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TURING

SCHEME

The UK's global programme
to study and work abroad

Turing Scheme: Year 1 evaluation

Research report

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Executive summary

In December 2020, the UK Government announced its plans for the Turing Scheme, which would provide funding for international opportunities across the world. The first year of operation (academic year 2021-22), provided £110m of funding. This was expected to enable up to 35,000 students, learners and pupils (participants), registered in a UK or British Overseas Territories education organisation, to undertake international study or work placements.

Evaluation methodology

In November 2021, the DfE commissioned IFF Research to carry out an evaluation of the Turing Scheme in its first year of operation to explore: how well it has been implemented; and the short and medium-term outcomes on providers and participants. The findings from the evaluation will inform reviews of the scheme's design and funding in the future. The evaluation included three key audiences:

- **Turing Scheme education providers:** Two stages of research (the first exploring early provider experiences, the second exploring reflections on overall delivery). Both stages involved a census telephone survey (210 providers took part in Stage 1, and 154 in Stage 2; equating to 56% and 51% of the population) and follow-up depth interviews with 45 providers.
- **Turing Scheme Participants:** An online survey with 2,645 participants who had finished their placement abroad (equating to 12% of the overall population of participants). Due to sample limitations, the base size for school participants was very low (n=66), and findings for this audience are presented separately in this report. A total of 10 focus groups and 34 individual depth interviews with participants were carried out to explore themes in more depth.
- **Non-participating providers:** 15 depth interviews were carried out, with providers who had applied but were unsuccessful, or started but did not finish an application.

Evaluation findings

How effective is the administration of applications for Turing Scheme funding?

Providers, particularly those from the Higher Education (HE) funding stream, had some difficulty with the application to the scheme. The majority (79%) of HE providers found this difficult, while 23% of Further Education / Vocation Education Training (FE/VET) providers and 29% of schools did. Difficulties tended to relate to the amount of detail and

forecasting required in the form (likely to be relatively more complex for HE providers, who deliver a greater volume and variety of placements).

Contributing further to negative views, many felt the timescale for completing the form - 6 weeks for HE providers, 8 weeks for FE/VET and schools - was too short. Furthermore, it was common for HE applicants to flag that the application window fell over the Easter period, meaning that they were required to complete the application during their annual leave and in the absence of support staff.

Another consideration was the timing of outcome communications (July). Some providers felt this left very little time for preparation around the summer holidays. Furthermore, HE providers also mentioned participants taking a year abroad often needed to be there in July/August and had therefore committed to their decision before knowing if funding would be available.

These issues were not great enough to deter providers from applying for Year 2 funding, however; the vast majority (86%) of providers did so. Only a minority of these providers (across all funding streams) agreed that there had been improvements to the application process (11% of HE providers, 21% of FE/VET providers, 32% of schools). This indicates that there is further room for improvement.

- **Recommendations:** To improve the application process experience, the delivery partner/DfE could open the application window earlier, enable a 'downloadable' form, and consider reducing the level of detail requested in the application.

How well does the Turing Scheme funding support providers in building international education links?

Most providers (95% for HE, 76% for FE/VET, and 54% of schools) had received funding for international opportunities prior to the introduction of the Turing Scheme. Typically, this had been through Erasmus(+). Maintaining these existing international links was important to the vast majority of providers (96% of HE providers and schools, 94% of HE/VET providers).

On completion of the first year of the Turing Scheme, most providers stated that relationships had been maintained (89% of HE providers, 86% of HE/VET, 83% of schools). Among those who had previously delivered Erasmus(+), around two-fifths (42%) of FE/VET providers and schools and more than half (52%) of HE providers said that they have been able to increase the volume of international placements offered through the Turing Scheme compared to Erasmus(+).

- **Recommendation:** Ensure this intended outcome continues to be explored in future research, to understand the longer-term impact of the Turing Scheme, where and how strong global connections are being maintained and made.

How well does Turing funding support participants to engage in international mobility?

Overall, the Turing Scheme has been successful in creating opportunities for international placements. Providers stated that the main motivation for applying to the Turing Scheme was the ability to provide funding for international mobility that would otherwise not have been possible, particularly for participants from a disadvantaged background.

Regarding the funding volumes, both providers and participants were likely to state that the Turing Scheme funds went some way in covering costs, but further funds (outside of the scheme) were often needed. A minority (45%) of HE participants felt the funding covered at least half of their costs on placement; this compares to the vast majority (86%) of FE/VET participants. That said, the funding appears to have been more crucial for FE/VET participants in terms of enabling them to go abroad in the first place. When asked the likelihood of going on placement in the absence of funding, only 23% of FE/VET participants said it was likely they would have, compared to 60% of HE participants. For those that would have gone on their placement regardless, they still found the funding extremely valuable, as it allowed them to have a more immersive experience and travel around within the country to a greater extent; the funding made their visit more of an experience.

There was a general view that some delivery issues raised had a greater impact on participants from a disadvantaged background and may have created barriers to many participating. Providers said that the timing of when application outcomes were confirmed (i.e., after many participants would have had to already commit to their placement abroad) meant some who could not afford the upfront cost or the risk of funding not being available down the line dropped out. Likewise, from the participant perspective, many described receiving the funds while already on placement, or even after they had returned. These participants acknowledged that without being fortunate enough to have alternative funds (for example, from parents or saved up from working) to see them through, or to fall back on in case funding was not going to be available, they would not have been able to go on the placement.

In terms of the participant experience, the vast majority of HE and FE/VET participants were satisfied with their placement abroad (92% and 89%, respectively), with substantial proportions very satisfied (70% for both HE and FE/VET participants). In the future, these

positive experiences will be important in boosting the reputation of the scheme and encouraging learners to participate.

- **Recommendations:** To widen participation further, the delivery partner/DfE should: consider greater funding amounts for the most disadvantaged and bring the application window and confirmation of outcome window forward; encourage providers to offer some funds to participants upfront (before placements have started); and make use of positive feedback from participants to advertise the scheme to prospective participants in the future.

What are the short-term benefits to participants who have engaged in mobilities?

Participants were very positive in terms of the outcomes experienced through taking part in the Turing Scheme. For example, the majority of HE and FE/VET participants reported improvements in soft skills (for example, communication, motivation, self-awareness), and academic and professional skills. HE and FE/VET participants reported increased confidence, being 'more well-rounded' and mature, more friendships, and improved sociability.

Participants also reported increases in their international outlook, with the vast majority (97% for HE, 96% for FE/VET) wanting to travel outside of the UK in the future either for travel, study, or employment. Nine-in-ten participants from HE settings (90%) and slightly fewer from FE/VET (84%) reported an increased ability to get along with people from different cultural backgrounds after their placement.

1. Introduction and Methodology

In December 2020, the UK Government announced its plans for the Turing Scheme, a scheme to provide funding for international opportunities in education and training across the world. For its first year of operation, the scheme provided £110m of funding, which was expected to enable up to 35,000 students, learners and pupils (participants) registered in a UK or British Overseas Territories organisations to study and undertake work placements.

The Turing Scheme provides funding for UK organisations from the Higher Education (HE), Further Education and Vocational Education and Training (FE/VET), and schools sectors to offer their students, learners and pupils international experiences. The scheme funded international visits for the first time in academic year 2021-22. More information on the Turing Scheme can be found in the initial gov.uk [press release](#), and on the [Turing Scheme website](#).

At the scheme's inception, the British Council and Ecorys were jointly awarded the role of delivery partner, who oversaw all Year 1 applications and management of the funds up to March 2022. In April 2022, Capita became the delivery partner, and subsequently managed all Year 2 applications, and the final months of the funding for Year 1.

Evaluation of Year 1

In November 2021, the DfE commissioned IFF Research to carry out an evaluation of the Turing Scheme in its first year of operation (academic year 2021-22) to explore how well it has been implemented and the short and medium-term outcomes for providers and participants.

The findings from the evaluation will inform reviews of the scheme's design and funding in the future. The high-level evaluation questions were:

- How effective is the administration of applications for Turing Scheme funding?
- How well does Turing funding support providers in building international education links?
- How well does Turing funding support participants to engage in international mobility?
- What are the short and medium-term benefits to participants who have engaged in mobilities?

Methodology

The methodology for this evaluation covered three key audiences:

1. Education providers who were awarded funding via the Turing Scheme

Two stages of research were conducted with education providers awarded funding in the first year of the scheme. The first took place in early 2022 (February – May), halfway through the academic year, and explored early provider experiences, including motivations for taking part, the application process, and placements delivered at that point in time. The second took place at the start of the following academic year (September 2022 – January 2023), when providers could reflect on the full delivery of the Turing Scheme's first year and delivery of their placements.

Both stages involved an attempted census telephone survey (210 interviews were achieved at Stage 1, representing 56% of providers awarded funding, and 154 at Stage 2, representing 51% of providers who participated in Year 1) and follow-up depth interviews with 45 providers. Further details on response volumes/rates across funding streams, and topic coverage can be found in Appendix 1A.

2. Turing Scheme Participants

IFF Research administered an online survey to participants whose placement period had completed at four points during the evaluation period. The sample was provided by the delivery partners and contained a census of all completed placements at each point.

In total, 2,185 HE participants (16% of all HE participants), 394 FE/VET participants (8% of all FE/VET participants) and 66 school participants (2% of all school participants) completed an online survey. There were some limitations to the contact details provided via the delivery partner, however, with many instances of staff contact details being supplied in place of participant details. In these instances, IFF asked staff to disseminate a provider-specific open link to their relevant participants. This was far more common for school sample and resulted in a much lower response for this audience. Due to the low base size for school participants, findings for this audience have not been weighted, should be treated as indicative rather than representative of the population and are reported separately, in Chapter 10.

Survey responses were supplemented with qualitative discussions, including 10 focus groups and 34 individual depth interviews. In total, 87 participants were involved in qualitative discussions, with a good mix across HE, FE/VET and schools.

Further details can be found in Appendix 1B.

3. Non-participating providers

To better understand barriers to participation and the impact of being declined for a Turing Scheme grant, IFF Research also conducted 15 depth interviews with providers who had either applied but were unsuccessful; or started an application but did not complete it.

2. Profile of providers, participants and placements

This chapter presents the high-level profile of funded providers and participants, and information about the types of placements funded in the first year of the Turing Scheme. This information comes from the Turing Scheme management information (MI).

Profile of education providers

According to the MI, a total of 373 education providers were awarded funding in Year 1 of the scheme, and 304 - or 82% - went on to deliver placements (barriers to delivery are explored in Chapter 6). Providers were broadly categorised into one of three 'funding streams', depending on the type of organisation: Higher Education (HE), Further Education and Vocational Education Training (FE/VET) and schools.

As shown in Table 2.1, awarded providers were quite evenly split between these three funding streams, with a slight skew towards HE providers. However, HE providers accounted for a greater proportion of those that went on to deliver placements (44%). Aside from HE institutions, across both those awarded and those that delivered, Academy or Free Schools and FE colleges were most common. Smaller minorities were accounted for by public or private enterprises, community / LA maintained schools and independent training providers.

As shown in Table 2.1, the vast majority (85%) of providers were based in England, and the proportions in each country were relatively aligned when comparing those that were awarded funding to those that delivered placements (i.e. where planned placements actually happened).

Table 2.1 Profile of education providers, split by those awarded funding and those who went on to deliver placements in Year 1, by funding stream

Funding Stream	Awarded	Delivered
Higher education	37%	44%
School	31%	24%
Vocation education and training	32%	32%

Source: Turing Scheme Management Information Base: All providers awarded funding (373); All providers that completed placements (304).

Table 2.2 Profile of education providers, split by those awarded funding and those who went on to deliver placements in Year 1, by country

Country	Awarded	Delivered
England	85%	85%
Northern Ireland	4%	3%
Scotland	8%	8%
Wales	4%	3%

Source: Turing Scheme Management Information Base: All providers awarded funding (373); All providers that completed placements (304).

Profile of participants

The MI showed that in total, 20,822 individuals (excluding accompanying staff) took part in Year 1 of the Turing Scheme (note: the original target was 35,000). Those in HE settings accounted for three-fifths of participants (63%), while FE/VET participants accounted for 22%, and school participants 14%.

