



Universities UK  
International

# Collaborating with Mexico

## POLICY, CONTEXT, OPPORTUNITIES

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### Executive summary:

In July 2018 Mexico elected a new President, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, heralding the most important change in Mexico's political landscape in the last 50 years. In this context, a UUKi delegation of 11 UK HEIs travelled to Mexico to better understand the new administration's emerging agenda for higher education and to scope potential for strengthening collaboration between UK and Mexican higher education institutions. The UUKi delegation spent three days in Mexico City and two days in Queretaro. The delegation was organised with support from ANUIES (National Association of Universities and Higher Education Institutions of the Mexican Republic), British Embassy, British Council and DIT.

This Information Note provides an overview of recent developments, and opportunities and challenges for UK-Mexico collaboration. An overview of key funding opportunities and other useful resources is included at Annexe 1.

### Key Action:

For information only.

### Audience:

Pro-Vice-Chancellors, Directors International,  
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# INTRODUCTION

A UUKi delegation (25 February-1 March 2019) was the first outbound visit of UK higher education institutions to Mexico, since President Andrés Manuel López Obrador was elected in July 2018. The mission's key objectives were to reaffirm links with Mexican higher education key stakeholders; to better understand the new administration's emerging priorities for higher education; and to underline the potential for UK-Mexico higher education collaboration to contribute to Mexico's national priorities.

The following report aims to share insights from the delegation. In doing so, it provides an overview of the Mexican higher education system, policy context and priorities for reform. It also provides an overview of the current state of the relationship, identifying challenges and opportunities for the UK-Mexico higher education relationship.

### Policy context<sup>1</sup>

Mexico has made progress in several development indicators (education, health and employment) over the last decade. However, challenges remain in sustaining progress, while simultaneously improving other indicators such as confidence in institutions and security policies.

Mexico ranks above the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) average in net secondary enrolment rate (77.2% vs. 74.4% in LAC), life expectancy at birth (77.1 years vs. 75.6 years in LAC), maternal mortality ratio (38 per 100,000 live births vs. 74.4 in LAC) and infant mortality rate (11.5 per 1,000 live births vs. 14.7 in LAC). Mexico's gross domestic product (GDP) per capita increased by almost one-and-a-half times between 1990 and 2017. Meanwhile, the share of the population living on less than USD 5.5 a day (2011 PPP) decreased from 44% to 33.6% between 2000-14. Over the same period, the population living on USD 5.5-13 a day (2011 PPP) increased from 35.5% to 42.8%.

The National Development Plan 2019-24 published in May 2019<sup>2</sup> forms the basis of the new government's development agenda. The Plan prioritizes economic and social development (with an emphasis on infrastructure, anti-corruption and poverty reduction), promote local development and improve social services, including health and access to education.

### Higher education system overview

#### Key points

- The Mexico higher education system is large and diverse and has undergone rapid growth over recent decades.
- Higher education provision: public and free institutions remain the largest providers, but there has been an important increase (more than 600,000 students) in private higher education provision in the last 10 years.
- In terms of higher education governance, states are responsible for implementing higher education policies and for curricular developments, while SEP designs national

level policy and provides funding to public higher education institutions.

- Mexico has high level of public expenditure on education
- The current higher education system is complex but lacks diversity by field and level of study. Over a third of students are enrolled in business administration and law, and nine out of ten study in bachelor's programmes.
- Higher education in Mexico needs better alignment with changing needs of the economy.

In 1970/1971 there were around 270,000 students enrolled in 385 campuses across Mexico. By 2016/2017 this had grown to approximately 4.4 million students (3.8 million students in face to face programmes and 0.6 million in distance and online programmes) across more than 7,000 campuses and close to 38,000 programmes (SEP, 2017). As in other countries that have seen massification of the higher education sector, this expansion mirrors the country's rapid economic development and responds to the needs of a growing middle class. At the tertiary level, the gross enrolment ratio of university-age students has risen significantly from 15% in 1991 to approximately 31.2% 2016. Nonetheless, it lags behind the regional average (46% in 2010) by a large margin.

With 13 subsystems<sup>3</sup> the Mexican higher education system is highly complex and diverse. The subsystems differ considerably in terms of institutions, programmes, governance structures, funding arrangements, government dependence and teaching and research intensity and quality.

All but two of the subsystems consist of public higher education institutions, with varying degrees of government dependence. The remaining two subsystems are private and completely independent from the government. The primary distinction between institutions in the public subsystems is their level of autonomy.

