

9.2.R.15 A Motion to Stating the SRC's Opposition to Proposed Policy Changes Affecting International Students

THIS STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL NOTES:

1. On October 10, 2013, the UK Government proposed a new Immigration Bill, which included provisions to mandate that international students would be required to pay £200 each year to access the National Health Service and also to present biometric and visa information when applying for new private accommodation;
2. These proposed changes come as part of a political program to make immigration regulations "tougher" for all migrants into the United Kingdom, with the ultimate ambition that net migration into the United Kingdom will fall to under 100,000 per year;
3. 44% of St Andrews students come from beyond the United Kingdom, representing 120 different nationalities;
4. 30% of St Andrews students come from beyond the European Union;
5. 15% of St Andrews students come from North America;
6. St Andrews students contribute £53.9 million each year through direct spending, part-time work, and international students coming to Scotland and staying on to work, and support 1,791 full time jobs in Scotland (£36.4 million and 1,401 jobs in St Andrews alone);
7. International students at St Andrews account for £73.5 million each year in exports into the United Kingdom, including £21 million directly spent by EU and international students and an additional £1.4 million each year by overseas family and friends visiting the University;
8. A June 2011 Department for Business Innovation & Skills estimated that international students bring in £8 billion into the British economy each year; and
9. The British Council's report, *Trust Pays*, identified that universities deliver tremendous wealth in promoting positive transnational relationships that ultimately work to benefit the United Kingdom's image across the globe.

THIS STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL BELIEVES:

1. The global diversity of the St Andrews student population is one of the University's greatest strengths and gives students the opportunity to learn more about other cultures and to become more adept at handling immersion into new cultures and customs;
2. The global diversity of the St Andrews student population ultimately makes its students more ambitious by bolstering confidence in adapting to new cultural surroundings and exploring professional opportunities across the globe;
3. Legislation that intentionally discourages net migration, including the number of international students attending the University of St Andrews, comes with a noteworthy economic cost to St Andrews, to Scotland, and to the United Kingdom;

4. The process of accessing healthcare and applying for private accommodation are not identical to entering a country and should not be considered as valid spaces for interrogation into an individual's immigration status;

5. Healthcare is a service provided by the government as a public good and should not be seen as a commercial service that international students should be obligated to purchase access to;

6. International students form an integral part of the St Andrews community.

THIS STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL RESOLVES:

1. To support a campaign to make clear the negative economic and social impact the proposed policy changes would have on St Andrews, on Scotland, and on the United Kingdom;

2. To mandate the Equal Opportunities Committee, its officers, and the Association President to organise and run such campaign;

3. To send notice of this motion to the MSP for North East Fife, the seven List MSPs for Mid Scotland and Fife, the MP for North East Fife, the Scottish Minister for Health, and to urge for their public opposition to the proposed changes, noting the negative economic and social impacts the changes would have; and

4. To send notice of this motion to the Home Secretary and to express our concern about the detrimental impact this legislation would have on St Andrews.