



Internationalisation and its discontents

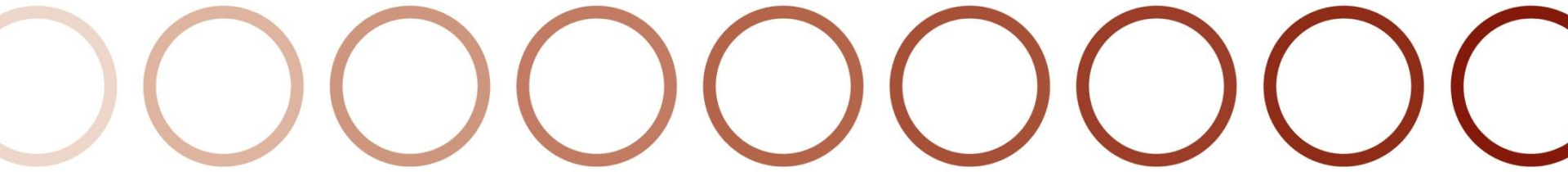
Daniel Stevens, International Students' Officer

National Union of Students

22nd January

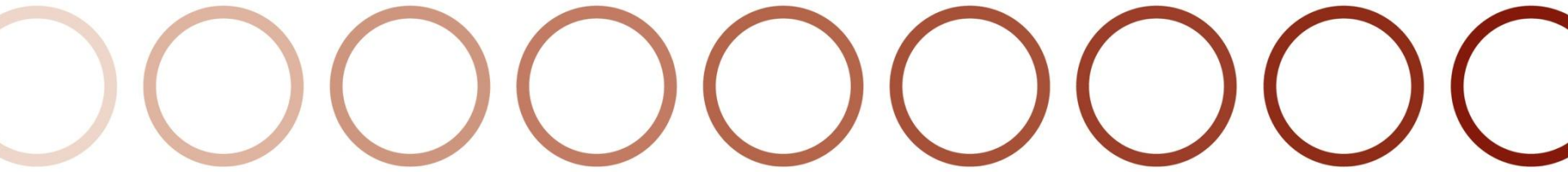
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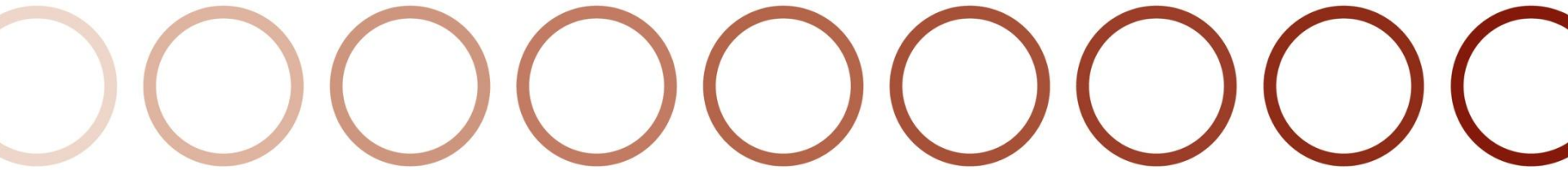
Brief Introduction

- Brazilian.
- 2006/2010: Studied Politics, Philosophy and Economics at the University of Warwick.
- 2010/11: President of Warwick Students' Union.
- 2011/12: Studied MSc in Business Analytics and Consulting at Warwick Business School.
- 2012/13: Full-time International Students' Officer.



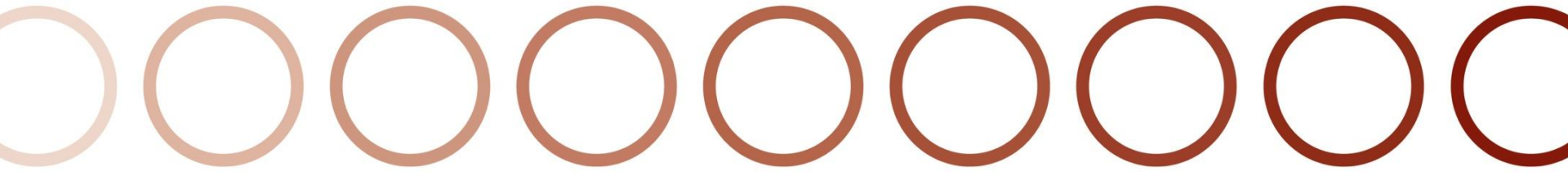
Four Main Topics

- The Context of Internationalization
- The Representation “Gap”
- The Social Experience
- Expectations with Employability