#### Note

<sup>1</sup>OECD, 2019. Latin American Economic Outlook 2019: Development in Transition. <http://www.oecd.org/dev/americas/Mexico-Country-Note-Leo-2019.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> National Development Plan 2019-2024. Available at: <https://lopezobrador.org.mx/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/PLAN-NACIONAL-DE-DESARROLLO-2019-2024.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> State public universities, federal public universities, federal institutes of technology, decentralised institutes of technology, technological universities, polytechnic universities, teacher education colleges (public), state public universities with solidarity support, intercultural universities, public research centres, other public higher education institutions, private universities, teacher education colleges (private).

While federal and state universities depend on the government for public funding, they have the autonomy to make most of their own decisions. The remaining seven subsystems<sup>4</sup> are comprised of institutions that act as decentralised government agencies under control of the Secretariat of Public Education (SEP).

#### Types of Higher Education Institutions

**Subsistema de Universidades Públicas (Public Universities Subsystem):** This system includes 61 federal and state universities. These institutions have autonomy over management, budgeting, and curricular content. They may also incorporate, and therefore bestow official validity on, programmes offered at private institutions. The largest such university, the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) enrolled 234,501 tertiary-level students in 2015-2016.

Non-autonomous federal institutions under the purview of the SEP or other ministries must follow study requirements determined by the state. Titles and transcripts are issued or endorsed by the controlling governmental body.

**Subsistema de Educación Tecnológica (Technological Education Subsystem):** Research-based science and technology institutions include 39 polytechnic universities and 218 technological institutes offering university degrees in engineering and applied sciences. These institutions tend to be very specialised, offering programmes in just a few fields of study.

**Subsistema de Universidades Tecnológicas (Technological University Subsystem):** This system includes 61 institutions administered by state authorities and authorised by guidelines established by the SEP. Institutions in the technological university subsystem offer two-year technical degree programs incorporating on-the-job training in applied disciplines.

**Subsistema de Educación Normal (Teacher Training Subsystem):** Institutions in the system offer BA degree programs for all types and levels of teacher training.

**Subsistema de Otras Instituciones Públicas (Other Public Institutions Subsystem):** This system includes 116 specialised institutions of higher education including the Instituto de Antropología e Historia,

schools belonging to the umbrella institution of the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, and institutions of the armed forces.

**Subsistema de Instituciones Particulares (Private Institution Subsystem):** This system includes approximately 2,100 private higher education institutions whose programmes of study are supervised by either federal or state ministries, or by public autonomous universities. Private institutions of higher education offer all types of degrees in all disciplines. Programmes with official validity at private institutions of higher education are incorporated under a public autonomous university or are recognised by the SEP or the relevant state department of education (Degrees from incorporated programmes are issued by the incorporating autonomous university; however, transcripts may be issued by the private institution.)

Public institutions remain the largest provider of higher education in Mexico, enrolling 70,69 percent of the 3.6 million students in the tertiary system as of 2015-2016. Like other Latin American countries, however, Mexico has seen a huge increase in the demand for tertiary education, and a concomitant rise in the number of private universities, especially in the last two decades, seeking to fulfil that demand. As of 2016, the private sector now enrolls just over one million students, up from 400,000 in 2006. Quality in the private higher education sector is radically uneven, with a handful of “Ivy League” type schools obtaining prestige and respect, and a substantial cohort of newer schools seeking to absorb demand without much regard for either academic standards or student outcomes.

All programmes at private institutions must have official recognition status. Validez Oficial de Estudios (Official Validity of Studies) serves as the basic indicator of governmental and professional approval of higher education programmes. However, the quality assurance system is voluntary, complex and fragmented; it lacks transparency and coherence and is costly. Currently, less than half of undergraduates are enrolled in evaluated or accredited programmes. Mexico’s main policy lever to increase quality reaches only public institutions, which account for 70% of students but less than one third of the 3,762 institutions in the country.

#### Note

<sup>4</sup> Teacher education colleges, public research centres, intercultural universities, polytechnic universities, technological

universities, decentralised institutes of technology, and federal institutes of technology.

The federal and state governments share responsibility for the governance, regulation and co-ordination of higher education in Mexico. SEP designs and implement national policy, sets education standards, provides funding to all type of public higher education institutions (82% of all public higher education funding comes from federal sources<sup>5</sup>) and coordinates the two levels of government (state and federal) in planning higher education<sup>6</sup>. State secretaries of education are responsible for implementing higher education policies at a state level and usually curricular requirements fall to state education departments.

The OECD in 2016 reported that public expenditure on education institutions as a percentage of GDP (for all educational levels combined) was at 6.2%, above the OECD average of 4.5%. Of Mexico's total education expenditure, 21 % is spent on HE. Private funding at around 0.9% accounts for a higher share of expenditure than the OECD average of 0.8%, an indication that demand is outpacing provision in Mexico. This has given rise to year-on-year growth in the private education sector at all levels of education, but particularly at the tertiary level where entry into the top public institutions is highly competitive. In higher education, 58 % of HEIs are privately-operated but these tend to be smaller than public institutions and account for only a minority of total student numbers.

