i-graduate International Alumni Barometer 2008 report

Produced for CIHE Global Horizons for Businesses
Section 5. The Evidence from Graduates

Introduction

Until now there has been little insight into the early career paths of international alumni after graduation from UK institutions. In collaboration with the Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE), i-graduate gathered the views of recent international graduates of UK universities using our unique research tool: The International Alumni Barometer. Aggregated data from over 15,000 alumni who completed i-graduate's International Alumni Barometer offers in-depth insight into career progression, with quantitative data regarding employment status and history, salary and the types of organisations employing international alumni as well as qualitative insight into whether international graduates perceive the UK university experience as having added sufficient value to their employability.

By focussing on the responses from the 4,100 alumni who graduated in the recent 'marker' years of 2003, 2005 and 2006, it is possible to examine the early career development of graduates and compare the progression and reflections of international and EU graduates with those from the UK to pinpoint key differences and trends.

Methodology

Adopted by eleven UK HE institutions in 2008, outcomes of the IAB process offers a representative cross-section of the sector, both geographically with representation from across the UK (including Wales and Scotland), and across a wide range of institutions with participation from Russell Group, 1994 Group and Million+ member institutions, traditional redbrick universities, large urban institutions and Guild HE institutions.

Participating Universities – IAB 2008:

University of Aberdeen
University of Bristol
Buckinghamshire New University
Cardiff University
Coventry University
University of Hertfordshire
Liverpool John Moores University
London South Bank University
Middlesex University
University College London
University of Warwick

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Graduates responded to an invitation email sent by the university to their alumni database; both domestic and international directing them to the online survey instrument. Alumni were incentivised to respond by the opportunity to win £500, and i-graduate worked with partner institutions to gain as high response rates as possible through reminder emails and publicising of the survey on the university's alumni webpage.

Response

In total more than 15,000 UK alumni responded to the International Alumni Barometer across all graduation years, representing 132 different nationalities. In addition to each partner institution receiving a confidential, benchmarked report, aggregated data provides a valuable representation of UK alumni. For the purposes of looking at early career progression in the context of the CIHE Global Horizons project, it was agreed to examine aggregated responses from the graduation years of 2006, 2005 and 2003; from which years over 4100 alumni responded. Of this number, almost half were from the UK (2174), with substantial numbers from the EU[1] (605) and other overseas countries (1352) *(see Appendix 1: Table 1).*

Of the sample group, the majority state that they studied for an undergraduate qualification; a substantial response was also gathered from alumni who had studied at taught postgraduate level (e.g. Masters degree) *(Appendix: Table 2).* The majority of UK alumni who responded to the survey studied at an undergraduate level, whereas 60% of the international (non-EU) response[2] was from taught postgraduate students. Feedback from postgraduate research students accounts for just 5% of the response from the sample group. This disparity in terms of the proportions for each level of study should be considered when comparing the differences between domestic and international alumni.

As would be expected, the vast majority of UK graduates (92%) within the sample years are currently living in the UK. Interestingly almost one third (27%) of both international and EU alumni from the sample graduation years of 2003, 2005 and 2006 are living in the UK *(see Figure 1/Appendix 1: Table 3).* This confirms that substantial numbers of international and EU graduates from UK universities choose to remain in the UK in the first five years after graduation; initiatives such as the International Graduate Scheme/Highly Skilled Migrant Programme have made opportunities for work following study in the UK more accessible for international students in recent years.

[1] 'EU alumni' refers to respondents from the 27 current member states of the European Union
[2] For the purposes of this report from here on in, 'International' refers to non-EU students. Where EU students are referred to this differentiation will be clarified

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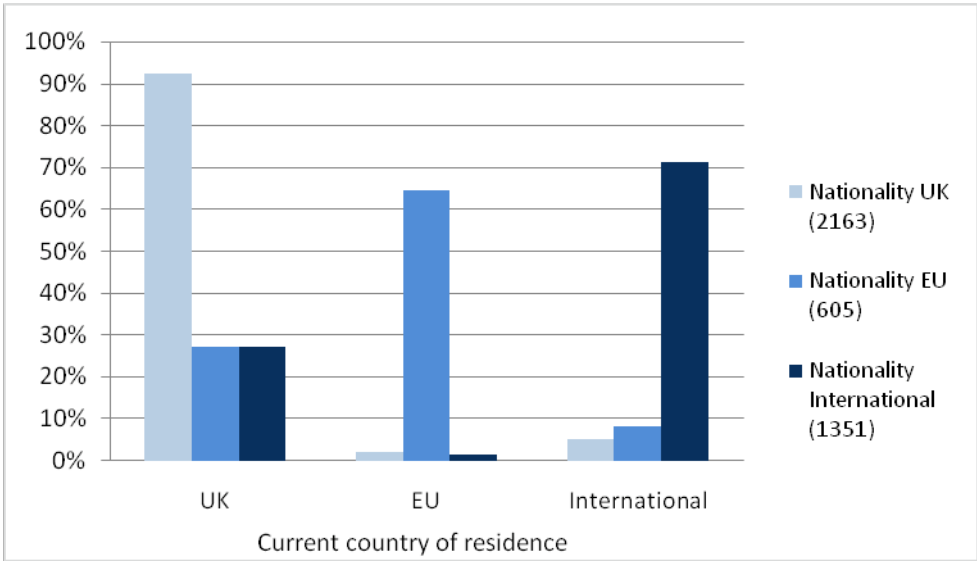

Figure 1. Nationality and current country of residence:

When comparing the country of residence year-on-year, it appears that international students are gradually returning back overseas, with 31% of international alumni who graduated two years ago living in the UK, reducing to 27% after three years and to 21% after five years *(Appendix 1: Table 4)*.

