

# Destination decisions

International applicants tell The Student Room what they want to see from UK universities

# About Us

The  
Student  
Room



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# The Student Room

Home to two million international users per month (with a further 90,000 on The Uni Guide).

Our community is the go-to location for prospective international students who want to make informed decisions about studying in the UK.

9% of our monthly posts in the Applications, Ucas and Clearing forum are from international students.

## Top locations by traffic (average monthly pageviews) [1]



Top forums for users outside the UK include:

- Medical schools
- Applications, Ucas and Clearing
- University life

*"I am a international student and want to study MSc from Uk help me out please I am bit nervous to choose."*

*"I'm American and preparing to start a PGCE (Secondary MFL) course. Truthfully, most of what I've seen of the English system is based on The Inbetweeners and Harry Potter. I don't know much about the Welsh or Scottish systems, and most of what I know about Northern Ireland as a whole is based on Derry Girls. I've done a good amount of reading and research, but there's no substitute for real in-person experience. What should I know about living and studying/teaching in your system(s)? Is there anything I should know about how students and parents are? (I'm afraid I'm going to get roasted by 11 year olds) What am I getting myself into and what should I know to best prepare me?"*

*"I'm in Year 12 right now and I'm planning on studying Medicine. I'm an international student hoping to study in the UK. My question is how do you choose where to go for university? I know looking at course details, what the university offers plays a big role but I'm quite overwhelmed by options, grades and requirements. It would really help if someone could help me out."*

*"i'm a first year undergrad international (USA) and i'm looking to meet students in the Central London area. i literally don't know a soul from England lol, so it would be great to meet people on here and potentially form friendships."*

# How are international students deciding which country to study in?



# Decisions, decisions

Q: Do you feel you have enough information to make a decision about..? (single response grid)

Which **course** to choose?  
Yes - 78%

Which **country** to choose?  
Yes - 72%

Which **university** to choose?  
Yes - 57%



Q: Outside of the UK, which, if any, of the following countries did you consider / would you consider studying in? (multiple response)



