

John Pullinger CB CStat | National Statistician

Rt Hon Keith Vaz MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

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Dear Mr Vaz,

As National Statistician and Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority, I am replying to your Parliamentary Question asking how many overseas students were in the UK on 1 June 2017; and how many such students there were from each country of origin (**4073**).

There is currently no source of data available which provides information on overseas students in all education sectors within the UK. The Annual Population Survey (APS) can provide information on the number of non-UK nationals resident in the UK. However, the APS is a sample survey based on households and so does not include people living in most types of communal establishments, such as students living in halls of residence whose parents do not live in the UK.¹

To provide an answer to your question we have used data on the number of students in Higher Education (HE) within the UK from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). The HE sector accounts for the largest proportion (83%)² of overseas students. The latest data available are for the 2015/2016 academic year.

Table 1 below provides estimates of HE students by domicile region for the 2015/2016 academic year. This information can be found in table B of the HESA publication *Students in Higher Education 2015/16*.³

Statistics are available on non-EU national sponsored study visa applications by education sector. These statistics are published by the Home Office. The latest data available are for the year ending March 2017. There were 168,591 sponsored visa applications for the University sector as a whole, 2,955 for English Language schools, 14,534 in the Further education sector and 13,379 in the Independent school sector. Further information is available from the Home Office publication *Why do people come to the UK? (3) To study*.⁴

We do not currently have a source of data which covers EU national students in further education

Yours sincerely



John Pullinger

¹ The Annual Population Survey is a household survey of people in the UK. It covers people in private households, NHS accommodation and students in halls of residence whose parents live in the UK. However, people in other communal establishments such as prisons and private care homes are excluded.

² Data from the Home Office on applicants for visas for study using sponsor acceptances by education sector show that, for the year ending March 2017, 83% were UK-based Higher Education Institutions.

³ <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/publications/students-2015-16>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-january-to-march-2017/why-do-people-come-to-the-uk-3-to-study#data-tables>

Table 1: Higher Education students by domicile 2015/2016⁵

Domicile	Total all students	Percentage by domicile
United Kingdom	1842315	80.8%
Other European Union countries	127440	5.6%
Other European Economic Area countries	5465	0.2%
Other Europe	14025	0.6%
Africa	33610	1.5%
Asia	191660	8.4%
Australasia	2675	0.1%
Middle East	29420	1.3%
North America	28040	1.2%
South America	5675	0.2%
Non-European Union subtotal	310575	13.6%
Non-United Kingdom subtotal	438010	19.2%
Total known domicile	2280325	100.0%
Not known	505	

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

⁵ In Table1, 0, 1, 2 are rounded to 0. All other numbers are rounded up or down to the nearest multiple of 5. Percentages are not subject to rounding.