Results

Employment status

Alumni of all nationalities are more likely to be in full time paid employment at five years since graduation, compared to more recent graduates, who are more likely to be unemployed or undertaking further study *(Appendix 1: Table 6)*. Graduates from 2003 are likely to have had more time to make career decisions and employment, whereas fresh undergraduates may be unsure of the next step, or may be undertaking a further degree or training before commencing full-time employment.

When comparing the employment status of international and UK graduates from the combined sample years, the figures are very similar with 73% of UK graduates and 76% of and international (non EU) alumni in full time paid work, although these are not necessarily graduate level jobs *(Appendix 1: Table 5)*. Interestingly, substantially fewer graduates from the EU are employed full time in paid work, with this group being more likely to be undertaking further study or training, as *Figure 2* below illustrates:

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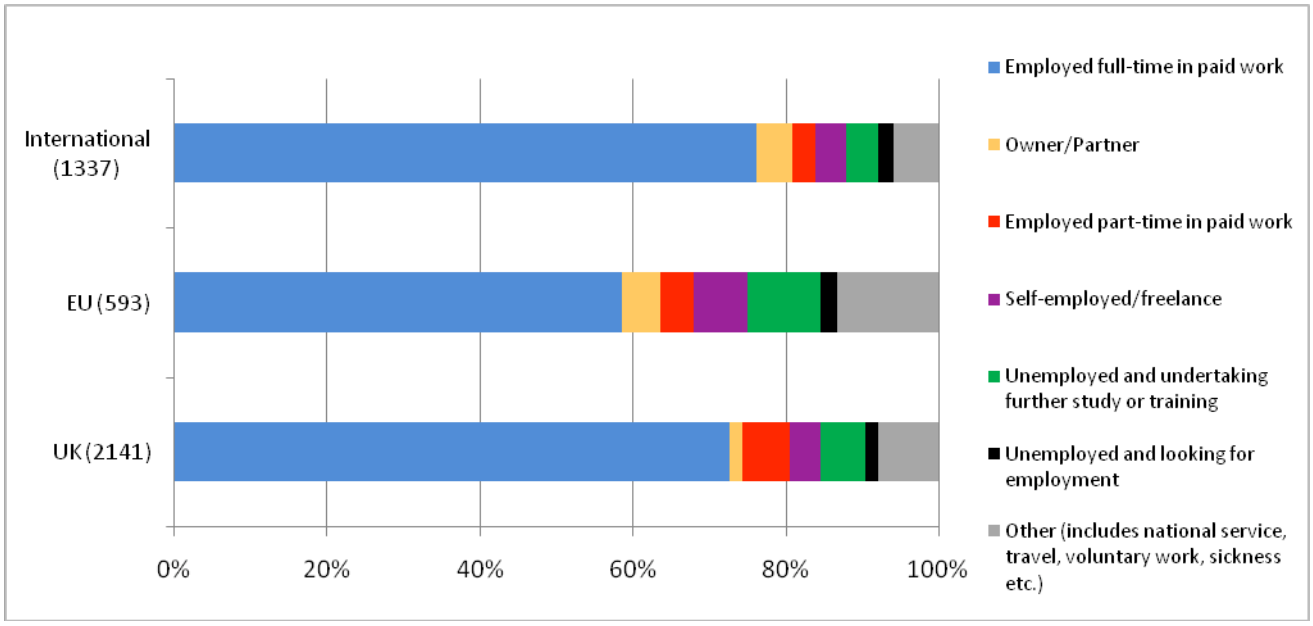
Figure 2. Current employment situation:



Regardless of nationality, the education sector is the largest employer at 2, 3 and 5 years after graduation, employing 13% of the sample group. In comparison with UK alumni, significantly larger numbers of international graduates are employed in the Banking/Finance/Insurance (12%) and Computing/IT sectors (11%), whilst UK graduates are comparatively more likely to be employed in the Medicine/Healthcare sector (12%) *(see Appendix: Table 7).* This is indicative of differences in area of study preferences whilst at University; in most institutions business and computer sciences attract large proportions of international students.

