe, the numbers of students arriving from Eastern European and the Baltic States, as well as from Cyprus and Malta, have seen notable increases, both in overall numbers and in the contribution they make to the total population of non-UK EU students in English HEIs (now at 17% compared with 0.2% in 2002/03). Students from Cyprus form the largest contingent in this group, with 6,495 students in English HEIs in 2005/06; only 53 such students were recorded in 2002/03. While numbers coming from Bulgaria (38) and Romania (27) were still low in 2005/06, numbers from other Eastern European countries (particularly Poland and the Czech Republic) and the three Baltic States of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia had increased greatly.

2.2 Non-UK EU students - course and HE profile: national data

The courses that appeared to attract by far the largest proportion of non-UK EU students were those related to business and administration. Nearly one-quarter of the students entering English HEIs in 2005/06 were studying subjects in this field. This was also the fastest growing area, with an increase

of 1.9 percentage points in the proportion of all non-UK EU students studying business and administration-related subjects between 2002/03 and 2005/06 (from 22.2% in 2002/03 to 24.1% in 2005/06). While numbers in all subject areas increased over the four year period (with the notable exception of engineering and technology, where numbers decreased from 11,232 in 2002/03 to 10,678 in 2005/06), there were nonetheless some subjects in which the overall proportion of students increased and others in which they decreased. In ten areas, the proportion of undergraduates increased; in addition to business and administration studies, these included medicine and subjects allied to medicine, biological sciences, social studies, mass communications and documentation, historical and philosophical studies, creative arts and design, education and combined degrees. The proportions studying agriculture, physical sciences, mathematical sciences, computer sciences, engineering and technology, law and languages decreased, with the most marked decrease being in engineering and technology, with a drop of 3.7 percentage points over the four years in the proportion studying subjects in this field.

The balance of entrants between pre-1992 and post-1992 institutions as HE destinations showed a slight shift, with an increase in the proportion electing to go to pre-1992 institutions (from 52.8% in 2002/03 to 54.8% in 2005/06) and a decrease in the proportion entering post-1992 institutions (from 45.6% in 2002/03 to 43.2% in 2005/06). The small proportion following HE courses in FE declined (from 0.8% in 2002/03 to 0.4% in 2005/06), whilst those in specialist colleges increased from 0.8% to 1.6%.

2.2.1 Student courses: The EU founder nations

Amongst the EU founder nations, the story was similar to the overall picture of non-UK EU students, although two subjects (agriculture and computer sciences) showed a marginal increase (0.2 and 0.3 percentage points, respectively). The proportion of students studying history, creative arts and combined degrees showed a marginal decline.

While students from the founder nations tended to enter the pre-1992 institutions (on average 56.7% students went to pre-1992 HEIs and 41.8% went to post-1992 HEIs across the four years), there was evidence of a very slight shift. A decrease of 0.4 percentage points in the proportion electing to go to pre-1992 institutions was seen between 2002/03 and 2005/06, although

the gains appeared to be more in specialist colleges (an increase from 0.9% to 1.5%) than in post-1992 institutions.

2.2.2 Student courses: Western European nations

The non-founder Western European nations were the only group of countries in which the proportion of students following business and administration courses declined (by 1.2 percentage points from 22.2% to 21% over the four year period). The proportion following other subjects reflected that of non-UK EU students overall, with the biggest drop being noted in engineering and technology subjects - however there was a larger increase in the proportion studying medicine (an increase of 0.9 percentage points compared to an increase across all non-UK EU students of 0.4 percentage points) and subjects allied to medicine (an increase of 1.1 percentage points compared to an increase across all non-UK EU students of 0.2 percentage points).

Entrants to post-1992 institutions declined each year amongst non-founder EU nations, with a drop of 5.2 percentage points (from 48.4% of the non-founder EU students in 2002/03 to 43.2% of the non-founder EU students in 2005/06). The proportion of entrants to pre-1992 and specialist colleges increased over the same time period (by 4.5 percentage points and one percentage point, respectively).

2.2.3 Student courses: Eastern Europe, the Baltic States and other accession states

In looking at the figures for these countries, one needs to exercise caution. In 2002/03, only 192 students from the Eastern European countries, Baltic States and late accession countries were registered; by 2005/06 this had increased to 15,721.

Although the proportion of students following courses in subjects allied to medicine increased, as elsewhere in Europe, the proportion studying medicine or dentistry declined by 1.3 percentage points (from 2.6% of the Eastern European English HE entrants in 2002/03 to 1.3% in 2005/06). Business and administration was the area in which there was the greatest gain (an increase of 4.4 percentage points from 25.5% of the entrants in 2002/03 to 29.8% of the entrants in 2005/06). The remaining pattern of gains and losses in other subjects largely reflected that from non-UK EU countries overall, with the exception of computer sciences (which increased from 5.7%

to 6.4% of entrants, compared with a decrease from 5.3% to 5.0% overall) and law (which increased from 6.3% to 6.8% of entrants, compared with a decrease from 5.7% to 5.1% overall).

Students from the Eastern European countries, Baltic States and the late accession countries of Malta and Cyprus tended to favour the pre-1992 HEIs (on average, 52.6% students went to pre-1992 HEIs and 46% went to post-1992 HEIs), but there was a marked shift across the four years. Whereas 64.6% of all entrants from these countries had gone to pre-1992 universities in 2002/03, only 51.1% had entered them in 2005/06. Similarly, 34.4% of all entrants from these countries had gone to post-1992 universities in 2002/03, but 47.7% had entered them in 2005/06.

2.3 Non-UK EU students - survey data

The responses from the 2188 non-UK EU students represented each of the 26 non-UK EU countries, although the numbers of responses from countries varied, with 326 responses from German students (the second-largest source of non-UK EU students in English HEIs), yet only four from Maltese students and four from Slovenian students (see Table 1 in Appendix 3).⁷ Compared with the national pattern of non-UK EU students obtained from the HESA data, a proportionally higher percentage of the survey responses (32%) came from students from Eastern European countries, the Baltic States or the later EU member countries of Cyprus and Malta.⁸ The responses from students from the EU founder nations made up one-third of the total number of respondents (near to the 35% noted in the national picture); those from the non-founder Western European countries represented just under one-third of the total number of respondents (compared with the 48% of such students recorded in HESA). In looking at the analyses presented in this report, these variations need to be borne in mind, although the multilevel statistical techniques that are used to address the main questions for the study (related

⁷ Some four per cent of the students either did not give a nationality (19 respondents) or indicated that they had mixed nationality (57 students).

⁸ It should be noted that, although the proportion of responses from Cypriot students (seven per cent) reflected their overall total in the non-UK EU student population (as indicated in the HESA data), the responses from Maltese students (less than one per cent of the survey responses) was not representative of the total population from Malta (nearly nine per cent of the non-UK EU students in 2005/06). We have no way of knowing why the non-response rate from Maltese students was so high.

to student tuition fees and loans) are able to control for the observed disparities.

The majority of the 2,188 survey respondents (58% of whom were female)⁹ had been living in their home country before coming to England to study in an HEI (Table 3 in Appendix 3). At least eight per cent, however, had been living in the UK before starting their course, with more than half of these (53%) having lived in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland for more than three years prior to HEI entry (see Table 4 in Appendix 3).¹⁰ Most (at least 91%)¹¹ had started their course since the beginning of the 2004/05 academic year. The remaining nine per cent either gave no data on their current courses (two per cent), or indicated that their course had started in 2003/04 (six per cent) or 2002/03 (less than one per cent). In effect, 43% of the survey respondents (940 students) were first year undergraduates, while the remainder were at different stages of their undergraduate studies.

2.4 Non-UK EU students - course profile: survey data

By far the largest proportion of responding students were following full-time courses in business and administration (26%), with a high proportion on social science courses (15%). The numbers following STEM courses (science, technology, engineering and maths) ranged from eight per cent on engineering and technology courses, to around two per cent on mathematics courses (see Table 7 in Appendix 3), while, in total, around seven per cent were studying medicine or dentistry or subjects allied to medicine. Just under three per cent of the respondents (52 students), however, indicated that they were undertaking the course of study for their degree via distance learning, part-time study, as an intensive short course or through executive education.¹² These students were removed from the dataset for the remainder of the descriptive analysis, which includes only those **2,136** students who were on full-time undergraduate courses.

⁹ See Table 2 in Appendix 3.

¹⁰ It should be noted that this period of residence was not necessarily continuous for all such respondents. From an analyses of data obtained elsewhere in the survey (in relation to maintenance loans), it is possible that up to 66 of the 92 students who said that they had lived in England for more than three years had a continuous period of residency.

¹¹ See Table 5 and 6 in Appendix 3.

¹² See Table 8 in Appendix 3.

While most of the respondents were studying for a first degree, nearly one-fifth of the survey respondents had already attained a higher education qualification. Ten per cent of these students (two per cent of all respondents) said they had obtained this qualification from an English HEI and ten per cent (again, two per cent of all respondents) said it was from a country other than their own (see Table 9 in Appendix 3). Most (80%, that is, 16% of all respondents), however, said that the previous qualification had been obtained from their home country.

While students who had obtained a first degree from a country other than their own were marginally more likely to suggest that they had come to England for social and cultural reasons, this was not statistically significant. Equally, the marginal difference noted in the likelihood that students who had obtained a first degree in their own country and who had come to England because of career prospects was not statistically significant.

The reasons students gave for studying in a country other than their own¹³ (whether this was for a first or second degree) and which appeared to explain over 20% of the variance in responses between students of different ages, from different countries or on different courses, fell into three broad areas. A factor analysis of the reasons respondents gave suggested that these were related primarily to:

- obtaining experience (including learning a language, mentioned by 32% of respondents) that would contribute to their future career
- poor career prospects (particularly for graduates, noted by 10% of respondents) in their own country
- a perception that the standard of education was higher in countries other than their own (reported by 25% of the respondents).

Previous family history and experiences, such as having parents or friends who had studied abroad (mentioned by eight per cent of respondents), the desire to move to another country (mentioned by 30% of respondents) and issues related to the attraction of different institutions, the availability (or lack of it) of particular courses, or the pedagogical approach adopted to the course of study, explained little of the variance between students from different countries and/or on different courses.

¹³ See Table 10 in Appendix 3.

More than three quarters (1,655 students) of the respondents identified, between them, over 30 different countries that they had looked at before taking up a place at an English HEI.¹⁴ By far the most considered country was the USA: this had been thought about by 40% of the 2136 students who took part in the survey (see Table 11 in Appendix 3). Outside the EU, students had examined the possibility of studying in Australia (17% of the respondents), Canada (13%), Switzerland (seven per cent), New Zealand (five per cent) and Norway (three per cent). Within the EU, two of the founder countries - Germany (16%) and France (15%) were dominant, while other Western European countries such as Spain (13%) were also considered. Far fewer respondents mentioned the possibility of studying in the latest accession countries, in Eastern Europe, the Baltic States or Malta or Cyprus (no more than two per cent of respondents and generally less than one per cent in each case).

The particular attraction of England (see Table 12 in Appendix 3), as compared to other countries, appeared to be primarily related to:

- The perceived strong economic climate (noted by 20% of respondents), potential career prospects (more generally, mentioned by 49% of respondents, and in England in particular, mentioned by 23% of respondents) and the opportunity to earn while studying (15%) and to get funding from England (13%).
- The reputation of English education and English universities. When asked why they had applied to an English HEI, 46% of the respondents specifically said that English HEIs had a good reputation. In response to items in a different question, 87% of the students, in each case, said that they expected that an English HEI would provide a high standard of teaching and that it would provide good academic facilities. Over half (55%) said they were believed that they would get individual attention from academic staff (see Table 13 in Appendix 3).¹⁵
- Social and cultural aspects and previous experience of having visited, lived in or been educated in England before.

