



Universities UK  
International

# **GONE INTERNATIONAL**

## **RISING ASPIRATIONS: SCOTLAND**



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**STANDOUT**



# INTRODUCTION

*Gone International: rising aspirations* found that 18,510 UK-domiciled, full-time, first-degree, graduates across the UK that responded to the 2016–17 DLHE (Destination of Leavers from Higher Education) survey had experienced at least one period abroad as part of their undergraduate first degree. This equates to 7.8% of the population. The report also found that 2,245 UK graduates of Scottish institutions spent time abroad, representing 11.6% of the graduating population who responded to the DLHE survey. This report looks at students at Scottish institutions: i) who went abroad ii) where they went and what they did, and iii) their graduate outcomes.<sup>1</sup>

## KEY FINDINGS – SCOTTISH INSTITUTIONS

- 2,245 graduates (11.6%) of the 2016–17 graduating cohort who responded to the DLHE survey had at least one period abroad as part of their undergraduate first degree.
- Language graduates had the highest mobility rate of 46.8%, and this rose to 88.9% if linguistics students were excluded. The next highest mobility rates were for ‘medical and dentistry’ subjects and ‘veterinary sciences’.
- 48.4% of mobility activities were in Europe, with 20.4% in North America and 12.3% in Australasia.

- During 2015–16, Erasmus+ mobilities accounted for almost half (48.4%) of all mobility activities.
- Most mobility was for study (85.8%), followed by work (9.0%) and volunteering (4.9%).
- The majority (68.3%) of instances were long-term mobilities of 14 weeks or more. 10.5% of instances were medium term mobilities (5–13 weeks), while just over a fifth (21.2%) were short-term mobilities of less than four weeks.
- Mobile graduates were more likely to obtain first-class honours or an upper second-class degree (91.0%) than non-mobile graduates (80.3%).
- Six months after graduating only 3.0% of mobile graduates were unemployed, compared to 3.8% of non-mobile graduates.

Mobile Graduates from Scottish institutions were slightly more likely to study abroad: 85.5% of mobilities from Scottish institutions were for study, compared to 75.0% of mobilities UK-wide. Mobilities from Scotland were also more likely to be mobile to countries in the Australasia region. They were also slightly more likely to participate in longer-term mobilities of 14 weeks or more than the UK-wide cohort (68.3% of mobilities compared with 63.7%).

## NOTE ON MOBILITY DATA

Although mobility data capture has improved in recent years, there might be some instances of mobility not captured by universities within the student record. Therefore, the results produced here, although broadly comprehensive, are based on incomplete populations. The report does not attempt to identify causal links between students going abroad and particular outcomes. Instead, it provides a snapshot of the profiles of first degree, UK-domiciled mobile students who graduated in 2016-17 and their outcomes. The analysis in this report is a step taken by UUKi to provide mobility data for the UK nations. However, the populations of students undertaking mobility are low and there UUKi encourage readers not to draw hard conclusions from these statistics. This report should be viewed in the wider context of the UK-wide *Gone International: Rising Aspirations* report

### Note

<sup>1</sup> Analysis is limited to UK-domiciled, full-time, undergraduate, first degree completers of the DLHE survey. Not all graduates respond to the DLHE survey. This means that there are some disparities in the sample size by nation. In 2016–17, 80% of the full-time, UK-domiciled, graduating cohort replied to the DLHE survey, and for

Scotland the response rate was 78%. For full methodology and limitations to this research, please see the full report:

# WHO GOES ABROAD?

In total, 2,245 graduates from Scottish institutions responding to the 2016–17 DLHE survey were reported as having at least one period abroad of one week or longer as part of their full-time, undergraduate first degree. This represents 11.6% of relevant respondents to the DLHE survey.

## WHAT DO MOBILE STUDENTS STUDY?<sup>2</sup>

By subject group, graduates of 'languages' had the highest mobility rate, at 46.8%, followed by graduates of 'medicine and dentistry' and 'veterinary science'. The 'languages' subject group includes linguistics, classics and related subjects, for which mobility rates are typically lower.<sup>3</sup> When 'linguistics' graduates were removed from the overall 'languages' cohort, the mobility rate for this group rose to 88.9%. The lowest mobility rates were for 'education' and 'computer science' for which mobility participation rates were less than 3.5%.