In 2015-2016, students in Mexican higher education were enrolled in:

- 89% ISCED level 6 programmes (licenciatura) (61% OECD average)
- 4.5% in ISCED level 5 short cycled programmes (técnico superior universitario and profesional asociado) (20.4% OECD average)
- 5.9% in ISCED level 7 programmes (especialización and maestría) (16% OECD average),
- less than 1% in ISCED level 8 doctoral programmes (doctorado) (2.4% OECD average). (OECD, 2017)

The two most popular fields of study are law and business administration, with 35% of new entrants, and engineering, manufacturing and construction (24.4%) which are well above the OECD average (23.3% and 16.5% respectively). Programmes in health and welfare are also common (10.1% vs 13% OECD

average). Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics, as well as information and communication technologies have low shares of entrants in Mexico (3.1% and 1.9% respectively), well below the OECD average (6.5% and 4.6%). (OECD, 2018).

Almost half of Mexican employers report a lack of skills in their sector and consider the education and training of applicants as unsuited to their needs. Raising the relevance and outcomes of higher education requires a strategic vision for higher education, a whole of government approach and the involvement of the entire higher education system.

### New government priorities for higher education

#### 1. Universal admission to universities

Andrés Manuel López Obrador promised during his campaign that the new government would offer universal admission to higher education. In order to do this, the new administration has developed comprehensive and ambitious scholarship programmes for higher education students from low income families. Selected students will receive a monthly scholarship to support their studies ("*Young People Writing the Future*" programme).

Alongside this, "*Universities for the Wellbeing Benito Juárez García*" aims to develop 100 higher education institutions in Mexico's poorest regions, likely by building on existing institutions and organisations. In doing so, the Government aims to make available an additional 32,000 places for higher education students. Selected students will receive a monthly scholarship of around 2,400 Mexican pesos (approximately £100). Given their high population density, and minimal higher education capacity, the following areas are likely to be prioritised: Oaxaca (11 schools), Ciudad de México (10), Veracruz (8), Chiapas and Guanajuato (6).

#### 2. Increasing access to education for young people who do not work or study and for the indigenous population

### Note

<sup>5</sup> OECD, 2017. Education at Glance 2017: OECD Indicators. OECD Publishing, Paris. [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2017\\_eag-2017-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2017_eag-2017-en)

<sup>6</sup> OECD, 2019. Higher Education in Mexico. Labour Market Relevance and Outcomes. [https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/higher-education-in-mexico\\_9789264309432-en#page106](https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/higher-education-in-mexico_9789264309432-en#page106)

The new administration has clearly stated that they will be looking to focus their interventions on the most disadvantaged populations: young people who do not work or study and indigenous population. One of the main government policies will be “Young People Building the Future”<sup>7</sup>. This will aim to train thousands of young people aged 18-29 years old to work. The Mexican government will provide a monthly stipend of 3,600 Mexican pesos (around £150) during a year for work training. This will be an opportunity for companies, public institutions and social organisations to train young people to develop their skills and start their work life. Alongside this, the Mexican government has a target of achieving a 22% gross enrolment rate for students from households in the four lowest income categories by 2024, with special attention to the indigenous population.

### 3. Higher education alignment with the labour market

The new government intends to develop a national strategy to ensure higher education is aligned with labour market needs as well as with the government development and growth strategy.

### 4. Decreasing regional inequalities and strengthening local government capacities, with a focus on states from the south east.

There are important gaps between Mexican states in terms of access and quality of HE. While the south-eastern region has a 28.5% higher education coverage, this percentage increases to 97.5% in the Metropolitan Region. The previous government set a goal of 40% HE coverage. 9 federal states have reached the goal - Ciudad de México (97.5%), Sinaloa (53%), Nuevo León (48.4%), Puebla (44.8%), Aguascalientes (44.4%), Querétaro (41.8%), Colima (41.6%), Sonora (41.3%) y Nayarit (40.8%) - while 7 of them are below 30% (Oaxaca (19.7%), Guerrero (21.5%), Chiapas (21.8%), Michoacán (27.5%), Tlaxcala (28.7%), Quintana Roo (28.9%) y Guanajuato (29.1%). The Government's plans to install 100 new universities all over the country, will also address regional capacity issues.

#### Note

<sup>7</sup> For more information: <https://jovenesconstruyendoelfuturo.stps.gob.mx/>

<sup>8</sup> For more information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prosperity-fund-fco-programme-summaries-countries>

### The present state of UK-Mexico collaborations: opportunities and challenges

Mexico and the UK have long-standing collaboration links in higher education, particularly through research collaboration and student mobility. The following section describes the current relationship and highlights some of the main challenges and opportunities for future collaboration.