¹⁴ The study did not obtain information about why students did not elect to go to these countries. This may have been because they preferred the English course, but it may equally have been because they were not able to obtain a place, could not find a suitable course, could not get a visa or could not get funding, for instance.

¹⁵ It is important to set these findings alongside those reported by Sastry and Bekhradnia (2007). In a summary of their full report on student experiences they reported that 'a worrying proportion of international students believe they receive poor value for money [from HE courses in English universities]'. They concluded that this may be, in part, a reflection of the lower intensity (in terms of taught hours) of courses in English HEIs compared with those on mainland Europe.
<http://www.hepi.ac.uk/downloads/33Theacademicexperienceofstudents2007summary.pdf>
[9 November 2007]

These three factors explained one fifth of the variance in responses between students of different ages, from different countries or on different courses. Other factors appeared to have little real explanatory power in relation to the actual decision made. These included previous family history and experiences, such as having parents or friends who had studied in England (true for 13% of respondents) or who had recommended English HEIs (24% of respondents), issues related to the attraction of different institutions, the availability (or lack of it) of particular courses or the pedagogical approaches adopted to the course of study, and even the possibility of getting funding from their home country (mentioned by five per cent of the respondents). This picture was similar to that reported in relation to electing to study in a country other than their own.

The importance of variables related to academic provision (the quality of lecturers and researchers, study facilities and course reputation) and ultimate career prospects, and those related to social and economic variables dominated the factors that emerged as important when choosing a university (see Table 14 in Appendix 3 for the basic frequency responses). Students who focused on academic and career factors appeared to be less concerned than those who identified social and economic factors about the presence of students from their home country, about the people that they had met on open days or about transport links to their home country, suggesting that their focus may be more on future prospects than on any ideas of current enjoyment. While the availability of specific HE-based scholarships or bursaries was noted as 'very important' or 'important' by 47% of the respondents and access to good student accommodation was seen as 'very important' or 'important' by 52% of the respondents, neither variable appeared to have much explanatory power by comparison with other academic or social factors.

2.5 In summary

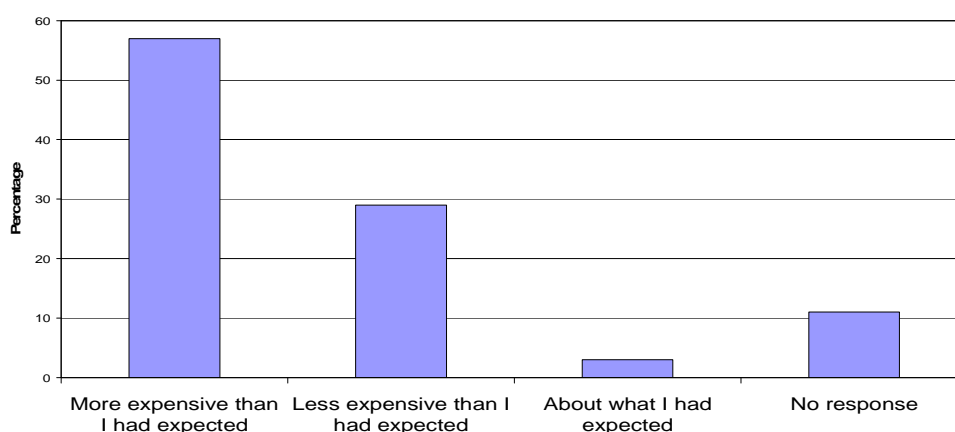
The period between 2002/03 and 2005/06 saw a notable change in the proportions of students coming from each of the non-UK EU regions, with increases in the contribution of the Eastern European, Baltic State and late accession countries, but a decrease in the contribution of the non-founder EU states. During that time changes were also evident in the subject areas being studied, with decreases in the proportions following some of the STEM courses (most notably in engineering) and increases in the proportion of students taking up subjects such as business and administration (other than from the non-founder EU nations, where such uptake declined).

The students responding to the survey reflected some of these changes, with proportionally more responses from students from Eastern European and the Baltic States. The pattern of subjects followed was also similar to that identified in the HESA dataset. Students indicated that their primary reasons for studying in a country other than their own were related to gaining experience that would contribute to their future career, a perception that the standard of education was higher in countries other than their own and that career prospects were also better elsewhere. England had not been the only country they had considered (respondents identified over 30 different countries they had looked at before taking up a place in an English HEI), but its principal attractions had been its perceived strong economic climate, the reputation of English education and English universities and previous experience of England (through visits or study).

3. Financial Issues and Tuition Fee Loans

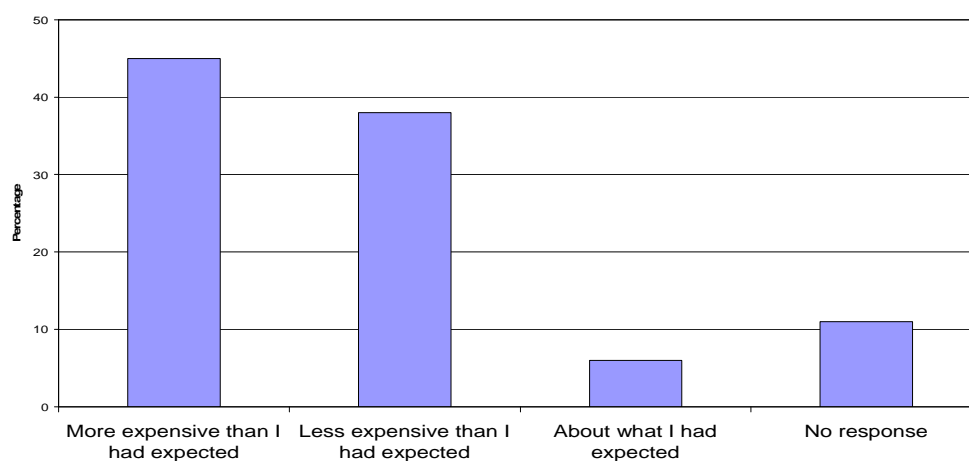
More than half of the survey respondents (57%) reported that the cost of living in England was more than they had expected, and just under half (45%) that the cost of studying was more expensive than they had expected (see Figures 3.1 and 3.2).¹⁶

Figure 3.1 Views on cost of living in England



Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of Non-UK EU Students, 2007

Figure 3.2 Views on cost of studying in England



Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of Non-UK EU Students, 2007

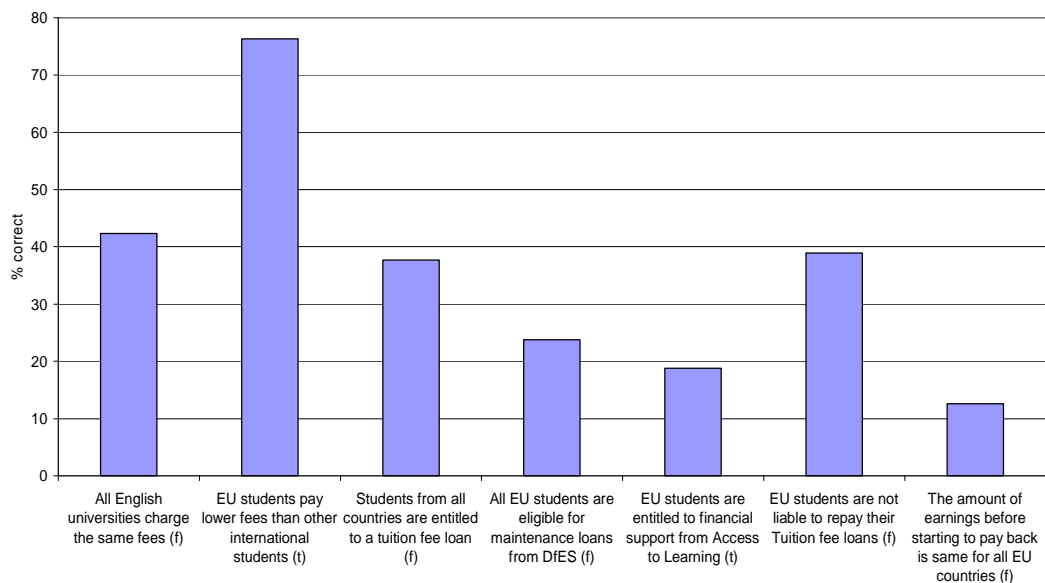
¹⁶ It should be noted that, for questions around financial matters, non-response rates increased to between 11% and 14%. In order to maintain comparability with other responses in the study, the basic frequency figures are all based on the total response of 2,136 completed, submitted and valid surveys.

This potentially negative view of the cost of living and studying in England was not universal, however. Around one-third of all respondents thought that living costs were lower than they had expected (29%) or were just as they had expected (three per cent) and over two-fifths thought that study costs were lower (38%) or as they had expected (six per cent). Given that just over one fifth of respondents (21%) had suggested that the fact that there was plenty of information about studying in England had been one of the reasons they had chosen to study here,¹⁷ while 13% said that the opportunity to get funding in England had been one spur to chose an English HEI, how much did non-UK EU students know about funding for EU students and how many of them had taken advantage of potential loans?

3.1 Financial knowledge

Around 12% of all of the respondents to the survey correctly identified five or more of true and false statements around questions of tuition fees, loans and other financial support (see Table 15 in Appendix 3 for data on student responses).

Figure 3.1 Percentage of students making correct responses (true or false)

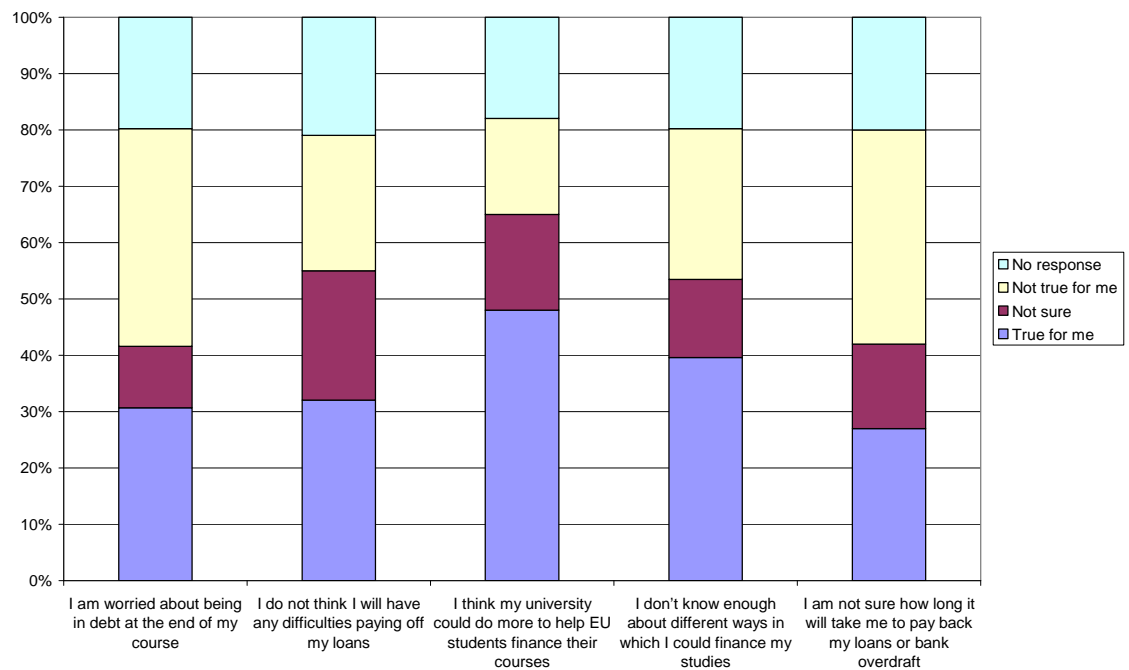


Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of Non-UK EU Students, 2007

¹⁷ See Table 12 in Appendix 3.

