

UK's International Education Strategy - Sector Action Plans – Summary for GOV.UK

The UK's International Education Strategy, published in January 2026, committed the Education Sector Action Group (ESAG) to developing sector action plans (SAPs) that will support delivery of the three ambitions of the new strategy.

ESAG core members are: British Educational Suppliers Association, Early Years Alliance, English UK, Independent Schools Council, UK Skills Partnership and Universities UK International.

To develop their plans, ESAG consulted across their sectors to identify key actions reflecting sector expertise, delivery capability and market insights.

The actions from the individual plans have been summarised thematically below. This highlights the range of activity ESAG has proposed to support delivery of the UK's International Education Strategy (IES):

1. International Market Development and Promotion
2. Market Intelligence, Evidence and Opportunity Insights
3. Quality, Qualification and Professional Recognition and Trust in the UK Offer
4. Student, Learner and Practitioner Mobility
5. Export Growth, Commercial Partnerships and Transnational Delivery
6. Capability Building and Delivery Enablers
7. Joined-Up UK Education Offer

The sector's individual plans will now support implementation of the strategy and ensure we meet its ambitions by 2030. This implementation work will put the sector as the driving force of planning and delivery of the strategy, help set key milestones, identify cross-sector collaboration opportunities, pinpoint where Government can support, and establish a regular cycle for reviewing progress and updating priorities as evidence and market conditions change.

Summary of the UK's International Education Strategy Ambitions

The [UK's International Education Strategy 2026](#) is built around three core ambitions:

- Ambition 1: Increase the UK's international standing through education. Strengthen the UK's reputation, influence and partnerships by promoting a high-quality, trusted and distinctive education offer across all stages of learning.
- Ambition 2: Continue to sustainably recruit high-quality international students from a diverse range of countries. Support responsible, diversified recruitment while maintaining strong learner experience, outcomes, compliance and confidence in the UK as a study destination.
- Ambition 3: Collectively grow education exports to £40 billion per year by 2030. Increase export value through international recruitment, transnational education, partnerships, qualifications, training, consultancy, suppliers and other education services.

Sector Action Plans

The sector's individual plans are published on their own websites as set out below:

ESAG Core Member	Website	Contact email
Universities UK International	Universities UK International	info@universitiesuk.ac.uk
Independent Schools Council	Independent Schools Council	web@isc.co.uk
British Educational Suppliers Association	BESA	besa@besa.org.uk
English UK	English UK	info@englishuk.com
Early Years Alliance	Early Years Alliance	info@eyalliance.org.uk
UK Skills Partnership	UK Skills Partnership	info@ukskillspartnership.org.uk

Organisations that wish to be involved should connect with the relevant ESAG lead to contribute to delivery and support achievement of the strategy's ambitions to 2030.

ESAG will:

- Set a sequencing and implementation approach for 2026-30, distinguishing immediate actions, evidence-building work, pilot activity and longer-term scaling.

- Build a regular review cycle into the implementation plan, using meetings to track progress, test priorities, review risks and agree any escalation or updates required.
- Review risks and dependencies regularly so that implementation remains sector-led, adaptable and responsive to changing market conditions.

Summary of Actions

The section below groups related sector-led actions (with government dependencies) from across the sector's individual plans into common delivery themes.

1. International Market Development and Promotion

Purpose: Build demand for UK education through promotion, trade engagement and market entry support.

Summary

Deliver market-specific promotion and engagement activity across focus countries, including trade missions, UK pavilions, recruitment events, coordinated marketing campaigns and country-specific market briefings. ESAG to identify ways to support providers to enter overseas markets through regulatory guidance, export toolkits, partner identification and expanded international teacher accreditation routes. Publish sector propositions and case studies that help embassies, the International Education Champion and delivery partners promote the UK offer.

2. Market Intelligence, Evidence and Opportunity Insights

Purpose: Improve understanding of markets, performance and opportunities.

Summary

Establish sector export baselines, annual reporting arrangements and evidence frameworks across all education sectors. Produce market intelligence on overseas demand, student recruitment trends, qualification requirements, procurement opportunities and competitor activity. Develop country system maps, opportunity bulletins and intelligence products to support providers in identifying viable markets, partners and commercial opportunities.

3. Quality, Qualification and Professional Recognition and Trust in the UK Offer

Purpose: Maintain the UK's reputation and remove barriers to market access.

Summary

Promote accreditation and safeguarding frameworks, strengthen the quality and sustainability of transnational education, improve progression pathways between UK education sectors and advance recognition of UK qualifications in focus countries. Develop evidence, recognition roadmaps and accreditation pathways that increase confidence among learners, regulators and international partners.

4. Student, Learner and Practitioner Mobility

Purpose: Support recruitment, progression and international learning pathways.

Summary

Strengthen recruitment and progression pathways into UK education through responsible international recruitment practices, enhanced English Language Training-to-study transitions, international teacher and practitioner development routes, Erasmus+ participation and mobility opportunities. ESAG to identify barriers affecting the competitiveness and experience of international learners studying in the UK.

5. Export Growth, Commercial Partnerships and Transnational Delivery

Purpose: Help organisations convert international demand into revenue and partnerships.

Summary

ESAG to support providers and suppliers to secure international contracts, partnerships and delivery opportunities through export accelerators, matched-support schemes, consortium-building arrangements and export champion networks. Expand transnational education partnerships, pilot international service offers, develop institutional collaborations and support providers to scale delivery in priority growth markets.

6. Capability Building and Delivery Enablers

Purpose: Remove practical barriers to international growth.

Summary

Build provider capability in areas such as partner due diligence, risk management, contracting, pricing and international delivery. Develop shared templates, consortium arrangements and market-entry tools to support smaller organisations. Address operational constraints affecting international growth, including accommodation capacity, data availability, local delivery partnerships and sector capability requirements.

7. Joined-Up UK Education Offer

Purpose: Present a coherent UK proposition internationally.

Summary

Develop and promote cross-sector UK education propositions that connect early years, schools, skills, English language, higher education and education suppliers. Produce shared promotional assets, case studies and sector narratives, including the British Education Journey framework, UK skills offer and UK EdTech proposition, to support coordinated international engagement by government, embassies and sector bodies.