



British Education Fair Spain

(Barcelona - 22 October 2014)

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1. Event fact file

Spain

Venue	Hotel Constanza, Barcelona – 22 October 2014
Opening hours	11.00 – 19.00
Opened by	Rod Pryde, Director of The British Council in Spain
Stand costs	Barcelona: £1,200
Sponsors	<p>No sponsors but a good number of collaborating institutions. Each of these sent direct invitations to networks exceeding 4,000 possible clients or offered in-kind sponsorships. Many others collaborated with dissemination but with smaller quantities of clients:</p> <p>Círculo de Formación, Educación & Empleo, IELTS, Mastermanía, VisitBritain, UKTI, Ayuntamiento Madrid, Ayuntamiento Barcelona, Escuelas Católicas, ASEPROCE, Richmond, NABSS Association, Fundación Hispano Británica and Inforjoven are our main “disseminators”.</p>
Unique feature to give added value	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Market Briefing for Exhibitors 2. General information sessions to the public 3. British Passport distributed on-line before arrival so that people prepared in advance. 4. Extensive media promotion of the event and UK Education excellence 2 months before the event. 5. Direct invitations to schools and promotion of UK Education through general information sessions throughout the year (over 20 talks since last year fair)
Seminars	<p>All you need to know to apply to a British university by Carolina Jiménez, British Council Spain</p> <p>All you need to know to apply to a British university by Missy White, Bath Spa University</p> <p>Levels of English and accreditation by Bernie Maguire, British Council Spain</p> <p>Discover the benefits of studying in London by Laura Ellis (King's College), Catherine Eames (Imperial College) y Penny Kossifos (University College London)</p>

2. Background & Framework

This is the second British Council Education Fair in Barcelona, organised in the same location as last year. The number of students willing to study abroad in Catalunya, as in the rest of Spain, continues to grow due to its international reputation, being the mother of English and most recently, an appreciation of its HE methodology and access to better jobs after University. Although the UK remains the preferred country of study, competition from other markets is fierce and Germany and other EU countries are gaining students quickly as they offer free education in English, have good reputation and also offer job opportunities after University.

Competing with these new markets requires continuity, dedication and creative mechanisms of communication as audiences are varied, highly spread out in 17 autonomous regions and require a lot of contact to attract their attention.

To our knowledge, this is the only HE Fair for one single country and we are delighted with visitor numbers and press attention. Germany and the USA (the 2nd and 3rd preferred countries of destination for Spanish students) spend larger amounts of money to promote their educational offers but we manage to reach larger markets through dedicated activities such as the Fairs. We have perceived a small increase in numbers from last year and slight improvement of the understanding of the key differences between the Spanish and British systems. While Barcelona attracts ½ of the public in Madrid (the city hosts ½ of the population as well), exhibitors tell us they are excellent clients that understand what they are looking for.

The Passport has been incredibly well received by the schools, as the tool that has allowed them to prepare their visits with the students. Having analysed the results and feedback, we continue to value the Fair as a good method for recruitment, for branding within Spain and for promotion of UK Education in general.

That said, there are still lots of key learning points for both organisers and exhibitors alike.

Key statistics

On-line pre-registrations	421	
Registrations at the Fair	610	
Total no registrations	712	Including on-line that registered and those that registered on arrival (school groups included)
Total N° of exhibitors	37	A full list of exhibitors can be found in <u>Appendix 1</u>

Visitor's primary market objectives (520 registration sheets analysed)

- UG studies 60%
- PG studies 23%
- UK Schools 23%
- English 31%
- VET/College 6%

3. Impact of marketing plan (combined with Fair in Madrid)

Marketing actions were many, varied and aiming to cover the different target audiences. These included:

- **Direct meetings and messages:** early meetings with local authorities and information centres, calls on schools, post letters to all Public and Concertado schools in Barcelona, e-mails to our data-bases (over 70,000 contacts), e-mails to Public, Concertado and Private schools, e-mails to academies of English, VET schools, teachers of English within Spanish institutions (over 3,000), e-mails to literature teachers at Universities (over 800) and articles in our various English and Exams newsletters in June and October.
- **Multipliers:** we have asked all Spanish Universities International Relations Units, Chambers of Commerce & Business Associations, British Networks within Spain, publishing agencies and a number of key networks to announce the fair on their websites, their newsletters and by other means. Those who did direct mailings to over 4,000 contacts were given a “collaborator” status.
- **Social media campaigns** via twitter and Facebook, including prize announcements.
- **An exclusive press manager** - working to place non-paid articles in press/radio or on-line media. Key messages: excellence of British Education and/or English learning in the UK (see list of articles which have been written due to this effort in the media impact report, annex 4). *El País Formación*, which belongs to the most read newspaper in Spain, placed an article on HE which was opened by over 60,000 unique visitors within a week. At the time of writing this report, it is still in the front page as the most visited article of *El País Formación*.
- **Paid publicity:** in Madrid (3 weekends in *El Mundo/Expansión*)
- **Future impact.** Since Oct 2013 we have given over 20 information sessions in schools and youth information centres around the country, in Madrid, Barcelona, Málaga, Zaragoza, Ciudad Real, Toledo, Murcia, etc. We will continue with these sessions as a means for promoting UK Education. 1,376 people have received information about UK Education through these sessions.