Participants were most likely to fall into the 19-24 age group (63%); 11% were Under 16, 15% were aged 16-18, and 10% were aged 25+. Participants were more likely to be female (57%) than male (37%) a further 6% were unknown/other.

Almost two fifths (39%) of participants were from a disadvantaged background and 9% had a known disability or special educational needs.

Profile of placements

A total of 21,353 placements were completed in the Turing Scheme's first year. Placements tended to be focused on study / learning (67%) as opposed to work (33%).

Host countries were most commonly in Europe (47%), although North America (22%) and Asia were also fairly popular (19%). A small minority of placements were in Africa (7%), Oceania (4%), and South America (2%).

Length of placement varied by funding stream, with the majority of FE/VET and school placements being short. Overall, the average (mean) number of days HE students spent in a placement was 109 days (median 68) compared to FE/VET (where the mean and median was 26 days and 16 days respectively) and a mean average of 7 days (median 6) for schools

A full breakdown of host destinations, placement types and length by funding stream can be found in Appendix 2A.

3. How effectively was the Turing Scheme communicated to providers?

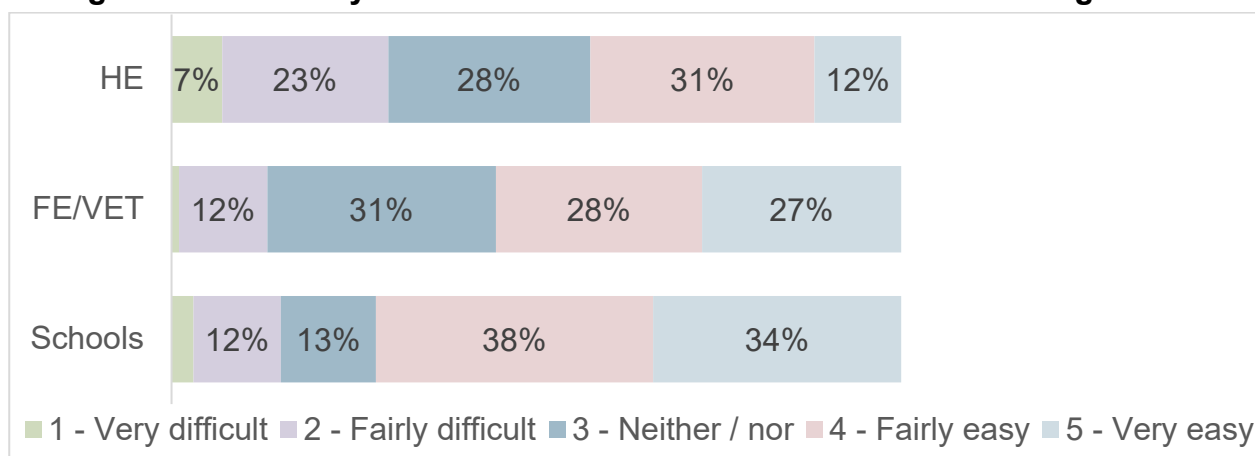
This chapter explores the experience and views of providers on first hearing about the Turing Scheme, and how effective the DfE were in communicating this information. It will also examine providers’ principal motivations for participating in the scheme.

Communication of the Turing Scheme to providers

Generally, provider views on information and communications about the Turing Scheme suggested more could have been done to proactively advertise / share information about the scheme in its early stages.

Higher Education (HE) providers tended to find it more difficult than other provider types to find information about the Turing Scheme. As shown in Figure 3.1, 43% of HE providers found it easy to find information on the Turing Scheme, while higher proportions of Further Education / Vocational Education Training (FE/VET; 55%) providers and schools (72%) did.

Figure 3.1 How easy/difficult it was to find information on the Turing Scheme



Source: Stage 1 provider survey. Base: All – HE (75), FE/VET (67), Schools (68)

HE providers were most likely to have first heard about the Turing Scheme through the British Council newsletter (22%) or through reports in the national or education media (22%). These were the two main routes across other funding streams too, with 23% of schools first hearing about the scheme in a British Council newsletter, and 24% of FE/VET providers first hearing through reports in national or education media.

Providers indicated some improvement could be made with DfE’s chosen communication channels and messaging: just under four in ten HE providers (36%) stated that they were effective. Whilst this proportion was slightly higher amongst FE/VET providers (45%) and

schools (47%), a similar proportion across all providers agreed that their chosen channels had been ineffective (27% of HE providers, 21% of FE/VET providers, and 28% of schools).

Many providers in the qualitative interviews explained that they had to actively seek information as initial information and communications from the DfE or British Council were limited. Providers felt that there was insufficient information available through official channels, with many feeling their experience of finding out about the Turing Scheme was no different to any other member of the public:

Really, we found out about it via various channels, none of which were official, it was like, 'word on the street', and social media. – *HE provider, Scotland*

Education provider motivations

The main motivation for participation in the Turing Scheme was the ability to provide funding for international mobility that would otherwise not have been possible. In the survey, 44% of HE providers identified this as their main motivation, and 34% of FE providers did.

In qualitative interviews, most providers raised the benefits of international opportunities they had seen among students previously.

Improved employability, exposure to different learning environments, opportunities to gain international work experience...which without funding is almost impossible to do unless you're from a very privileged background. – *HE provider, England*

Some also felt that offering international opportunities improved the value of their offer as an education provider, particularly in disadvantaged areas:

It's an amazing opportunity ... a lot of the pupils we have are disadvantaged, so for the school to be able to show to the community that children can have the same opportunities as other schools in the area, it's very good for our reputation. For us attracting new students to the school, it's brilliant. – *School provider, England*

Education providers that had actively decided not to apply tended to state that the scheme would not be worth their while, as the funding did not quite marry up with their needs.

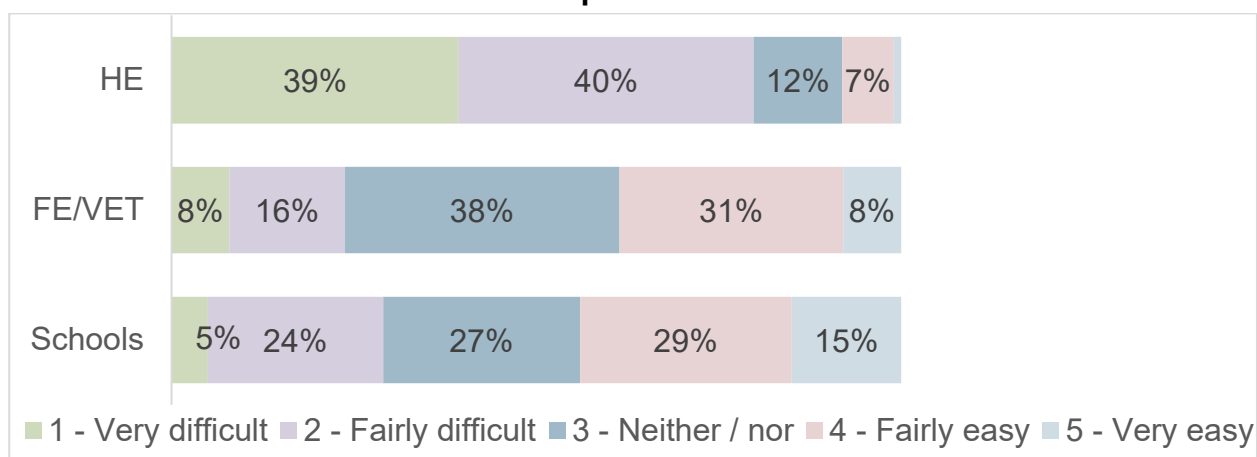
4. How effective was the application process for providers?

This chapter explores the provider experience of applying to Year 1 of the Turing Scheme. Applications opened on 12 March 2021. The deadline for Higher Education (HE) providers was Friday 16 April 2021 (giving them 6 weeks for completion), while Further Education / Vocational Education Training (FE/VET) providers and schools had until Friday 7 May 2021 (giving them 8 weeks for completion).

Experiences of the Year 1 application process

Both the provider survey findings and qualitative interviews highlight challenges in the application process, particularly among HE providers. As shown in Figure 4.1, most HE providers (79%) found the Year 1 application process difficult, whilst 19% found it easy. Although fewer FE/VET providers and schools found the application process difficult (24% and 29% respectively), the proportions stating they found it easy were still in the minority, suggesting there is scope to improve the process.

Figure 4.1 How easy/difficult providers found the Turing Scheme application process



Source: Stage 1 provider survey. Base: All those directly involved in the application process – HE (67), FE/VET (64), Schools (62)

Similarly, HE providers were far more likely to state that the process requirements of the application (for example, information needed, length of time to complete etc.) were unreasonable (76% compared to 16% of FE/VET providers and 19% of schools)

This was supported by evidence from the qualitative interviews. Where providers experienced challenges with the application, particularly HE and FE/VET providers, they struggled with the need to forecast exact volumes, destinations, durations, and timings of placements. As outlined in Chapter 2 and Appendix 2A, HE providers were delivering a greater scale (volume and duration) and variety (destinations and nature) of placements.

Having to plan and account for this volume and range of placements is likely to have contributed to HE providers' relative difficulty completing the application. Furthermore, some HE providers drew comparisons with Erasmus+ application requirements which, in their view, were more straightforward.

Providers often felt that the timescale for completing the form was too short, particularly in relation of the amount of information they were required to gather. Many applicants described needing to dedicate several weeks to the application. It was common for HE applicants to flag that the application window fell over the Easter period, meaning that they were required to complete the application during their annual leave and in the absence of support staff. Changing the timing of the application window was seen as crucial to one HE provider:

Getting the application window away from Easter would be the single most important thing they could do. – *HE provider, England*

One HE provider described the impact that the time pressure had on their ability to be innovative with planned placements:

Four weeks isn't very long anyway, and if you are looking to be ambitious and innovative like we are being asked to be by DfE...we don't have time to do that because we have to consult across our whole university, all the faculties, all the deans [...] It just doesn't work, what we find is that we're unable to be innovative...and we're just going with business as usual. – *HE provider, England*

In terms of the practicalities of filling out the form, providers who found this easier praised the accompanying guidance, describing it as concise and clear. Despite this, others struggled somewhat. For example, some mentioned not being able to 'skip ahead' and access upcoming questions (some would have liked to download the form), or easily share the form with colleagues they needed information from. Questions were available in the PDF guidance; greater awareness of this could have addressed these qualms.

Among unsuccessful providers, many were unclear on definitions/requirements within the application and suggested that more guidance on these could have been provided.

Across all funding streams, providers also described the questions as repetitive, making the application tricky in places, and tedious.

It was a lot of work. The reason was because it was very repetitive, and they kept asking the same questions, so you had to find another way to answer that didn't sound like you were copycatting the previous questions. – *School provider, England*

Providers had mixed opinions on how supportive the delivery partners were during the application process. Although many viewed the delivery partners as responsive and acknowledged their attempts to be helpful (for example, with information-sharing webinars), some felt that they were also struggling to get to grips with the delivery of a new scheme. In some instances, this meant answers to questions were not readily available, and queries took time to resolve in already challenging timescales.

