

Quality Assurance of Transnational Education (TNE)

Simon Roy

Head of Higher Education Policy
OECD Directorate of Education and Skills

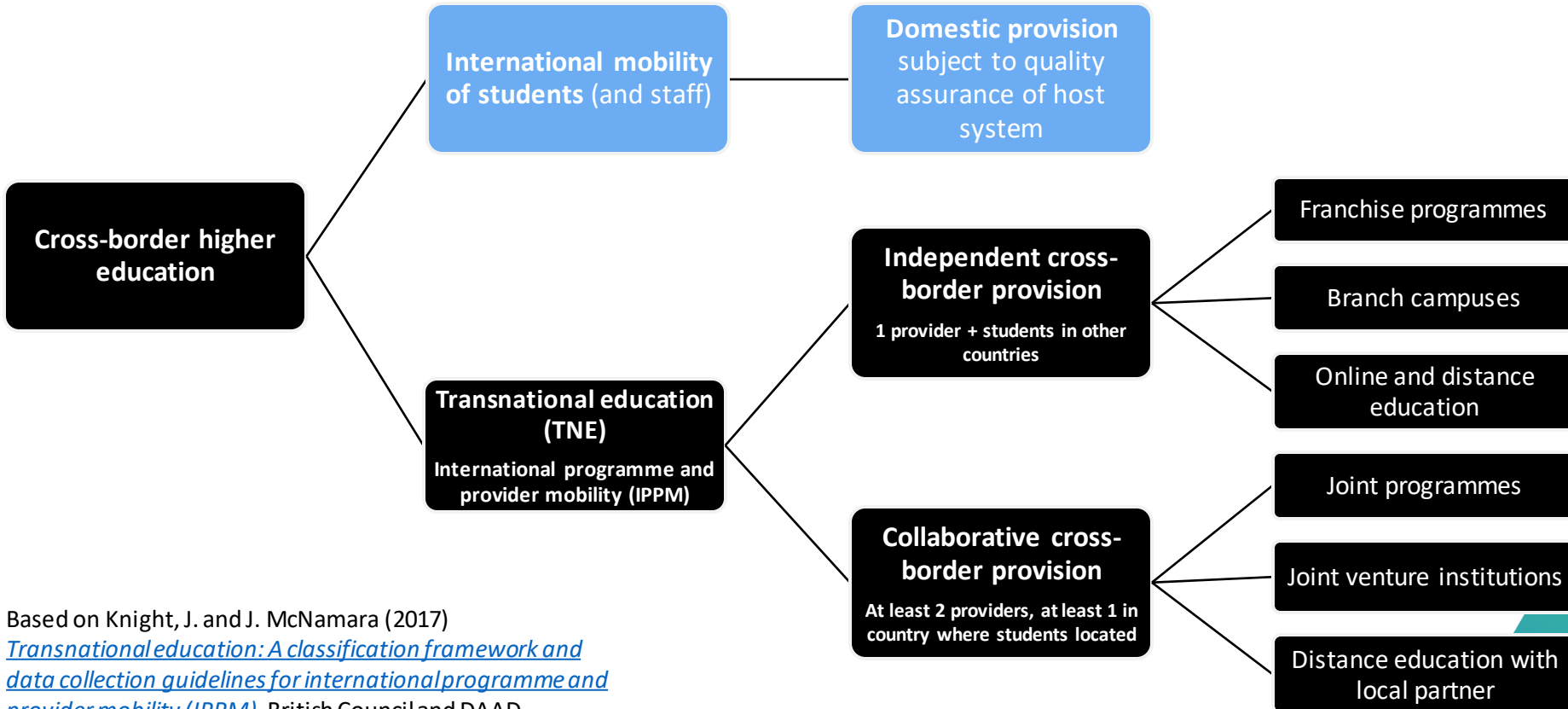
'Implementation and Innovation in QA through Peer Learning' (IMINQA) PLA

21 March 2023



Cross-border higher education and transnational education (TNE)

Unpacking the concepts...