Please see a full media plan and results analysis including info on visitors data, pre-registration system and findings from evaluation and observation of the exhibitions in [Appendix 2](#) & [Appendix 4](#).

4. Recommendations

4.1 Key recommendations for exhibitors

- Review your entry requirements for Spanish students. Remember Bachillerato marks are an average of 8-11 compulsory subjects. Getting an average 8 is a huge achievement. It does not compare equally to AAA. A good student in Spain will have a 6.5-7.5 average mark. Use UCAS comparative tables to see how UK-Spain Naric agreed marks between UK & Spain compare.
- Engineering, architecture, business & politics/international studies seem very attractive
- Branding in Spain is important. A media such as **Mastermanía** is worth considering as they are reasonable priced and have lots of access to students.
- Apart from coming to the fair itself, exhibitors who want to build a market in Spain (and are not yet well-known) need to continue actions throughout the year. Building up a brand takes time.
- There was also some dissatisfaction about having to queue for some exhibitors. These came mostly from school group participants.
- Many Spanish parents are looking for a short-term placement in schools (one term)

5.2 Key recommendations for the organisers

- Ensure exhibitors can access the space while it is closed to the public during lunch time.
- Allow one day between venues
- The Hotel in Barcelona was good, but perhaps more space should be booked.
- Feedback from the information sessions was overwhelmingly good. It may be wise to offer some in the morning to schools. We will continue offering a wide variety of sessions and repeating the most successful several times. We will also continue offering the general sessions throughout the year in schools, city councils, youth information offices, etc.
- Re-introduce a session with agents (maybe at lunch time?) or even a session for school-counsellors.
- Market briefing well received. A lot of interest in the UCAS chart. BC will work out a comprehensive explanation of all the different marks in Spain (and studies) and send to exhibitors.
- The general information table was busy throughout the fair; we will continue to have this. Some exhibitors said they were asked too many general questions. We really cannot avoid this; people want to hear from you what we have already told them.

- We need to find a way to collect the pack for schools that is less disrupting.
- When promoting the event, we will ask exhibitors for their wish list of contacts

6. Conclusions and follow up

The event was very busy and the majority of exhibitors expressed happiness with the overall results (number and quality of visitors at the Fair). One exhibitor mentioned that more PG would be needed. Year on year we do every possible effort to reach PG students (nearly 23 % of the visitors), but it is important to understand that the mornings will always be primarily UG as the main interest in the Fair comes from Schools. Schools really appreciate the “pack” which was prepared for them. Feedback from the public is excellent in terms of quality of the organisation, support at the venue and information received both from exhibitors and organisers. They highly value the variety on offer, the support received at the entrance, to respond to general questions and the information sessions offered. Overall we are satisfied with the results of this Fair.

Appendix 1: List of participating institutions

Nº	Universities
1	Aberystwyth University
2	Anglia Ruskin University
3	University Of The Arts London
4	Bath Spa University
5	University Of Bedfordshire
6	Bournemouth University
7	Brunel University
8	UCFB
9	City University London
10	University College London
11	University Of East Anglia
12	Edge Hill University
13	University Of Essex
14	Goldsmiths, University Of London
15	IE University
16	Imperial College London
17	University Of Kent
18	King's College London
19	University of Leeds
20	University of Leicester
21	London South Bank University
22	Marbella Design Academy
23	Middlesex University
24	Queen Mary, University of London
25	Sheffield Hallam University
26	University Of South Wales
27	University Of Southampton
28	Southampton Solent University
29	University Of Sussex
30	University Of Westminster
Ag.1	Sheffield Centre
Ag. 2	The Student World
ELT	Anglo-Continental School of English
ELT	OISE Group

Appendix 2: Visitors' survey results

The total number of online registrations was **421** plus 400 in 12 school groups (11 private schools, 4 of them British Schools). We registered **610** new people on the day (including school children), which means that around 200 people came without registering or did not bring their registration form. Around 60% of pre-registered visitors came - The total number being **712**.

Registration Data Analysis

Impact of media & communication actions in terms of attendance:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| ➤ BC Web or direct mailing/newsletter | 26% |
| ➤ School/University: | 17.8% |
| ➤ Friends or Family: | 26.8% |
| ➤ Press, Facebook, Twitter: | 6.5% |
| ➤ Not interested in UG/PG | 21% |

Press, Facebook and Twitter campaign have comparatively low return rates given the efforts we place in sending and repeating campaigns. But we feel they are worth sending out as they reach lots of readers and raise the profile of British Education as a whole.

Preferences as outlined in their registration forms (521 registration sheets analysed)

- | | |
|---------------|-----|
| ➤ UG studies | 60% |
| ➤ PG studies | 23% |
| ➤ UK Schools | 23% |
| ➤ English | 31% |
| ➤ VET/College | 6% |

By sectors:

- | | |
|---|-----|
| ➤ Communication or Humanities | 14% |
| ➤ Sciences or Technology/Engineering | 35% |
| ➤ Business/Mgt/Politics or Int. Relations | 30% |
| ➤ Arts related studies | 21% |
| ➤ Health Sciences | 18% |

Feedback forms

General public

We have analysed 44 feedback forms. The feedback received on the whole was very good. People found the information sessions extremely useful. The passport was also welcomed, although there was one comment about it not being available Spanish/Catalan. Their expectations of the fair were well met and they would highly recommend it their friends and family. Some people found the venue to be slightly cramped.