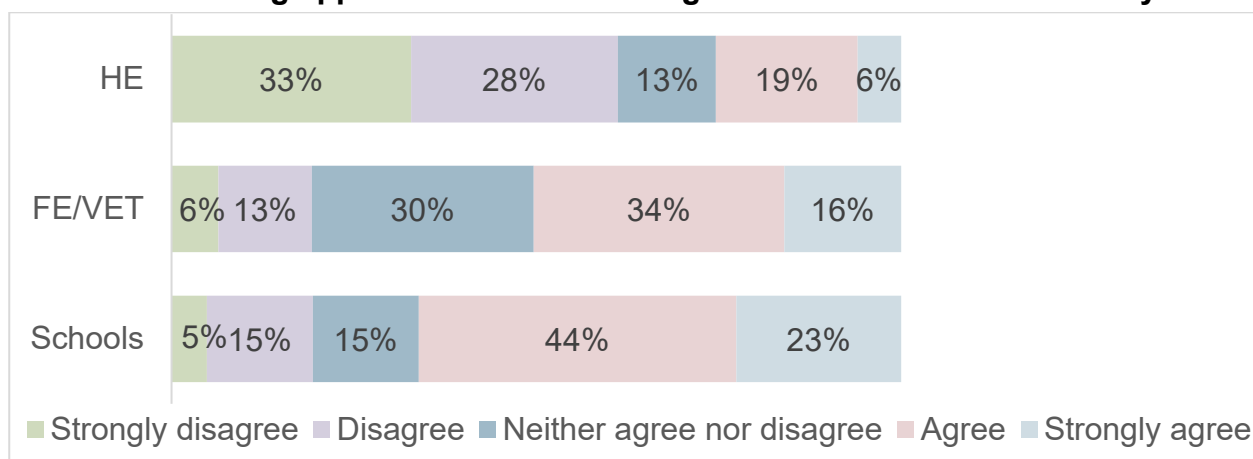
Application for Year 2 of the scheme

Despite the difficulties with the Year 1 application, the vast majority (86%) of providers who participated in Year 1 of the Turing Scheme applied to Year 2, where some changes had been made to improve the process. This included streamlining the application questions and simplifying the funding request categories. However, only a minority of providers (across all funding streams) agreed that there had been improvements to the application process (11% of HE providers, 21% of FE/VET providers, 32% of schools). This indicates that there is further room for improvement.

Experiences of the post-application stage

As with their experience with the application process itself, HE providers tended to be negative about the time taken between submitting their application and receiving confirmation the outcome. As shown in Figure 4.2, 61% of HE providers disagreed that the time taken was satisfactory, while only 19% of FE/VET providers and schools disagreed. Schools were most positive, with 67% agreeing that this timescale was satisfactory.

Figure 4.2 Extent to which providers agree/disagree that the time between submitting applications and receiving the outcome was satisfactory



Source: Stage 1 provider survey. Base: All those directly involved in the application process, excluding 'don't know' responses – HE (67), FE/VET (63), Schools (62)

Two-thirds (66%) of HE providers felt that the outcome decision took longer than expected, while only 33% and 27% of FE/VET and schools did.

In the qualitative interviews, most providers said that they received the outcome of their application in July. Many found this timing problematic because it fell into summer holidays, when staff were not around to set up the scheme for their organisation. Most HE providers also mentioned that, where participants were doing a year abroad or studying at overseas universities, many had needed to leave in July/August to be there for the start of overseas semesters, and therefore left before they knew whether financial support would be available. Even if a learner was not leaving until September, HE providers flagged they usually had to financially commit to their decision sooner, to be guaranteed a university place and/or accommodation (both overseas and in England).

If you've got students going out in September, they have to make a decision and pay deposits, one way or another. – *HE provider, Scotland*

Providers in the qualitative research highlighted that this had a particular impact on (prospective) participants from a disadvantaged background, who could not afford the upfront cost or the risk of funding not being available down the line. This issue is explored further in on provider views on the Turing Scheme widening access (page 28) and participant's experiences (pages 35 and 44).

Views on communications from the delivery partner¹ after the application had been submitted indicated further room for improvement. In the survey, 37% of HE and 42% of FE/VET providers said the delivery partners had good communication during this period. However, schools were relatively positive, with 61% who said this communication was good. In qualitative interviews, providers who felt disappointed with this communication identified that more regular and proactive updates would have been helpful.

¹Important to note that the delivery partner is Capita now, but it was Ecorys / British Council at the inception of Year 1.

5. How well does Turing Scheme funding support providers in building international links?

This chapter explores the extent to which the Turing Scheme enabled providers to maintain or build international links with institutions around the world, and how important being able to do so was to these providers.

Maintaining previously established international links

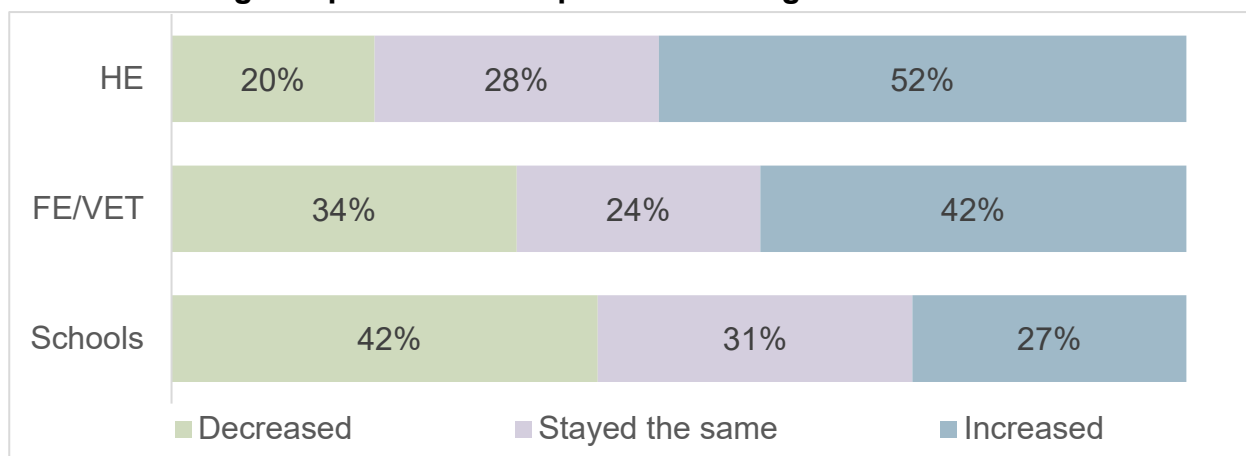
Most providers had received funding for international placements prior to the Turing Scheme. Nearly all the higher education (HE) providers had previously received funding (95%). Around three-quarters (76%) of further education or vocational education training (FE/VET) providers and just over half (54%) of schools had previously received.

Among those who had received previous funding, the vast majority had participated in Erasmus(+) (100% of HE providers, 98% of FE/VET providers, and 70% of schools).

The vast majority of providers felt that maintaining existing international links was important (96% of HE providers and schools, 94% of HE/VET providers). In qualitative interviews, some providers raised concern about the lack of reciprocity in the Turing Scheme and the impact this would have on their existing relationships. However, on completion of the first year of the Turing Scheme, most providers stated that relationships had been maintained (89% of HE providers, 86% of HE/VET, 83% of schools).

In terms of the volume of placements, Figure 5.1 shows that the majority of education providers (across all funding streams) had either been able to increase or maintain the number of placements offered through the Turing Scheme compared to previously. More than 50% of HE providers had increased the volume of placements and 42% of FE/VET providers and 27% of schools.

Figure 5.1 Change in the volume of placements offered through Turing Scheme funding compared to those provided during Erasmus or Erasmus+



Source: Stage 1 Provider survey. Base: Organisations who previously participated in Erasmus or Erasmus+ (145): HE (69), FE (50), Schools (26). 'Don't know' responses removed.

Developing new international links

As well as ensuring that existing links were maintained, a key aim of the Turing Scheme was to develop international links with new partners around the world. This was experienced most by FE/VET providers (89%) and schools (86%) but was less common for HE providers (48%). This could be due to HE providers being most likely to already have numerous international links in place before the Turing Scheme, through programmes like Erasmus(+).

One characteristic of the Turing Scheme fund is that it enabled international opportunities with a wider range of countries, namely non-EU countries. In line with this, HE providers were the most likely of the funding streams to report increased placement opportunities outside of Europe with almost two-thirds (65%) of HE providers saying they experienced this benefit. Around half (49%) of FE/VET and 39% of schools said they had increased opportunities outside of Europe with the funding.

FE/VET providers and schools were more likely to report an increase in European placements (80% and 74% respectively), while 39% of HE providers had done so. This indicates that HE providers have found greater success in expanding placements in areas outside of the traditional (previously Erasmus funded) countries.

Alternatives to the Turing Scheme

Funding for international placements outside of the Turing Scheme was very unlikely. Just under three quarters (74%) of schools who were surveyed said that alternative funding for similar international placement opportunities was not available and 81% of FE/VET providers answered similarly. Just under nine in ten (87%) of HE providers said that they would not be able to access similar funding without the Turing Scheme.

Providers would struggle to enable international placements without the funding granted through the Turing Scheme. Of those providers who participated in the Turing Scheme, most FE/VET providers and schools (93% and 87%, respectively) and a slightly lower proportion of HE providers (79%) said that they would not have been able to provide the international placements they did, without Turing Scheme funding. This was also mirrored in the qualitative analysis where many providers talked about their reliance on the Turing Scheme for their large-scale international placements and the lack of alternatives. Some providers did, however, mention smaller scale funding such as alumni donations or charitable grants, exchange systems funded by other countries, or specific projects/ bursaries funded by private sector or specialist international organisations.

[Charities or foundations offer grants] but only for exceptional students and nothing on a comparable scale to Turing. – *HE provider, England*

In qualitative interviews, some providers also mentioned alternative funding in Wales called the 'Taith' which has become available since the start of the Turing Scheme.

Being in Wales, we now have the Welsh Government Taith; so we have just made a bid for that – *HE provider, Wales*

6. What was the provider experience of Turing Scheme Year 1?

This chapter will present the volume and length of achieved placements, and barriers that providers experienced in delivering all their planned placements (including the impact of COVID-19). The chapter will also look at providers' perceived benefits of the Turing Scheme including benefits for those from diverse backgrounds.

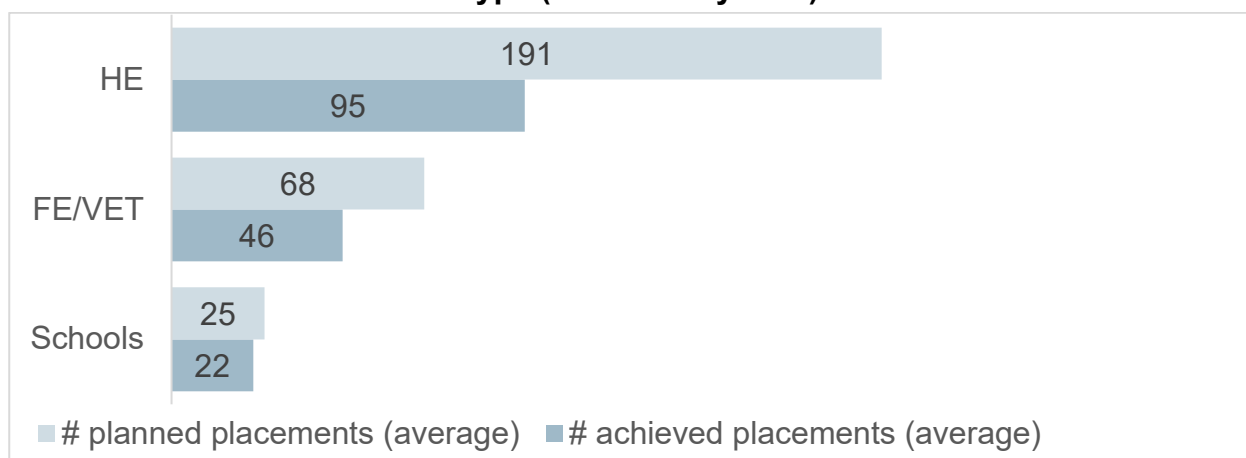
The volume and nature of Turing Scheme placements

HE providers in the evaluation study reported that they had planned to deliver a much higher number of placements than other provider types at the initial stage. As shown in Figure 6.1, for the first year of the scheme, HE providers had an average of 191 international placements planned, while FE/VET providers had an average of 68 planned, and schools, 25.

Due to a variety of factors (most notably, COVID-19), providers struggled to meet their planned volume of placements, especially HE providers. On average, HE providers reported delivering only half (50%, n=95 on average) of planned placements, while FE/VET providers reported delivering around two-thirds (68%, n=46 on average). Schools on the other hand reported they were closer to providing what they had set out deliver, with school providers on average achieving 88% (n=22 on average) of planned placements.