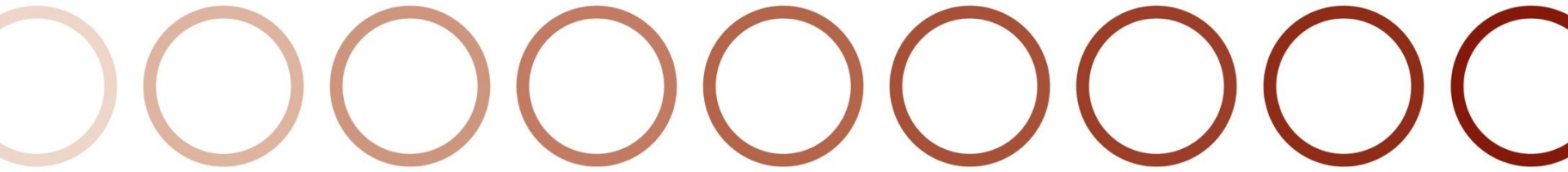
But first... Some comments about Home Office Policy

- Disproportionately places the burden on students.
- Need to be better customer service standards.
- Changes need to stop being applied retrospectively.



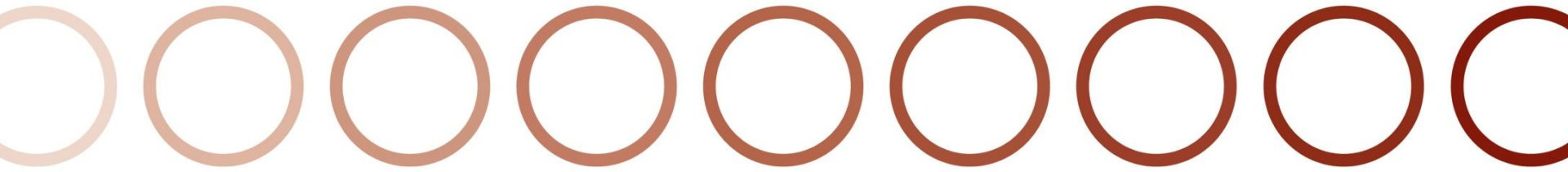
The context of Internationalization

- Given the present climate for higher education, the circumstances and economics of international student migration are set to change, perhaps quite rapidly. The map of migration may look very different in as little as a decade. The economic balance of power, the methods of delivery (with 'local' campuses of 'global' universities), even the ecology of the linguistic map of higher education, may all see fundamental transformation. (Sovic, 2012)



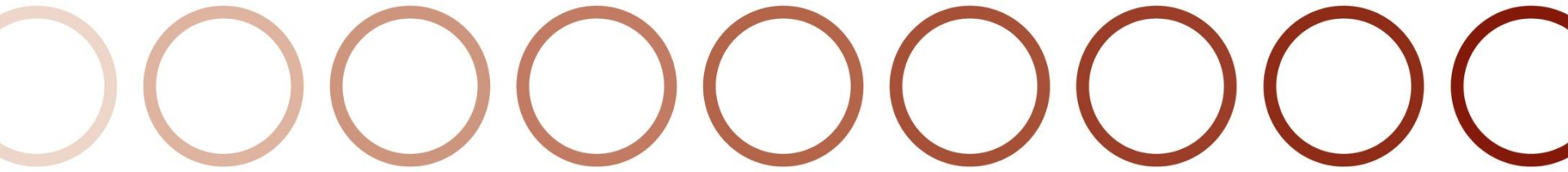
The context of Internationalization

- The shift from aid to trade in the past thirty years.
- Explosion in international student numbers.
- The “othering” of International Students. Role as non-citizens.
- Critical debate needed but overshadowed by UKBA issues.