Only six respondents identified correctly all seven of the appropriate answers to the statements given in the survey. For most students the areas of greatest uncertainty (to which they responded 'not sure') were in relation to statements about paying back student loans (51%), paying back tuition fee loans (45%) and getting support from Access to Learning funds. By contrast, only five per cent of students said they did not know whether or not EU students paid lower tuition fees than other international students and seven per cent incorrectly thought EU students paid the same (or higher) fees than international students. This suggests that at least one of the messages about tuition fee loans had been understood; the worry is that there is still a significant degree of misunderstanding and confusion around tuition fees and tuition fee loans and other financial support for non-UK EU students (which may well be mirrored, of course, amongst UK students). That uncertainty exists was reflected in responses that suggested that over half of the students in the survey felt that either they did not know enough about different ways in which to finance their studies, or were unsure whether there were other things they should know (see Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3 Views on financial circumstances



Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of Non-UK EU Students, 2007

Levels of knowledge about tuition fee loans were highest amongst students from the Eastern European countries and the Baltic States; the mean score for these students was 2.71 against a mean of 2.52. Students from the six founder countries scored 2.48, with the lowest mean scores amongst the respondents being observed in responses from students from the non-founder Western European countries.

At a country level, the highest levels of financial awareness scores appeared to be amongst respondents from Slovakia (a mean of 3.28), Poland (a mean of 3.19), the Czech Republic (3.15) and Hungary (3.09). The lowest scores were found amongst the accession nations (Bulgaria, a mean of 1.71, and Romania, a mean of 1.75) and amongst respondents from Cyprus (a mean of 1.95) and Luxembourg (a mean of 2.00).

3.2 Non-UK EU students: financial circumstances

Students reported that they were funding their studies and living expenses through a number of different means. Most (60%) reported receiving some income from their family, others said they were using their own savings (27%), or were engaged in part-time work (26%)¹⁸ or had obtained funding from their own country (18%) (see Table 16 in Appendix 3). For some, however, the only sources of funding were through using bank overdrafts, credit cards or via loans.

The majority of the respondents to the survey (77%) reported that they had an English bank account; with 20% of all respondents saying they also had an overdraft facility in this country (one-quarter of these reported having an additional overdraft facility in their home country). Some 13% of respondents with a bank account, however, said they were not sure whether or not they had access to such a resource. The mean value of the overdrafts, where known, was just under £770, with a mode of £200, though at least one respondent reported an overdraft of £16,000.¹⁹

¹⁸ Note that, in an earlier single response question, 29% reported that they were in part-time work, whereas only 26% referred to such work in the later multiple-response question.

¹⁹ See Tables 17, 18 and 19

Nearly half of the respondents (48%) reported owning a credit card (11% of the respondents said they had cards in both their home country and in England), with 59% of the 1033 students who owned a card saying that they paid off the balance they owed every month.²⁰ For others, however, such complete balance payments were made more occasionally (20% said they paid the balance most of the time) or were not made at all (19% of the card holders said they did not pay off the balance each month). Anticipated debt by the end of the course ranged from nothing (this was the case for nearly one-third of the respondents) to more than £25,000 for three per cent of the respondents (see Table 22 in Appendix 3).

For some students, levels of debt were clearly a concern. Thirty one per cent were worried about finishing their course in debt and 24% believed they would have difficulties paying off their various loans, with 27% uncertain how long this process would take (see Table 23 in Appendix 3). In order to offset current (and possibly future debts) some 40% of students had started part-time work at some point during their course. For nearly two fifths of these, however, combining part-time work and studying had proved problematic. Some (six per cent of all respondents) had already given up their part-time job, precisely for this reason, while one-third of those who were still in work (29% of all respondents) said they were finding it very difficult to manage their course and a part-time job. In contrast, others (20% of all respondents) reported no difficulties in balancing the various calls on their time (see Table 3.1).

²⁰ See Tables 20 and 21.

Table 3.1 Impact of part-time employment during term-time

Part-time employment	%
Yes, I am currently in a part-time job and can manage to study and work	20
Yes, I am currently in a part-time job but am finding it difficult to manage studying and work	9
I had a part-time job but had to give it up because I could not manage studying and work	6
I had a part-time job but had to give it up for another reason	5
No, I have not had a part-time job in term-time since I started my course	48
No response	12
N =	2136

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

1,890 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

The mean number of hours worked by those who were finding it difficult to cope was 21.8; in contrast, the mean number of hours worked by those who said that it was manageable was 18.2, suggesting that the issue may be as much (if not more) to do with the extent of part-time work undertaken than the capacity of the individual to balance the various demands upon them.²¹ The non-UK EU students in this study certainly reported higher levels of part-time working than appeared to be the average in most of Europe. Gibbs, commenting on a HEPI report by Sastry and Bekhradnia in 2007,²² reported that students in mainland Europe worked, on average, eight to 15 hours alongside their full-time study.²³

²¹ Table 24 in Appendix 3 provides an overview of the number of hours used.

²² Sastry and Bekhradnia also noted that perceptions of value for money on university courses were lower amongst students who worked longer hours in part-time jobs alongside their course of study. Sastry, T. and Bekhradnia, B (2007) *The Academic Experience of Students in English Universities* [online]. Available: <http://www.hepi.ac.uk/downloads/33TheacademicexperienceofstudentsinEnglishuniversities2007.pdf> [9 November, 2007].

²³ In some countries, the average number of hours worked by full-time students was much higher than this average. Gibbs noted that students in Latvia worked 'for 31 hours per week to supplement their income and still [studied] for 33 hours per week, eight hours per week more than the average [for UK students]. Gibbs commentary on the HEPI report is available at <http://www.hepi.ac.uk/downloads/33-Gibbs-commentary.doc>. [9 November, 2007] For a comprehensive study of term-time working, see also Brennan, J. Duaso, A., Little, B. Callender, C. and Van Dyke, R. (2005) *Survey of Higher Education Students' Attitudes to Debt and Term-time Working and their Impact on Attainment* [online]. Available: http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/2005/rd15_05/. [9 October, 2007]

Those currently in work (with one exception) appeared to be earning at or above the minimum wage for their age group.²⁴ Of the 628 still in part-time jobs, 80% reported that they earned more than £5 an hour, with 51% earning more than £5.50 (see Table 25 in Appendix 3). The hours worked varied from less than 10 to more than 40, with just under half of all respondents working between 16 and 30 hours per week. This is markedly higher than the number of hours reported in a survey of higher education students in 2001/02, which suggested that the median number of hours worked was 12.²⁵

3.3. Take-up of loans

Around 45% of the non-UK EU respondents said that they had started their course at some point during the 2006/07 academic year and so would have been eligible, as a new student, for a tuition fee loan. Others may have been eligible for the loans as a continuing student. In total, just under one-third of the survey respondents (651) reported that they had applied for a loan (see Table 26 in Appendix 3).²⁶ For some (25%), the application was linked closely to the fact that tuition fee costs were higher than had been anticipated and for nearly three-quarters (72%), the absence of such a loan would have meant that they would not have been able to undertake the course (see Table 27 in Appendix 3). Applications by some students were prompted by suggestions by relatives (14%), friends (five per cent) or university staff (seven per cent). In some cases, however, students suggested that their decision was prompted more by financial calculations; 36% said that they believed that it would make more sense to pay the tuition fees after they had started earning than at the outset of their course, while 12% felt that the interest rate that the

²⁴ This was £4.45 for 18-21 year olds at the time of the survey, but has now increased to £4.60. <http://www.dti.gov.uk/employment/pay/national-minimum-wage/index.html> [17-10-07]

²⁵ West, A., Hind, A., Xavier, R., with Jupp, J. (2003). *Evaluation of Aimhigher: Survey of Opportunity Bursary Applicants 2001/02: Preliminary Findings* (DfES Research Report 497). London: DfES [online]. Available: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RR497.pdf> [18 October, 2007].

²⁶ Of those who were in receipt of a loan, most (80%) had said that they had started their course within the last year (2006/07). Some, however, had clearly started their full-time course earlier (mainly in 2004/05). It may be that, of the 531 who said they had received a tuition fee loan, up to 105 may have received this loan as a continuing rather than a new student. Some of course, may have mistaken another form of financial loan for a tuition fee loan. Since we have no way of ascertaining whether or not this is the case, the analysis that has been conducted here is based on the assumption that all 531 of the respondents who said they had applied for and received a loan, were indeed in receipt of one.

loans attracted was good. These young people were also significantly more likely ($p < 0.000$) to have identified correctly the true and false statements about tuition fees and other financial support outlined in Section 3.1 (Financial Knowledge).

Eighty-two per cent (531 students) of all applicants received the loan for which they applied; amongst those who reported how much they now owed (473 respondents), current debt varied from £100 to £10,000; with a mean debt of £3,092 (the median and mode amount, as would be expected for a tuition fee loan, was £3,000).²⁷ In nearly half of the cases (48 respondents) where students had not received a loan, applicants reported that they had been told that they were not eligible, with one noting that '*my parents earn too much*'.²⁸ Others gave various (unprompted) reasons; with some reporting having withdrawn their application (two students) or having found other sources of funds (six students). Some were still waiting to hear the outcome of their application (12 students), but some (at least seven) said they did not know why they had been rejected.

Of those who specifically reported that they did not apply for a loan (1,250 students, or 59% of all respondents), nearly half (47%) said that they did not need one to help pay their tuition fees. Indeed, students who indicated that they were using their own savings to pay their way, or had received financial support from their family, or had funding from their home country, were significantly less likely than other students to have applied for a loan. Those using their own savings, for instance, were only two fifths as likely as other students (an odds multiplier of 0.39)²⁹ to say that they had applied for a tuition fee loan.³⁰ By contrast, those who were in part-time or full-time work,³¹ or in

²⁷ It is possible that a few respondents may have included other money they owed (whether to the Student Loan Company or elsewhere) in the total owed to the SLC for tuition fee loans. Some 66 students who had received a tuition fee loan reported that they were also in receipt of a maintenance loan, which means that they were effectively being treated as UK students and not as non-UK EU students. See Tables 28 to 32 in Appendix 3.

²⁸ See Table 33 in Appendix 3.

²⁹ An odds multiplier is a term used when calculating probabilities using logistic regression. An odds multiplier of 1.00 means that one outcome is as likely as the alternative. An odds multiplier of more than 1.00 means that an outcome (in this case, applying for a loan) is more likely to occur than the alternative (not applying for a loan); an odds multiplier of less than 1.00 means that it is less likely to happen. In this report, we include only those outcomes where the results were significantly different from 1.00.

³⁰ In financing their way through university, 1273 respondents (60%) said they had obtained funding from their families, 682 said they were in some form of employment (29%) and 572 students reported drawing on their own savings (27%); see Section 3.2 and Table 16, in Appendix 3.

receipt of a hardship or other bursary from their HEI were significantly more likely than others to have applied for a loan, with those on bursaries (only six per cent of the respondents) more than three times as likely (an odds multiplier of 3.16) to be an applicant.