## GENDER

The female mobility rate of the 2016–17 cohort was 12.7% (1,465 students) while the male mobility rate was 10.0% (775 students). It is worth noting that language graduates, who make up a large percentage of the mobile population, are more likely to be female.

**Table 1: All Subject Groups by Mobility Rates**

Subject of study (group)	Had a period of mobility	No period of mobility	Total	Mobility rate
Languages	445	510	955	46.8%
Medicine and dentistry	220	680	900	24.4%
Veterinary science	25	110	135	19.9%
Law	115	665	785	14.9%
Architecture, building and planning	50	310	360	14.3%
Engineering and technology	200	1,330	1,535	13.2%
Business and administrative studies	315	2,060	2,375	13.2%
Historical and philosophical studies	120	785	900	13.0%
Mass communications and documentation	40	325	365	11.3%
Social studies	155	1,395	1,545	9.9%
Creative arts and design	125	1,165	1,290	9.7%
Physical sciences	95	970	1,065	9.1%
Biological sciences	130	1,995	2,120	6.0%
Subjects allied to medicine	140	2,650	2,785	4.9%
Mathematical sciences	15	335	350	4.9%
Education	25	740	765	3.5%
Computer science	20	910	930	2.1%
Agriculture and related subjects	..	..	..	..
Combined	..	..	..	..
Grand Total	2,245	17,075	19,315	11.6%

### Note

<sup>2</sup> This section uses two subject definitions: 1. Subject group: the JACS (Joint Academic Coding System) subject group as defined by HESA, for example, 'languages' 2. Detailed subject: the specific subject studied by the student as defined by HESA, for example, 'French studies'. For more information see: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/support/documentation/jacs/jacs3-detailed>

<sup>3</sup> For the purposes of this report, linguistics graduates include: Q1 Linguistics; Q2 Comparative literary studies; Q3 English studies; Q4 Ancient language studies; Q5 Celtic studies; Q6 Latin studies; Q7 Classical Greek studies Q8 Classical studies; and Q9 Others in classics, linguistics and related subjects

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASSIFICATION<sup>4</sup>

The analysis found that students from less-advantaged backgrounds (SEC groups 4–8) were less likely to spend a period of their degree overseas than students from more advantaged backgrounds (SEC groups 1–3). 14.2% of students from more advantaged backgrounds were mobile, compared to 8.1% of students from less advantaged backgrounds.

**Table 2: Mobility Rates by Socio-economic Classification<sup>5</sup>**

Socio-economic Classification	Had a period of mobility	No period of mobility	Total	Mobility rate
More advantaged (SEC 1 to 3)	1,535	9260	10,800	14.2%
Less advantaged (SEC 4 to 8)	380	4,320	4,700	8.1%
Not classified	320	3,155	3,475	9.2%
Unknown	5	335	345	2.0%
Total	2,245	17,075	19,315	11.6%

### ETHNICITY<sup>6</sup>

Analysis of the 2016–17 cohort shows underrepresentation of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) students going abroad. The mobility rate for white students (11.7%) was higher than for BME students (9.9%)

**Table 3: Mobility Rates by Ethnicity**

Ethnicity	Had a period of mobility	No period of mobility	Total	Mobility rate
White	2,085	15,695	17,780	11.7%
BME	145	1305	1,455	10.0%
Unknown / Not applicable	10	75	85	13.1%
Grand Total	2,245	17,075	19,315	11.6%

**Note**

<sup>4</sup> For the purposes of this report, students from ‘more-advantaged backgrounds’ refers to students whose parents, guardians or their own occupations (if they were over the age of 21 at the start of their course) fall within socio-economic classification (SEC) groups 1–3. Students from ‘less-advantaged backgrounds’ fall within the SEC groups 4–8. For more information see: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c16051/a/sec>

<sup>5</sup> 3,820 graduates had an unknown socio-economic classification. Across the UK Language students are disproportionately from higher SEC backgrounds: 75.3%, compared to 65.5% in other subjects

<sup>6</sup> Black and minority ethnic (BME) students fall into the following HESA categories: Black, which includes: Black or Black British – Caribbean; Black or Black British – African; and other Black background. Asian, which includes: Asian or Asian British – Indian; Asian or Asian British – Pakistani; Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi; Chinese; and other Asian background. Other (including mixed), which includes: mixed – White and Black Caribbean; mixed – White and Black African; mixed – White and Asian; other mixed background; Arab; and other ethnic background. Excludes unknown ethnicities. For more information see: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c16051/a/ethnic>

