

Quality of teaching tops the list for international students

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Quality of teaching is the single most important factor considered by international students when deciding where to study according to research published today by Study Group.

Also ranking near the top of the list were personal safety, the reputation of the college and country of study according to the majority of the 671 students surveyed.

The 'Choice of Destination' survey was commissioned by leading international education provider Study Group and conducted by the International Graduate Insight Group (i-graduate). The respondents were from a variety of countries (including China, Russia and Greece) and studying at one of the UK's four Bellerbys international colleges, taking a range of courses from A-Levels and Foundation to HND and Masters qualifying programmes.

Bottom of the list of 19 factors were the availability of scholarships, future work opportunities and whether their friends studied in the same country.

James Pitman, Managing Director of Study Group UK, commented: "The research highlights what students from around the world are looking for in a study destination, and it is not surprising that so many of them choose to study in Britain. Our education system is widely regarded as offering the gold standard, providing an excellent foundation on which to launch a successful career."

The research also revealed that international students rely on word of mouth recommendations when considering which institution to attend. Parental advice topped the list of influencing factors, followed by agent recommendation and information gained from institution websites. By comparison, league tables were deemed unimportant and ranked near the bottom.

James Pitman continued: "While the opinions of education experts and family would logically be important to prospective students, what is surprising is the lack of interest in official rankings. Fewer than five per cent of respondents found league table ratings important enough to sway their decisions."

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Notes to Editors:

About Study Group (www.studygroup.com)

Spanning five continents, Study Group is a global leader in international education, providing the

highest quality educational opportunities for students from over 120 countries. Beginning in 1994 with 7000 students per year, Study Group now has an enrolment base of 40,000 around the world.

Through Study Group's leading set of partnerships with top universities, it is able to provide on and off-campus preparation courses for international students that ensure academic success and entry into some of the most prestigious educational institutions in the world. The quality of its teaching is confirmed by independent accreditation bodies worldwide including: English UK, Ofsted, British Council, NEAS, Accet, English Australia and New Zealand Qualification Authority.

Through the Bellerbys brand in the UK, Study Group provides academic preparation for international students wanting to study at English-speaking universities. Courses include GCSEs, A-Levels, specifically designed Foundation courses to gain entry into universities, a degree course and pre-masters qualifications.

Study Group offers English language courses for international students in 18 locations in all of the main Anglophone destinations through its Embassy CES brand. Courses include short-term general English, one-year academic programmes and specialist English preparation for public English language qualifications, or for degree programmes at English-speaking universities. Study Group also runs youth summer vacation courses in the UK, Ireland and the USA, combining English language training with both academic and extra-curricular activities.

The biggest intake of international students into Study Group's UK programmes is from countries with emerging economies such as China, and South East Asian economies, and in particular from oil rich nations like Russia and the Middle East.

About i-graduate (www.i-graduate.org)

The International Graduate and Insight Group (i-graduate) is an independent benchmarking and research service, delivering comparative research for the education sector worldwide.