As would be expected, individuals who graduated from UK education institutions five years ago in 2003 appear to be more likely to hold a professional, managerial or senior position than more recent graduates, who are more likely to be employed in a skilled trade or administrative position. Across the sample group, international graduates are more likely to hold a senior or managerial position (29%) compared with UK graduates (16%), who are more likely to be employed as a health, creative or other professional or in and administrative position within the first five years after graduation *(Appendix 1: Table 8).* This indicates that having study experience in the UK, in addition to their other skills, gives international graduates an advantage in securing high level jobs or progressing quickly in their career. Indeed, in response to a series of attitude statements, international alumni are significantly more likely than British graduates (45% vs 26%) to state that being an alumnus of a UK university means they can 'progress more quickly in their chosen career' *(Appendix 1: Table 17).*

Interestingly, international graduates who have remained living in the UK are more likely to state that they are a company owner/founder/partner, CEO/MD, department head or in an executive or other managerial position (19%) compared with UK alumni living in the UK (16%). Having a UK

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learning experience appears to have been especially beneficial to international alumni who have returned overseas; with 32% of this group holding the most senior positions[3] within five years, although this in part may be a reflection of a tendency for some returning graduates to rejoin their family businesses upon returning home.

Living overseas appears to make it easier for graduates to run their own businesses; alumni not living in the UK are substantially more likely to state that they are an owner/founder/partner of an organisation. Again, perhaps international students who have been able to fund their UK studies are more likely to come from an affluent family business background within which they may find employment as a partner or within a related organisation upon returning home. Perhaps graduates see greater business opportunities overseas, or choose to set up their own business as a means of finding employment upon moving overseas.

When the type of organisation is considered, international graduates are less likely to be employed by a trust or charity (6%) or a state-owned organisation (13%) than their UK counterparts (11% and 18% respectively.) International graduates are substantially more likely to work for an organisation with international dealings, offices or customers, compared with UK graduates, 42% of who state their company has no international dealings – indicative of the large number of British graduates who have remained living and working in the UK *(see Appendix 1: Tables 10 & 11)*. In terms of size of organisation, 21% of UK graduates state that their company employs over 20,000 people, compared to 17% of international alumni who are seemingly more likely to work for SMEs.

Income

As would be expected, the further out of university an individual is, the higher their annual salary. Graduates two years out of university are more likely to be earning a lower annual salary of between £10-£19,000 than those who graduated five years ago, who are more likely to be earning in excess of £30,000. *(see Appendix 1: Table 13)*.

On the surface, international graduates appear to be earning substantially less than UK graduates with 24% earning an annual salary of less than £10,000, compared with just 4% of UK graduates. However, the vast majority of these lower-earning international alumni have returned to countries where salaries are generally much lower; as illustrated by *Figure 3* below.

International alumni living in the UK appear to be earning similar or higher salaries compared with British alumni, with 60% of British alumni in the UK and 65% of international alumni in the UK earning between £20-40,000, and 18% of international alumni in the combined sample earning in excess of £40,000 compared with 14% of UK alumni *(Appendix 1: Table 12)*.

[3] Senior position refers to those who selected that their current job position was 'Owner/founder/partner', CEO/Chairman/Managing Director/President', 'Director/General Manager', 'Department Head/Functional Head', 'Other managerial position'.

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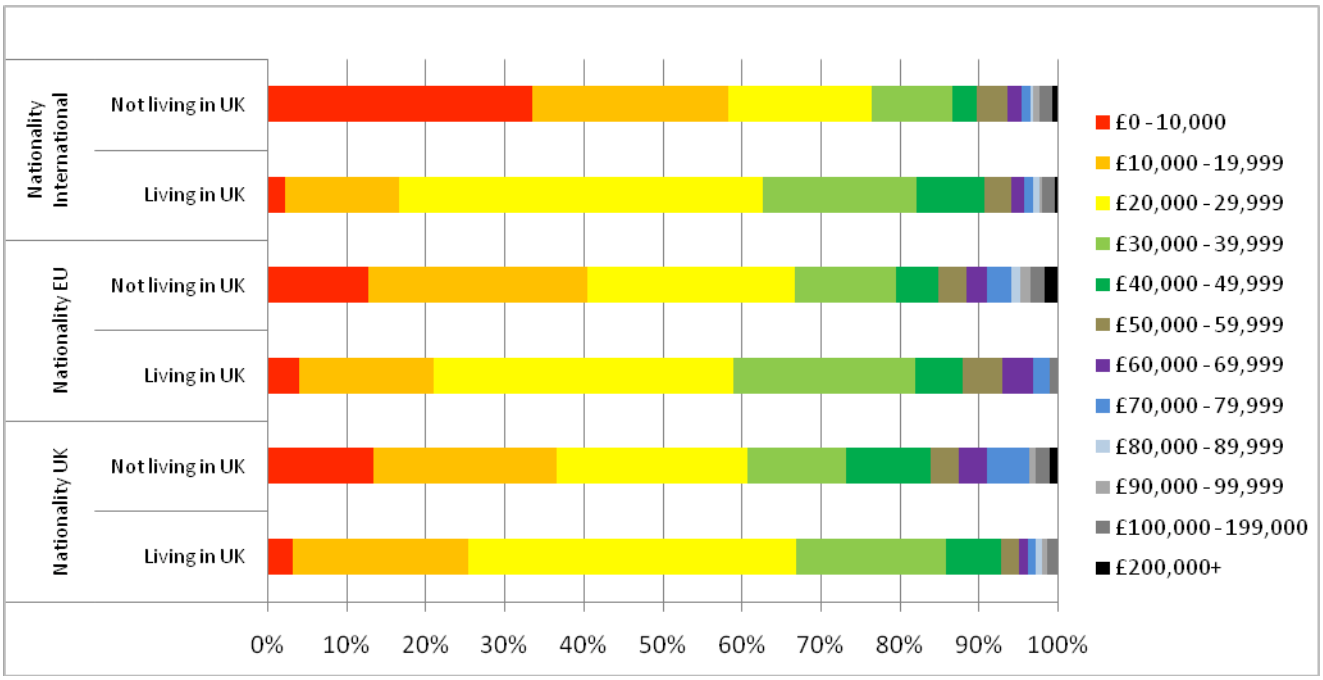
Figure 3: Approximate annual income range (before tax) in GBP:



In addition to an approximated salary respondents are asked about their perceptions of their own income in comparison with the relative income for the country in which they are working *(Appendix 1: Table 14)*. Interestingly, a substantially greater number of British graduates in the UK perceive their salary to be 'above' or 'well above average' compared with international alumni in the UK; (31% vs. 24%) despite fewer British graduates earning an income in the larger salary brackets over £20,000. It should be considered that some international respondents may be unfamiliar with the UK employment sector and may be unaware as to what an 'average' income is for the UK.

International alumni who have studied in the UK and are now working overseas appear to do especially well in terms of relative income compared with peers – this group are over four times more likely (17% vs. 4%) to indicate that they are earning a salary that is 'well above average' for the country compared to graduates who are living in the UK - indicating very clearly that studying in the UK leads to the ability to earn a higher salary overseas.

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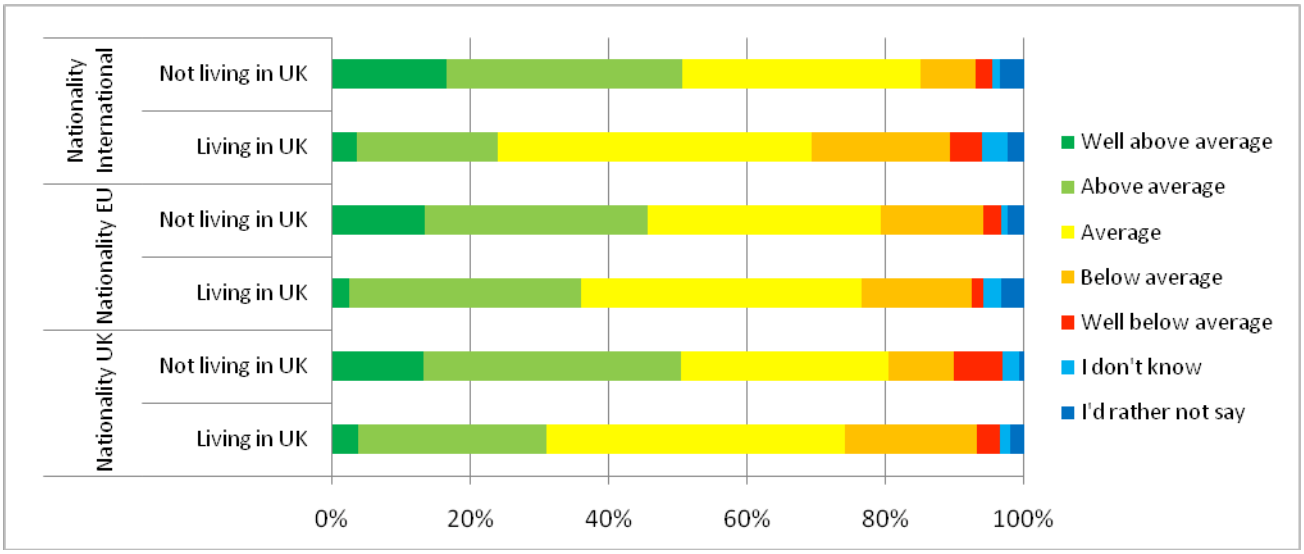
Figure 4: Perceived relative income by nationality and country of residence:



'Churn Rate'

Graduates from 2003 are more likely to have worked for between 3 and 5 employers since graduation, compared with more recent graduates, the majority of whom (85%) have worked for 1 or 2 employers since graduation. The number of positions held also increases relatively over time; 33% of graduates 5 years out have held 4 or more positions compared to 14% of 2005 graduates and 8% of 2006 graduates *(Appendix 1: Table 15)*.

On average, UK graduates appear to change jobs at a slightly faster rate within the first five years after graduation compared with international graduates. When the three sample years are compared, it is noticeable that UK graduates have had more different employers within the same period of time; 19% of UK graduates have had four or more employers since graduation in 2003, compared with just 10% of international graduates (as *Figure 5* illustrates).

When asked how long they intend to remain with their current employer, just over one third of both UK and international graduates stated they plan to leave within the next year. 10% of both groups plan to stay long-term (over 5 years).