Ten per cent of the non-applicants said they had been told that they were not eligible for a loan prior to applying (see Table 34 in Appendix 3). Others (33%) were concerned about getting into debt to the Students Loan Company, said that they found the information on the loans too confusing (10%), that they had had not heard of the Students Loan Company (16%) or that they did not know that they could apply for a loan (24%). Clearly, the reasons for not applying for a loan were not solely financial. What were the defining characteristics, if any, of the students who applied for loans (whether or not they received them)?

A logistic regression model was constructed that controlled for respondents' age and gender, the region from which they came (founder nation, Western European or Eastern European), the subjects they were studying, their plans (whether for work or study, in England or elsewhere) after graduating and their knowledge of financial support mechanisms (as indicated by their score on the 'true/false' questions). The analysis suggested that the most significant factors associated with submitting an application were:

- Respondent came from Eastern European, Baltic State or new accession country (these students were more than twice as likely to apply for a loan as students from other countries - an odds multiplier of 2.24. Three quarters of the Latvian students in the study applied for a loan, for instance).
- Respondent came from founder country (these students were around one and a half times more likely to apply for a loan than students from other Western European countries - an odds multiplier of 1.37).³² It should be noted that a number of the non-founder Western nations (Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland) have student support arrangements that are funded and administered through government organisations. These governments allow students studying in other EU countries to claim support from their home country or the destination country, but not from both.

³¹ A total of 65 respondents (three per cent) said they were both in a full-time job and in full-time education.

³² Holland (a founder nation) also provides student funding in the form of a loan, while some other countries make loans available through a government subsidy on loans issued by national banks.

- Higher levels of knowledge on financial support mechanisms (an odds multiplier of 1.3).
- Students following courses in education (an odds multiplier of 3.11) or creative arts and design (an odds multiplier of 1.49). The numbers on the education courses were relatively small (25 students or just over one per cent of the respondents). Rather more were on the creative arts and design courses; 144 students or just under eight per cent of respondents.
- Students following courses in maths (40), medicine and dentistry (55) and subjects allied to medicine (82) were significantly less likely than students on other courses to have applied for loans.

Amongst the non-UK EU students, the countries within which the highest proportion of students had been applicants for tuition fee loans were Latvia (three-quarters of whom had applied for loans), Malta (two-thirds of whom had applied for loans), Poland and Hungary (over half of whom, in each case, had applied for loans). In the case of Poland and Hungary, students can apply for student funding in the form of loans from either their own governments or from England.³³ It is not clear from the survey why Polish and Hungarian students opted for tuition fee loans from England rather than from their home countries.

Loan applications, therefore, appeared to be more forthcoming from students who had access to (and understood) the financial information on tuition fee loans and other sources of financial support, and were more likely to come from students from the founder countries or the more recent accession countries and from students following courses that appeared less clearly linked, traditionally, to high future earnings potential. In an analysis of the economic returns for different degree courses for the Royal Society of Chemistry and the Institute of Physics (PWC, 2005), for example, the research team found that the additional earnings premium attached to a degree in medicine was significantly higher than that for social science degrees.³⁴

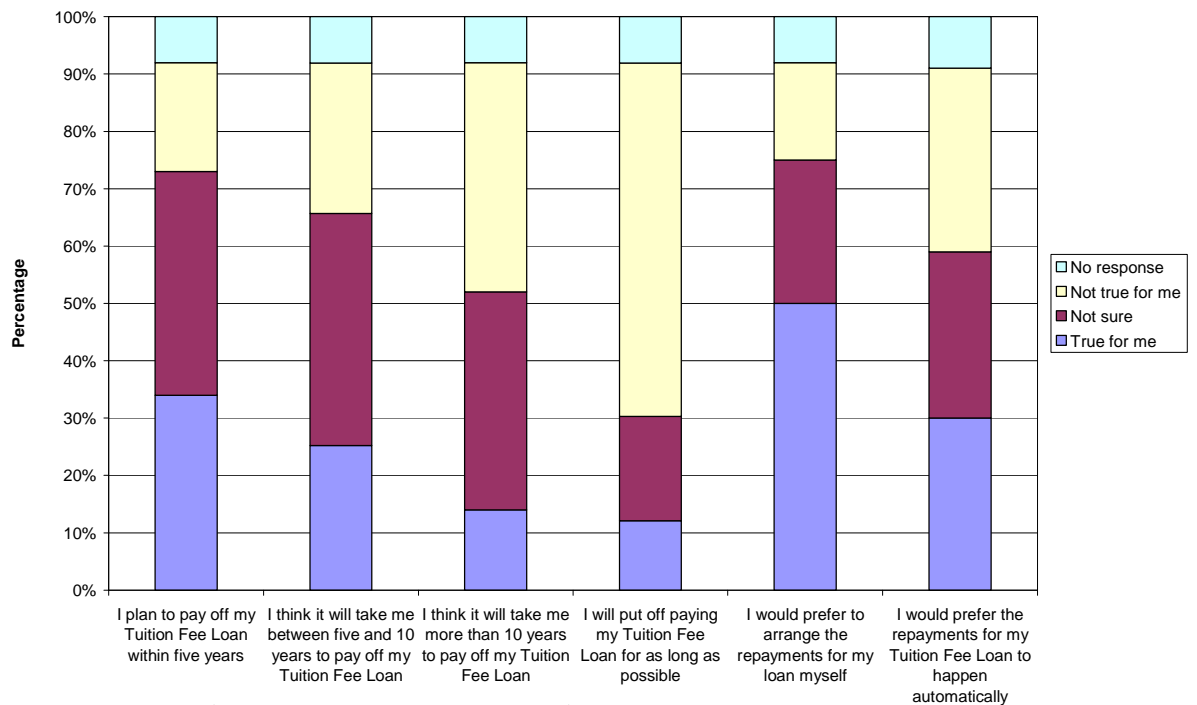
³³ Bulgaria and Lithuania are considering the option of providing loans for students.

³⁴ The research examined the relative returns of different degree subjects compared to the returns that accrued from the achievement of two A level subjects. The percentage hourly earnings premium from *any* degree subject was 23% higher than for two A levels alone, but the returns from medicine (44%) and law (39%) were significantly higher than the average, while the returns from other social science subjects particularly history (at 13%) were significantly lower. PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (2005). *The Economic Benefits of Higher Education Qualifications* [online] Available: http://www.rsc.org/images/EconomicBenefitsHigherEducationQualifications_tcm18-12647.pdf [9 November, 2007].

3.4. Repayment of loans

Opinions on how tuition fee loans should be paid back were divided between those who felt that students would prefer a PAYE scheme (44%) and those who thought they would want to organise their own payments, either through a bank (35%) or by making payments to the government at the end of the financial year (seven per cent) (see Table 35 in Appendix 3). When referring to their own preferences for payment, however, only 30% of those who had a tuition fee loan wanted repayments to happen automatically, while 50% said that they wanted to make their own loan arrangements (see Figure 3.4). There is no real indication that this was because they wanted to avoid payment (though 12% suggested that they would put off paying any tuition fee loans for as long as possible), but the responses suggest that the non-UK EU students sought some flexibility and independence for their future financial management.

Figure 3.4 Repayment of Tuition Fee Loans (filtered by those in receipt of loans)



Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of Non-UK EU Students, 2007

While respondents were largely undecided about the level of interest that should be charged on tuition fee loans, and whether or not it should be linked to inflation (and in which country), there was a higher level of preference for fixed rate repayments not linked to inflation (35% supported this), or for repayments that reflected the interest rate that was in place in England when students took out their loan (38% felt that this would be fair). More than half (54%), however, felt that any future rate that was fixed at a rate that was higher than the interest rate in place in England for other loans would be unfair (see Table 36a in Appendix 3). Based on their current understanding of repayment plans, over one-third planned to pay off their loan within five years, one-quarter thought it would take them up to 10 years, and 14% thought it would take longer than a decade (see Figure 3.4, above).

Amongst those who had received a tuition fee loan, five variables appeared to be significant indicators of whether or not respondents felt confident that they would be able to pay back the loan within 10 years of graduating. Once age, gender, country of origin, future plans, reasons for coming to England, plans to stay in England and size of loan, for instance, had been taken into account, those who believed they would have cleared the debt within the decade (in descending order of significance) were:

- Those with higher levels of knowledge on financial support mechanisms (an odds multiplier of 1.55)
- Those who intended to enter a full-time job in the UK or elsewhere within 2 two years of graduating (an odds multiplier of 1.42)
- Those whose reasons for coming to England were academic rather than economic or social (an odds multiplier of 1.09)
- Older students (an odds multiplier of 1.06)

Female students were just over half as likely as male students to think they would pay back their loan within 10 years. It is not known whether or not these attitudes towards the paying back of loans reflect those of UK students or of current patterns of repayment of student loans more generally; information from the Student Loans Company suggests that loans have not been in operation for long enough to identify patterns or make an assessment of propensity for repayment.³⁵

³⁵ Over half of the respondents (51%) thought that non-UK EU students would repay their loans, but over one-third were less sanguine. See Table 36b.

3.5. In summary

The extent of awareness around the availability of financial support and around tuition fee loans, in particular, was mixed. While non-UK EU students were generally aware that EU students paid lower tuition fees than international students, there was still an element of confusion as to how they would need to pay back any loans related to these. Just one-third of the students had applied for a tuition fee loan; while some said they did not require one in order to pay their fees, others were not aware of how to apply or whether or not they were eligible. Levels of awareness were highest amongst students from Eastern European countries and amongst those from the Baltic States; students from these countries were also significantly more likely to have applied for a loan than students from any other region. Loan applications also appeared to be higher from students studying subjects that were less clearly linked to professional qualifications or to courses that traditionally may have led to the potential for higher earnings.

Concern about debt was evident, with nearly one-quarter of all students expressing worries about repaying existing or future loans. Nonetheless, there was an indication that many students were already considering strategies for paying back tuition fee loans, for instance; those who expressed most confidence in being able to do so, were those with the best level of understanding of current financial mechanisms for students. This suggests a need to ensure that clear and easily accessible information on tuition fee and student loans is made available to all potential applicants to English HEIs and that the criteria for accessing it (and the means by which it needs to be paid back) are open and transparent. Comments from some students also suggest a need for a speedier response to queries, both prior to applications and following their submission.

4. Future Plans

Data from the HESA destination study (31% of whom were from non-UK EU backgrounds) indicates that, within six months of completing their degree, 46% of new graduates were in full-time paid work, with a further four per cent in part-time paid work and two per cent in voluntary unpaid work. Over one-quarter of the respondents (27%) to the 2005/06 survey were pursuing further studies while nine per cent were combining work and study.