Based on Knight, J. and J. McNamara (2017)
[Transnational education: A classification framework and data collection guidelines for international programme and provider mobility \(IPPM\)](#), British Council and DAAD



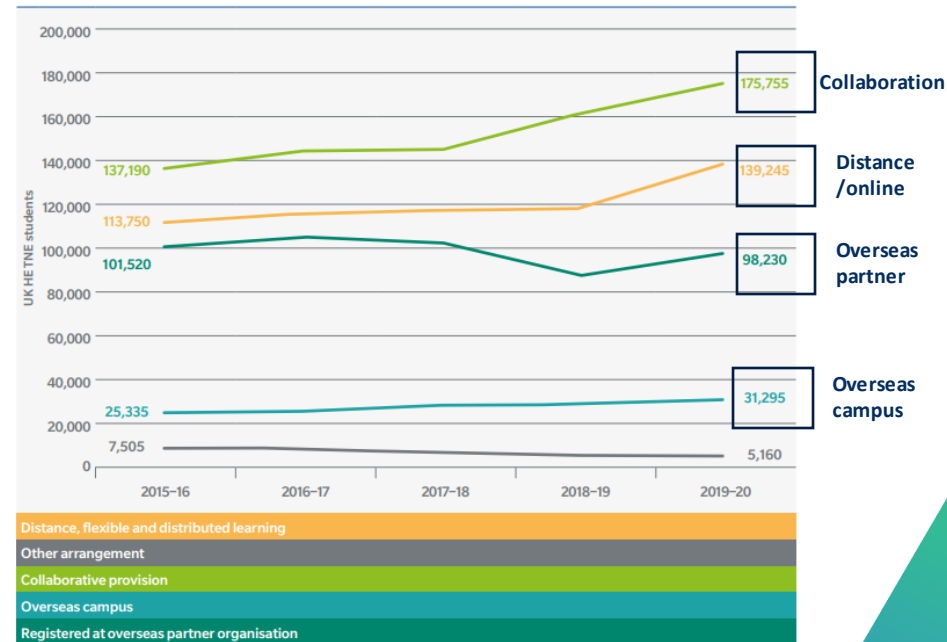
The scale of TNE

Increasing international programme and provider mobility (IPPM) - the UK example

Table 8: Top 20 countries and territories for UK HE TNE students, 2019–20
(Excluding Oxford Brookes University)

Rank	Country or territory	Student numbers	% Change from 2018–19	% of Total
1	Malaysia	49,160	2.1 ↑	11.0
2	China	48,700	16.3 ↑	10.9
3	Sri Lanka	30,755	21.8 ↑	6.9
4	Singapore	27,700	-2.7 ↓	6.2
5	Hong Kong	22,400	5.7 ↑	5.0
6	Greece	19,590	13.2 ↑	4.4
7	Egypt	19,590	-2.6 ↓	4.4
8	Oman	17,680	1.9 ↑	3.9
9	United Arab Emirates	14,530	8.0 ↑	3.2
10	Cyprus (EU)	11,340	-1.4 ↓	2.5
11	Germany	9,190	34.6 ↑	2.0
12	Saudi Arabia	9,045	16.7 ↑	2.0
13	India	8,485	1.5 ↑	1.9
14	Switzerland	7,990	26.9 ↑	1.8
15	Kuwait	7,360	15.0 ↑	1.6
16	Pakistan	7,310	21.5 ↑	1.6
17	United States	7,305	15.1 ↑	1.6
18	Nepal	7,230	42.4 ↑	1.6
19	Uzbekistan	6,105	9.5 ↑	1.4
20	Ireland	5,920	13.1 ↑	1.3