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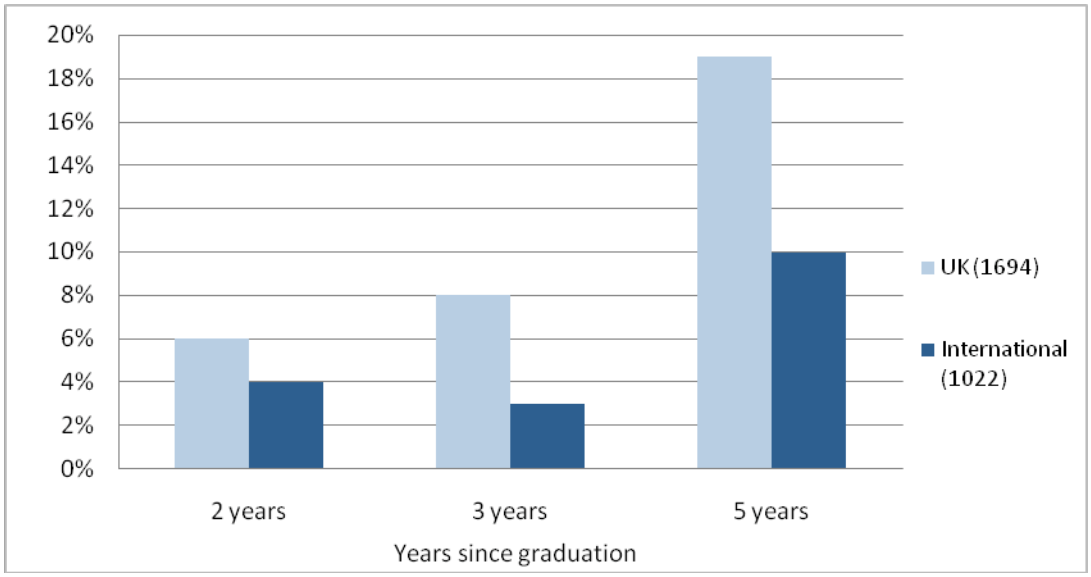
Figure 5: Percentage of UK and international graduates with four or more different employers since graduation



Reflections

Alumni are asked within the IAB to rate a series of factors in terms of how important they perceive them to have been to their current employer. All alumni, regardless of nationality, consider their personality to be the factor most important to their current employer when they were hired, with 95% of the sample stating that their personality was 'important' or 'very important'. International and EU graduates are more likely than UK alumni (67% vs 44%) to that state 'the country in which I gained my qualification' as an important factor in enhancing their employability, indicating that many international graduates perceive having a UK learning experience has a direct influence on the attractiveness of a graduate to an employer *(see Appendix: Table 17)*.

When asked to reflect upon their university experience, international alumni are significantly more likely than British graduates to state that being an alumnus of a UK university means they can progress more quickly in their chosen career (45% vs 26%), and this applies to both international alumni who have remained in the UK and those who have gone overseas. 73% of international graduates also feel studying at their UK university has made them 'the person they are today'; international alumni value their UK learning experience both in terms of enhancing their employability and shaping them as a person.

International alumni are less likely to say that their university experience was worth the financial investment in terms of both time and money. This probably reflects both the expectation placed upon the investment to deliver, as well as the particularly high investment value for many overseas students in their international education.

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84% of international graduates from the sample group indicate they would recommend or actively recommend graduates from their university to their current employer, compared with 78% of UK alumni, who are more likely to sit on the fence. A small number of both UK and international graduates state they would discourage their employer from accepting graduates from their institution (*Appendix 1: Table 19*).

Interestingly, international alumni are more likely than UK graduates to feel part of a close community/social network as a result of being a UK university alumnus. Despite the distance gap of living overseas, international and EU alumni feel no less connected with their university than UK alumni, highlighting the importance of the experience and value placed on the UK/institutional brand. However 43% of international alumni and 49% of UK alumni state that they feel disconnected or very disconnected from their institution, indicating there is much scope for universities to improve contact with alumni both in the UK and overseas.

International alumni are asked to comment within the IAB on how they feel studying in the UK has affected their employability. As would be expected from such a large sample, comments range from the very positive to the occasionally negative, with the vast majority remarking that the UK study experience has added value to their employability. Many commented that a qualification from a UK institution is perceived as attractive to overseas employers n terms of reputation, leading to enhanced employability. Selected comments can be found in *Appendix 2*.

Conclusions

Aggregated responses from recent international graduates from UK universities who completed the i-graduate International Alumni Barometer indicate that**:**

- Large numbers (almost one third) of international and EU graduates remain in the UK in the five years following their studies.

-EU graduates are the group least likely to be employed full time, with this group more likely to be undertaking further study or training.

- International graduates remaining in the UK are slightly more likely to have a 'senior' job position within five years after graduation, and the UK learning experience appears especially beneficial to graduates returning overseas in terms of seniority of employment position within five years.

- International graduates who have remained in the UK are earning higher salaries compared with UK graduates. Those returning overseas are over 4 times more likely to earn a salary that is 'well above average' for the country compared to graduates who have remained in the UK.

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- 67% of international graduates indicate that studying in the UK has enhanced their employability, and compared with British graduates significantly large numbers of international graduates feel the UK study experience will enable them to progress more quickly in their career

Further information

For further information about the International Alumni Barometer and this research, please don't hesitate to contact i-graduate.