38%



36%



27%



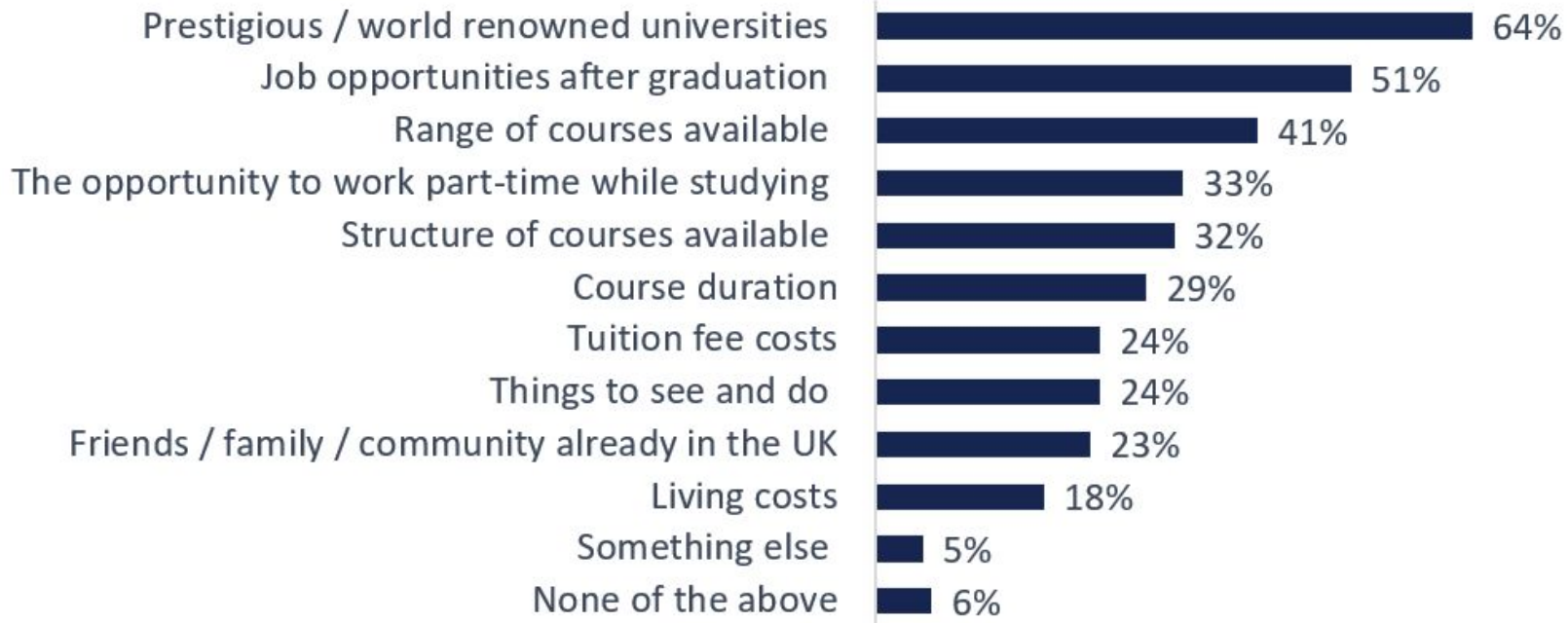
16%

Only considering UK



15%

# Drivers for studying in the UK



*Q: Which, if any, of the following made you consider studying the UK? (multiple choice)*

# What are international students considering when choosing a university in the UK ?





# What is important to applicants



1	Entry requirements	67%
2	Course content	60%
3	University league table / university rankings	54%
4	Affordable tuition fees	53%
5	Student satisfaction	52%
6	Scholarships / bursaries available	51%
7	University atmosphere	50%
8	Accommodation offered	43%
9	Low cost of living	40%
10	Social life / societies / extracurricular activities	37%

*Q: Which of the following are / were important to you when choosing universities in the UK? (multiple response – top ten)*

# Finance is top concern

Almost all (93%) had some reservations about studying in the UK, on average each selecting around 4 each from the list. The primary concerns were related to finance.

*Q: Do / did you have any reservations about studying in the UK? Please select all that apply (Multiple response)*



**65%**  
cost of living at  
university



**57%**  
funding  
their studies



**39%** choosing a  
university  
without visiting in  
person



**33%**  
Getting a  
visa to study  
in the UK

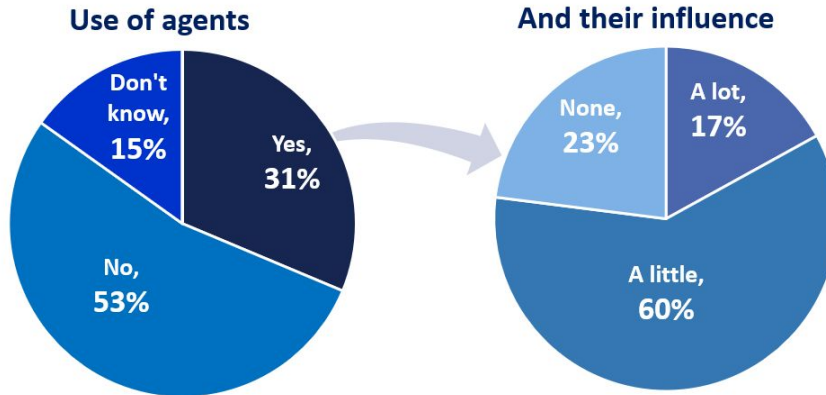


**31%** being  
accepted /  
welcomed in the  
UK

# The role of agents in international student decision making



# The support of education agents



**Q: Did you use / do you plan to use an education agent to assist with your university application?** (single response)

**Q: How much influence, if any, would you say your education agent had / will have on your university choices?** (single response) (base: 88, those that used/planned to use an education agent)