#### General context

In the context of political change, Mexico-US bilateral relations are increasingly tense. Mexico has been trying to diversify away from its reliance on the US since Donald Trump took office in January 2017. In this context, the UK government is aiming to strengthen its relationship with Mexico, and, across the Prosperity Fund programme<sup>8</sup>, the International Climate Finance programmes and the Chevening scholarship programme will invest around £126m in Mexico in the next four years.

UK companies are also exporting/investing in oil and gas, renewables, public transport and security. Financial services are expanding and there are new opportunities in education, renewables and cyber.

A strengthened bilateral relationship presents opportunities for the UK-Mexico HE relationship. The Newton Fund has been an important international research and innovation cooperation tool, with £74 million pounds invested by Mexico and the UK until 2021.

An Agreement on the Mutual Recognition of Higher Education awards, titles, diplomas and academic degrees<sup>9</sup> was also signed in 2015, in the context of the Mexico-UK dual year. Currently, the British Council in Mexico is working with SEP on the latest version of the agreements Annexes, in particular on amending Annex 5, which describes Mexico's process for recognition.

<sup>9</sup> Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cs-mexico-no12015-ukmexico-mutual-recognition-of-higher-education-awards>

### *Language skills*

Language skills are required to develop and increase collaboration between two higher education systems. Currently, not many UK students are enrolled in language courses while there is a lack of courses taught in English offered in Mexico.

Increasing English language proficiency, including through improved English language provision at Mexican schools and opportunities for Mexican students to travel to the UK to learn English, is a high priority for the new administration. More widely, there is a shortage of teachers being trained at the moment in Mexico and an interest in curriculum development and pedagogy. In this context, there may be opportunities for UK universities to 'train the trainers', to provide trainee teachers (e.g. BA English Language Training) as paid English Language assistants/interns in schools, Colleges and Universities and/or to develop visiting professor programmes to teach in English at different academic levels.

### *Opportunities at state level*

There is potential value of working at state level, in coordination with national authorities. Mexican states have expressed significant interest in building partnerships aimed at strengthening the higher education offer at a local level as well as collaboration with local industries. Institutions should start thinking about engaging with state governments, states autonomous universities or existing networks of universities at a local level.

During the mission, UK delegates had the opportunity to visit Queretaro State, located in the South-Central Region of the country, with a GDP income mainly based on the manufacturing industries. There they had the opportunity to learn about the State's Triple Helix initiative, an interesting model aimed at linking universities, government and industries needs and resources.

### **Note**

<sup>10</sup> ANUIES is the National Association of Universities and Higher Education Institutions, a non-governmental organisation that convenes 195 Mexican institutions: public, private and research centres covering approximately 70% of the total student enrolment in Mexico. ANUIES institutions account for 90% of the total research, development and innovation in Mexico<sup>10</sup>. Mexican institutions willing to become ANUIES members must go through an admission procedure of two stages: the first corresponds to the Executive General Secretariat (SGE) that reviews the applicant institution legal conditions, and the second to the regional councils. Regional Councils evaluate several academic

Each region and each state in the country has its comparative advantages and strategic areas for development:

**-Agrobusiness, ICT, Tourism and Mining** in the Northwest (Baja California, Baja California Sur, Sonora, Sinaloa, Chihuahua)

**-Agribusiness, Renewable Energy and / Hydrocarbons, Automotive and Auto-parts in the Northeast** (San Luis Potosí, Zacatecas, Nuevo León, Durango, Tamaulipas)

**-Agribusiness, ICT and Creative Industries, Pharmaceutical and Health in the West Center** (Aguascalientes, Guanajuato, Michoacán, Nayarit, Jalisco, Colima)

**-Water, Wastes, Agri-food, Automotive, Health, R & D & I** in the Metropolitan Area

**-Automotive and Transportation, Textiles and Clothing, Agro-biotechnology, R & D + I** in the South-Central Region (Queretaro, Hidalgo, Guerrero, Puebla, Tlaxcala, Morelos)

**-Agribusiness, Renewable Energy, Alternative and Sustainable Tourism in the South east** (Campeche, Chiapas, Quintana Roo, Oaxaca, Tabasco, Veracruz, Yucatán).

States from the South East of the country are being highly prioritised by the federal government.

Note: For more information on State opportunities for collaboration see Annex 1.