If your institution is interested taking part in the next cycle of the International Alumni Barometer, we'd be happy to send you further information.

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Or visit http://www.i-graduate.org/services/alumni_barometer.html for further information.

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APPENDIX 1: Aggregated IAB data tables

(Data reflects aggregated data from 'marker' graduation years of 2003, 2005 and 2006 unless otherwise specified)

Table 1: Response by nationality

Nationality	Total
UK	2174
International (non-EU)	1352
EU	605
Grand Total	**4131**

Table 2: Response by level of study

	Level of study at the university				
Nationality	**Undergraduate**	**Taught Postgraduate**	**Research Postgraduate**	**Other**	**Total***
UK	1525	463	96	70	2154
International (non-EU)	460	779	65	30	1334
EU	214	295	43	41	593
Total	**2199**	**1537**	**204**	**141**	**4081**

** base numbers vary due to non-compulsory questions*

Table 3: Current country of residence

		Current country of residence			
		UK	**EU**	**International**	**Total**
Nationality	**UK**	1999	49	115	**2163**
	EU	164	391	50	**605**
	International	369	21	961	**1351**
	Total	**2532**	**461**	**1126**	**4119**

Table 4: Current country of residence by graduation year (non-UK alumni)

		Graduation year		
		2003	**2005**	**2006**
Current country of residence	**UK**	21%	27%	31%
	Outside UK	79%	73%	69%

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Table 5: Employment status by nationality

	UK	EU	International
Employed full-time in paid work	73%	59%	76%
Unemployed and undertaking further study or training	6%	10%	4%
Self-employed/freelance	4%	7%	4%
Other	4%	8%	2%
Employed part-time in paid work	6%	4%	3%
Owner/Partner	2%	5%	5%
Unemployed and looking for employment	2%	2%	2%
In national service in my home country	0%	2%	1%
Due to start a job within the next month	1%	1%	1%
Undertaking a period of travel with no or intermittent employment	1%	1%	0%
Doing voluntary or other unpaid work	1%	0%	0%
Unemployed and not looking for employment, further study or training	0%	1%	0%
Temporarily sick or unable to work	0%	1%	0%
Retired	1%	0%	0%
Permanently unable to work	0%	0%	0%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Table 6: Employment status by year of graduation

	2003	2005	2006
Employed full-time in paid work	73%	75%	68%
Unemployed and undertaking further study or training	4%	5%	8%
Self-employed/freelance	4%	4%	6%
Other	6%	4%	4%
Employed part-time in paid work	3%	4%	5%
Owner/Partner	5%	2%	3%
Unemployed and looking for employment	2%	1%	2%
In national service in my home country	1%	1%	1%
Due to start a job within the next month	1%	0%	1%
Undertaking a period of travel with no or intermittent	0%	1%	1%
Doing voluntary or other unpaid work	0%	1%	1%
Unemployed and not looking for employment, further study or	1%	0%	0%
Temporarily sick or unable to work	0%	0%	1%
Retired	0%	0%	0%
Permanently unable to work	0%	0%	0%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

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Table 7: Ten largest employment sectors by nationality

	UK	EU	International	Total
Education	15%	15%	9%	13%
Medicine/Healthcare	12%	7%	5%	9%
Banking/Finance/Insurance	6%	9%	12%	8%
Computing/IT	4%	5%	11%	7%
Other, please specify	6%	8%	6%	6%
Government	6%	3%	3%	5%
Law/Legal Services	4%	5%	5%	4%
Management Services/Consultancy	3%	7%	4%	4%
Accountancy/Actuarial	4%	4%	3%	4%
Engineering/Electronics	3%	5%	3%	4%

Table 8: Employment position by nationality

	UK	EU	International	Total
Owner/founder/partner	1.37%	5.10%	3.61%	2.61%
CEO/Chairman/Managing Director/President	0.60%	1.55%	1.20%	0.93%
Executive	2.03%	3.77%	5.41%	3.40%
Department or practice head	2.63%	5.32%	6.53%	4.30%
Other managerial position	8.98%	8.20%	11.86%	9.85%
Self-employed	2.57%	4.66%	1.89%	2.61%
Consultant/Advisor	7.28%	13.97%	9.11%	8.77%
Government official/Diplomat/Politician	1.37%	1.33%	1.46%	1.39%
Science and technology professional	6.79%	6.21%	8.59%	7.32%
Health professional	9.25%	3.55%	3.69%	6.62%
Teaching and research professional	8.87%	11.75%	6.44%	8.43%
Business and public service professional	4.00%	2.44%	3.44%	3.60%
Sales and marketing professional	3.94%	3.33%	5.07%	4.24%
HR professional	0.71%	1.77%	1.89%	1.25%
Creative professional	4.76%	3.33%	2.58%	3.83%
Other professional position	16.31%	9.53%	13.40%	14.44%
Administrative position	8.48%	4.21%	6.10%	7.12%
Skilled trade occupation	1.26%	0.89%	1.20%	1.19%
Other	8.81%	9.09%	6.53%	8.08%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

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Table 9: Employment position by nationality and current country of residence