# Information sources



# Sources used in their information gathering process



**Q: Which, if any, of the following have you found useful / did you find useful when finding out about universities in the UK? (multiple response)**

# Virtual open days

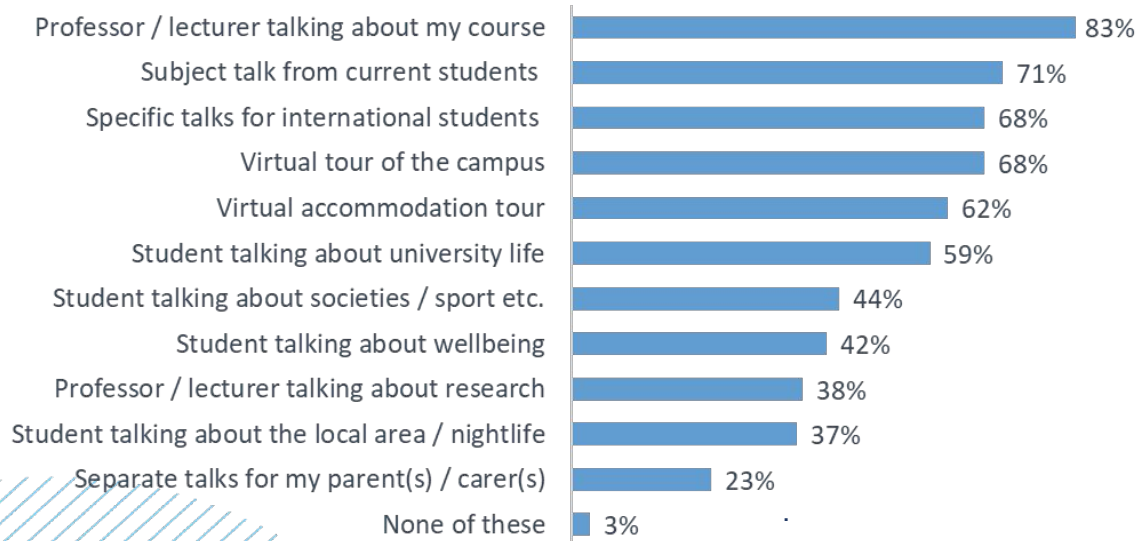
Q: Have you attended / did you attend a virtual open day for a UK university?  
(single response)



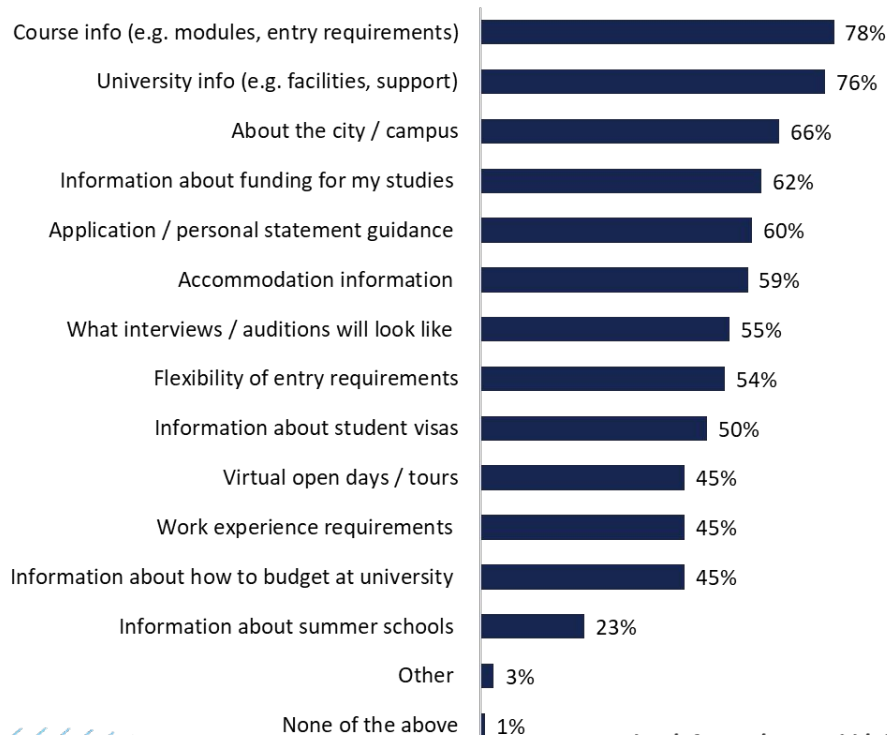
Q: Do you plan to attend a virtual open day for a UK university in the future?  
(single response)