Finally, there is a strong appetite for increased collaboration in both countries. This was evidenced by the attendance of over 60 Mexican institutions at a networking day organised by ANUIES, National Association of Universities and Higher Education Institutions of the Mexican Republic<sup>10</sup>, in the context of the UUKI delegation.

indicators performance to decide whether the institution may join the Association. These include: Institutional development plan, educational and academic model, Infrastructure, evidence of other national or international accreditations, minimum requirements established by PRODEP for full-time professors, 75% of the enrolment in quality programs recognized by the Secretariat of Public Education (SEP) and 25% of postgraduate programs registered at the Postgraduate Quality Program of the National Council of Science and Technology (CONACYT)

A survey of 27 of those institutions attending the event identified the following partnership priorities:

- 55% of respondents (15 institutions) have existing links with UK higher education institutions, most of them related to joint research projects, student exchange initiatives and dual degrees.
- In terms of future priorities for partnership development, Mexican institutions mentioned student and staff mobility, joint research, double degrees, English language training as key priority areas.
- 92% of respondents (25 institutions) said they were interested in establishing teaching and learning partnerships, or transnational education (TNE) partnerships.
- Among those 25 institutions that expressed interest in TNE partnerships, in terms of types of TNE provision, half of them said their interest was focused mainly on dual/multiple degrees (when an award is given separately by two or more institutions), 37% in distance, online and/or blended learning, and 13% in articulation agreements.
- 44% of the institutions surveyed indicated some challenges in partnering with the UK. These included: financial costs for students, and the difficulties of getting a UK university to sign an agreement for student mobility that doesn't require students to pay tuition fees.

#### *Mobility and student recruitment*

Roughly 1% of Mexican higher education students participate in an international mobility programme<sup>11</sup>, with most students going to Spain, followed by the US and Colombia. However, for the 2015/2016 academic year, the United States was the top destination for Mexican students.

The number of Mexican students in the UK has increased in the last five years, mainly at a postgraduate level. In 2017/2018 there were 1,945 Mexican students in the UK, with the majority receiving government funding (HESA, 2019).

#### **Note**

<sup>11</sup>Patlani 2014/15-2015/16. Mexican survey of International student mobility [http://patlani.anuies.mx/archivos/documentos/PATLANI2017\\_web\\_optimizado.pdf](http://patlani.anuies.mx/archivos/documentos/PATLANI2017_web_optimizado.pdf)

CONACyT is the main source of Government funding for Mexican students studying overseas. Between 2014-2017, a total of 8,336 scholarships were awarded by CONACyT, with 27% of scholars choosing the UK.

While there is growing demand for higher education in Mexico, there is currently uncertainty over CONACyT's future budget and priorities. However, a new administration represents an opportunity for UK institutions not currently eligible to receive CONACyT funded scholars to underline their excellence.

Cost and inability to work whilst studying are the two of the main perceived barriers to studying in the UK by Mexican students. Also, differences in fees policies between Mexico and the UK may hinder student mobility. Public universities in Mexico are free, while international students studying in the UK do not get access to student loans and face higher tuition fees.

However, in Mexican institutions there is strong interest in increasing staff and student mobility, with a focus on short term and two-way mobility schemes. Asymmetric mobility schemes (short mobility from UK with long term mobility from Mexico) were suggested by Mexican institutions during the delegation as a way of increasing mobility in both ways.

The number of international students who view Mexico as a potential education destination is relatively small. According to UIS UNESCO data published in early 2016, only 7,166 foreign students opted to study in Mexico. Top senders included the United States, Spain, Brazil, Cuba, and France. Countries like China, Japan and Peru appear for the 2015/2016 academic year among the top 10 sender countries<sup>12</sup>.

The UK has very low rates of student engagement in outward student mobility, relative to other Western countries. This has been attributed to anxieties about language, fear of isolation, lack of knowledge of available opportunities, fear of disruption of domestic academic schedules, as well as worries about

<sup>12</sup> Patlani 2014/15-2015/16. Mexican survey of International student mobility [http://patlani.anuies.mx/archivos/documentos/PATLANI2017\\_web\\_optimizado.pdf](http://patlani.anuies.mx/archivos/documentos/PATLANI2017_web_optimizado.pdf)

retaining access to student accommodation<sup>13</sup>. In the case of Mexico, security and safety concerns are important to any new entrant. Just 240 UK students undertaking a mobility experience as part of their course went to Mexico in 2017-2018 (most of them at undergraduate level). The Mexican government as well as many HEIs highlighted the need for increasingly more reciprocal/ two-way mobility schemes.

There are funding opportunities available (e.g. such as AMEXCID scholarships<sup>14</sup>) to increase UK outward student mobility to Mexico, in the context of the UK's strategic commitment to double the number of UK students studying, working or volunteering overseas as part of their UK degree by 2020. However, in 2018, no UK student applied for this opportunity mainly because of application timing complexities.

#### *Research collaboration*

Evidence shows that research collaboration with UK HEIs increases the impact of Mexican-led research. The international average FWCI for Mexico is 0.90, and the FWCI of co-authored papers with UK authors is 4.21 (Scival, 2018).