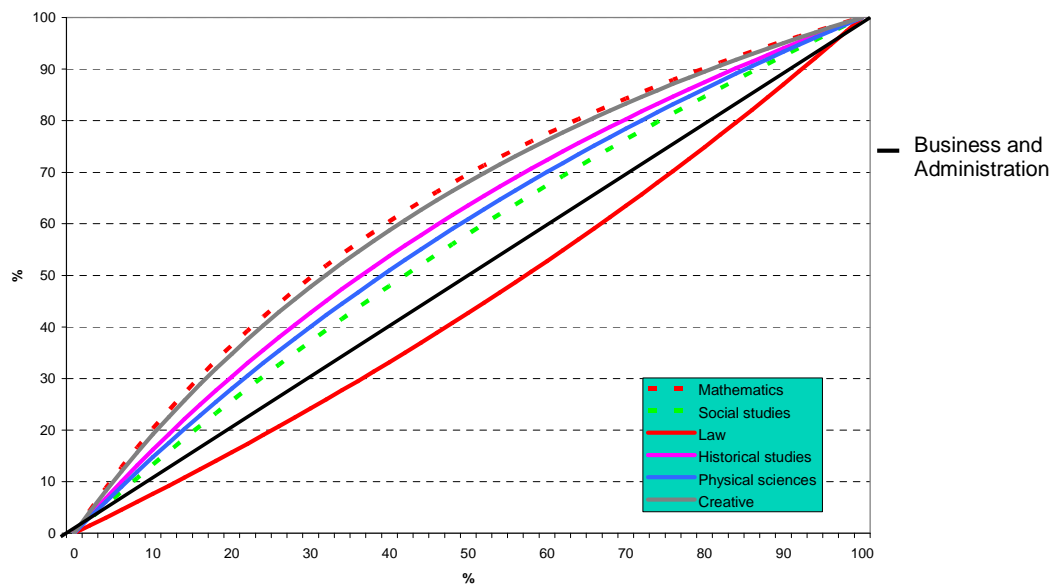
4.1 EU students staying in the UK: HESA data

An analysis of the HESA data for the years 2002/03, 2003/04, 2004/05 and 2005/06, using a logistic regression model, suggested a number of predictor variables for the likelihood of a non-UK EU student staying in the UK. Based on the data for 38,085 non-UK EU students for whom destinations were known, those who were more likely to stay in the UK, once demographic characteristics and study and subject variables were taken into account, were indicated by:

- **Country of origin** (students from both Western and Eastern European countries were more likely to stay in the UK than those from founder countries. It should be noted that the proportion of students from Eastern European and late accession countries for whom destination data is available is limited in the current dataset, however.)
- **Sex** (females were more likely to stay in the UK than males)
- **Destination** (those in full-time study were more than three times as likely to stay in the UK as those in full-time work, while those both working and studying were more than one and a half times as likely to stay as those in full-time work. By contrast, those in part-time work or in voluntary work were less likely to stay than those in full-time work.)
- **Length of study** (those on shorter HE courses were less likely to stay in the UK, post-graduation, than those on full length degree courses)
- **Occupation** (those entering sales and customer service occupations, personal service occupations or administrative and secretarial occupations were significantly more likely to stay in the UK than those entering other occupations, including professional occupations. Those in managerial and senior official posts were significantly less likely to stay in the UK than those entering at other levels or in other occupations)
- **Location of degree study** (students from London HEIs were more likely to remain in the UK than those who had studied elsewhere in the country)

- Those who had studied courses in the **STEM subjects** (including physical and biological sciences, medicine and related subjects, maths, engineering, computer sciences and agriculture), in creative arts, languages, historical and philosophical studies, architecture, social studies and mass communication were more likely to stay in the UK than those studying other subjects (such as business studies, education and veterinary science) while those studying law or combined degree courses were less likely to stay in the UK than any those following any other course (see Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 Probability of staying in UK by subject, compared to students studying Business and Administration courses



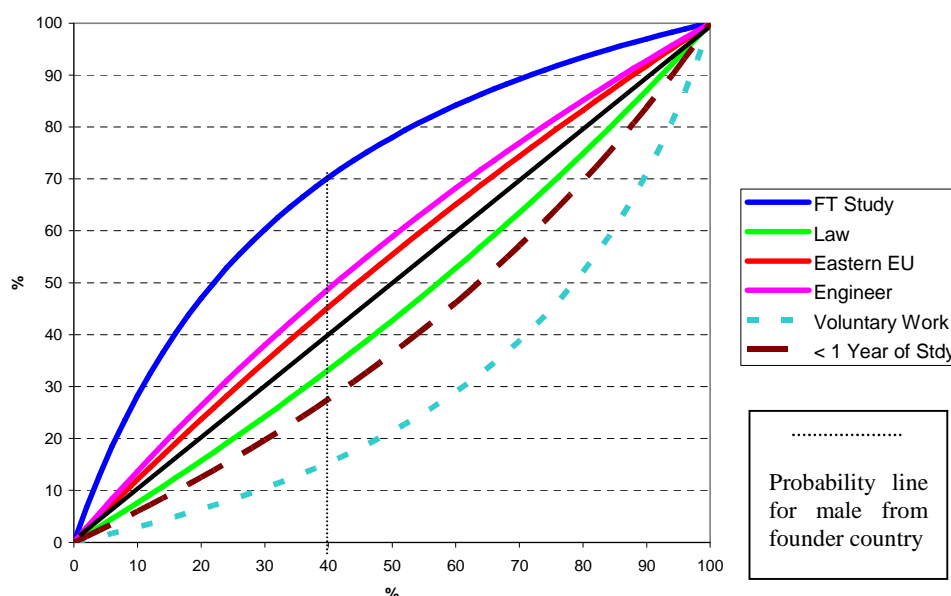
Source: HESA data 2002/03 to 2005/06 non-UK EU students (38,085)

- Those who had studied in **post-1992** HEIs rather than in pre-1992 HEIs.

Based on the known destination data over the last three years, it was possible to calculate, from the final logistic model, the probability of any one student staying in the UK. A male student from one of the founder countries, for example, studying a two to three year degree course in business administration in a London HEI and moving on to full-time work, would have a 40% probability of staying in the UK (see Figure 4.2). Had that male student been studying medicine, the probability of his staying in the UK would be much greater, at 70% (see probability line on Figure 4.2). For an Eastern European female who had studied medicine, the probability of staying in the UK would be 76%; this probability would be 90% if the post-graduation

destination was further study rather than full-time work. It should be noted of course, that the actual numbers of Eastern European female medical students is very small, so that the calculated probability should be treated as illustrative rather than predictive.

Figure 4.2 Probability of staying in the UK after graduating (by subject)



Source: HESA data 2002/03 to 2005/06 EU students only (38,085)

4.2 Destinations of UK and non-UK EU students: HESA data

In order to look at the factors that predicted the potential destinations of UK and non-UK EU students, a multinomial regression model, with five potential outcomes (full-time work, full-time study, work and study, part-time work and voluntary work) was constructed.³⁶ This model explored the relationship between country of origin, course and length of study and location of study with subsequent destinations, also taking into account individual student characteristics such as age and sex. It included data from the 38,085 non-UK EU students and a random sample of 38,200 UK students.³⁷

³⁶ A sixth outcome, unemployment, was considered, but removed from the final model as the numbers of unemployed students within different subject groups were so small that the model could not converge.

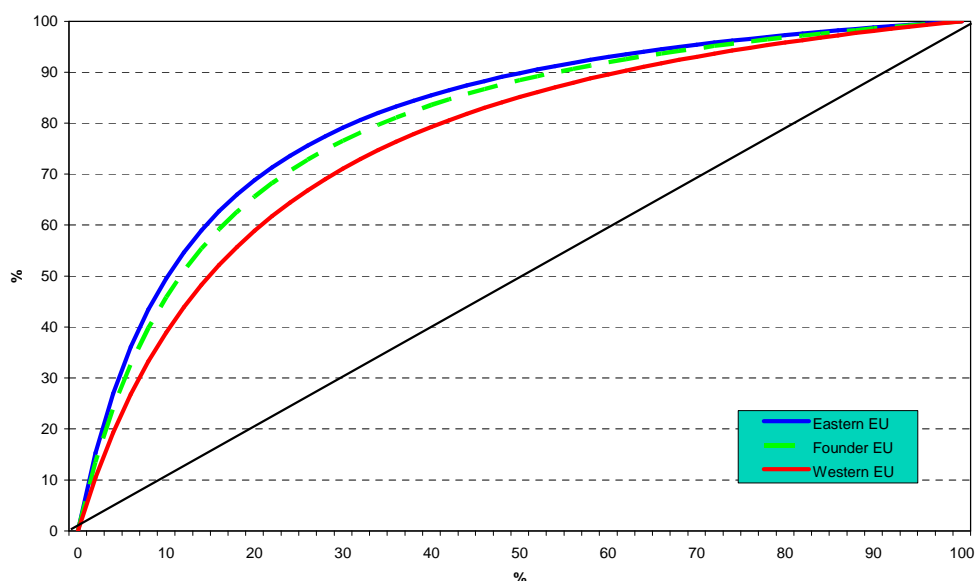
³⁷ The original intention had been use the entire HESA dataset for all UK and non-UK European students for whom destinations were known. The computer power needed to run this analysis was greater than that which was available and so the decision was made to take a random sample of UK students. Given the large size of the sample (over 38,000 in each set), one-to-one matching at student level was not deemed necessary.

The analysis suggested that, for non-UK EU students, the most significant factors associated with entry into **full-time work** (rather than any of the other destination outcomes) after completion of a higher education course were age (older students were more likely to enter the workforce than follow any other route), having attended a post-1992 rather than pre-1992 university and following a course in medicine or dentistry. Students who had followed a full three- or four-year course and those who had followed a short course (less than one year of full-time study) were also more likely to be associated with entry into full-time work. There was no apparent association between full-time employment and country of origin; young people from UK and non-UK EU backgrounds were as likely to enter full-time work, when all other background factors were taken into account.

By contrast, and in comparison with graduates from the UK, graduates from all over Europe (whether founder nations, or from Western or Eastern European, Baltic State or late accession countries) were more strongly associated with **entry into further study** than transfer into part-time or voluntary work (see Figure 4.3). This was also true for those non-UK EU students who stayed in the UK (those who had stayed in the UK were negatively associated with part-time or voluntary work and with taking up work-study opportunities). Taking part in further study was also strongly associated with graduates from maths, physics, languages, law, historical studies and social sciences courses. It should be noted, however, that there was no significant difference between entry into full-time study and part-time work for language and combined degree graduates, while both law and combined degree graduates were as likely to be associated with work-study programmes as with full-time study.

Graduates from architecture, creative arts and education courses, by contrast, were negatively associated with full-time study, though the creative arts graduates were equally associated with part-time work and with voluntary work. Education graduates and those who had followed mass communications and documentation courses were positively associated with part-time employment. Those who had studied in London universities were positively associated with voluntary work, but negatively associated with full-time study.

Figure 4.3 Probability of staying in full-time study compared to full-time work, by region



Source: HESA data 2002/03 to 2005/06: UK and non-UK EU students (76,285)

4.3 EU students - anticipated destinations: survey data

The proportion of non-UK EU respondents who believed that they would be in full-time work within two years of finishing their current course (41%) was around 50% greater than thought that they would be so employed within six months of completing their courses (see Tables 37 and 38 in Appendix 3). For many of the respondents, however, post-graduate studies were a significant consideration: nearly one-third of all respondents (32%) thought they would be following such a course within six months of graduating; 22% thought they would be following post-graduate courses two years later.

Post-graduation, the non-EU countries of the USA, Australia and Canada, the two founder countries of France and Germany, and Spain and Italy continued to exercise a potential pull on the respondents (see Table 39 in Appendix 3). Nearly one-third (32%) of the respondents were considering working or studying in the USA after completing their degree, while the proportions of students thinking about working or studying in Australia (17%) and Canada (13%), France (14%) and Germany (12%) were similar to those who had thought about starting a first degree in those countries. Few respondents said

that they were thinking about working in Eastern Europe or the Baltic States, though all 26 EU countries were mentioned at least once.

Just under half of the 2,136 undergraduates believed that they would still be in England six months after completing their current course, whether undertaking post-graduate studies (22% of all respondents), in a full-time career post (18%) or in part-time or temporary work (two per cent); a further six per cent thought they would still be in England but were uncertain what they might be doing. The anticipated situation two years after the completion of their undergraduate courses suggested that over one-third (35%), believed they would still be in England, although the balance was more towards work (21% suggested they would be in full-time career job) with fewer (13%) thinking they would be pursuing their studies in England.