Final MI data showed that across all HE providers 43% of all planned placements in were delivered in total, and 69% of planned FE/VE placements and 39% of planned school placements were delivered.

Figure 6.1 Volume of initial planned vs. delivered placements, reported by provider type (from survey data)



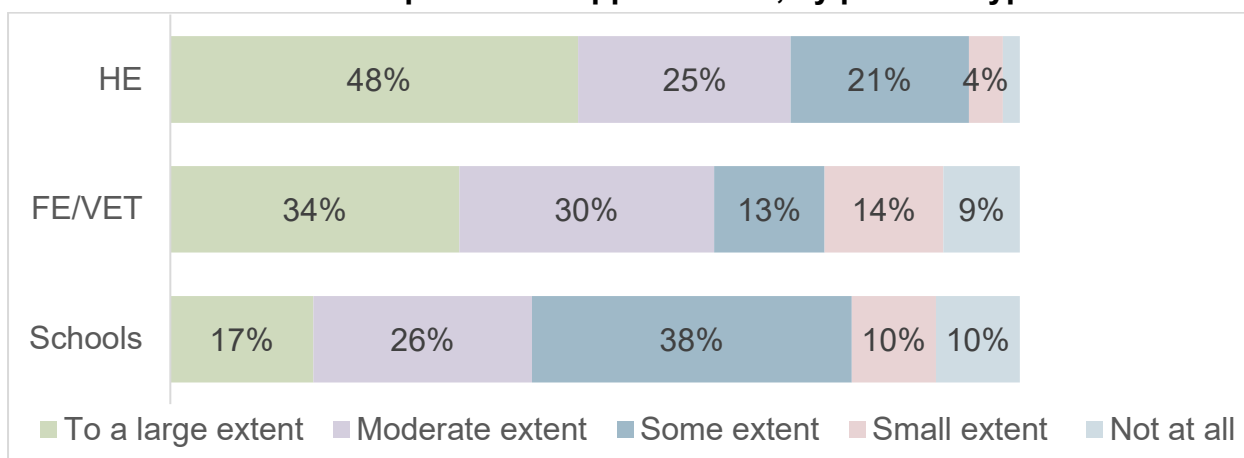
Source: Stage 2 Provider survey. Base: All providers (154): HE (56), FE (56), Schools (42)

In line with the MI data, in the survey schools and FE/VET providers were much more likely than HE providers to state that they offer short term international placements. All (100%) of schools said that 75% or more of their placements were short term, as did four-fifths (79%) of FE/VET providers and just over a quarter (27%) of HE providers. For providers who offered both short- and long-term placements,² schools and FE/VET providers both reported that short-term placements were easier to achieve than long-term placements. HE providers suggested the opposite, with over half (55%) saying that long-term placements were easier to achieve.

The impact of COVID-19 on the delivery of placements

COVID-19 had a very significant impact on the delivery of the first year of the Turing Scheme. Across all providers, more than nine-in-ten said that COVID-19 had an impact on the delivery of the Turing Scheme. HE providers felt the effects of COVID-19 the most. As shown in Figure 6.2, almost half (48%) of HE providers said that the pandemic had impacted the delivery of international placements to ‘a large extent’. This was much higher than schools where only 17% reported having delivery impacted to ‘a large extent’.

Figure 6.2 The extent to which COVID-19 had an impact on the delivery of international placement opportunities, by provider type



Source: Stage 2 Provider survey. Base: All providers (154): HE (56), FE (56), Schools (42)

Qualitative interviewing reflected the overall disruption caused to international placements by COVID-19. This not only had an impact on the placements themselves, but also the recruitment of students in the first place, who were reluctant to commit due to uncertainty that placements would go ahead, or anxiety about the pandemic.

² Short-term placements were defined as any placements lasting less than two months.

I think people were like, it [the placement] probably won't happen, or they were worried because Covid was still going on – *School, England*

All three provider types stated that the main impact of COVID-19 was that entry restrictions in foreign countries prevented participants from attending their placement. For HE providers, over three-quarters (76%) said this was an impact. Additionally, the second greatest impact felt by all three provider types was that COVID-19 created general uncertainty or concerns about safety and travel. This meant that participants were less likely to have signed up for the Turing Scheme, making it harder for providers to achieve their planned placements. Just under half (47%) of HE providers said that this was an issue. Over one-fifth of FE/VET providers and schools stated this to be an impact too (25% and 21% respectively).

Some countries wouldn't let students in, and some had backed away from wanting to do it, so plans that we had didn't come to fruition – *HE provider, England*

Other challenges to the delivery of the Turing Scheme

Qualitative interviews with providers highlighted other challenges to delivering the scheme in its first year. Some providers talked about waiting times leading to participants losing confidence / interest in the scheme.

A lot of it was due to the fact that Turing was a new scheme, and we were waiting on answers on things for a long time... We found that when it takes a long time to get an answer, the participants lose confidence. – *HE provider, Wales*

Timing of the funding allocation also presented difficulties for providers. They said that they were unable to guarantee funding to participants as awards were confirmed too close to the start of the placements, or even after some placements were already underway. This meant that some providers struggled to get participants to sign up.

We can't put it in our prospectus, we can't advertise the programme, because you're not allowed to advertise anything that isn't guaranteed. – *HE provider, England*.

Some providers said that allowing the funding to be released earlier would help solve this issue.

The sooner that they can be approved for their funding, their entitlement, the more likely they are to follow through with it and actually go, and the sooner those funds are released for them the more they can, for example, book their flights in advance and get the best possible rate on that. – *HE provider, England*

Providers also encountered some difficulties getting support from delivery partners. A frequent challenge mentioned in qualitative interviewing was the time it took for the delivery partners to respond to providers' questions. When providers did get a response from the delivery partners, it often told them to refer back to the programme guide. This problem was exacerbated by the fact that this was the Turing Scheme's first year, and many providers had questions about how to deliver their placements.

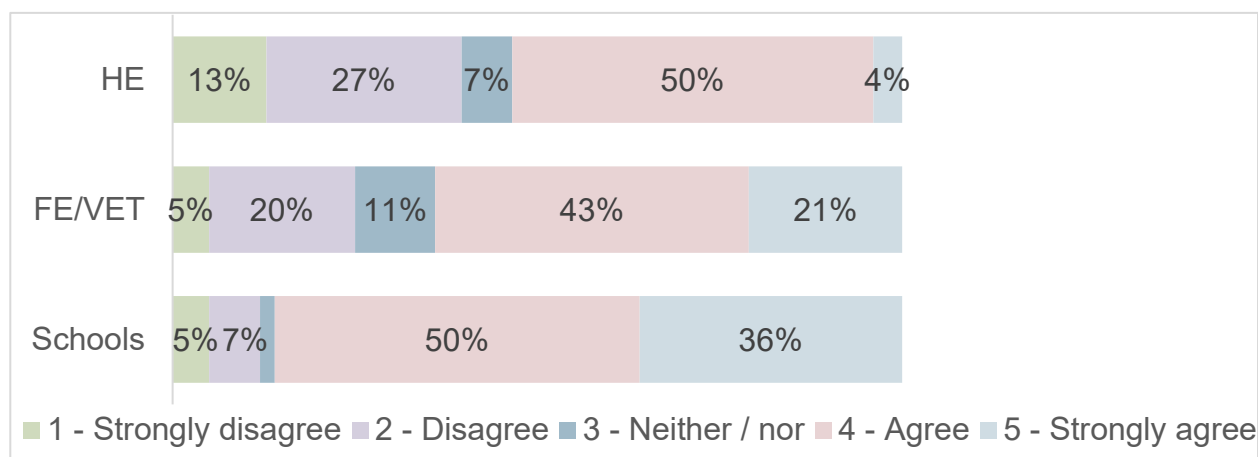
The communication was pretty poor. You can't pick up a phone and speak to anyone. The negative thing is that they refer you back to the programme guide. You try and get clarification, but they just refer you back to it, and it's like 'well I don't understand it, that's why I'm asking'. – *FE/VET provider, England*

The delivery of Turing Scheme placements

The Turing Scheme has been a success when it comes to delivering international placement opportunities, particularly for FE/VET providers and schools. At least 89% of providers in these funding streams agreed that the Turing Scheme was satisfactory in providing placement opportunities. Less than one-in-ten (5% and 7% respectively) said that it had been unsatisfactory. The views of HE providers were more mixed. Almost half (45%) of HE providers said that they thought that the Turing Scheme was satisfactory. However, around one third (31%) said that they thought the Turing Scheme was unsatisfactory and around one quarter (24%) were ambivalent.

Figure 6.3 shows to what extent each provider agreed that the level of funding provided was satisfactory. A majority of all providers believed that the level of funding was acceptable, and schools appeared to be the most satisfied of the three provider types.

Figure 6.3 The extent to which different provider types agree or disagree that the funding provided on Year 1 of the Turing Scheme was satisfactory



Source: Stage 2 Provider survey. Base: All providers (154): HE (56), FE (56), Schools (42)

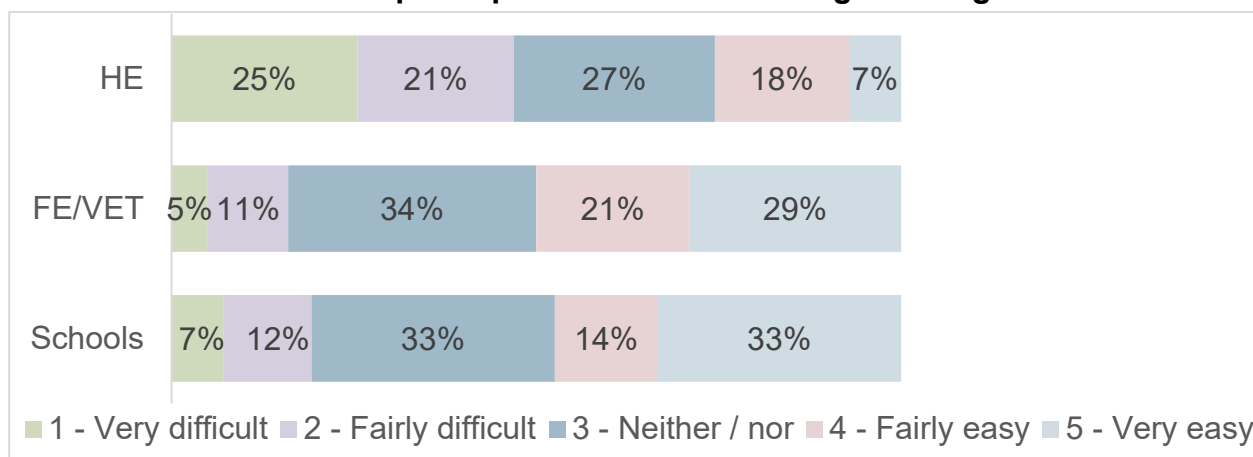
Similarly, only 36% of HE providers agreed that the funding offered by the Turing Scheme was enough to enable their students to participate, compared to 67% of FE/VET providers and 85% of schools.

Provider views on the Turing Scheme widening access to international opportunities

Around nine-in-ten of all providers (HE: 89%, FE/VET: 89% and schools: 90%) said that the Turing Scheme enabled them to improve participation in international placements among participants from disadvantaged backgrounds. This was a key focus of the Turing Scheme.

There was, however, mixed feedback from providers regarding how easy it was to achieve the number of planned placements for participants from disadvantaged backgrounds, with HE providers finding this relatively difficult. As shown in Figure 6.4, around half of HE providers (46%) found it difficult to meet their target. This compared to 16% of FE/VET providers and 19% of schools finding this difficult.

Figure 6.4 How easy/difficult providers found it to achieve their target number of mobilities for participants from disadvantaged backgrounds



Source: Stage 2 Provider survey. Base: All providers excluding 'don't know' responses - (153): HE (55), FE (56), Schools (42)

Generating interest among for participants from disadvantaged backgrounds was not a main challenge – in qualitative interviews, providers indicated that barriers related to the initial lack of guarantee for funding, the amount of funding and the timing that it was delivered. These issues were felt to disproportionately impact participation among disadvantaged groups. HE providers in particular attributed difficulty recruiting this group to the level of funding provided.

