



APPG for International Students

Minutes of the AGM 2024

19 March 2024 13:00 – 13:30

House of Lords, Committee Room 1

Attendees:

Paul Blomfield MP (Co-Chair and registered contact)
Baroness Uddin
Baroness Warwick
Lord Willets
Baroness Randerson
Lord Bourne
Afzal Khan MP (Arrived at 13:40)

Also in attendance:
Office of Matt Western MP
Office of Mark Logan MP

Apologies:

Lord Bilimoria (Co-Chair)
Mark Logan MP
Alison Thewliss MP
Ben Lake MP
Baroness Garden
Andrew Mitchell MP
Lord Lucas
Sir Bill Wiggin MP
Lord McConnell
Baroness Finlay
Baroness Ritchie

1. Minutes from 2023 AGM

The minutes from the 2023 AGM were reviewed.

APPROVED

2. Report of Activity 2023-24 including Approval of Income and Expenditure Statement

The group queried if the secretariat services provided by Independent Higher Education (IHE) should be noted in the expenditure statement under employment expenses, as the APPG does not employ anyone directly. The group asked the secretariat to confirm if these should be in-kind contributions from the secretariat and to confirm with APPG Officers before submitting the statement.

APPROVED (pending confirmation of expenditure statement change)

3. Election of Officers

*The election of Officers was undertaken according to the Guide to the Rules published in September 2023 which restricts an APPG to no more than four officers from 31 March 2024: <https://www.parliament.uk/about/mps-and-lords/members/apg/rules-on-appgs/>

APPG Officers standing for re-election/election:
Co-Chair (named contact): Paul Blomfield MP (Lab)
Co-Chair: Lord Bilimoria (Crossbench)
Secretary: Mark Logan MP (Con)
Treasurer: Baroness Uddin (non-affiliated)

Lord Bilimoria and Mark Logan MP both confirmed they agree to re-stand via email.

ELECTED

4. Creation of a Vice-Chair Council to advise the APPG Officers

The group voted to create a Vice-Chair Council, appointing members of the council from the current Vice-Chairs of the APPG. This council would not have a formal role in the APPG, as per the rules, but would serve in an advisory capacity. The group discussed if such a council is needed. The group noted the importance of the broad representation the Vice-Chairs have

given the group since the inception of the APPG. The group decided to trial the Vice-Chair Council to maintain representation from the devolved administrations and other groups, and to re-visit the question at the next AGM.

Vice-Chairs appointed:

Vice-Chair: Alison Thewliss (SNP)

Vice-Chair: Baroness Warwick (Lab)

Vice-Chair: Lord Willetts (Con)

Vice-Chair: Ben Lake MP (Plaid Cymru)

Vice-Chair: Baroness Garden (Lib Dem)

ELECTED

5. Approval of APPG Secretariat 2024

Independent Higher Education (IHE) to continue as Secretariat of the APPG for International Students.

APPROVED

6. Discussion

APPG activity in 2024

Immigration rule changes removing the rights of postgraduate taught students from bringing their dependants to the UK while studying.

The APPG agreed to conduct an evidence session exploring any possible changes or exemptions to the recently changed rule preventing students from bringing dependents unless sponsored by a government or completing a postgraduate research degree.

The session could explore how students could demonstrate the means to support their dependants.

The group noted that business schools are deeply impacted by this change. The session would hear evidence from business schools (capturing a broad range of provision and providers). The group also agreed to invite evidence from leading postgraduate taught institutions as those most impacted by the change.

The secretariat agreed to arrange this event as soon as possible after the Easter recess. The session would gather evidence to make representations to Ministers, ideally before the Migration Advisory Committee reports on their review of the Graduate visa.

The group agreed to not pursue more events in 2024, other than the annual celebration of International Students' Day, until after the General Election as the APPG for International Students will re-form after this time.

7. AOB and Close

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 13:37.

Following the AGM:

Panel discussion: "What do declining international student numbers mean for the UK?"

The panel included:

- **Harry Anderson**, Deputy Director - Policy and Global Engagement, Universities UK International (UUKi)
- **James Pitman**, Managing Director (HE UK & Europe) Study Group and Chair of the Board, Independent Higher Education (IHE)
- **Emma Meredith**, Director of Global Engagement - Interim Director of Skills Policy, Association of Colleges (AoC)
- **Huan Japes**, Membership Director and Joint Acting Chief Executive, English UK
- **Simon Nathan**, Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Policy, Independent Schools Council (ISC)