In terms of the number of co-authored papers, the UK is Mexico's 4th most frequent collaborator globally and 3rd in Europe (after Spain and France) with 1,528 co-authored publications by Mexico and the UK (with 10 or less co-authors) between 2015-2017. The most significant research areas were Physics and Astronomy, Medicine, Agricultural and Biological Science, Earth and Planetary Sciences, Biochemistry, Genetics and Molecular Biology, Engineering.

UK HEIs can contribute to the new administration's development goals through high-quality research in partnership with Mexican HEIs. There are existing, successful schemes to support research partnerships and strengthen UK collaborative research relationship with Mexico, such as the Newton Fund and the Global Challenges Research Fund. The main Newton Fund areas for collaboration in Mexico are: Future cities, Agri-tech, Social innovation, Health/nutrition and Energy. By 2021 more than £30 million will be invested in Mexico through the Newton Fund.

Co-tutored PhDs were mentioned during the delegation as a way of increasing research collaboration between the two systems. There is a huge potential for

collaborative research with Mexican institutions, and joint supervision of doctoral students may be an opportunity to develop new partnerships.

#### *TNE*

Transnational education students in Mexico studying for UK degrees increased by 179% from 2013-14 to 2016-17, albeit from a low base; in 2016-17 there were 740 UK HE TNE students. Mexico now has the fifth highest number of UK HE TNE students across North, South and Central America, and the highest volume by student numbers of all non-English speaking countries in the Americas. Slightly more TNE students are postgraduate (52%) compared to undergraduate in Mexico (48%), and most study through distance, flexible or blended modes.

As stated above, the Mexican higher education system has undergone rapid growth over recent decades. TNE is considered an efficient way of absorbing the increasing demand for higher education in Mexico. Because of regulatory constraints, throughout the delegation, dual degrees were highlighted as the form of TNE where there was most potential to develop new collaborations. Mexican higher education institutions also stated an interest in exploring online and/or blended formats.

#### **Looking ahead**

The UUKi delegation identified significant demand for collaboration with the UK among Mexican partners. UUKi will work together with key stakeholders in ANUIES, the British Council, the Department for International Trade and the British Embassy to facilitate and promote this collaboration by increasing understanding of the Mexican system, and changing political context among UK universities, and promoting and disseminating new and existing sources of funding. Specifically, UUKi will work with partners to:

1. Provide better information, advice and guidance on Mexican higher education system opportunities at a national and local level, and partnership priorities, including industrial links.

#### **Note**

<sup>13</sup>Source: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/education/ihe/knowledge-centre/student-mobility/report-student-perspectives-going-international>

<sup>14</sup> For more information: <https://www.gob.mx/amexcid/acciones-y-programas/becas-y-cursos-de-cooperacion-academica>

2. Renew the relationship with CONACyT, including updates on changing funding priorities and priorities for collaboration.
3. Inform the UK higher education sector on emerging opportunities under the UK Government Skills for Prosperity Programme
4. Work with AMEXCID to increase awareness of existing opportunities for outbound UK student and staff and to grow the number of

UK students benefited from funding to study abroad in Mexico.

Individual delegates are likely to follow up with potential partners on a range of bilateral and collaborative activities during the delegation.

# ANNEXES

## Annex 1 Key sources for collaboration

### Mexico sources of funding

**Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología (CONACYT).** It formulates and finances scholarship and support programmes for the training of scientific and technological capital. <https://www.conacyt.gob.mx/15>

**Fondo para el Desarrollo de Recursos Humanos (FIDERH)** – Bank of Mexico. Federal trust administered by the Bank of Mexico for more than 40 years. Funds postgraduate Mexican students. <http://www.fiderh.org.mx/index.html>

**Fundación Mexicana Para la Educación, la Tecnología y la Ciencia (FUNED).** Non-profit organisation founded in 1993 by Mexican businessmen. In the last 25 years FUNED supported more than 5000 Mexicans to study abroad through strategic alliances with the government, universities and other international and private organisations. <http://www.funedx.org/>

**Coordinación Nacional de Becas de Educación Superior (CNBES).** Belongs to the Ministry of Public Education and is the entity responsible for the granting and administration of the National Scholarship Program for students who are enrolled in the Bachelor or Higher Technical University (TSU) level in Public Institutions of Higher Education (IPES) <https://www.becaseducacionsuperior.sep.gob.mx/#>

**Agencia Mexicana de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AMEXCID).** It has an offer of scholarships and academic exchange programmes for students, teachers, researchers and foreign experts, aimed at contributing to facilitate the training of the leaders who will build the future.