We ended up asking our students to make a contribution. When you're trying to encourage disadvantaged students to go on these things...it's only £300, but it's still £300 which is a lot of money. The funding isn't enough for what we're trying to do. – *HE provider, England*

At some point that student has to decide whether they can afford to go or not, and if they're really financially disadvantaged they're not going to be able to go. - *HE provider, England*

For those students the money isn't sufficient. The issues have been around the weekly stipend and that just not really covering. They've had to supplement it, even though they're from a disadvantaged background. – *HE provider, England*

These views are supported by participant views on the funding, explored in Chapter 8.

7. How are participants being informed and encouraged to participate in the Turing Scheme?

This chapter explores the Turing Scheme's delivery by providers, addressing how well providers address fairness when promoting the scheme, and examining participants' motivations to undertake placements. This chapter focuses on HE and FE/ VET participants; school participants are discussed in Chapter 8.

Promoting the Turing Scheme to students

In general, there was continuity between the methods that providers said they had used to promote the Turing Scheme, and the channels through which participants had heard about the scheme. The most common way HE providers made participants aware of placement opportunities was through email announcements (55%), and through communication on their website (48%). Schools and FE/VET providers favoured using announcements in class or in assembly (53% and 49% respectively).

HE participants echoed providers, with 41% having heard about the scheme from an email announcement and 43% as part of their university course. Roughly one fifth of FE/VET participants also used these channels (20% and 22% respectively), along with 20% hearing about the scheme in a class or assembly, and 23% coming across information about a placement at their college. Most participants felt they had sufficient information to decide whether to take part in a placement abroad. Almost nine-in-ten participants from both HE and FE/VET providers (87% and 85% respectively) agreed that they had enough information to make a decision, with 61% of participants from both funding streams strongly agreeing.

Most providers used extra ways to inform and encourage participants specifically from disadvantaged backgrounds to apply. This was consistent across all funding streams (HE providers 84%, FE/VET providers 75% and 88% of schools).

This was supported by evidence from the qualitative interviews, where many providers expressed concerted efforts to make the programme as accessible as possible through a variety of approaches. Reassurance around funding and the level of support available on placement was key in encouraging participation amongst disadvantaged groups, with some providers organising face-to-face meetings specifically with these participants.

The reassurance for them was great, because we said that we could pay for their vaccinations, can pay for your passport... there should be no barriers whatsoever. – *School Provider, England*

However, many providers and participants felt that the Turing Scheme could be better targeted at participants from disadvantaged backgrounds and more could be done to

ensure they have fairness of participation. These comments related to the lack of clarity around the volume and the timeline of funding provision:

For disadvantaged or low-income students, of which I was one... the guarantees of funding are so ambiguous and so late that it doesn't really help. – *HE provider, England*

This issue is explored further in Chapter 6, where provider views on how successful the Turing Scheme has been in widening access is explored.

Motivations for taking part

As shown in Figure 7.1, the most common motivation for doing a placement amongst HE and FE/VET participants was helping their future career prospects. Almost half (47%) of FE/VET participants said that this was the most important motivation for taking part, whilst a slightly lower proportion of HE participants (33%) felt this was their main motivation. This was reflected by one FE/VET participants, whose placement opened their eyes to new career possibilities:

It makes me think differently now about my course ... people doing health and social care always think about nursing and social work, but this expanded my knowledge, I could go overseas and work in different sectors. - *FE/VET participant, work experience, Europe*

When asked in general, rather than focusing on their main motivation, HE participants put greater importance on the placement as a cultural experience than FE/VET participants, with 70% motivated by the experience of living in a new country, and 63% citing making friends from other cultures/countries. This compares to 54% and 36% (respectively) of FE/VET being motivated by these factors.

Table 7.1 Participant motivations for taking part in the Turing Scheme (top 5)

Motivation	HE (%)	FE/VET (%)
To help future career opportunities / prospects	77	79
To explore new places	77	70
To grow as a person	72	66
To experience living in a new country	70	54
To improve awareness/understanding of different cultures	60	54
To make friends from other cultures / countries	63	36

Source: Participant survey. Base: All HE and FE/VET participants – HE (2,185); FE/VET (394).

Some participants in the qualitative interviews expressed the excitement they felt about the potential of a placement abroad, and a relief that financial support was available for them:

I was pleased that it would help me to go abroad and get the experience, because I was worried there wouldn't be anything in place to support me with that – *HE* participant, *study/learning, Europe*

8. How well does Turing funding support participants to engage in international mobility?

This chapter explores the participant experience of the Turing Scheme, from overall satisfaction to views on funding amounts, and fairness in participation. It presents findings from Higher Education (HE) and Further Education / Vocational Education Training (FE/VET) participants only. Findings relating to school participants are presented separately, in Chapter 10.

Participant satisfaction with Year 1 of the Turing Scheme

Overall, the vast majority of HE and FE/VET participants were satisfied with their placement abroad (92% and 89%, respectively), with substantial proportions very satisfied (70% for both HE and FE/VET participants). Furthermore, around two-thirds of participants felt the experience exceeded their expectations (63% for HE participants, 66% for FE/VET).

Overall satisfaction for placements was higher among participants who were hosted in non-EU destinations (93% were satisfied with their placement) compared to those visiting EU destinations (87% were satisfied).

Among HE participants, the majority had a choice over their host country (82%), while just under half were able to choose what they would be doing abroad (48%) and the length of this placement (45%). Fewer FE/VET participants had these choices: 38% were able to choose the country, while around a quarter chose their type of placement (25%) and length (23%). As shown in Table 8.1, across both funding streams, the vast majority of participants who did have a choice were satisfied with the options available to them.

Table 8.1 Participant satisfaction with placements options available

Participant Satisfaction	HE (% agree)	FE/VET (% agree)
I was satisfied with the options for the length of my international placement	88	94
I was satisfied with the options for the type (e.g., studying, volunteering, work) of placement I could do	83	84
I was satisfied with the selection of countries that I could do my placement in	80	84

Source: HE and FE/VET survey. Base: All who had a choice on the type of placement, excluding 'don't know/not applicable' responses. In order of statements - HE (889; 968; 1,735), FE/VET (113; 93; 165)

It was fairly common for participants who were studying abroad to talk about how much they enjoyed experiencing a different education setting, for example a wider variety of modules, smaller classes, and the exposure to different lecturers.

Many who were working abroad talked about the opportunity to be exposed to different and well-known employers they would not have been able to work for otherwise.

Participants across all placement types talked positively about being exposed to and immersed in a different culture. It was fairly common for participants to talk about the funding as a key enabler of this. Some mentioned how they would not have been able to do such a trip without the funding.

The experience was overwhelmingly positive for me. The size of the funding surprised me, which was incredibly helpful, I wouldn't have been able to do it otherwise. The actual exchange itself was brilliant for me for personal development, academic development, and just very, very interesting and fun. - *HE, study/learning, Europe*

My trip was incredible. So, I've never been abroad before and it was just like 'what'. Experiencing a totally different side of life. It's going to be hard to top, I think! - *HE, study/learning, Africa*

Although many stated that they would have gone in the absence of funding (as outlined later in this section), they explained how the funding allowed them to travel around within the host country more and spend money on additional cultural experiences.

I was able to immerse myself in cultural things, which I couldn't do without the funding. I saw the opera and the ballet; my course isn't just about language but culture, so it really helped my experience to do stuff like that. - *HE, study/learning, Europe*

That said, when asked what aspects of the scheme they were not satisfied with, HE participants most commonly mentioned the level of funding (20%) or the information provided by their institution (17%). FE/VET participants were most likely to cite issues with the communication from and relationship with the organisation delivering their placement in the host country (14% and 10%, respectively).

In qualitative interviews, some participants also described challenges in the setup stages, for example, navigating visa requirements, and short lead in times to placements once confirmed. There were also some mentions of COVID-19 impacting placements. For example: host countries requiring isolation days before entering; needing to travel via other countries and isolating there due to restrictions coming from the UK; classes being

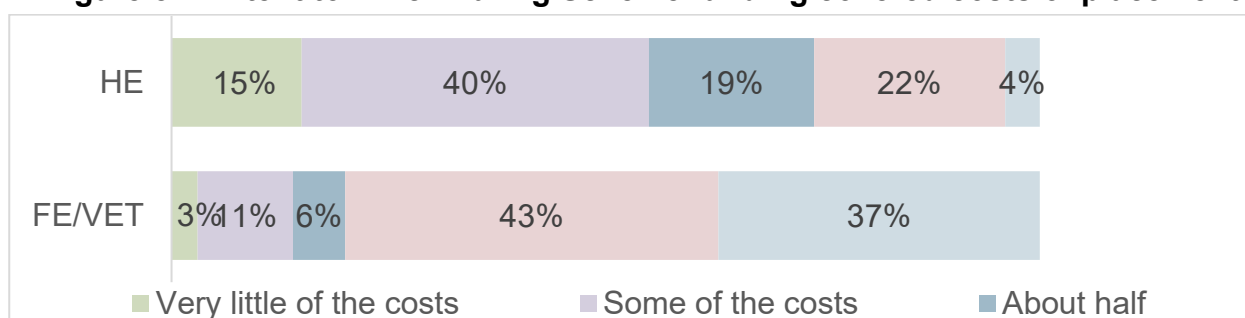
delivered online (restricting the social element of the placement); and outbreaks delaying return travel.

Views on the Turing Scheme funding

Participants had mixed views about how adequate the Turing Scheme funding was, and how it was delivered.

HE participants were far less positive than FE/VET participants regarding the Turing Scheme funding and how the amount aligned with their costs. As shown in Figure 8.1, a minority (45%) felt the funding covered at least half of their costs on placement; this compares to the vast majority (86%) of FE/VET participants.

Figure 8.1 Extent to which Turing Scheme funding covered costs of placement

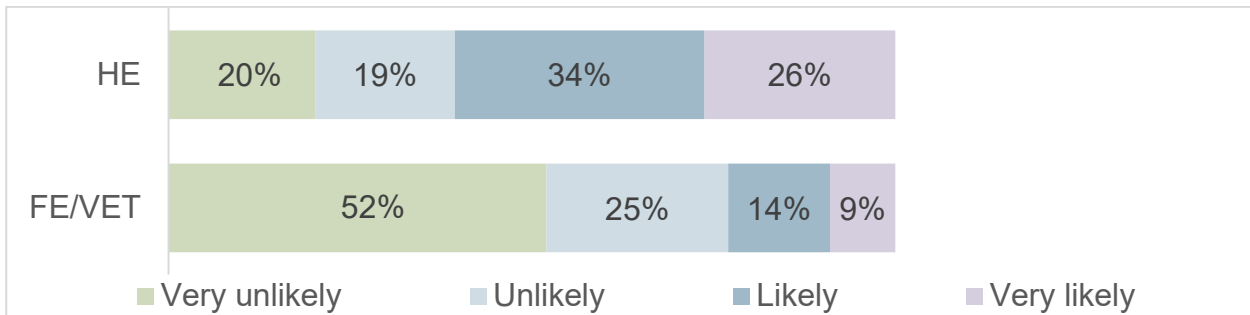


Source: Participant survey. Base: All aware of how funding was administered (i.e. directly or indirectly), excluding 'don't know' responses - HE (1,996); FE/VET (318)

Furthermore, although the majority were positive, HE participants were also less likely to agree the funding covered their living costs (65% compared to 81% of FE/VET participants), and that they had enough money to pay for social and leisure activities whilst abroad (54% compared to 64%). The vast majority of HE participants (96%) spent other money (i.e., in addition to the Turing Scheme funding) while abroad, while 78% of FE/VET participants did. HE participants tended to report that the cost of living was relatively high in the countries they visited, compared with FE/VET participants (39% compared with 10%) and were also likely to do longer placements.

That said, the funding appears to have been more crucial for FE/VET participants in terms of enabling them to go abroad in the first place. When asked about the likelihood of going on placement in the absence of funding, only 23% of FE/VET participants said it was likely they would have, compared to 60% of HE participants (see Figure 8.2).

