

News Release
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Government creates new unit to support international education sector

English UK has welcomed the creation of a new Government unit to promote UK education to an international market, but expressed fears that the initiative may not go far enough.

Education UK will be jointly funded by UKTI and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, and will support the Government's Education Sector Industrial Strategy, due to be published in the near future.

English UK's chief executive Tony Millns said: "We are pleased to see that one government department at least understands the potential for growth that the UK's highly-regarded education sector presents, but unless the Home Office changes its approach on student visas and the net migration target the initiative will face difficulties in those types of education, such as English language, where students naturally want to come to the UK and learn in an English-speaking environment."

The initiative was announced by Skills Minister Matthew Hancock during a visit promoting vocational education in India. He said: "It is essential that we realise the potential of the largely untapped resource that is our education exports. There is a fast-growing demand for high-quality education, and we are lucky to have a dynamic and entrepreneurial sector that is well placed to contribute.

"We are in a global race and other countries are presenting attractive and co-ordinated offers, so Education UK is a vital step in bringing together the UK sector to drive its international engagement, particularly on high-value opportunities."

The new unit, which will have a 10-strong staff headed by a Managing Director with private sector experience on a three-year contract, will:

- Research, identify and help to develop trading opportunities for UK exports
- Support UK providers to respond effectively to targeted international opportunities, by fostering the development of UK consortia for specific opportunities and helping them to prepare and promote bids
- Ensure large-scale complex commercial opportunities, which the UK is not currently well-equipped to respond to, are effectively pursued so UK organisations win the business.

Notes to Editors

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