# WHERE DO THEY GO, AND WHAT DO THEY DO?

## WHERE DO MOBILE STUDENTS STUDY?<sup>7</sup>

Across the three academic years, 48.4% of all mobility instances from Scottish institutions took place in the Europe, followed by North America with 20.4% of instances and Australasia with 12.3% of instances (see Table 7). The United States was the most frequent destination country, (12.2%), followed by France (11.5%) and Spain (10.6%). Over a third (34.3%) of mobility from Scotland is to these three countries. The most frequent non-EU destinations were the United States, Australia (5.9%) and Canada (5.9%).

**Table 4: Instances of Mobility by Region of Destination, 2014–15 to 2016–17**

Region	Instances of mobility	%
European Union	1,285	46.4%
North America	565	20.4%
Australasia	340	12.3%
Asia	320	11.5%
Africa	95	3.5%
South America	60	2.1%
Other Europe	55	2.0%
Not known	40	1.4%
Middle East	..	..
Total	2,775	100.00%

### Note

<sup>7</sup> This section considers ‘instances’ of mobility, rather than the number of students who had a period of mobility. For example, if a student had two separate periods of mobility in France, this would be recorded as two instances. As with the other mobility data, instances are only counted where the period abroad lasted at least

**Table 5: Top 10 Destinations by Instances of Mobility, 2014–15 to 2016–17**

Location	Instances of mobility	%
United States	340	12.2%
France	320	11.5%
Spain	295	10.6%
Australia	165	5.9%
Canada	165	5.9%
Germany	160	5.8%
Netherlands	105	3.8%
Cambodia	70	2.6%
New Zealand	70	2.5%
Philippines	65	2.3%
Total	2,775	100.0%

one week. Overall, in the academic years 2014–15, 2015–16 and 2016–17, the graduate cohort had 22,800 separate instances of mobility (2,100 in 2014–15, 16,210 in 2015–16 and 4,490 in 2016–17). As these numbers suggest, the majority of students who go abroad do so in their second year.

## WHAT MOBILITY SCHEMES ARE USED?

The majority of mobility placements for students took place during the penultimate years of their studies (71.1%). During that year (2015–16), Erasmus+ accounted for almost half (48.4%) of all instances of mobility.

**Table 6: Instances of Mobility by Scheme, 2015–16 Only<sup>8</sup>**

Scheme	Instances of mobility	%
ERASMUS+	870	48.4%
Provider	785	43.6%
Other scheme	130	7.2%
Sandwich placement	15	0.7%
Total	1,795	100.0%

## HOW LONG ARE STUDENT MOBILITIES?

Across the three academic years, the majority (68.3%) of instances were long-term mobilities of 14 weeks or longer. 10.5% were medium-term mobilities (5–13 weeks), while just over a fifth (21.2%) were short-term mobilities of less than four weeks.

**Table 8: Instances of Mobility by Duration, 2014–15 to 2016-17**

Duration	Instances of Mobility	%
Short term (1 to 4 weeks)	590	21.2%
Medium term (5 to 13 weeks)	290	10.5%
Long term (14 weeks plus)	1,895	68.3%
Total	2,775	100.0%

## WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF MOBILITY?<sup>9</sup>

Across the three academic years, three quarters of instances were undertaken for the purpose of study (85.8%), followed by work (9.0%) and volunteering (4.9%).

**Table 7: Instances of Mobility by Type, 2014–15 To 2016-17**

Type	Instances of mobility	%
Study only	2,380	85.8%
Volunteering only	135	4.9%
Work only	250	9.0%
Total	2,775	100.0%

### Note

<sup>8</sup>HESA collects data on the following mobility schemes: Provider – university-led schemes such as bilateral partnerships that are established, administered and delivered by the UK university. Sandwich placements which meet the criteria set out by funding councils, not including Erasmus+. Erasmus+, the European Union programme for education, training, youth and sport. Other schemes, such as British Council Teaching Assistants, Generation UK China, Study China, Camp America and IAESTE. For more

information, see: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c16051/a/mobscheme>

<sup>9</sup> HESA collects data on the following mobility types: Study abroad, Work abroad, used in situations where a student was doing paid work such as an internship, Volunteering, where the student undertook voluntary or other unpaid work. For more information, see: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/collection/c16051/a/mobtype>

# WHAT DO THEY DO NEXT?

## CLASSIFICATION OF FIRST DEGREE<sup>10</sup>

Mobile graduates from Scottish institutions were more likely to obtain a first-class honours or upper second-class degree (91.0%) than non-mobile graduates from Scottish institutions (80.3%). Proportions of students with first class honours were 38.3% for mobile students and 24.6% for non-mobile students. Mobile students are also more likely to have higher degree classifications when 'language' graduates are excluded from the population.