Figure 8.2 Likelihood participants going on placement in the absence of Turing Scheme funding



Base: All HE and FE/VET participants, excluding 'don't know' responses – HE (2,080); FE/VET (371)

When asked what they would have done without the funding, the majority of both HE and FE/VET participants said they would not have gone on a placement abroad at all (57% and 73%, respectively), but HE participants were relatively more likely to say they would have sought alternative, cheaper options such as a different destination (23% compared to 15% of FE/VET) or shorter trip (14% compared to 4% of FE/VET).

All of these findings could be linked to HE participants being more likely to need to / be offered a whole year abroad as part of their academic course. As outlined in Chapter 2, HE participants were far more likely to have gone on longer placements. The greater likelihood of HE learners to take a year abroad, as opposed to shorter placements, means many of these individuals would have had to commit to the visit, or even have started it, before funding had been confirmed near the start of the academic year. This may have created a bias towards HE participants who had the existing financial security needed for a visit.

Indeed, this was supported by many HE participants in qualitative interviews. For many participants, funding was not confirmed and/or delivered until they were already on their placement (particularly if they had gone for the start of the academic year), or, in some instances, even after they had completed it.³ This was particularly challenging for participants who needed upfront costs to secure housing or for initial travel, which could be expensive. Many described worrying a lot before funding (and the amount they would receive) was confirmed, and then struggling with day-to-day living costs while waiting for funding to come through.

³ After application outcomes and awarded funds were confirmed, it was the responsibility of the education provider to manage fund distribution. However, the application outcome timing came after the start of placements for some participants who left earlier, there were some issues with funds being made available to providers at the start of the academic year, causing some confusion about whether funds would be available (and in what volumes).

I think I would like to have it earlier on in my year aboard, just because that was the period I was struggling especially like visa costs, and that kind of stuff which takes a massive chunk out. - *HE, study/learning, North America*

Some acknowledged that without being fortunate enough to have alternative funds to see them through in the meantime, or to fall back on in case funding was not available (for example, from parents or saved up from working), they would not have been able to go on the placement. This aligns with the provider views outlined in Chapter 6, and highlights a potential issue in terms of the Turing Scheme truly widening access for learners from a disadvantaged background, who may not have access to alternative funds to risk committing to a placement, or to support them until funding comes through.

Participants identified three key solutions to these challenges: earlier confirmation of funding awards to education providers; greater upfront clarity on the thresholds for different funding amounts; and earlier and more frequent release of funds from their education provider.

Experience during placements

Generally, participants were positive about how they were treated by others while on their placement. As shown in Table 8.2, at least four-fifths of participants from both HE and FE/VET funding streams agreed that they felt respected and valued by other people taking part in placements, the people in the country visited and staff involved in delivering the placement.

Table 8.2 Extent to which participants felt respected and valued by different groups during their placement

Groups involved in placement	HE (% agree)	FE/VET (% agree)
Other people taking part in a placement	91	89
People living in the country	87	86
Staff involved in delivering my placement	84	86

Source: HE and FE/VET survey. Base: All HE and FE/VET participants excluding 'don't know' responses. In order of statements - HE (2,043; 2,117; 2,123), FE/VET (383; 382; 381)

Amongst those who disagreed, the qualitative discussions highlighted particular issues relating to women, those with additional needs and those from ethnic minority groups.

I experienced some racism and had to be careful when I was out and about. - *HE, work experience, Europe*

I suppose I was quite different to people who live there...that made it hard at times. - *FE/VET, study/learning, Asia*

9. What are the short-term benefits of the Turing Scheme for participants?

This chapter explores the short-term benefits to participants who took part in the Turing Scheme. This includes changes to skills and opportunities, other potential personal or social benefits and any changes to future study or mobilities.

Impact of placement on participant skills and opportunities

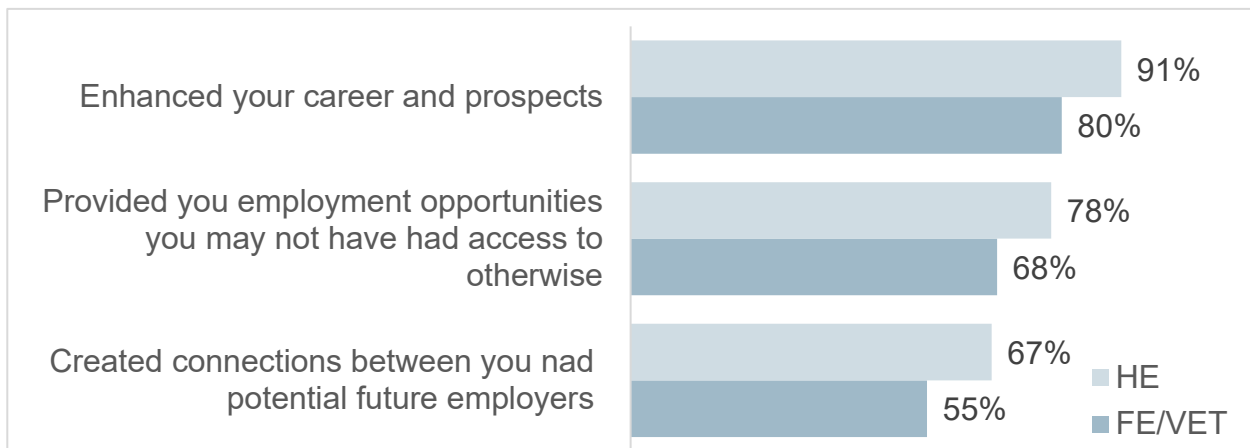
Participants identified several areas where skills and opportunities improved as result of the placement. In terms of 'soft skills' most participants (86%+) across HE and FE/VET settings reported improvements. For instance, most participants cited improvements in:

- Communication skills (96% for HE, 95% for FE/VET)
- Motivation and perseverance (97% for HE, 94% for FE/VET),
- Self-awareness (97% for HE, 95% for FE/VET)
- Problem solving (94% for HE, 92% for FE/VET)

Participants also outlined how the placements improved their academic skills and overall employability. In terms of academic skills, participants were most likely to report improvements in presentation skills (84% for HE, 83% for FE/VET participants) and research skills (80% for both HE and FE/VET participants). Comparatively, HE participants were more likely to cite improvements in skills like reporting writing (72%, 66% for FE/VET), exam skills (63%, 40% for FE/VET) and essay writing (65%, 51% for FE/VET), likely due to the nature of activities done on the placements.

As shown in Figure 9.1, across all employability aspects, participants from HE settings were slightly more likely to report improvements in this regard.

Figure 9.1. Extent to which participants felt that their placement affected employability



Source: HE and FE/VET survey. Base: All those on work placement excluding 'don't know'. In order of statements - HE (532; 514; 519); FE/VET (285; 283; 277).

Participants from both HE and FE/VET were most likely to say that their placement has enhanced their career and prospects (91% of HE participants, 80% of FE/VET participants). In qualitative interviews, a participant in the qualitative research highlighted how their placement has helped them upskill in their desired industry:

For employability it has been amazing. I have been strategic and gone for specific [child based] roles and a future employer wants to know that you are upskilling and keeping your skills set fresh. – *FE/VET participant, work experience, Asia*

Three-quarters (67%) of HE participants, and just over half (55%) of FE/VET participants reported that they had created connections with potential future employers. In qualitative interviews, participants explained how their placement had done this and, for some, had resulted in employment opportunities.

I am talking to companies and bettering myself. I am trying to make a future for myself that I will be proud of ... It is something you can put on your CV and talk about. You can mention you have volunteered in another country and shown you can take initiative. – *FE/VET participant, study/learning, South America*

I have had quite a few messages via LinkedIn saying it sounds interesting and do you want an interview here ... it has certainly helped my future prospects. – *HE participant, work experience, North America*

Participants also reported overall improvements in language skills after their placements. In the qualitative research, it was common for participants to report increased confidence and interest in language and other cultures, with one who had even learned an additional local dialect.

I went to learn Russian but as a result I picked up Tatar as well, I fell in love with Tatar culture, and I didn't have the opportunity before. – *HE, Studying/Learning, Europe*

In the survey, HE participants placed in a country where English was not the official first language reported slightly higher levels of increased confidence when communicating in their host country's language (69%) when compared to FE/VET participants (63%).

Connected with this (as HE participants were likely to do longer placements), participants on longer placements were most likely to report positive effects on their skills and opportunities. Confidence in communicating in the language of the host country (where it was not English) increased with length of placement, from 62% among those visiting for less than 4 weeks, to 83% among those visiting for 7-12 months. Enhancement of their career and prospects (from 83% among those visiting for less than 4 weeks, to 94% among those visiting for 7-12 months) and creation of connections with potential future employers (60% among those visiting for less than 4 weeks, to 73% among those visiting for 7-12 months) also increased with length of placement.

Personal and social benefits due to placement

Participants also reported improved personal and social benefits alongside their other skills. HE and FE/VET participants reported increased confidence, being 'more well-rounded' and mature, more friendships, and improved sociability. Participants highlighted the importance that having these new opportunities had on their confidence, and that these placements allowed them to see what they were capable of.

I was thrown in at the deep end and managed it, so that definitely gives me more confidence to do other things. – *HE, study/learning, Europe*

Having more confidence in myself and being more independent through knowing that I went to Asia, and I guess survived. I can do a lot more things than I thought I could prior to that. – *HE, studying/learning, Asia*

As well as confidence, participants noted that they felt more 'well-rounded' or mature because of their placement. Participants highlighted that the responsibilities and

experiences they had on placement were important in giving them that opportunity to mature and grow.

[Maturing] comes from working ... having a lot more responsibility. It was not like a was a spreadsheet jockey or shadowing in meetings, I was doing real work and could see the impact on the company every day. – *HE, work experience, North America*

Increased sociability and friendships were also highlighted as benefits of the placements, as participants were able to build connections with people, they would not usually be able to meet. One participant demonstrated the importance of increased relationships and friendships across the world.

I have met so many people from across the world with a network of friends from Chile to Eastern Europe ... having those connections has been great. – *HE, Studying/Learning, North America*

Impact on participants' likelihood of future mobility

Participants on the Turing Scheme reported increases in their international outlook, with the vast majority wanting to travel outside of the UK in the future either for travel, study, or employment. Participants from both HE and FE/VET reported similar figures when it came to how likely they were to travel abroad again in the future (97% for HE, 96% for FE/VET).

Nine-in-ten participants from HE settings (90%) and slightly fewer from FE/VET (84%) reported an increased ability to get along with people from different cultural backgrounds after their placement. One participant highlighted how the placement allowed them to meet and engage with people from different cultures which they would not normally get the opportunity to do.

I'm from a fairly small village, so I never really met people from other cultures. Going on study abroad, it was meeting so many people, not only from the culture of the country I went to, but other people who were going the same study abroad scheme as me, from all over the world. It was eye-opening, in a way. You learn how to communicate with people who don't necessarily speak your language or have your cultural norms. – *HE, Studying/Learning, Asia*

After their placements, the vast majority of HE participants were also likely to identify as global citizens (91%), while a slightly lower proportion of those from FE/VET settings felt this (83%).

The qualitative findings further demonstrated the increased likelihood for future international mobility, with participants highlighting a new interest or desire to travel.

It really got me excited to think of all the places left to visit. – *HE, work experience, Asia*

In terms of future travel, participants from HE and FE/VET settings reported similar levels of interest in studying/learning overseas (88% and 83% respectively). Participants from HE were more likely than those in FE/VET to want to go abroad in future for employment (80% compared with 66%).

10. What is the experience of school learners on the Turing Scheme?

This chapter focuses on the experience of school participants who took part in the Turing Scheme and explores how participants are informed and encouraged to participate, how well the funding supports participants to engage and any short-term benefits that participants have experienced. Due to the low base size (n=66), this chapter uses counts rather than percentages and the findings should be treated as indicative rather than representative.

How are participants being informed and encouraged to participate in the Turing Scheme?

School participants primarily heard about the opportunity in an assembly or class setting (36) or received an email about the placement (27). Of the 66 participants from schools, 55 felt that they were fully briefed and prepared for their placement before going.