	Nationality UK		Nationality EU		Nationality International	
	Living in UK	Not living in UK	Living in UK	Not living in UK	Living in UK	Not living in UK
Owner/founder/partner	1.3%	2.3%	0.0%	7.0%	1.3%	4.4%
CEO/Chairman/Managing Director/President	0.6%	0.8%	0.0%	2.1%	1.3%	1.2%
Executive	1.9%	3.8%	0.8%	4.8%	3.0%	6.3%
Department or practice head	2.5%	3.8%	4.1%	5.8%	2.3%	8.0%
Other managerial position	9.3%	5.4%	8.3%	8.2%	11.2%	12.1%
Self-employed	2.6%	2.3%	3.3%	5.2%	2.0%	1.9%
Consultant/Advisor	7.3%	6.9%	9.9%	15.5%	9.9%	8.8%
Government official/Diplomat/Politician	1.4%	1.5%	2.5%	0.9%	0.3%	1.9%
Science and technology professional	6.5%	10.8%	9.1%	5.2%	13.2%	7.0%
Health professional	9.5%	6.2%	5.0%	3.0%	8.2%	2.1%
Teaching and research professional	8.4%	14.6%	14.0%	10.9%	4.9%	7.0%
Business and public service professional	4.3%	0.0%	1.7%	2.7%	2.6%	3.7%
Sales and marketing professional	3.7%	7.7%	5.0%	2.7%	2.6%	5.9%
HR professional	0.7%	0.8%	3.3%	1.2%	3.0%	1.5%
Creative professional	4.9%	3.1%	4.1%	3.0%	3.3%	2.3%
Other professional position	16.7%	10.8%	9.9%	9.4%	14.5%	13.0%
Administrative position	8.8%	3.8%	7.4%	3.0%	6.6%	5.9%
Skilled trade occupation	1.2%	1.5%	0.8%	0.9%	1.3%	1.2%
Other	8.4%	13.8%	10.7%	8.5%	8.6%	5.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 10: Organisation type by nationality

	UK	EU	International	Total
Family owned	3%	8%	5%	4%
Privately owned	38%	52%	46%	43%
Publicly owned	25%	16%	24%	23%
State owned	18%	14%	13%	15%
Trust/charity	11%	4%	6%	8%
Other	5%	6%	6%	6%

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Table 11: Organisation type by nationality

	UK	EU	International	Total
Has an international parent company	13%	20%	19%	16%
Has international customers/suppliers	16%	16%	16%	16%
Has international representatives/partners	9%	11%	11%	10%
Has international/overseas offices/subsidiaries	20%	25%	31%	24%
No international dealings	42%	28%	23%	34%

Table 12: Approximate annual income by nationality

Approximate annual income (GBP before tax)	Nationality UK		Nationality EU		Nationality International	
	Living in UK	Not living in UK	Living in UK	Not living in UK	Living in UK	Not living in UK
£0 - 10,000	3%	13%	4%	13%	2%	33%
£10,000 - 19,999	22%	23%	17%	28%	14%	25%
£20,000 - 29,999	41%	24%	38%	26%	46%	18%
£30,000 - 39,999	19%	13%	23%	13%	19%	10%
£40,000 - 49,999	7%	11%	6%	5%	9%	3%
£50,000 - 59,999	2%	4%	5%	3%	3%	4%
£60,000 - 69,999	1%	4%	4%	3%	2%	2%
£70,000 - 79,999	1%	5%	2%	3%	1%	1%
£80,000 - 89,999	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%
£90,000 - 99,999	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%
£100,000 - 199,000	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%
£200,000+	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%

Table 13: Approximate annual income by graduation year

Approximate annual income (GBP before tax)	Year of graduation		
	2003	2005	2006
£0 - 10,000	8%	11%	13%
£10,000 - 19,999	14%	23%	26%
£20,000 - 29,999	35%	35%	34%
£30,000 - 39,999	20%	15%	15%
£40,000 - 49,999	9%	6%	5%
£50,000 - 59,999	3%	4%	2%
£60,000 - 69,999	3%	1%	1%
£70,000 - 79,999	2%	1%	1%
£80,000 - 89,999	1%	1%	0%
£90,000 - 99,999	1%	0%	1%
£100,000 - 199,000	2%	2%	1%
£200,000+	1%	0%	0%

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Table 14: Perceptions of salary by nationality and country of residence

	Nationality UK		**Nationality EU**		**Nationality International**	
	Living in UK	Not living in UK	Living in UK	Not living in UK	Living in UK	Not living in UK
Well above average	4%	14%	3%	14%	3%	17%
Above average	27%	38%	34%	32%	22%	34%
Average	42%	28%	40%	34%	48%	35%
Below average	19%	9%	16%	15%	20%	8%
Well below average	3%	8%	2%	2%	4%	2%
I don't know	2%	3%	3%	1%	2%	1%
I'd rather not say	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%	3%

Table 15: Number of employers since graduation, by nationality and year of graduation