4.4 Career plans and anticipated earnings: survey data

Reflecting the main subjects studied by the respondents, 32 per cent of the 2,136 non-UK EU students said that they were most interested in a career in the field of Real Estate, Renting and Business Activities, with a further seven per cent interested in financial intermediation (see Table 40 in Appendix 3). Careers in community, health and personal services (16%) and health and social work (10%), followed by transport, storage and communication (six per cent) and education (six per cent) dominated other anticipated career areas. Only one per cent of the respondents indicated any interest in public administration and defence, for instance, or in construction industries. Few students appeared to have no idea, as yet, as to their preferred career area. Although some seven per cent of the respondents did not answer this question, only two per cent said they had no anticipated career plan.

The extent to which these students are realistic about their future remains to be seen. Less than half of the students suggested what their anticipated earnings would be within six months of graduating; this had reduced to just over one-third who were able to suggest what these might be within two to three years of completing their degree and starting work (see Tables 41 and 42 in Appendix 3). The mean earnings anticipated by the undergraduates within six months were £20,755, ranging from less than £2,000 to over £50,000. The mode earnings, a range between £18,001 and £21,000, may be

realistic for those anticipating a career in England. Within two years, those who provided a forecast suggested that they would be earning a mean of £30,625. Again the range was from less than £2000 to over £50,000, but the mode was broader and extended between £24,001 and £30,000.

4.5 In summary

Most students in the survey indicated that they had a preferred career area, although the extent to which they were able to predict potential earnings varied. Around half anticipated staying in England, with a significant proportion suggesting that they would be undertaking a post-graduate course here. The indications from the HESA data are that the probability of a non-UK EU student staying in England to take part in further full-time study is indeed greater than that of their remaining to work (whether full- or part-time), particularly for those studying maths, physics, languages, law, historical studies and social sciences courses. Older students, by contrast, and those studying medicine or dentistry were more strongly associated with entry into full-time work. Nonetheless, making longer-term predictions on the basis of current data is problematic, particularly in relation to students from Eastern Europe, about whose post-graduate behaviour little is yet known.

5. Implications

5.1 Provision of Courses

Over the last four years, there has been a notable shift in the balance of non-UK EU students coming to England. Across all such countries, there has been a decline in both the overall numbers and the proportion of students from founder nations (from 38% to 35%) and other western non-founder nations (from 61% to 48%) and a growth in the numbers and the proportion of young people from the Baltic States, Eastern Europe and late accession countries (from two per cent to 17%). At the same time there has also been a shift in the courses being followed by non-UK EU undergraduates; a shift that has not been consistent across all 26 non-UK EU countries. While business and administration studies, for instance, appeared to be both the largest (and fastest-growing) course, the proportion of applicants for such places declined amongst the seven non-UK non-founder nations. The proportion of entrants to most STEM subjects (other than those related to medicine or biology), law and languages, have, in contrast, seen a marked decline. Accompanying these shifts, there has also been a change in the pattern of applications, with post-1992 universities appearing to benefit most from the arrival of the students from the Eastern European countries, Baltic States and the late accession countries, but losing favour amongst other non-founder EU nations.

These changes provide a significant challenge to HEIs in their longer-term planning. To what extent can one anticipate that existing patterns of non-UK EU student recruitment will persist, particularly in relation to the variations seen between students from founder, Western and Eastern European countries? Will business and administration remain a growth area? Amongst the survey respondents, a key factor in electing to come to an English HEI appeared to be one that was instrumental - the prospect the course afforded for a future career. Far fewer respondents said that they had based their decision on the lack of a particular course in their home country, a preference for a particular assessment strategy or the length of the course. Will English universities continue to be able to capitalise on potential career premiums and what steps do they need to take (if any) to ensure that the courses that they are offering maintain this advantage?

5.2 Post-graduate recruitment

Over the four years from 2002/03 to 2005/06, non-UK EU students, following the completion of their degree courses, were more likely to move on to full-time post-graduate courses or to enter full-time work (whether in England or elsewhere) than to enter part-time or voluntary positions. Entry to post-graduate courses in England appears to have been significantly more likely amongst those non-UK EU students following courses in maths, physics and languages (subjects that have declined in relative popularity amongst non-UK EU undergraduate entrants) or those following courses in historical and social studies (areas that have seen some increase in take-up). Although business studies and administration courses have dominated undergraduate entry for non-UK EU students for a number of years, there was a far higher probability that students following those courses would either not remain in England, or, if they stayed in the country, would not enter post-graduate study.

The question that arises is whether or not there will be any changes in the pattern of non-UK EU recruitment to post-graduate courses in the future. At present, the historical picture is dominated by the post-graduate behaviour of non-UK EU students from the founder and western non-founder countries. With increasing numbers of students from the Eastern European, Baltic State and late accession countries, it is possible that the current destination pattern may change. In the past, there was a high probability that such students would stay in England (or at least in the UK), having completed their first degree, and that they would continue into higher education in the first instance. The growing proportion of business studies and administration students amongst the students from the Eastern European, Baltic State and late accession countries may challenge that. Will there be a continued growth in progression to higher education from non-UK EU students, or will there be a shift towards young people taking up full-time employment opportunities? Will the apparent lessening popularity of the STEM subjects amongst non-UK EU recruitment (other than those related to medicine or biology, which are significantly related to the take-up of full-time employment) herald a move away from postgraduate recruitment amongst non-UK EU students? Nearly one-third of the survey respondents envisaged taking up a course of full-time study following graduation. Will this translate into reality, and for which subject areas?

5.3 Study and work balance

For some students, the ability to earn money whilst studying was a feature that had attracted them to studying in England. The reality of full-time study and part-time working had proved difficult, however: a number had already abandoned their jobs, others suggested that they were about to do so. Other researchers suggest that, both in their home countries and when in the UK, non-UK EU students spend more time studying and spend longer hours working in part-time jobs than their English counterparts (Gibbs, 2007). Even so, and by comparison with these other studies, the non-UK EU respondents to this survey reported working far longer hours than the average. Many of these also said that they found it hard to study and work. It is possible that some may have been encouraged (whether by their employers or by the income that they generated, perhaps) to work longer hours than were commensurate with their studies. Research has also found that students who work lengthy hours in part-time jobs tended to have lower perceptions of the value for money of their courses (Sastry and Bekhradnia, 2007) and that longer working hours have a negative impact on the quality of students' work and on '*essential aspects of their academic studies*' (Brennan et al., 2005). Is there a need for guidelines on the balance between full-time study and working hours? Should these be drawn up by individual HEIs? Should they be made available for all non-UK EU students and all HEI students - and for employers who recruit such students?

5.4 Tuition fee loans

Only a minority of the students in the survey had a clear understanding of the different sources of UK funding and support and of the financial arrangements related to tuition fee loans. For some students, this was not an issue; some, for instance said they did not need any further sources of income. For others, however, the cost of living and of funding their course was a significant challenge and they would have benefited from additional funding. Some of these had not applied for a loan because they were concerned about getting into debt to the Student Loan Company, but others said that they had not heard of the company or that the information that they had received was too confusing. Amongst those who had taken out loans, those who appeared to have put most thought into ways in which they might pay the loan back and

who expressed most confidence in being able to do so, were those with the best level of understanding of current financial mechanisms for students.

How best should tuition fee loans be marketed to potential students in non-UK EU countries? What strategies have proved effective and what lessons can be learnt about the effectiveness of marketing from those students who have applied for loans (whether or not they received them)?

Appendix 1 Drawing the sample

HESA data was used to help define the sample of institutions from which the EU students would be recruited to take part in the survey. In 2004/05, there was an estimated total of around 45,000 undergraduates across the 132 English HEIs. Clearly, the distribution of students from different countries is not entirely random, while the pattern of recruitment from some countries (particularly the new accession countries) is not yet established. It is recognised, too, that a number of institutions (four in 2004/05) do not recruit undergraduates, while others (a further four institutions in 2004/05) have no significant history of recruiting EU students at this level.

In order to meet the aims of the research, therefore, the research team carried out power calculations to estimate the number of undergraduate responses that would be required and the number of HEIs, therefore, that would need to be recruited to the study. In order to provide an EU-wide approximation of views, attitudes and plans (that is, for the estimate of percentages to be correct to within 5% at least 95% of the time), initial calculations suggested a minimum of 1,040 responses would need to be achieved. In order to provide a similar approximation by country, it was calculated that 3,800 achieved responses would be required.

Previous experience of surveys in this field suggested that the anticipated response rate to the study would be in the order of 10%, giving a mean of 35 to 40 responses per institution. For an EU-wide approximation, therefore, at least 26 HEIs would need to be recruited, but a higher number (95 HEIs) would need to be recruited in order to give a country-level approximation. Instead, it was decided to focus on a regionally-based analysis (recruiting around 60 HEIs), since the total number of students coming to English HEIs from some countries was low and far fewer than would be needed to provide a reliable estimate of the views of undergraduates from that country. Seven of the 26 EU countries in 2005/06 contributed fewer than 500 students each, for instance, while fewer than 50 students, in each case, came from Romania and Bulgaria.

In the first instance, 132 institutions and a short list of 95 was compiled for specific targeting. In total 73 HEIs were recruited, of whom 67 eventually took part in the study.

Appendix 2 EU member states and date of accession

Type	Year of accession	Country
Founder states		Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands
Non-founder Western states	1973	Denmark, Ireland, UK
	1981	Greece
	1986	Portugal, Spain
	1995	Austria, Finland, Sweden
Baltic States, Eastern European states and other late accession countries	2004	Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia
	2007	Bulgaria, Romania

Appendix 3 Tables

Table 1 Nationality of respondents

Nationality	In survey	N	Deleted from survey	N
	%		%	
Austrian	1	30	1	1
Belgium	2	35	0	0
Bulgarian	<1	7	0	0
Cypriot	7	162	2	2
Czech	2	42	2	2
Danish	2	34	0	0
Dutch	3	54	1	1
Estonian	1	26	1	1
Finnish	4	92	3	3
French	10	211	5	5
German	15	326	5	5
Greek	8	168	2	2
Hungarian	3	54	0	0
Irish	6	130	6	7
Italian	4	83	0	0
Latvian	2	39	0	0
Lithuanian	4	96	2	2
Luxembourgish	1	11	0	0
Maltese	<1	4	0	0
Polish	9	188	5	5
Portuguese	3	70	0	0
Romanian	<1	8	0	0
Slovakian	2	42	0	0
Slovenian	<1	4	0	0
Spanish	4	94	2	2
Swedish	5	102	1	1
Other	3	57	60	65
No response	1	19	5	5
N =		2,188		109

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 2 **Gender of respondents**

Gender	In survey	Deleted from survey
	%	%
Female	58	59
Male	37	34
No response	5	7
N =	2,188	109

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 3 Country of origin

Country	In survey %	Deleted from survey %
Austria	1	1
Belgium	3	4
Bulgaria	<1	0
Cyprus	8	5
Czech Republic	2	1
Denmark	2	0
England*	8	23
Netherlands	2	5
Estonia	1	1
Finland	3	3
France	9	13
Germany	14	13
Greece	7	2
Hungary	3	0
Republic of Ireland	5	6
Italy	3	1
Latvia	2	0
Lithuania	4	2
Luxembourg	1	2
Malta	<1	0
Northern Ireland*	<1	1
Poland	7	5
Portugal	3	1
Romania	<1	0
Scotland*	<1	1
Slovakia	2	0
Slovenia	<1	0
Spain	4	4
Sweden	4	2
Wales*	<1	0
Other country	3	6
No response	1	2
N =	2,188	109

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 4 Number of years lived in UK before starting current course

Number of years	In survey %	Deleted from survey %
3 years or more	53	85
Less than 3 years	36	7
No response	10	7
N =	174	27

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

A filter question: all those who lived in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales before starting their course

174 respondents in the survey and 25 respondents deleted from the survey answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 5 Year started current course

Academic year	%
2002 - 2003	<1
2003 - 2004	6
2004 - 2005	20
2005 - 2006	28
2006 - 2007	43
No response	2
N =	2,188

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

2,142 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 6 Year will finish current course

Academic year	%
2006 - 2007	26
2007 - 2008	27
2008 - 2009	32
2009 - 2010	11
2010 - 2011	2
2011 or later	<1
No response	2
N =	2,188

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 7 Subject area currently studying

Subject area	%
Agriculture and related subjects	1
Architecture, building and planning	3
Biological sciences	9
Business and administrative studies	26
Computer science	6
Creative arts and design	8
Education	1
Engineering and technology	8
Historical and philosophical studies	4
Languages	8
Law	4
Mass communications and documentation	4
Mathematical sciences	2
Medicine and dentistry	3
Physical sciences	5
Social studies	15
Subjects allied to medicine	4
Veterinary science	<1
Combined subjects	1
Other (uncodeable)	<1
No response	<1
N =	2,188

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

2181 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of on-UK EU Students 2007

Table 8 Mode of current study

Mode	%
Full-time	98
Part-time	2
Distance learning	1
Intensive/short course	<1
Executive education	<1
No response	0
N =	2,188

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

2,188 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

The following tables include only those respondents who indicated that they were currently in full-time study.