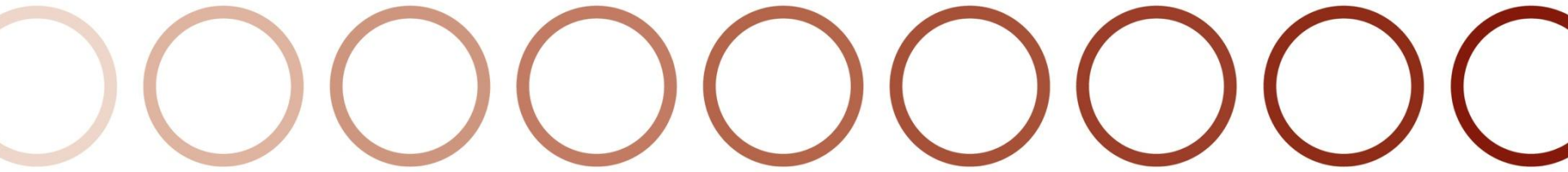
The context of Internationalization

- ESOS Legislation/London Metropolitan University.
- Compare to the 2010 raising of fees.
- International Fees. (Scotland fixed fees campaign)
- Commitment to Widening Participation?
- Hardship.



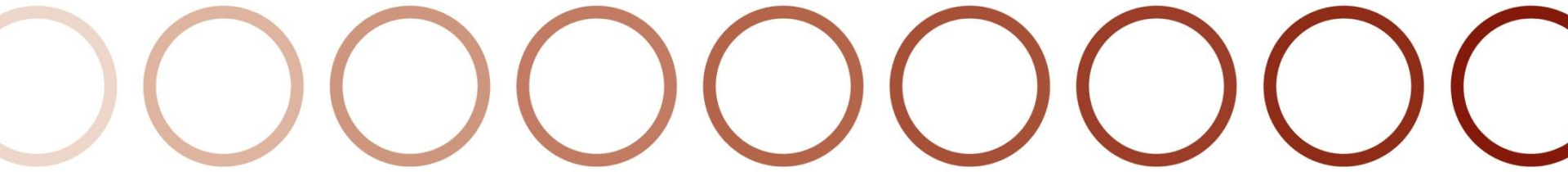
The Representation “Gap”

- International student population has changed dramatically in the past 10 years.
- Are Unions able to represent these students?
- Are international students able to truly put forward their views?



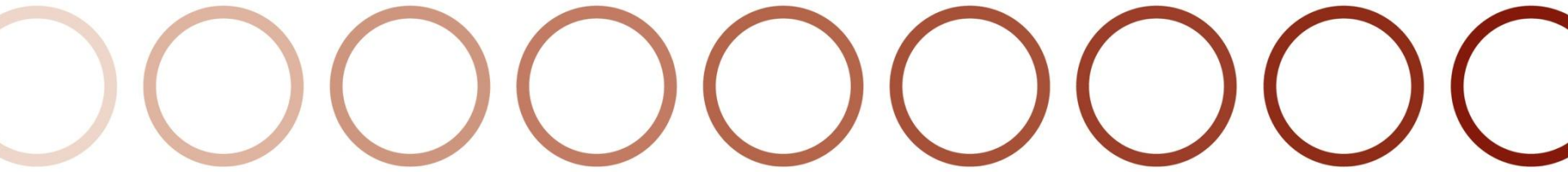
The Social Experience

- “The ideal of transforming a culturally diverse student population into a valued resource for activating processes of international connectivity, social cohesion and intercultural learning is still very much that, an ideal.”



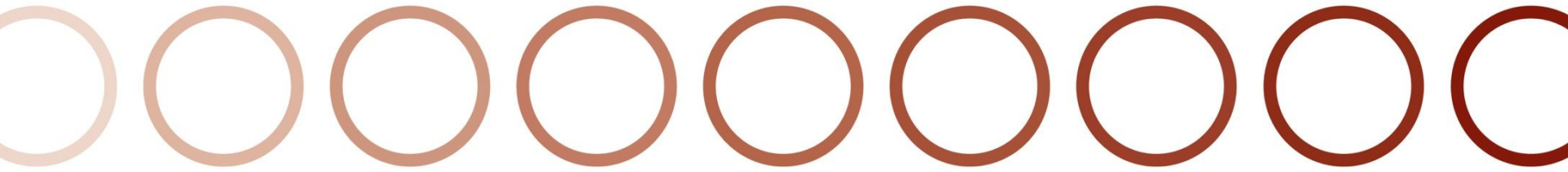
The Social Experience

- “Although there is a high-quality support available to prospective and current international students through the International Office, the Careers Centre, the Students’ Union and other central institutions, the support they provide to aid students adjusting to life in the UK is largely focused on practical and social matters. While these efforts are undoubtedly necessary (and appreciated by the student body) there is awareness that initiatives towards “internationalisation at home” are not sufficiently developed.”