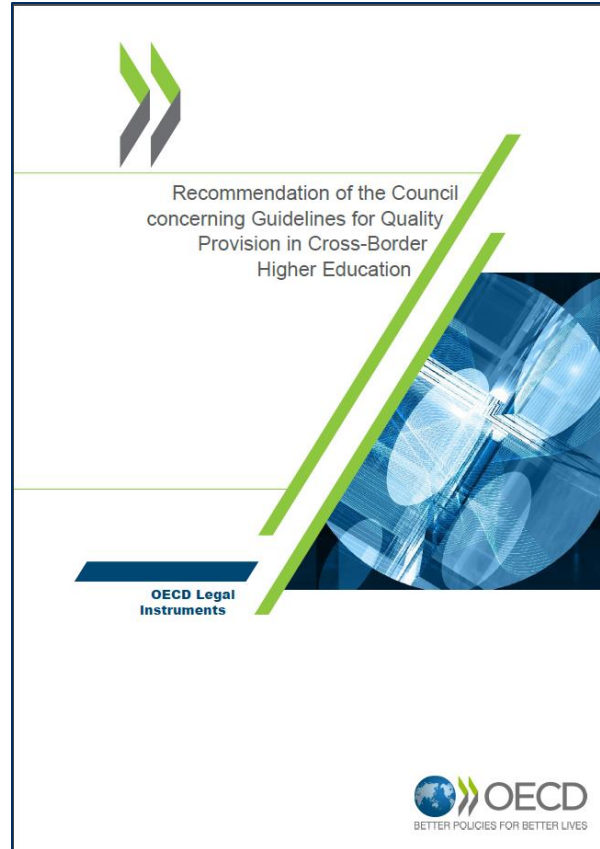
Figure 3: UK HE TNE student numbers by type of provision, 2015–16 to 2019–20
(Excluding Oxford Brookes University)



Universities UK (2021) [The scale of UK higher education transnational education 2019–20 - Trend analysis of HESA data](#)



OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education



For full text: OECD (2005)
[Recommendation of the Council
concerning Guidelines for Quality
Provision in Cross-Border Higher
Education](#)



OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education – broad principles for QA of TNE

Common principles for assuring quality and recognition in CBHE, adopted in 2005

The Guidelines call for:

- > Clear information for learners
- > **Programmes to be of equivalent quality to those delivered domestically – requirement for adequate QA procedures (cf EHEA Rome Ministerial)**
- > Fair and transparent procedures for recognition of credentials
- > International cooperation between relevant agencies (e.g. QA bodies)

Recommendations for six types of actors:

1. Governments (in sending and receiving countries)
2. Higher education providers including higher education academic staff
3. Student bodies
4. **Quality assurance and accreditation bodies**
5. Academic recognition bodies
6. Professional bodies



Translating principles into practice

The context for students located abroad differs from that experienced students in the home country

Objective

- > **Programmes to be of equivalent quality to those delivered domestically – requirement for adequate QA procedures**

Challenges

- > Is the **learning environment** of equivalent quality?
- > Do students have comparable access to **academic and non-academic support**?
- > To what extent is the programme designed to reflect the expectations of **international labour markets and employers**? (risk of domestic bias)
- > For practical and professionally oriented programmes: can students access equivalent **internship or work-based learning** opportunities?



Implementing the OECD Guidelines – translating principles into specific actions

- **2012 and 2015** – Previous monitoring exercises by OECD Secretariat based on surveys to national contact points – monitored implementation in a very general way
- **2021-2022** – Cooperation with UNESCO: [assessment report](#) (Achim Hopbach) and consultative panel at WHEC 2022 in May in Barcelona
- **2023** – Monitoring to report to OECD Council:
 - ◆ Defining some basic criteria to judge whether QA systems pay adequate attention to Transnational Education – attempting to make monitoring more specific – your input welcome and needed
 - ◆ Fielding a short, largely fixed-response survey to OECD member and accession countries – Q3 2023
 - ◆ Reporting to Council on implementation – assumption a) the Guidelines can stand; b) focus should rather be on practical measures for implementation (notably led by regional QA bodies, such as ENQA)



**EDUCATION
& SKILLS**

Higher Education Policy Team

<https://www.oecd.org/education/higher-education-policy/>





Key questions

1. What is the approach in your national system to assuring the quality of outgoing TNE from your country/jurisdiction?
2. How are QA agencies in your system addressing the specific issue of TNE in their external QA of (sending) higher education institutions? (e.g. in the use of monitoring indicators or criteria in site visits)
3. What, if any, are the main differences in how your QA agencies approach outgoing TNE (with students abroad) and domestic HE provision (with students in your country)? What explains differences that do exist?
4. To what extent can QA agencies genuinely ensure the same level of quality in provision for students abroad and students at home?