Table 9 Achievement of HE qualification before current HE course

Obtained a HE qualification?	%
Yes, from an English university	2
Yes, from a university in another country (not my home country)	2
Yes, from a university in my home country	16
No	79
No response	1
N =	2,136

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

All those respondents who said they were currently in full-time study

2,114 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 10 Main reasons for wanting to study in a country other than home country

Main reasons	%
It was a good opportunity to experience another country	60
I thought that studying in a different country would give me a better chance of a career in other countries	48
I thought that studying in a different country would give me a better chance of a future career in my home country	44
I wanted to learn the language	32
I wanted to move to another country	30
The standard of education was better in other countries	25
The subject / course of study was not available in home country	24
I wanted to study at a particular institution	18
The course of study would have taken too long in my home country	14
I wanted a course with a more practical/less theoretical content	14
Career progression was poor in my home country	13
There were no good jobs for graduates in my home country	10
My parents / friends had studied in a different country	8
Other reason	7
No response to this question	1
N =	2,136

More than one answer could be put forward so percentages do not sum to 100

A total of 2,119 respondents gave at least one response to this question.

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 11 Other countries considered for studying abroad

Countries	%
Australia	17
Austria	3
Belgium	5
Canada	13
Cyprus	2
Czech Republic	2
Denmark	3
Estonia	1
Finland	3
France	15
Germany	16
Greece	5
Hungary	1
Ireland	7
Italy	9
Latvia	<1
Lithuania	1
Luxembourg	1
Malta	1
Netherlands	7
New Zealand	5
Northern Ireland	3
Norway	3
Poland	2
Portugal	2
Scotland	9
Slovakia	1
Slovenia	<1
Spain	13
Sweden	7
Switzerland	7
USA	40
Wales	5
Other	3
No response to this question	23
N =	2,136

More than one answer could be put forward so percentages do not sum to 100

A total of 1,655 respondents gave at least one response to this question.

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 12 Reasons for choosing to study in England

Reasons	%
I had been / was at school in England	6
I had been / was at an English school in another country	11
I had studied / was studying at another university in England	1
I had lived in England before	14
I was working in England	8
People (friends, family, teachers etc.) recommended it	24
My parents / relatives / friends studied in England	13
I have friends / relatives who live in England	19
I thought the standard of education was better than in my home country	24
I wanted the chance to study at a particular university	15
The subject / course of study was not available in my home country	18
The course of study was shorter than in my home country	17
The style of teaching / assessment suited me better than the style used in my home country	23
There was plenty of information available about studying in England	21
English universities have a good reputation	46
I thought it had a strong economy with good career opportunities	20
I thought it would improve my career prospects generally	49
I thought it would improve my career prospects in England	23
I wanted to move to England	16
I wanted to move to a particular city	6
I liked the lifestyle and culture (sports, music, fashion)	20
I had visited the country before and liked it	23
The culture is similar to the culture of my country	9
I wanted to improve my English language skills	41
It is close to my home country	23
I would be able to work in England whilst studying	15
There was an opportunity to get funding from my own country	5
There was an opportunity to get funding from England	13
Other	5
No response to this question	2
N =	2,136

*More than one answer could be put forward so percentages do not sum to 100
A total of 2,090 respondents gave at least one response to this question.
Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007*

Table 13 Expectations of English universities / HEIs

Expectations	I expected this	I did not expect this	I was not sure (if this would be provided)	No response
A high standard of teaching	87	2	4	7
Good academic facilities (e.g. libraries, computer rooms)	87	2	2	8
Helpful admissions staff	72	10	10	8
The possibility of good employment prospects after graduation	71	9	11	8
Good social life / facilities	61	17	14	8
Individual attention from academic staff	55	22	15	8
A good standard of accommodation	54	22	15	9
An international student community	53	24	15	8
Free use of university facilities (e.g. gym, sports grounds)	48	28	15	9
English language support	47	29	15	9
Free course materials / equipment (e.g. art materials, lab coats)	32	38	21	8
Free materials / equipment not necessarily related to my course (e.g. lap tops, book vouchers)	17	58	17	8
N = 2,136				

A series of single response items

Due to rounding, percentages may not always sum to 100

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 14 Views on importance of factors in choosing a university

Reasons for choosing university	Very important	Important	Neither important nor unimportant	Not important	Not at all important	No response
Good reputation for the course that I want to study	48	34	8	1	1	8
Good lecturers and researchers	43	38	8	2	1	9
Good facilities (e.g. libraries, computer rooms)	36	44	8	2	1	9
Good reputation for graduate employment in my home country	25	32	22	6	5	9
Good setting / environment	23	45	17	4	3	9
Good sources of funding available (e.g. scholarships, bursaries)	20	27	28	8	8	9
A good and varied social life	18	39	23	8	5	8
Good transport links to my home country	18	34	25	8	7	9
Good student accommodation near the university	17	35	20	10	9	9
Good local transport facilities	15	35	36	9	7	9
Good opportunities for part-time work nearby	14	23	27	13	14	9
The people I met there (e.g. at an open day)	6	19	28	16	21	9
Lots of students from my home country studied there	3	9	20	24	37	9

N = 2,136*A series of single response items**Due to rounding, percentages may not always sum to 100**Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007*

Table 15 Views on financial aspects of studying

Views	True	False	Not sure	No response
All English universities charge the same tuition fees	28	42	19	11
EU students pay lower tuition fees than other international students	76	7	5	11
Students from all countries are entitled to a Tuition Fee Loan from the Student Loan Company	17	38	34	11
All EU students are entitled to maintenance loans from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES)	26	24	39	11
EU students are entitled to financial support from the Access to Learning Fund in the same way as home students	19	22	47	12
EU students are not liable to repay their Tuition Fee Loans if they work outside the EU	4	39	45	12
The amount an EU students needs to earn before starting to pay back their UK student loan is the same across all EU countries	24	13	51	12
N = 2,136				

A series of single response items

Due to rounding, percentages may not always sum to 100

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 16 Other sources of income to help with costs of studying

Other sources of income	%
Part-time job	26
Full-time job	3
Family	60
Funding from my home country	18
Hardship / bursary award from your university/higher education institution	6
Disabled Student's Allowance	<1
Dependant's Allowance	1
Other award / scholarship from HEI	1
Scholarship from a charitable foundation	1
Access to Learning Fund	1
Own savings	27
I do not have any other source of income	8
Other	7
No response to this question	13
N =	2,136

More than one answer could be put forward so percentages do not sum to 100

A total of 1,859 respondents gave at least one response to this question.

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 17 English bank account

English bank account	%
Yes	77
No	10
No response	13
N =	2,136

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

1,868 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 18 Bank overdraft facility

Bank overdraft facility	%
Yes, in my home country	10
Yes, in England	15
Yes, in both	5
No	44
Not sure	13
No response	13
N =	2,136

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

1,867 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 19 Current level of overdraft

	Mean £	Min £	Max £	Number of ...
Level of overdraft	768.36	3	16000	233

Numerical data provided by respondents

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 20 Possession of a credit card

Credit card	%
Yes, in my home country	23
Yes, in England	14
Yes, in both	11
No	39
No response	13
N =	2,136

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

1,862 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 21 **Extent to which undergraduates pay off their whole balance each month**

Pay off whole balance	%
Yes, always	59
Yes, most of the time	20
No	19
No response	2
N =	1,033

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

A filter question: all those who indicated that they have a credit card

1,012 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 22 **Total debt anticipated on completion of degree**

Total debt anticipated	%
No debt anticipated	32
Up to £2,000	4
£2,001 - £5,000	5
£5,001 - £10,000	12
£10,001 - £15,000	7
£15,001 - £20,000	5
£20,001 - £25,000	3
More than £25,000	3
Do not wish to answer	5
Don't know	11
No response	13
N =	2,136

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

1,860 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 23 Views on Finance (all students)

Views	True for me	Not sure	Not true for me	No response
I am worried about being in debt at the end of my course	31	11	39	20
I do not think I will have any difficulties paying off my loans	32	23	24	21
I think my university could do more to help EU students finance their courses	48	17	17	18
I don't know enough about different ways in which I could finance my studies	40	14	27	20
I am not sure how long it will take me to pay back my loans or bank overdraft	27	15	38	20
N = 2,136				

A series of single response items

Due to rounding, percentages may not always sum to 100

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 24 Number of hours worked in a part-time job in a normal week

Number of hours	%
1 to 10	18
11 to 15	15
16 to 20	24
21 to 30	25
31 to 40	6
Over 40	1
No response	11
N=	628

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

A filter question: all those respondents who indicated that they had worked in a part-time job during term time

562 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 25 Amount paid per hour in part-time job

Amount paid	%
£4 or less	1
Between £4 and £5	11
Between £5 and £5.50	29
Between £5.50 and £6	19
Between £6 and £7	16
Between £7 and £8	6
Between £8 and £9	3
Between £9 and £10	4
Over £10	4
No response	8
N=	628

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

A filter question: all those respondents who indicated that they had worked in a part-time job during term time

579 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 26 Application for a Tuition Fee Loan from the Student Loan Company

Applied for a tuition fee loan	%
Yes	31
No	59
No response	11
N =	2,136

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

1,901 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 27 Reasons for applying for loan

Reasons	%
I would not have been able to do the course without the loan	72
It made sense to me to pay tuition fees after I started earning instead of at the start of my course	36
The cost of tuition fees was higher than I expected	25
My parents / relatives suggested it	14
I thought the interest rate was good	12
The university staff suggested it	7
My friends suggested it	5
Other	3
No response to this question	2
N =	651

*More than one answer could be put forward so percentages do not sum to 100
A filter question: all those who indicated that they had applied for a tuition fee loan
A total of 638 respondents gave at least one response to this question.
Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007*

Table 28 Receipt of a Tuition Fee Loan from Student Loan Company

Did you receive a Tuition Fee Loan?	%
Yes	82
No	16
No response	3
N =	651

*A single response item
Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100
A filter question: all those who indicated that they had applied for a tuition fee loan
634 respondents answered this question
Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007*

Table 29 Amount owed to SLC for Tuition Fee Loan

	Mean £	Min £	Max £	Number
Amount owed	3092	100	10000	478

*Numerical data provided by respondents
Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007*

Table 30 Application for a maintenance loan

Have you applied?	%
Yes	10
No	78
No response	12
N =	2,136

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

1,885 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 31 Receipt of a maintenance loan

Receipt of maintenance loan	%
Yes	41
No	58
No response	2
N =	217

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

A filter question: all those who indicated that they had applied for a maintenance loan

213 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 32 Amount currently owed to SLC

	Mean £	Min £	Max £	Number
Amount owed	3404	500	10000	76

Numerical data provided by respondents

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK and EU Students 2007

Table 33 Reasons for not receiving a Tuition Fee Loan

Reasons	%
I was told that I was not eligible for one	47
Other	40
No response to this question	14
N =	103

More than one answer could be put forward so percentages do not sum to 100

An open-ended, multiple response question

A total of 89 respondents gave at least one response to this question.