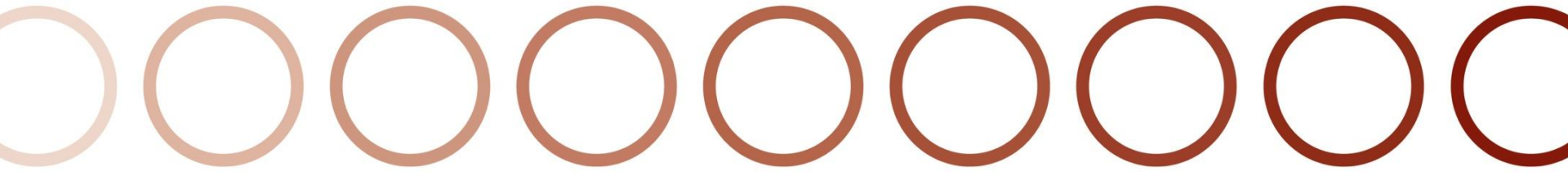
The Social Experience

- A 2004 survey from UKCOSA of 5,000 international students found that 59% interacted mainly with conationals and other internationals, 32% were friends with a mixture of British and international students, whilst 7% interacted primarily with British students.



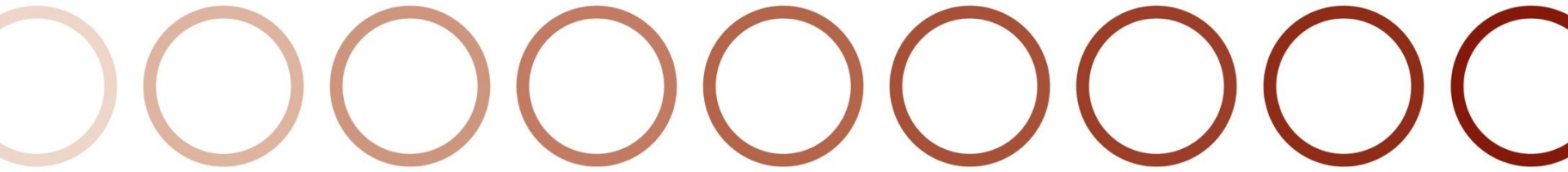
The Social Experience and Students' Unions

- 2005: 69.4% students had a desire for more integration.
- 2007: Only 56.8% of int. students felt sufficiently informed about their Union.
- 2008: At Warwick it was found that "UK students hold the perception that international students prefer to stay together, don't make the effort or are actively excluding. UK students themselves fear misunderstanding, leading to anxiety, embarrassment, and awkwardness. International Students still hold the perception that the Union is focused primarily on UK undergraduate 18-21 years. They feel that they are not adequately catered for despite making up a large percentage of the student population."



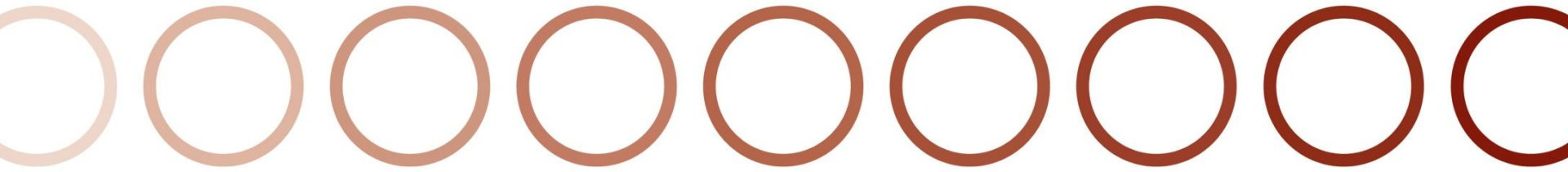
Internationalisation

- Internationalising Students' Unions project. Which aimed to:
 - Engaging, supporting and representing international students more effectively
 - Encouraging opportunities for integration between home and international students
 - Incorporating a global perspective in all areas of students' union activity



