

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**17 September, 2012**

**'We need to get it right' on student visas, minister tells YouGov-Cambridge forum**

***YouGov-Cambridge study finds Britain is 'global leader in education'.***

Adding to the on-going debate over student visas, Foreign Office Minister Hugo Swire has said that Britain must continue to attract foreign students in order to maintain and improve Britain's reputation internationally, but that the system has been "abused" in the past.

Responding to a question on the student visa issue at the YouGov Cambridge forum, held on September 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> in Cambridge, Mr Swire said:

"Unfortunately, the system has been abused in the past. ... We need to get it right. We need to make sure people can come here from all over the world, because then when they go back to their own countries they have a greater sense of what we're about."

A cross-country study prepared for the YouGov-Cambridge forum revealed that Britain is viewed as a global leader in education on a par with – or in various cases preferred over – the US as the best place to receive a university education.

The poll was conducted across Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, Pakistan and China and asked respondents where they would choose from a list of eighteen countries if they had to send their child to receive a university education in another country. Britain was ranked first in Pakistan (59%), in the US (47%), in the Middle East and North Africa (40% across the region overall), and in Germany (50% - in joint first place with the US). It was ranked second behind only the US in both France (37%) and China (56%).

Commenting on the findings, YouGov-Cambridge Director Dr Joel Faulkner Rogers said the study and the Minister's comments on the issue would help illuminate the debate being waged over student visas.

"It is clear from the results of the YouGov-Cambridge study that Britain's universities are held in the highest regard by people all over the world. The reputation of Britain's universities is rivalled only by the US, and is helping drive interest in Britain in key emerging markets. Minister Swire's comments reflect the challenge the Government is facing in balancing its pledges on immigration, while also ensuring that Britain maintains its reputation as a global leader in education," Dr Faulkner Rogers said.

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See the full results for the cross-country YouGov-Cambridge study [here](#)

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### **About the YouGov-Cambridge study**

Between 10-25 August 2012, YouGov questioned 12,693 adults across the US, Britain, Europe, the Middle East & North Africa (MENA), Pakistan and China. Data was weighted to be nationally representative of adult populations in Britain, US, France, Germany and the US. Data in the Middle East & North Africa (MENA), Pakistan and China is representative of the online population. Not all questions were asked in China.

### **About YouGov-Cambridge**

YouGov-Cambridge is a unique partnership between Cambridge University and YouGov, which brings polling and academic experts together to collaborate in opinion-research on transnational and global issues. These collaborations focus primarily on six key topics of international public opinion: US and UK foreign policy; the Arab Spring; Af-Pakistan; the EU in crisis; climate change and changing attitudes to globalisation.

### **About YouGov**

YouGov is an international, full service market research agency offering added value consultancy, qualitative research, field and tab services, syndicated products such as the daily brand perception tracker BrandIndex and social media analysis tool SoMA, fast turnaround omnibus and comprehensive SixthSense market intelligence reports. YouGov's sector specialist teams serve financial, media, technology and telecoms, FMCG and public sector markets.

YouGov is considered a pioneer of online market research and has a panel of 2.5 million people worldwide, including over 350,000 people in the UK representing all ages, socio-economic groups and other demographic types.

As the most quoted market research agency in the UK, YouGov has a well-documented and published track record illustrating the accuracy of its survey methods.

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