No. of employers	**UK**			**EU**			**International**		
	2003	2005	2006	2003	2005	2006	2003	2005	2006
1	25%	38%	48%	28%	37%	52%	28%	47%	50%
2	36%	37%	35%	32%	40%	36%	35%	35%	39%
3	20%	16%	11%	22%	17%	8%	27%	14%	8%
4	10%	5%	4%	6%	4%	3%	8%	3%	2%
5	6%	1%	1%	8%	1%	1%	2%	0%	1%
6	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
7	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
8	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
9	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
10+	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 16: Length of time intending to remain with current employer, by nationality

	UK	**EU**	**International**
Less than 3 months	7%	6%	9%
Over 3 months to 6 months	8%	8%	8%
Over 6 months to 1 year	18%	16%	15%
Over 1 year to 2 years	30%	33%	29%
Over 2 years to 3 years	15%	18%	17%
Over 3 years to 5 years	12%	10%	11%
Over 5 years	10%	9%	10%
Total	100%	100%	100%

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Table 17: Reflections statements by nationality

	% 'Agree' or 'Strongly Agree' with statement		
	UK	**EU**	**International**
My degree was worth the investment of time	93%	94%	90%
I am proud of my connections to xxx University	89%	87%	89%
My degree was worth the financial investment	85%	88%	79%
My degree has been relevant to the work place	77%	83%	80%
My experience at The University of xxx has made me the person I am today	67%	68%	73%
I have debt from studying which has had a significant impact on my standard of living	41%	30%	47%
Being a University of xxx alumnus means nothing special to me	38%	31%	28%
Being a University of xxx alumnus means I am part of a close community/social network	29%	47%	60%
Being a University of xxx alumnus means I can progress more quickly in my chosen career	26%	38%	45%
Being a University of xxx alumnus means I can command a higher salary	19%	28%	32%

Table 18: Perceptions of importance of factors to current employer

	UK	**EU**	**International**
My personality	97%	93%	93%
The level of my qualification	83%	87%	89%
Prior work experience	83%	78%	82%
Practical skills acquired as a result of my degree	74%	74%	78%
The subject(s) I studied	71%	84%	82%
The institution at which I studied	50%	62%	66%
The country in which I gained my qualification	44%	67%	68%

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Table 19: Recommendation of graduates to current employer

	UK	EU	International
I would actively recommend graduates from my university	28%	30%	31%
If asked, I would recommend graduates from my university	49%	52%	53%
I would neither recommend nor oppose acceptance of graduates from my university	23%	18%	15%
If asked, I would oppose acceptance of graduates from my university	0%	0%	1%
I would actively oppose acceptance of graduates from my university	0%	0%	1%

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Selected comments

Honestly, I do not believe that the part of my studies I took in the UK has had much importance to my employability. Much more important is my qualifications due to my overall experience, the totality of my education from a variety of institutions, and my personality.

(Male, PGR, Norway)

No doubt it has been beneficial for my professional development. I would say there are three main factors:
1. The worldwide prestige of UK universities
2. The improvement of my scientific analysis skills
3. The increase of self confidence

(Male, PGR, Peru)

'Attending school and university studies in the UK provided me with sound foundations from which to go on to build a successful career in international development. However, subsequent degrees and work experience gained outside the UK were more important determinants of career success in my case.

(Male, Columbia, UG)

'In many ways it has been a problem - especially for people who are biased or 'racist' against all of us who studied abroad. But when interviewed by people who appreciate good education - it has certainly opened many doors of opportunities.

(Female, PGR, Greece)

'When first employed out of school it was very important since I worked at Ernst & Young an international accounting firm--personally it has been a tremendous advantage because it gives me different perspectives and experiences than many others in my field and my geographic area.

(Male, UG, USA)

'Having completed my studies in England I have come to recognize the high level of training that I received in my field. Although the degree itself has made no impact on my employability in the civil service, I have been afforded a level of respect for completing graduate work in a country held in the highest esteem for education excellence. I feel I am in an excellent position for future advancement in my career choice.

(Male, PGR, Canada)

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'I think it is not a matter of studying in the UK or not, it's the fact that one leaves his/her own country and goes to another completely different land, studying and living there gives the additional credit to the person in terms of mobility, mind-set (being open to the world), flexibility, adventurous, etc. And it is certainly the case for me! My study in the UK has certainly been one of the advantages for me, I not only learnt the knowledge I was supposed to learn, but more important, it's the western way of thinking, the different culture, sharing of knowledge and so on which helped me understand things much better and in a more thorough manner.
(Female, PGR, China)

'I believe that it made me more employable. By studying in the UK, very far from home, it showed that I am independent and by graduating from there, it proved that I am capable to compete with students from all over the world. Also, by having to study in a foreign language (despite English is my second language), it definitely helps me in my career. Further, the interactions with various nationals makes me more confident in my working life to discuss, hold meetings and even give speeches and conduct my cases.
(Male, UG, Malaysia)

'It has been both an advantage and a disadvantage. Although it boosted employers perceptions of me and impressed them greatly, my lack of hands-on experience proved to be a deterrent for many within my chosen field. Outside of my field of study, many were afraid to hire me as they believed that I would not stay long with them and would seek more interesting and greener pastures elsewhere.
(Female, PGR, Barbados)

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