Internationalisation challenges

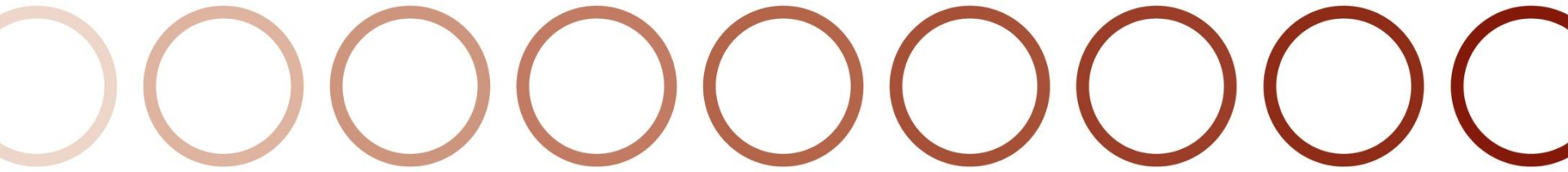
- Participation in democratic and representation structures
- Responding to key issues
- Facilitating home and international student interaction
- Providing services that meet needs
- Establishing genuine, two-way communication
- Developing appropriate partnerships
- Creating a global union



A culturally inclusive union

- Work with the international office/international student advisory service to ensure international students get introduced the union early on (even pre-arrival)
- Consider running buddying or mentoring schemes or language exchanges (tandem learning)
- What other services can the union provide e.g. family support groups, links into local community groups, advice on accommodation contracts?
- Ensure union social spaces are inclusive – are there alcohol free areas?