The most common motivators for engaging with the placement were to explore new places (56), improve awareness and understanding of different cultures (46), and to grow as a person (45). However, when asked the one *most* important reason for going on a placement the most common answer was to improve cultural sensitivity (19).

How well does the Turing Scheme funding support participants to engage in international mobility?

Participants broadly felt that they had enough funding to support them on the placement. The majority reported having enough money to cover their living costs (48) and social or leisure activities (42) whilst on placement. Despite this, the vast majority of participants (58) were still spending additional money, which most commonly came from their family (46).

School participants felt positively about how well-respected they felt on their trip, as evidenced in Table 10.1.

Table 10.1 Extent to which participants felt respected and valued by different groups during their placement

Groups involved in placement	Number of participants who agree
Other people taking part in a placement	58
People living in the country I did my placement in	57
The staff involved in delivering my placement	55

Source: School survey. Base: All school respondents excluding 'don't know'. In order of statements – (65; 64; 64).

Over two-thirds of school participants who took part in the survey (47) reported that they were unlikely to go on the placement without funding, which suggests that the funding has supported this group to engage in mobilities.

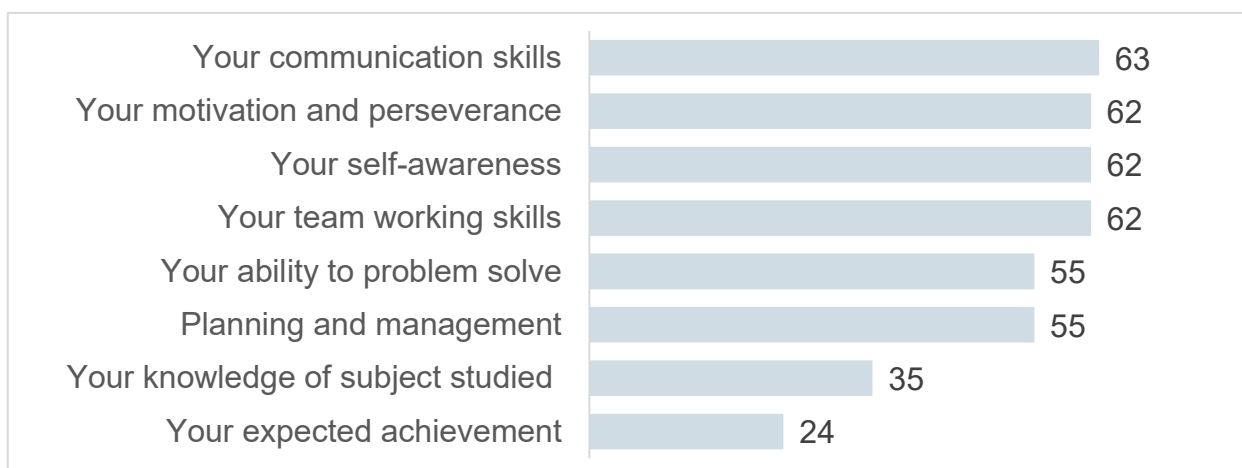
What are the short-term benefits of the Turing Scheme for participants?

Participants from school settings largely reported positive short-term benefits as a result of taking part in placements funded by the Turing Scheme. This included things like communication skills, motivation, and language skills, as well as other social benefits like increased social awareness. Participants also reported higher interest in future mobilities.

Impact of placement on participant skills and opportunities

In terms of 'soft skills', nearly all of the participants who took part in the survey reported improvements in their communication (63), motivation and perseverance (62), self-awareness (62), and their team-working (62). Fewer reported that the placement had impacted on their knowledge of the subject studied or on their expected achievement. Figure 10.1 further demonstrates the breakdown of improvement in skills because of placement.

Figure 10.1 School participants who reported improvement in skills due to placement



Source: School survey. Base: All school funding stream participants excluding 'don't know/not applicable'. In order of statements – (64; 64; 64; 61; 63; 35; 34).

For academic skills there was more limited improvement, with the biggest improvement in participants presentation skills (46). Some participants in the qualitative research highlighted how having to do presentations on their placement had improved their skills.

Personal and social benefits of the placement

Participants also reported personal and social benefits after their placements, such as increased ability to get along with people from other cultures (mentioned by 61 of the participants). The qualitative research found that participants felt increased empathy with others, and improved understanding of the world. One participant highlighted that the placement allowed her to see her own privilege, whilst another reported that it gave them more insight into the lives of others.

[The placement gave me] a better understanding of international relations and my place in the wider world ... it outlined my privilege to me. – *School, Studying/Learning, Africa*

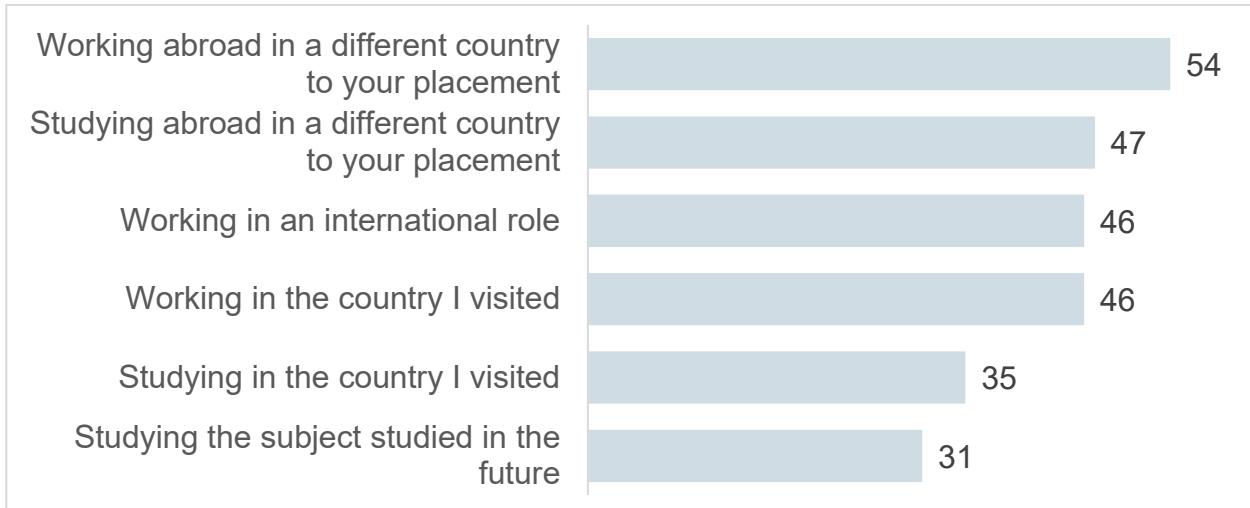
I have developed this emotional sensibility for [children with disabilities] and empathy. – *School, Studying/Learning, Asia*

Impact of Turing Scheme on participants' likelihood for future mobility

School participants reported high levels of interest in travelling abroad again in the future, as 63 participants of 65 reported that they were likely to travel outside of the UK in the future. This was echoed in the qualitative findings where participants highlighted an increased interest and confidence in travel.

Participants from schools were most interested in working abroad in a different country to their placement country (54) followed by studying in a different country to their placement country (47).

Figure 10.2 Participants who had increased interest in future mobilities because of placement



Source: School survey. Base All school respondents excluding 'don't know'. In order of statements - (54; 47; 46; 46; 35; 31).

11. Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter presents the overall conclusions to this evaluation, reflecting on the extent to which the first year of the Turing Scheme has been successful against the key research questions, and areas for development for future years of the scheme (including recommendations, where applicable).

How effective is the administration of applications for Turing Scheme funding?

Although the application process succeeded in getting a range of providers onto the scheme, this was the element which providers were most negative about. Higher Education (HE) providers found the application process particularly challenging, likely due to the relatively greater volume and range of placements they offer compared to Further Education / Vocational Education Training (FE/VET) and schools.

The main challenges were the timing and length of the application window, and the extent of detailed forecasting needed when filling out the form. Although some recognised that improvements had been made for Year 2 applications, findings indicate there is still room for improvement.

Recommendations:

- **Opening the application window earlier** would allow a longer lead-time for education providers to draft their applications; avoid resource constraints due to overlap with Easter holidays; allow outcomes to be decided and communicated earlier.
- **Enable a 'downloadable' form**, which would make it easier for questions to be reviewed, filled out, and shared between individuals (than the current PDF format guidance does).
- **Consider reducing the level of detail requested in the application form.**

How well does the Turing Scheme funding support providers in building international education links?

The Turing Scheme appears to have been successful in supporting the maintenance of existing, and creation of new international links for education providers. Although there was initial hesitancy regarding the lack of reciprocity in the scheme (i.e., only outbound mobilities happening) and the impact this might have on relationship, most providers (across all funding streams) stated that their connections had been maintained.

Furthermore, good proportions of providers have been able to increase the volume of international placements offered through the Turing Scheme.

Many of the planned placements were not able to take place due to the impact of COVID, therefore a review the first year of the scheme may not be the most accurate picture of how/if the scheme has helped maintain international relationships and/or create new ones. Furthermore, ensuring longevity and strength in international links takes time, and is hard to assess in just one year.

Recommendations:

- **Ensure this intended outcome continues to be explored in future research**, to understand where and how strong global connections are being maintained and new ones being made.

How well does Turing funding support participants to engage in international mobility?

Overall, the Turing Scheme has been successful in creating opportunities for international placements. Providers stated that the main motivation for applying to the Turing Scheme was the ability to provide funding for international mobility that would otherwise not have been possible, particularly for participants from a disadvantaged background.

Furthermore, participants were very positive about their experiences and the opportunities created through the fund. Moving forward, these accounts will be important in boosting the reputation of the scheme and encouraging students, learners and pupils to participate.

There is some evidence that the funding amounts (set by delivery partners) and delivery structure (set by providers) may be a barrier for those from very disadvantaged backgrounds taking part:

- Around half of HE participants felt the funding covered very little/some of the costs.
- Providers have indicated that participants from a disadvantaged background can rarely contribute any funds themselves, and there is a limit to what the provider is able to contribute.
- Timings of providers being confirmed for grants and, later, being able to draw down the grants, meant some prospective participants were left unsure as to whether any funding would be available and pulled out of the scheme as a result.

- Some prospective participants struggled with the notion of receiving funds while on placement, as they needed it upfront to cover initial costs.

Recommendations:

- **Consider greater funding amounts for the most disadvantaged**, who may not have any additional funds to contribute.
- The previous recommendation to **bring the application window and confirmation of outcome window forward** should enable providers to be confident in their offer for participants from a disadvantaged background sooner and allow these individuals to commit to participation ahead of the academic year.
- **Providers should be encouraged to offer some funds to their learners upfront** (before placements have started), to ensure disadvantaged students have access to upfront funds for travel and to secure accommodation etc.
- **Make use of positive feedback from participants** to advertise the scheme to prospective participants in the future.

What are the short-term benefits to participants who have engaged in mobilities?

Participants were extremely positive about the benefits of taking part in the Turing Scheme – the vast majority had a positive experience and most acknowledge that they had experienced skill (soft, professional, academic) development.

Most pertinently, participants talked about the improvement to their confidence and intercultural awareness. Most participants are highly motivated to travel outside the UK in the future and feel they have developed the skills to take forward into these experiences.

12. Technical Appendix

Appendix 1A: Fieldwork with providers

Surveys

Fieldwork volumes and response rates

IFF Research administered a telephone survey to education providers whose application outcome was 'successful' in the application data provided by the delivery partner. Table 12.1 below provides an overview of the starting sample for Stage 1, with all successful providers compared to survey completes.

Table 12.1 Provider Stage 1 survey: completes and response rates, by funding stream

	Starting sample (count)	Completes (count)	Response rate (%)	Refusal rate (%)
HE providers	139	75	54	2.2
FE/VET providers	119	67	56	2.5
Schools	115	68	59	1.7
Total	373	210	56	2.1

For Stage 2, the MI data was reviewed to determine which of the successful providers were able to then deliver placements in Year 1 of the scheme (many providers were impacted by COVID-19 and unable to do so). This analysis showed that 304 providers had delivered placements in the first year. Table 12.2 presents the number and proportion of providers who completed the full survey, as well as response rates when those who completed the screener section confirming that they did not take part in Year 1 of the scheme.