A common negative comment continues to be the lack of Scottish Universities (or Oxbridge). This probably explains why to the question of quality of institutions the results were 55% marking 4 and 18% marking 5 (where 5 is best).

Schools

In general schools gave very positive feedback, the information received at the event and very specifically the Passport/guide book. Some mentioned that they would have liked some information sessions in the morning to coincide with their visits. They all really appreciated the box received with info about all institutions at the Fair. We will continue to provide this in the future.

Exhibitors

Out of 28 feedback forms, 94% (25) of exhibitors thought the Fairs (Madrid & Barcelona) had good numbers and quality visitors, 7% (2 exhibitors) felt only good numbers and 2% (one exhibitor) expressed it was disappointing. The majority were looking for UG and recruitment but branding and PG is also an important market for a good number of exhibitors. 89% of the exhibitors expressed BC support was excellent or good. The length of the Fair was felt right for most exhibitors although some expressed in the comments that a longer time would be necessary in Madrid. Details: <https://raquelmontes.typeform.com/report/PJtEfK/QZKb>

Some comments received from exhibitors which may be of interest to all:

- Spain has lots of potential for partnerships (Erasmus in particular but also for Top-ups after VET)
- Lots of applications are received but they then do not convert on recruits. I feel there is a cultural clash here. If this happens, please get in touch and let's analyse what is happening. It could well be the marks required are far too high or that students cannot fulfil some of the criteria (3 weeks practice in schools for a PGCE, for example), or other. We can work with your recruitment agency to identify where the issue is.
- Keeping in touch with networks in country pre-Fair (Erasmus partners or other) increases the number of visitors to stand

Appendix 4: Advertising and promotion plan (media plan). Same plan for Madrid and Barcelona.

Pre-event:

List of all Actions

Given that our exhibitors included a wide variety in offer, aiming at different target audiences, our marketing plan was designed to be wide in scope. The direct marketing actions were many, varied and aiming to cover all targeted audiences.

Actions included:

- Meetings with local educational authorities for their support with our communication to public schools, and with city councils to promote in their websites for “activities in the cities”.
- telephone calls and e-mails to over 500 schools,
- e-mails to language assistants in Spanish institutions (over 3000),
- mailings to 167 schools of English
- to all Spanish Universities International Relations (84),
- a variety of social media campaigns on twitter and Facebook
- direct mailing to our contacts: twice in the newsletter in June and Oct + e-mail direct message (+70,000 contacts)
- 10,000 cards announcing the Fair and distributed via schools, colleges, Universities, EFL schools and BC offices. A large version on our gate (on an important road in centre of Madrid).
- collaboration agreement with “multipliers”/collaborators and others
- paid advertising in Expansión y Empleo (3 weekends before Fair) as well as on-line paid advertising in Madrid and Barcelona
- a press agency dedicated to getting media impact (press releases)
- social media campaigning, specially 3 weeks before the event

Social Media Actions: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter (and follow up through blog)

Facebook campaigns:

- BC facebook site – 11.000 fans.
- 3 facebook ads and various campaigns, addressed to different target audiences and reaching over 80,000 people.

Twitter efforts: lots of tweets coordinated with other teams at BC (Exams, Comms, Education, TCs)

Blog: <http://yesstudyintheuk.wordpress.com>

Detail of Press & Media impact (including paid and Agency impact)

Radio

- RADIO: Direct Connection with “Buenos Días Madrid” from the event on 23rd October
- RADIO: “Puntos de Vista” – RNE (Radio Nacional de España). Interview with C. Jiménez (a week before the event)

Press releases

- 16 Sept: To monthly papers and Education Specials
- 23 Sept: Media breakfast with main Spanish newspapers
- 1 Oct: General press & Education & specialist media
- 16 Oct: Focus on sessions to general and specialist media
- 18 Oct: to general media
- 20 Oct: Detailed info on Fair opening
- 21 Oct: Remind of note press

Printed Press

- Supplement *Emprendedores y Empleo en El Mundo* – special article + paid ads (two weekends before the event)
- Interview for El País – Carolina Jiménez
- Interview for ABC – Mick Watters

Digital Media

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2. http://economia.elpais.com/economia/2014/10/21/actualidad/1413914172_646953.html
3. http://agenda.lavanguardia.com/?post_type=event&p=48338
4. <http://www.esmadrid.com/agenda/iii-feria-de-la-educacion-britanica-melia-madrid-princesa/>
5. <http://www.elle.es/moda/consejos-de-moda/shopping-is-great>
6. <http://www.aprendemas.com/Breves/DetalleBreve.asp?Breve=21052>
7. <http://www.portalferias.com/ferias-educacion-y-formacion-madrid/s42;c1/>
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