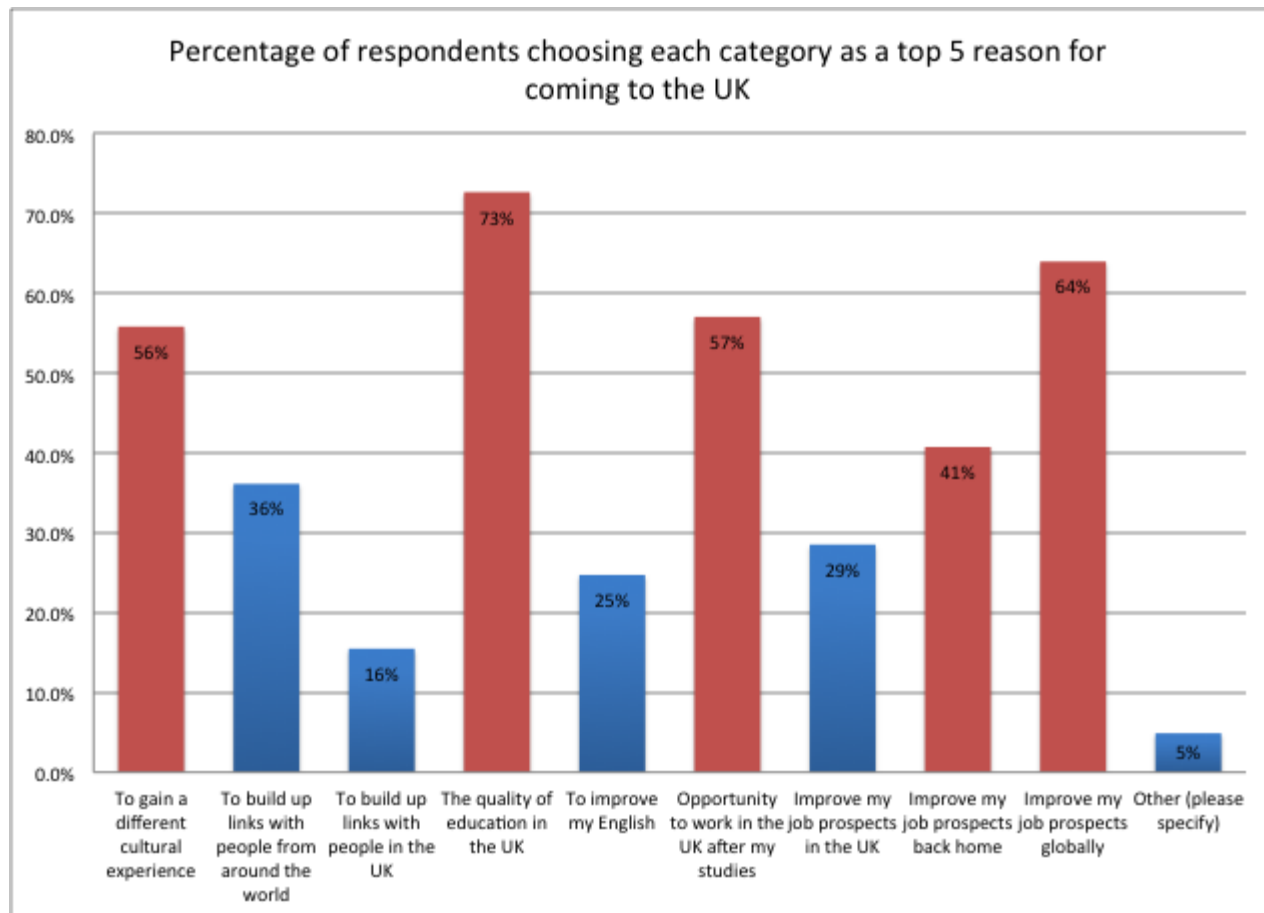




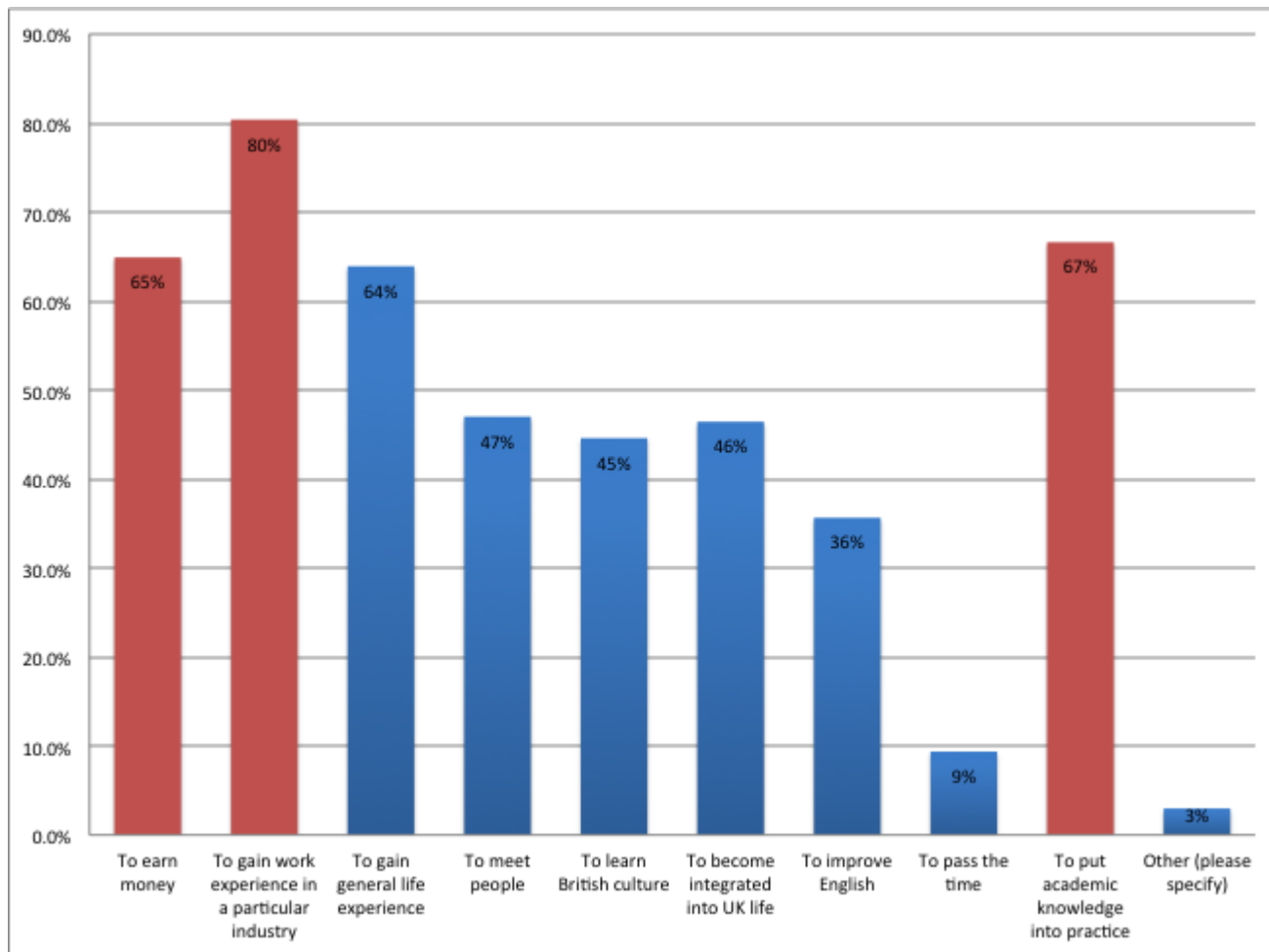
International Student Perceptions on Employability

- Survey from 19 January 2012 until 21 March 2012
- Over 1,200 responses.
- Revealed that one of the main reasons for international students choosing to come to study and work in the UK is to increase global job prospects. Generally, international students do not see UK study as a route to permanent residence, but a route to increasing employability due to the high quality of education.