Table 12.2 Provider Stage 2 survey: completes and response rates, by funding stream

	Starting sample (count)	Completes (count)	Response rate (excl. non-participants) (%)	Response rate (incl. non-participants) (%)
HE providers	134	56	42	42
FE/VET providers	96	56	58	66
Schools	74	42	57	80
Total	304	154	51	59

Topic coverage

The surveys completed by providers covered the following topics:

Question sections	Stage 1 Survey	Stage 2 Survey
Introduction: <i>A few questions to understand a bit about the organisation and the respondent's role in the application to the scheme</i>	Y	Y
Initial information and advertisement for the Turing Scheme: <i>This section was about the relevance of the Turing Scheme and whether it meets the organisations needs and the needs of other providers</i>	Y	
Motivations to apply: <i>This section was about motivations behind the organisation's decision to apply to the Turing Scheme</i>	Y	
General Reflections: <i>This is a short section around the experience of the Turing Scheme, and their level of satisfaction with the scheme</i>		Y
Application process: <i>This section explored the application process, how the organisation found this process and any suggestions for improvement that they may have</i>	Y	
Experience of Turing funded mobilities: <i>This section explored international mobility opportunities that have been funded this academic year and the respondent's experiences so far</i>	Y	Y
Benefits of inter-institutional relationships: <i>This section explored the respondent's views of the inter-institutional relationships they may have maintained or developed as a result of the Turing-funded international mobility placements.</i>		Y
Other international mobility opportunities: <i>This section was about the availability of alternative funding for international mobilities</i>	Y	

Weighting

The profile of successful providers was compared to the profile of achieved interviews at both stages in terms of funding stream, country, organisation type and region (London / South East England vs. not). For both Stage 1 and 2, the proportions falling into each category did not significantly differ across any metric, and so weighting was not applied.

Qualitative fieldwork

Fieldwork volumes

In the Stage 1 provider survey, 91% agreed to recontact for a follow-up qualitative interview. The target was 45 interviews, which was achieved with a split of 18 HE providers, 13 FE/VET providers and 14 schools. IFF conducted three interviews with providers in Wales, six in Scotland, and one in Northern Ireland.

In the Stage 2 provider survey, 84% agreed to recontact for a follow-up qualitative interview. The target was 45 interviews, which was achieved with a split of 19 HE providers, 15 FE/VET providers and 11 schools. IFF conducted three interviews in Northern Ireland and Wales, and five interviews in Scotland.

Topic coverage

At the end of each survey, interviewers invited providers to participate in a follow-up qualitative interview to discuss the outcomes of the Turing Scheme support in more detail.

The qualitative follow-up for at **Stage 1** explored the reasons behind why providers chose to apply to the programme, their experiences of the application process, their progress against their organisation's targets, and the extent to which alternative funding for international opportunities in education is available.

The **Stage 2** interviews explored providers' experiences of how the scheme is operating, what is working well and what needs improvement. They also explored the benefits of the scheme for their organisation and their students/pupils/learners.

As part of this evaluation, we also spoke to education providers who were either unsuccessful in their applications or who did not apply for the Turing Scheme. These 15 interviews explored the reasons behind why providers did or did not apply to the programme, their experiences of the application process, and the extent to which they continue to arrange international opportunities in education and training without Turing funding.

All of these interviews lasted up to 45 minutes, and were conducted over Teams, Zoom or telephone (depending on preference).

Appendix 1B: Fieldwork with participants

Fieldwork volumes and response rates

IFF Research administered an online survey to participants whose placement period had completed at four points during the evaluation period. The sample was provided by the delivery partners and contained a census of all completed placements at each point. The data was cleaned to remove duplicates in placement completers from the previous batch (to ensure no one was contacted to complete the survey more than once), and all remaining participants were sent an invitation email and up to three reminders to take part. As some individuals participated in more than one mobility, the survey randomly selected one mobility for the individual to focus on when answering placement-specific questions.

In total, 2,185 HE learners, 394 FE/VET learners and 66 school learners completed an online survey. There were some limitations to the contact details provided, however, with many instances of staff contact details being supplied in place of participant details. In these instances, IFF asked staff to disseminate a provider-specific open link to their relevant learners. This was far more common for school sample and resulted in a much lower response for this audience. Due to the low base size for school participants, findings for this audience have not been weighted and are reported separately.

Table 12.3 – 12.7 below breaks ‘direct’ (i.e., those where we had an individual email address) survey completes and response rates down by demographics. Table 12.8 – 12.12 does the same for ‘open link’ completers (i.e., those where we had to reach participants via provider staff).

Table 12.3 Profile of participant survey completes, direct links, by overall

Overall	Starting Sample	Completes	Response Rate (%)
Overall	12,906	2,597	20

Table 12.4 Profile of participant survey completes, direct links, by funding stream

Funding Stream	Starting Sample	Completes	Response Rate (%)
HE	9,056	2,171	24
School	549	55	10
FE/ Vocational	3,285	344	10
Unspecified	16	34 ⁴	213

⁴ This figure is greater than the starting sample due to the information for this variable becoming available for some participants in a later data transfer.

Table12.5 Profile of participant survey completes, direct links, by country

Country	Starting Sample	Completes	Response Rate (%)
England	10,803	2,149	20
Scotland	1,087	261	24
Wales	671	101	15
Northern Ireland	282	50	18
UK/ Unspecified	63	43	68

Table12.6 Profile of participant survey completes, direct links, by age

Age	Starting Sample	Completes	Response Rate (%)
14 - 16	406	40	10
17 – 18	1,194	119	10
19 - 21	5,609	1,376	25
22 – 24	1,408	257	18
25 +	1,082	195	19
Unspecified	3,207	617	19

Table12.7 Profile of participant survey completes, direct links, by mobility duration

Mobility Duration	Starting Sample	Completes	Response Rate (%)
< 4 weeks	8,459	1,740	21
4 – 8 weeks	1,893	328	17
2 – 3 months	383	65	17
4 – 6 months	1,491	372	25
7 – 12 months	178	25	14
Unspecified	502	74	15

Table12.8 Profile of participant survey completes, open links, by overall

Overall	Starting Sample	Completes	Response Rate (%)
Overall	361	56	16

Table12.9 Profile of participant survey completes, open links, by funding stream

Funding Stream	Starting Sample	Completes	Response Rate (%)
HE	40	1	3
School	184	11	6
FE / Vocational	125	44	35
Unspecified	21	0	0

Table12.10 Profile of participant survey completes, open links, by country

Country	Starting Sample	Completes	Response Rate (%)
England	309	50	16
Scotland	35	1	3
Wales	6	5	83
Northern Ireland	6	0	0
UK / Unspecified	5	0	0

Table12.11 Profile of participant survey completes, open links, by age

Age	Starting Sample	Completes	Response Rate (%)
14 – 16	230	2	1
17 – 18	56	18	32
19 – 21	28	14	50
22 – 24	22	4	18
25 +	19	3	16
Unspecified	6	15	250

Table12.12 Profile of participant survey completes, open links, by mobility duration

Mobility Duration	Starting Sample	Completes	Response Rate (%)
< 4 weeks	132	42	32
4 – 8 weeks	133	11	8
2 – 3 months	43	3	7
4 – 6 months	5	0	0
7 – 12 months	3	0	n/a
Unspecified	45	0	0

Survey responses were supplemented with qualitative discussions, including 10 focus groups and 34 individual depth interviews. In total, 87 participants were involved in qualitative discussions, with a good mix across HE, FE/VET and schools.

Topic coverage

The quantitative survey of participants explored the following topics:

- 1. Basic information about the placement:** This section involved some basic questions about the participant, their placement, and when they first heard about the opportunity to undertake a period abroad for a study, volunteering or work experience placement.

2. **Experience of the placement:** This section asked the respondent about the length of their placement and explores their overall experience in more detail.
3. **Outcomes:** This section explored the outcomes of the respondents' placement abroad as part of the Turing Scheme.
4. **Future plans:** This section asked the respondent about their plans to go abroad in the future, and the effect that their placement has had on this.
5. **Demographics:** This section involved questions about the respondents' background. This was to help us analyse how the experiences of the placements differ among different types of people.

The qualitative discussions covered the following topics:

1. **Introduction:** This section involved a few questions to confirm basic information about participants' placements
2. **Involvement with the Turing Scheme:** This section was about participants' awareness of the Turing Scheme and how they found out about the opportunity to take part in a visit abroad
3. **Experience of the Turing Scheme:** This section went into further detail about the participants' experience of the scheme, and any suggestions they had to improve the scheme
4. **Outcomes:** This section explored how their visit as part of the Turing Scheme may have affected them as a person. For example, in the context of challenges they faced, or personal development as a result of the scheme.
5. **Final comments:** In this section, participants were prompted to give any final comments they wanted to add

Appendix 2A: Full profile of providers, participants and placements

Profile of providers

Management information (MI) shows that a total of 373 education providers were successful in their Year 1 Turing Scheme application, and 304 participated, i.e., had participants who went on their placements abroad. Tables 12.13 – 12.15 present the profile of providers (both successful and participating), split by funding stream, country, and organisation type.

Table 12.13 Profile of providers, by funding stream

Funding Stream	Successful Providers (count)	Successful Providers (%)	Participating providers (count)	Participating providers (%)
HE providers	139	37	134	44
FE/VET providers	119	32	96	32
Schools	115	31	74	24

Table 12.14 Profile of providers, by country

Country	Successful Providers (count)	Successful Providers (%)	Participating providers (count)	Participating providers (%)
England	318	85	257	85
Northern Ireland	13	4	10	3
Scotland	29	8	25	8
Wales	13	4	12	3

Profile of participants and placements

Management information (MI) indicates that a total of 20,822 participants went on placements funded by Year 1 of the Turing Scheme. The tables below present the profile of participants, split by funding stream, type of placement and mobility length.

Table 12.15 Profile of participants, by funding stream

Funding Stream	%	Count
HE providers	64	13,326
FE/VET providers	22	4,668
Schools	14	2,828

Table 12.16 Profile of participants, by type of placement

Type of Placement	%	Count
Study / learning	67	13,923
Work placement	33	6,835
Unknown	<1	64

Table12.17 Profile of placements, by mobility length

Mobility Length	%	Count
27 days or less	44	9,363
28-56 days	19	4,081
57-84 days	5	1,050
85-168 days	15	3,303
169-365 days	17	3,556

Table12.18 Profile of participants, by age

Age	%	Count
Under 16	11	2,328
16 to 18	15	3,122
19 to 24	63	13,067
25 to 29	6	1,194
30+	4	814
Unknown	4	297

Table12.19 Profile of participants, by gender

Gender	%	Count
Male	57	11,781
Female	37	7,746
Other/unknown	6	1,295

Deprivation (according to the TUNDRA measure of multiple deprivation) could only be derived for those who provided their home postcode in the survey. Table 12.21 shows the breakdown for participants in each funding stream.

Table12.20 Breakdown of participants by funding stream

Level of Participation	HE (%)	FE/VET (%)	Schools (%)
1 (lowest level of participation in HE)	5%	16%	11%
2	7%	10	15%
3	10%	8%	24%
4	12%	13%	12%
5 (highest level of participation in HE)	15%	10%	11%

Source: HE, FE/VET and School survey. Base: All participants who provided their home postcode – HE (2,185), FE/VET (395), School (66)

Profile of placements

Management information (MI) indicates that a total of 21,353 individual placements were funded by Year 1 of the Turing Scheme (with some individuals going on more than one placement). The tables below present the profile of all placements, split by funding stream and host continent.

Table12.21 Profile of placements, by funding stream

Funding Stream	%	Count
HE providers	65	13,779
FE/VET providers	22	4,720
Schools	13	2,854

Table12.22 Profile of placements, by host continent

Host Continent	%	Count
Europe	47	9,977
North and Central America	22	4,596
Asia	19	3,959
Africa	7	1,465
Oceania	4	816
South America	2	540



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