Q: Which of the following, if any, do you think UK universities should include in their virtual open days? (multiple response)



# What do they need from you?



**Q: What information would it be useful for UK universities to share with prospective students from overseas? (multiple response)**



# Career options



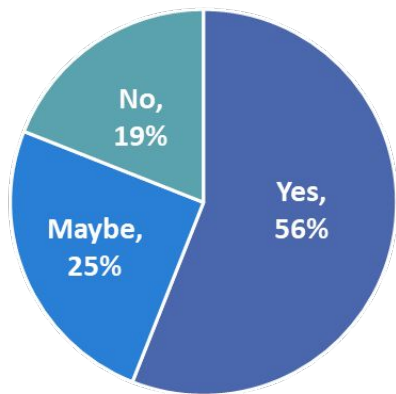
*“Hello All, I have been offered admission to the MSc Marketing course at the University of AAAA and the University of BBBB. Which is the better choice? I am an international student looking to advance my career in marketing. Any advice/information would be much appreciated!”*

*“I’m an international student and I want to apply to either politics, international relations or law. I’d like to stay in the uk after completing my degree. Out of those international relations interest me the most but I understand it’s not a particularly employable degree. I’ve heard that becoming a lawyer in the uk as a foreigner is pretty much impossible unless you’re extremely exceptional. Do you think getting a law degree and working in another industry is a good idea? What kind of work can you do? Is politics a better idea in that case?”*

*“Hi. I am an international student, and I am probably going to study in the UK in September 2023. My dad has a huge international social circle, and some of them have advised me to consider studying in Canada or mainland Europe. Apparently, the UK has significantly lower part-time job opportunities, more expensive, and lower graduate employment rate. Is this true? Also, please consider the fact that I’m going to live in the north(Leeds, Glasgow or Edinburgh) for at least 4 years.”*

# Looking ahead

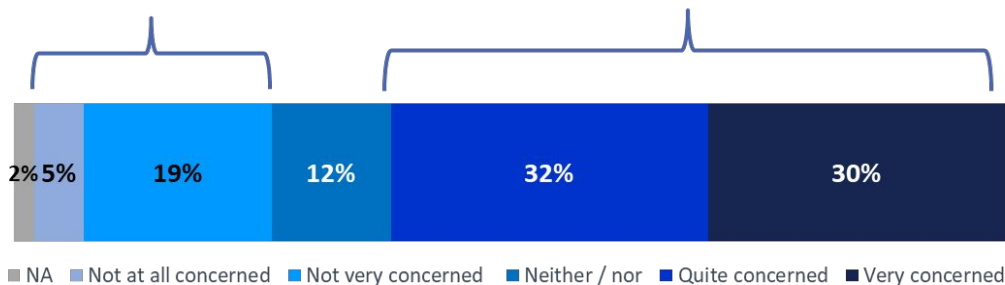
Q: Have you decided on your future career path? (single response)



Q: How concerned are you about getting a job when you graduate / finish your studies? (single response)

Net not concerned: 24%

Net concerned: 62%



# Country targeted sponsorship

Bespoke packages to enable you to target student users by country. These comprise of

- Forum sponsorship
- Targeted display impressions
- Retargeted impressions
- Email to audience aged 18-24 from chosen country

Contact Paul or the Education Team for more details.