<https://www.gob.mx/amexcid/acciones-y-programas/becas-y-cursos-de-cooperacion-academica>

### Note

<sup>15</sup> For information on 2019 calls: <https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.conacyt.gob.mx%2Findex.php%2Fconacyt%2Fconvocatorias-y-resultados-conacyt%2Fconvocatorias-becas-al-extranjero%2Fconvocatorias-becas-al-extranjero>

### Mexican states strategic areas for collaboration and contact details:

- [Baja California](#)
- [Baja California Sur](#)
- [Sonora](#)
- [Sinaloa](#)
- [Chihuahua](#)
- [San Luis Potosí](#)
- [Zacatecas](#)
- [Nuevo León](#)
- [Durango](#)
- [Tamaulipas](#)
- [Coahuila](#)
- [Aguascalientes](#)
- [Guanajuato](#)
- [Michoacán](#)
- [Nayarit](#)
- [Jalisco](#)
- [Colima](#)
- [Estado de Mexico](#)
- [Querétaro](#)
- [Hidalgo](#)
- [Guerrero](#)
- [Puebla](#)
- [Tlaxcala](#)
- [Morelos](#)
- [Campeche](#)
- [Chiapas](#)
- [Quintana Roo](#)
- [Oaxaca](#)
- [Tabasco](#)
- [Veracruz](#)
- [Yucatán](#)

### Mexican states International academic mobility opportunities for the UK (state/level and/or type of study):

- [Aguascalientes](#), short training mobility schemes
- [Baja California](#), undergraduate, professional practices and research exchange

[1%2Fconvocatorias-abiertas-becas-al-extranjero%2Fconv-pec-extr-19&data=01%7C01%7CSamanta.Bonelli%40international.ac.uk%7Cc2ff552ea4354c84e3af08d6adf89c5a%7Cb66c9f751b5f4d6280ff8ac626f15ced%7C0&data=1AuLl8%2Bineir9lsLVKBLd3OnagT72r4wxPg7ppMbpQk%3D&reserved=0](https://www.gob.mx/convocatorias-abiertas-becas-al-extranjero%2Fconv-pec-extr-19&data=01%7C01%7CSamanta.Bonelli%40international.ac.uk%7Cc2ff552ea4354c84e3af08d6adf89c5a%7Cb66c9f751b5f4d6280ff8ac626f15ced%7C0&data=1AuLl8%2Bineir9lsLVKBLd3OnagT72r4wxPg7ppMbpQk%3D&reserved=0)

- [Mexico State](#), support for scientific research exchange
- [Guanajuato](#), support for international mobility
- [Hidalgo](#), short research mobility
- [Michoacán](#), postgraduate mobility
- [Morelos](#), support for international mobility
- [Nuevo León](#), academic exchange
- [Puebla](#), postgraduate mobility
- [Queretaro](#), international mobility
- [Yucatan](#), international mobility agreements
- [Zacateas](#), masters and PhD in science, innovation and technology

#### UNAM-UK, Centre for Mexican Studies

The Centre for Mexican Studies in the United Kingdom is an academic outpost of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), hosted by King's College London. It was created in March 2015, in the UKMX2015 dual year with the idea to promote academic and cultural exchange between UNAM and British higher education institutions.

For further information:

<http://www.unitedkingdom.unam.mx/index.php?Language=2>

Contact: Prof. Ana Elena González-Treviño  
Centre for Mexican Studies, UNAM-UK  
Director  
anaelenaglez@kcl.ac.uk

#### UK sources of funding

**Newton Fund.** This initiative of the British government, through strategic partnerships, promotes collaboration in science and innovation by creating connections between the government, academia, companies and NGOs, within its partner countries. The Newton Fund's vision is to promote economic development and social welfare in its partner countries – Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Egypt, Philippines, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, Vietnam-through innovation and science, as part of its Official Development Assistance (ODA) funding.

Key areas for collaboration in Mexico are: Future cities, Agri-tech, Social innovation, Health/nutrition and Energy.

Pillars of action:

People: to improve scientific and innovation skills through the development of students and researchers' capacities and mobility schemes. These programmes

promote the exchange of Mexican researchers to the UK, and British researchers to Mexico, in priority areas for Mexico.

Research: collaborations between Mexican and British researchers to generate high-level impact information for common issues.

Translation: to promote partnerships that develop innovative solutions to current problems. This pillar promotes the link between industry, academia and government; science commercialisation; technology transfer; and, the training of public officials to manage innovation. For more information <http://www.newtonfund.ac.uk/about/about-partnering-countries/Mexico/>

**Chevening Scholarships.** Chevening is the UK Government's international awards scheme aimed at developing global leaders. Funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and partner organisations, Chevening offers a unique opportunity for future leaders and influencers from all over the world to develop professionally and academically, network extensively, experience UK culture, and build lasting positive relationships with the UK. Chevening Scholarships enable international students to pursue a fully funded one-year master's at any UK university. Some of the main subjects prioritised by the British government are:

- Prosperity
- Human Rights
- Security and Justice
- Energy, climate change and sustainable development,
- International relations with a focus on the Pacific Alliance.