**Table 9: Classification of First Degree, All Degree Subjects**

Mobility marker	First class	Upper second class	Lower second class	Third class /Pass	Total
Had a period of mobility	38.3%	52.8%	8.3%	0.7%	1,930
No period of mobility	24.6%	55.7%	17.3%	2.3%	13,375
Total	26.3%	55.4%	16.2%	2.1%	15,305

**Table 10: Classification of First Degree, Non-Language Students Only**

Mobility marker	First class	Upper second class	Lower second class	Third class /Pass	Total
Had a period of mobility	40.0%	51.5%	7.8%	0.7%	1,490
No period of mobility	24.6%	55.3%	17.7%	2.4%	12,885
Total	26.2%	54.9%	16.7%	2.2%	14,375

### Note

<sup>10</sup> Some first-degree level qualifications are not subject to classification. These unclassified degrees are not included in percentage calculations for class of degree.

## ACTIVITY

Graduate outcomes data from the DLHE survey revealed that a smaller percentage of mobile graduates were unemployed six months after completing their studies, compared to non-mobile graduates. 3.0% of mobile graduates were unemployed, compared to 3.8% of non-mobile graduates<sup>11</sup>

**Table 11: Activity, All Degree Subjects**

Mobility marker	Work only	Work and further study	Study only	Unemployed	Other activities
Had a period of mobility	69.4%	5.0%	17.4%	3.0%	5.3%
No period of mobility	68.4%	5.7%	17.8%	3.8%	4.3%
Total	68.5%	5.6%	17.7%	3.7%	4.5%

Note: Had a period of mobility (2,245), No period of mobility (17,075).

<sup>11</sup> 'Other' activities might include taking time out to travel. Graduates who selected 'due to start work' have also been included in the 'other' activities group.



# CONCLUSION

## **Gone International: Rising Aspirations finds that students who go abroad get better degrees and better jobs**

### **Conclusions for the UK**

Mobile students across the UK are more likely to gain a first-class degree, less likely to be unemployed and, if in work, more likely to be in a graduate job. Just six months after graduating, mobile students earned higher average salaries:

- Mobile graduates were more likely to obtain first-class honours or an upper second-class degree (91.6%) than non-mobile graduates (80%).
- Six months after graduating only 3.1% of mobile graduates were unemployed, compared to 4.2% of non-mobile graduates.
- Mobile graduates who were working in full-time, paid employment had an average salary of £23,482, compared to an average salary of £22,256 for non-graduates (a difference of 5.5%) six months after graduating.
- Of all working, mobile graduates in the 2016–17 cohort, 78.3% secured a 'graduate-level' job within six months of graduating, compared to 73.2% of non-mobile graduates.

This year's report shows that more students are going abroad than ever before, and there has been an increase in reported participation by students from less advantaged backgrounds. However, a participation gap remains with more advantaged groups still the most likely to go abroad during while enrolled on a UK degree programme.

### **Conclusions for Scotland**

In Scotland, the data shows that 11.6% of the 2016–17 graduating cohort – 2,245 – had at least one period abroad as part of their degree. Language graduates had the highest mobility rate of 88.9%, followed by 'medical and dentistry' subjects and 'veterinary sciences'. 48.4% of mobility activities were in Europe, with 20.4% in North America and 12.3% in Australasia. During 2015–16, Erasmus+ mobilities accounted for almost half (48.4%) of all mobility activities. Most mobility was for study (85.8%), followed by work (9.0%) and volunteering (4.9%).

The analysis also found that mobile graduates experienced broadly more positive outcomes upon graduation than those students who did not go abroad. Mobile students were more likely to obtain first-class honours or an upper second-class degree (91.0%) than non-mobile graduates (80.3%) and just six months after graduating only 3.0% of mobile graduates were unemployed, compared to 3.8% of non-mobile graduates.

#### **Note**

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