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 34 Reasons for not applying for a Tuition Fee Loan

Reasons	%
I did not need a loan to help pay my fees	47
I did not want to get into debt to the SLC	33
I did not know that I could apply for one	24
I have not / had not heard about the SLC	16
I was told that I could not apply for one	10
The information I was given about the loan was too confusing	10
No response to this question	4
N =	1250

More than one answer could be put forward so percentages do not sum to 100

A filter question: all those who indicated that they had not applied for a tuition fee loan

A total of 1,201 respondents gave at least one response to this question.

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 35 Views on how students should repay their Tuition Fee Loans

Methods of repayment	%
Payments to the government at the end of the financial year	7
By organising their own repayments (through their bank or similar institution)	35
Through their employer (pay as you earn)	44
No response	14
N =	2,136

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

1,847 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 36a Views on the interest rate for Tuition Fee Loans

If the English government...	This would be fair	I'm not sure	This would not be fair	No response
Fixed it at a set rate (not linked to inflation)	35	33	17	15
Fixed it at the interest rate that was in place in England when students took out their loans	38	32	15	15
Linked it to the inflation rate in England	23	34	28	15
Linked it to the inflation rate in the country in which the student was working	29	33	23	15
Fixed it at a rate higher than the inflation rate in England	3	28	54	15
N = 2,136				

A series of single response items

Due to rounding, percentages may not always sum to 100

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 36b Views on whether all EU students will repay their loans

Will all EU students repay their loans?	%
Yes, I think they all will	15
Yes, I think they will if they earn enough	36
No, I don't think they will	16
I'm not sure	19
No response	14
N =	2,136

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

1,836 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 37 Plans 2 years after finishing course

Future plans	%
Full time career job in England	21
Full time career job not in England (but not in my home country)	20
International travel	4
Part-time / Temporary work in England	1
Part-time / Temporary work NOT in England (but not in my home country)	1
Part-time / Temporary work in my home country	1
Voluntary work	<1
Postgraduate studies in England	13
Postgraduate studies NOT in England (but not in my home country)	5
Postgraduate studies in my home country	4
Don't know - no fixed plans yet	19
Other	4
No response	9
N =	2,136

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

1,942 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 38 Plans within six months of finishing current course

Future plans	%
Full time career job in England	18
Full time career job not in England (but not in my home country)	3
Full time career job in my home country	6
International travel	6
Part-time / Temporary work in England	2
Part-time / Temporary work NOT in England (but not in my home country)	1
Part-time / Temporary work in my home country	1
Voluntary work	1
Postgraduate studies in England	22
Postgraduate studies NOT in England (but not in my home country)	5
Postgraduate studies in my home country	5
No fixed plans yet but will stay in England at first	6
No fixed plans yet but will return to my home country soon after I finish my course	3
Don't know	10
Other	4
No response	9
N =	2,136

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

1,942 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 39 Countries considered for work or study in the future

Countries	%
Australia	17
Austria	4
Belgium	6
Bulgaria	1
Canada	13
Cyprus	2
Czech Republic	2
Denmark	4
Estonia	1
Finland	3
France	14
Germany	12
Greece	5
Hungary	1
Ireland	6
Italy	9
Latvia	<1
Lithuania	1
Luxembourg	2
Malta	1
Netherlands	7
New Zealand	8
Northern Ireland	2
Norway	4
Poland	1
Portugal	2
Romania	1
Scotland	6
Slovakia	1
Slovenia	1
Spain	14
Sweden	7
Switzerland	8
USA	32
Wales	3
Other	7
No response to this question	32
N =	2,136

*More than one answer could be put forward so percentages do not sum to 100
A total of 1,444 respondents gave at least one response to this question.
Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007*

Table 40 Career area of interest

Career area	%
Real Estate, Renting & Business Activities	54
Agriculture, Hunting & Forestry	1
Public Administration & Defence; Compulsory Social Security	1
Hotels & Restaurants	3
Construction	2
Education	10
Financial Intermediation	11
Fishing	<1
Transport, Storage & Communication	9
Manufacturing	2
Other community, social and personal service activities	29
Health & Social Work	16
Mining & Quarrying	<1
Wholesale & Retail Trade; repair of motor vehicles & personal service activities	3
Electricity, gas and water supply	1
I don't know	2
Other (uncodeable)	2
No Response	11
N =	2,136

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

1,898 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Table 41 Expected salary one year after finishing current course

Expected salary	%
<£2000	1
£2001 to £5000	1
£5001 to £9000	2
£9001 to £12000	3
£12001 to £15000	5
£15001 to £18000	7
£18001 to £21000	10
£21001 to £24000	3
£24001 to £27000	5
£27001 to £30000	3
£30001 to £35000	1
£35001 to £40000	1
£40001 to £50000	<1
>£50000	1
No response	58
N =	2,136

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

897 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Mean Year 1 salary = £20,755

Table 42 Expected salary three years after finishing current course

Expected salary	%
<£2000	1
£2001 to £5000	1
£5001 to £9000	1
£9001 to £12000	1
£12001 to £15000	2
£15001 to £18000	1
£18001 to £21000	4
£21001 to £24000	3
£24001 to £27000	6
£27001 to £30000	5
£30001 to £35000	3
£35001 to £40000	3
£40001 to £50000	3
>£50000	2
No response	64
N =	2,136

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

771 respondents answered this question

Source: NFER/Hobsons Survey of non-UK EU Students 2007

Mean Year 3 salary = £30,625

Appendix 4 Changes in non-UK EU population

Change in non-UK EU student population 2002/03 to 2005/06

Country	2002/03		2003/04			2004/05			2005/06			overall change		overall % change	
	Count	Col %	Count	Col %	%change	Count	Col %	%change	Count	Col %	%change	%		%	
Austria	1110	1.40	1193	1.57	7	1305	1.48	9	1307	1.41	0	18		0	
Belgium	1166	1.48	1157	1.53	-1	1222	1.38	6	1287	1.39	5	10		-6	
Bulgaria	20	0.03	31	0.04	55	32	0.04	3	38	0.04	19	90		62	
Cyprus	53	0.07	60	0.08	13	4999	5.66	8232	6495	7.01	30	12155	increase	10354	increase
Czech Republic	7	0.01	16	0.02	129	784	0.89	4800	994	1.07	27	14100	increase	12014	increase
Denmark	1730	2.19	1658	2.19	-4	1626	1.84	-2	1565	1.69	-4	-10		-23	
Finland	1937	2.45	1798	2.37	-7	1679	1.90	-7	1710	1.85	2	-12		-25	
France	9607	12.16	9954	13.12	4	10173	11.52	2	10813	11.67	6	13		-4	
Germany	11206	14.18	10974	14.47	-2	11769	13.33	7	12324	13.30	5	10		-6	
Greece	25316	32.04	22391	29.52	-12	20529	23.26	-8	18760	20.25	-9	-26		-37	
Hungary	18	0.02	24	0.03	33	556	0.63	2217	753	0.81	35	4083	increase	3469	increase
Irish Republic	6510	8.24	7067	9.32	9	9532	10.80	35	9417	10.17	-1	45		23	
Italy	5897	7.46	5632	7.43	-4	5781	6.55	3	5973	6.45	3	1		-14	
Luxembourg	288	0.36	292	0.39	1	326	0.37	12	326	0.35	0	13		-3	
Malta	7	0.01	10	0.01	43	807	0.91	7970	960	1.04	19	13614	increase	11600	increase
Netherlands	2075	2.63	1937	2.55	-7	2057	2.33	6	2169	2.34	5	5		-11	
Poland	49	0.06	59	0.08	20	2215	2.51	3654	3839	4.14	73	7735	increase	6584	increase
Portugal	2193	2.78	2247	2.96	2	2430	2.75	8	2496	2.69	3	14		-3	
Romania	18	0.02	22	0.03	22	32	0.04	45	27	0.03	-16	50		28	
Spain	6243	7.90	6034	7.96	-3	5815	6.59	-4	5582	6.03	-4	-11		-24	
Sweden	3550	4.49	3269	4.31	-8	3214	3.64	-2	3170	3.42	-1	-11		-24	
Estonia	4	0.01	3	0.00	-25	164	0.19	5367	322	0.35	96	7950	increase	6767	increase
Latvia	6	0.01	6	0.01	0	234	0.27	3800	466	0.50	99	7667	increase	6526	increase
Lithuania	4	0.01	5	0.01	25	428	0.48	8460	911	0.98	113	22675	increase	19329	increase
Slovenia	3	0.00	2	0.00	-33	194	0.22	9600	289	0.31	49	9533	increase	8118	increase
Slovakia	3	0.00	3	0.00	0	369	0.42	12200	634	0.68	72	21033	increase	17929	increase
Total	79020	100	75844	100		88272	100		92627	100					

Appendix 5 Higher Education Institution recruitment and liaison

A team of Marketing Executives, who were managed by Helen Robertson from Hobsons Research, conducted the recruitment and liaison strategy with HEIs. endence hosted the online survey on behalf of NFER and Hobsons.

All 132 HEFCE-funded English Higher Education Institutions [HEIs] were contacted, in March 2007, in order to gain their active participation in the survey. Those who were recruited were asked to provide statistics on their non-UK EU student cohort, where this information was available. They were asked to invite their non-UK EU students, via e-mail, to take part in the online survey. Apart from the initial recruitment letter (which was sent by post), all liaison was conducted via telephone and e-mail communications.

Once participation was agreed, further instructions were sent regarding the fieldwork process. Each institution was provided with suggested text for the invitation e-mail. This email contained an embedded institution-specific URL link, which enabled students to enter the survey directly. In order to maximise response rates, a follow-up e-mail was also provided to institutions for them to send to their EU students at an appropriate date. Institutions were asked to let the Hobsons team know once their e-mails had been sent and this information was used, together with response monitoring and tracking, to follow-up any HEIs that had agreed to participate but who had not yet sent out their e-mails to students. In total:

- 67 institutions both agreed to participate and confirmed that they had sent a bulk invitation e-mail to their non-UK EU students.
- 19 institutions tentatively agreed to participate but then dropped out prior to the survey period or failed to confirm that they had sent out the invitation e-mail.
- 15 institutions said they would not participate and 7 institutions either did not respond or would not provide a definitive answer concerning participation.
- Reasons for refusal to participate or subsequent withdrawal were given as:
 - General 'survey fatigue'
 - Clash with existing surveys
 - Timing (summer/Easter term)
 - Too few non-UK EU undergraduates at the institution, or focus of insufficient interest to warrant involvement

The average number of undergraduate responses received per institution was 32 [after data cleaning and removal of incomplete or invalid responses and responses from British students or post-graduates etc.].

Ref: DIUS Research Report 08 09

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ISBN: 978 1 84478 997 9

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Universities and Skills

Department for
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