

#SUPPORTSTUDYABROAD

UNIVERSITIESUK.AC.UK/SUPPORTSTUDYABROAD

BACKGROUND

On the 28 January 2019, the government issued a [technical note](#) on the future of the UK's membership of the Erasmus+ programme **in the case of a no-deal Brexit**. The good news is that students on current placements will be able to continue, and receive funding, to their end.

The government has also said they would like to stay in the Erasmus+ programme for future calls, if the EU will agree. However, it is now clear that if in the event of a no-deal Brexit the UK government does not succeed in securing continued Erasmus+ membership, there will be no national alternative to enable students to go abroad. **If we lose Erasmus+ there will be no study abroad scheme to replace it.** We want the government to think again.

Every year, some 17,000 UK students study or work abroad on Erasmus+ placements across the EU and other partner countries. All students benefit from a monthly stipend to enable them to study and work abroad, as well as an online language portal and the Europass. Students from less-advantaged backgrounds are provided with additional support to help pay their living and travel costs while on placement.

Universities UK International and Universities UK (UUK) have launched (Wednesday 6 February) an urgent social media campaign to encourage the government to commit to funding study abroad opportunities in case of a no-deal Brexit.

In this briefing, you will find an explanation of the details of the campaign, as well as suggested tweets and actions you can use.

GOAL

If there is a no-deal Brexit, UUK urges the UK government to commit to continue funding study abroad opportunities for UK students, even if they cannot negotiate continued participation in Erasmus + programme.

OBJECTIVES

The social media campaign has two components:

1. to get organisations across the higher education sector to tweet case studies, key messages and calls to commit to our goal and;
2. to get individual students and mobility alumni to tweet about their experience studying, working or volunteering abroad, key messages and calls to commit to our goal.

The campaign hashtag is: **#SUPPORTSTUDYABROAD**

Please include a link to the campaign web page: universitiesuk.ac.uk/supportstudyabroad

The social media campaign is coordinated through UUK, who are integrating it with press, policy and advocacy work.

TARGETS

- **Primary:** Education Secretary, Damian Hinds, [@DamianHinds](https://twitter.com/DamianHinds)
- **Secondary:** your local MP, especially if they are Conservative.

You can find out who your local MP is, as well as their social media handles, based on your postcode on the [They Work for You](https://www.theyworkforyou.com) website.

TIMING

The campaign will commence at 9:00 GMT, Wednesday 6 February 2019. Schedule as many tweets and make as much noise as you can on social media for that morning! We will be keeping the campaign running over the coming days and weeks, so please do keep the social media activity going.

KEY MESSAGES

1. **Study abroad supports social mobility.** Students who study abroad clearly outperform their peers [academically and professionally](#). They are:
 - 19% more likely to gain a first class degree
 - 20% less likely to be unemployed
 - 10% more likely to be in 'graduate' jobs six months after graduation

For those from disadvantaged and underrepresented backgrounds the benefits are even more pronounced:

- BME students who studied abroad are 17% more likely to be in 'graduate' jobs six months after graduation.
 - Mature students who participated in these programmes earn 10% more than their peers.
2. **An investment in international experience for our students now is an investment in the future of our economy.** Without the international opportunities offered through schemes like Erasmus+, the UK's workforce will not be equipped to meet the changing needs of our economy post-Brexit.

[Research by the CBI](#) has found that:

- seven out of 10 small and medium size enterprises believe that future executives will need foreign language skills and international experience
 - 39% of employers are dissatisfied with graduates' intercultural awareness
 - 49% of employers are dissatisfied with graduates' language skills
3. **Without this funding, 17,000 UK students will miss out on opportunities to study abroad next year.** The government has committed to avoiding this in the withdrawal agreement – why not in the case of no deal?
 4. With Exit from the EU pending, the government has ambitious plans for a **global Britain**. Committing to study abroad funding should be central to achieving this vision.

See universitiesuk.ac.uk/supportstudyabroad for more details on our position.

NB: we want to keep this campaign positive. Please focus on the benefits of study abroad and the importance of continuing to fund study abroad, rather than criticising the government or taking an anti-Brexit tone. Be polite and respectful in making the case and sharing positive stories and news.

THE ACTION

1. Organisational accounts

Please tweet at Secretary of State for Education Damian Hinds @DamianHinds, urging him to commit to continue funding study abroad opportunities for UK students, even if they cannot negotiate continued participation in Erasmus + programme.

Use the hashtag **#SupportStudyAbroad** from all your professional and, if you wish, personal Twitter accounts.

You can find some suggested tweets below, and you should also have received some images you can attach to your tweet as part of this brief. However, we encourage you to personalise your tweets wherever possible – the more personal the better!

If you can, please include a link to the campaign web page:
[universitiesuk.ac.uk/supportstudyabroad](https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/supportstudyabroad)

We have created social media graphics for you to [download and share](#).

2. Student mobilisation

We have also created an action circular like this one aimed at students. You can download it on our [action page](#), or alternatively should have received it via email. Please circulate it as broadly as you can within your student ambassador teams, student union, alumni networks, student officers, Erasmus+ offices, etc – essentially, to as many students or student officers as possible!

SUGGESTED TWEETS

1. *.@DamianHinds, If we can't stay in Erasmus+, will the UK government fund a national scheme to enable students to study abroad after Brexit?*
#SupportStudyAbroad
<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/supportstudyabroad>
2. *.@DamianHinds over 600,000 Brits have made personal and professional connections across the world through Erasmus+. Please ensure that we will have a national replacement for it!*
#SupportStudyAbroad
<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/supportstudyabroad>

3. *I participated on Erasmus+, and I can tell you from experience that it's made a massive difference to my career and life! [@DamianHinds](#) please commit to ensuring replacement program in case of #NoDealBrexit!
#SupportStudyAbroad
<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/supportstudyabroad>*
4. *If we want a global Britain after Brexit, we must make sure we have the skills and connections to make it happen! [@DamianHinds](#) please commit to funding a replacement program for #Erasmus+ in case of #NoDealBrexit!
#SupportStudyAbroad
<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/supportstudyabroad>*
5. *Students who study abroad do better academically and professionally than their peers, and bring with them real global networks. [@DamianHinds](#) please make sure the opportunities are there for students after we leave the EU.
#SupportStudyAbroad
<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/supportstudyabroad>*

ABOUT UNIVERSITIES UK'S WORK ON STUDY ABROAD

In 2017, Universities UK International launched the [Go International: Stand Out](#) Campaign to double the percentage of UK students who study, work, or volunteer abroad as part of their degree.

So far, 90 universities have joined the campaign and pledged ambitious actions to help us reach this target.

The higher education sector recognises the significant value that study abroad opportunities hold for our students and our country. We need the government to recognise the same.

Find out more about the [Go International: Stand Out](#) campaign.