The scheme subsidises visa and tuition fees, a monthly stipend, travel costs to and from the UK, and an arrival and homeward departure allowance.

In Mexico, during 2017, more than 1,500 applications were received for the 2018-2019 cycle. For further information: <https://www.chevening.org/scholars>

**Skills for Prosperity Programme.** The UK Government, as part of HMG's Prosperity Fund, is investing in a Global Skills programme to support nine-middle income countries to tackle skills gaps, which are holding back growth and prosperity. The Skills for Prosperity Fund will look

to improve the affordability, quality, relevance and equity of Higher Education (HE) and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in partner countries around the world. Taking a partnership approach and drawing on UK expertise, the programme will promote sustainable and inclusive growth and poverty reduction through education and skills initiatives. The programme is expected to work in Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia, Egypt, Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, Brazil and Mexico, and in partnership with the governments in those countries. The estimated value of the programme is £75m.

Interventions will support the four overarching outcomes for the programme:

- Improved quality of learning outcomes from TVET and HE provision in the public and private sectors.
- Improved public/private sector partnerships in the development, management delivery and assessment of skills development, TVET and HE
- Improved affordability of TVET and HE provision & a conducive environment for resourcing in areas key to national economic development
- Improved equity in access to the provision of TVET and HE in the public and private sectors and improved progression to employment for marginalised groups.

In the case of Mexico recent opportunities were identified to develop projects focusing on the following areas:

- Skills development (including through technical assistance)
- Education-industry partnerships
- Labour Market Intelligence
- 4th Industrial Revolution
- Information, Advice and Guidance for under-employed youth
- English Language for technicians
- STEM outreach

**Global Challenges Research Fund.** The Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) is a £1.5 billion fund announced by the UK Government in 2015 to support cutting-edge research that addresses the challenges faced by developing ODA-designated countries (including Mexico) through:

- Challenge-led disciplinary and interdisciplinary research, bringing social sciences, sciences and arts and humanities into conversation with each other and with individuals, communities, NGOs,

government organisations, policy makers, data analysts and cultural producers

- Strengthening capacity for research and innovation within both the UK and developing countries
- Providing an agile response to emergencies where there is an urgent research need.

GCRF forms part of the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitment, which is monitored by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). GCRF supports collaborative projects with international partners and bids must include partners in developing countries. The GCRF delivery partners are: UK Research and Innovation, Scottish Funding Council, Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, Higher Education Division Northern Ireland, Academy of Medical Sciences, Royal Society, British Academy, Royal Academy of Engineering and UK Space Agency. A third of the projects funded in the first round were in partnership with Mexican institutions.

Further information:

<https://www.ukri.org/research/global-challenges-research-fund/>

**National Academies.** The Royal Society and other national academies have several international schemes to support research mobility to and from the UK which would be open to support collaboration with Mexico. For the Royal Society these include International Collaboration Awards, Newton International Fellowships, International Exchanges and Wolfson Fellowships.

Details of these schemes can be found at:

<https://royalsociety.org/grants-schemes-awards/grants/>

The British Academy also has a range of schemes open to researchers from outside the UK, including Global Professorship Awards and Newton International Fellowships.

Details can be found here:

<https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/funding-opportunities>

**Erasmus+.** Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe. Its budget of €14.7 billion will provide opportunities for over 4 million Europeans to study, train, gain experience, and volunteer abroad. Erasmus+ offers a variety of possibilities to collaborate with institutions outside the EU, like the International Credit

Mobility initiative. This funding stream has enabled students, doctoral candidates and staff from UK Institutions to study or train abroad at institutions in Erasmus+ partner countries. Mexico is a partner country. Further information: [http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node_en)

**UK-Mexico chair initiative.** An innovative initiative bringing together twelve UK and twelve Mexican universities aimed at fostering academic mobility between the two countries. Initially proposed by the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID), the Mexico-UK Visiting Chair Initiative sees senior figures from prestigious UK and Mexican universities spend up to two weeks each year working collaboratively to explore new and exciting links in research and teaching. A letter of intent to establish the Visiting Chair was signed during March 2015 in London, witnessed by the President of Mexico Enrique Peña Nieto.

**British Academy Global Professorships scheme**

This programme provides mid-career to senior scholars - active in any discipline within the social sciences and the humanities and based in any country overseas - with the opportunity to relocate for a period of four years to the UK and make a contribution to UK research and higher education.

Further information: <https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/programmes/global-professorships>

**British Council. Higher Education Alliances 2019**

Higher Education Alliances supports the articulation of global networks and the diversification of internationalization schemes. This programme provides access to international expertise that will allow the development of a comprehensive internationalization strategy for Higher Education Institutions to promote partnerships for long term collaboration. Deadline to submit application, July 14 2019.

Further information: <https://www.britishcouncil.org.mx/en/events/higher-education-alliances-call-applications-2019>