International Student Perceptions on Employability

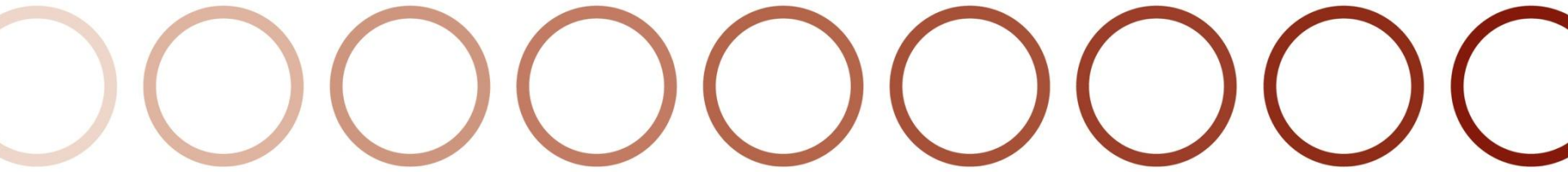


Volunteering and working during studies



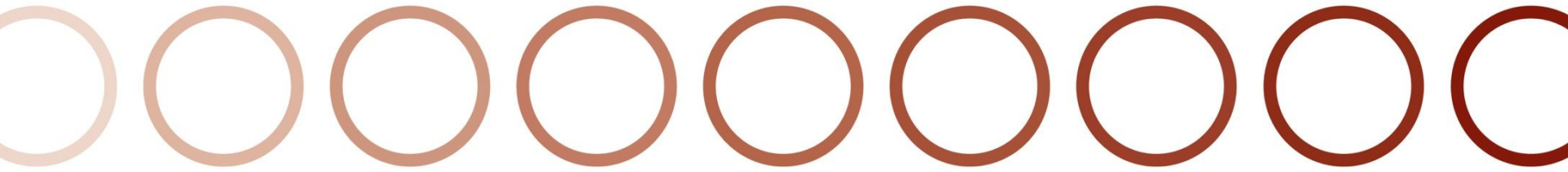
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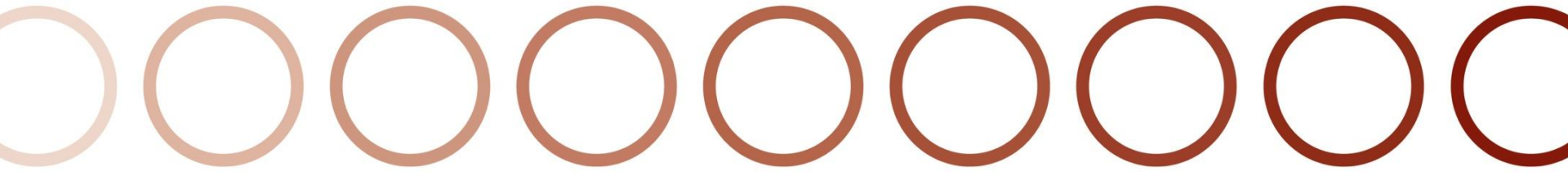
Conclusions and Recommendations

- Increase careers support capacity to explain student working and volunteering regulations for international students.
- Develop curricula which includes opportunities to gain work experience directly related to the course.
- Develop summer/graduate internship programs with businesses to ensure students have some opportunity to gain experience.
- Provide increased global networking opportunities for students (i.e. careers fairs beyond UK based employers, webinars, and online networking spaces).



Problems

- Huge difficulties with sponsors.
- Postgraduate Taught and Job deadlines.
- Real sense of hopelessness and frustration.



NUS Wish list

- Government and Sector “Charter.”
- Regulation of fees and quality. Fee protection.
- Funding of international student representation and experience outside the classroom.
- National initiatives on employability.
- New PMI



Thank you!
Feel free to get in touch:
Daniel.Stevens@nus.org.uk