

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004666/21
to the Commission
David McAllister (PPE)
(14 October 2021)**

Subject: Universities in the United Kingdom

The United Kingdom shares common values, a common culture and a common history with the European Union. It is therefore desirable that social exchanges continue to be cultivated beyond what is set out in the Trade and Cooperation Agreement. It is essential that the young generation can benefit from exchanges even given the current relationship between the UK and the EU.

Many EU students have benefited from the teaching and research at UK Universities, which have an excellent reputation worldwide. Following Brexit and the UK's decision to stop participating in the Erasmus+ programme, exchanges of this kind will become more difficult. EU Students who wish to study in the United Kingdom now face financial and bureaucratic barriers.

1. How will the Commission make it easier for students from the EU to gain access to universities in the UK?
2. Does the Commission plan to create a new and equivalent programme between the EU and the UK to promote cross-border academic exchanges?
3. Does the Commission see any possibility of cooperating with the British Turing Scheme?

**Answer given by Ms Gabriel on behalf of the European Commission
(22 December 2021)**

EU students who wish to study in the United Kingdom (UK) face additional financial and bureaucratic barriers as a consequence of Brexit.

The Commission recalls that, during the negotiations on the new relationship with the UK, the EU offered to include provisions on mobility of students, researchers, trainees and certain categories of youth exchanges in the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement. However, the UK did not take up this offer.

The Commission does not intend to create a new EU-UK student mobility programme for EU university students currently studying or willing to study in the UK. Indeed, a fully-fledged and recognised programme already exists, the Erasmus+ programme, with a strongly increased budget for the new programming period (the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027).

The Commission is ready to examine any future request from the UK to become associated to Erasmus+ as it does with other third countries. Finally, it is important to stress that across all 27 Member States there are excellent universities, offering high quality and inclusive education, in many cases also in English.

The Commission does not intend to formally cooperate with the Turing scheme. However, two mobility actions covering higher education students and Vocational Education and Training (VET) learners and staff from Erasmus+ Programme Countries⁽¹⁾ will offer limited possibilities to undertake mobility in non-associated third countries, including the UK.

In practice, an EU university could send some students to the UK and receive Turing-funded UK students. But this possibility will remain very limited due to budget constraints and, especially, the fact that the Turing Scheme is not build on the Erasmus+ core principle of reciprocity.

⁽¹⁾ EU-27 and associated third countries