

Press release

“Modern, independent, international” – how the UK can help shape Egypt’s higher education future

Cairo, 14 October 2015

- Professor Robin Grimes and British education experts set out vision for transformation in Egyptian higher education system at policy forum attended by Minister for Higher Education and Scientific Research Ashraf El-Shehi.
- British Ambassador John Casson: “With this partnership in higher education, bringing together British excellence and the determination of reformers like Minister El-Shehi, we will equip this generation of young people, and many more to come, with the skills they need to succeed.”
- Jeff Streeter, Director of the British Council in Egypt: “This forum is about a future which is rich in education partnerships between the UK and Egypt and defined by new levels of co-operation and collaboration.”

Today in Cairo Professor Robin Grimes and a leading delegation of British education experts set out a vision for transformation in the Egyptian higher education system at a policy forum attended by Minister for Higher Education and Scientific Research Ashraf El-Shehi.

The forum was the centrepiece of a weeklong visit to Egypt conducted by Professor Grimes and 20 British education experts, including government officials and leaders of some of the UK’s top universities.

In a speech to over 100 British and Egyptian education experts, British Ambassador John Casson emphasised the UK’s reputation for excellence in higher education and scientific research. A recent assessment placed four UK universities in the top ten worldwide.

The UK is uniquely placed, Casson argued, to provide experience and expertise as Egyptian partners seek to build a more modern, independent, and international higher education system that serves the 3m young Egyptians studying now and will serve many generations to come.

The forum provided British and Egyptian experts an opportunity to discuss in detail key areas where UK experience could help shape Egyptian reform efforts – for example, in developing research infrastructure, quality assurance systems, and leadership and management of the sector. They also discussed prospects for partnership between the two governments, as well as between individual university and research institutions in the UK and Egypt.

Speaking at the forum, British Ambassador John Casson said:

“Every day I meet intelligent and determined young people who have the potential to change this country’s future. They are Egypt’s greatest assets. With this partnership, bringing together British excellence and the determination of reformers like Minister El-Shehi, we can together build a modern, independent, and international higher education system that will equip this generation of young people, and many more to come, with the skills they need to succeed.”



Press release

Director of the British Council Jeff Streeter said:

“Over the last 4 years, we have worked with universities across Egypt and the Supreme Council to support their aspirations and ambitions. We can be proud of what has been achieved in the past, but today – and this Forum – is about the future: a future which is rich in education partnerships between the UK and Egypt and defined by new levels of co-operation and collaboration.”

The UK-Egypt education partnership: wide-ranging and booming

The UK’s work on higher education reform in Egypt is just part of the UK’s wide-ranging effort to support young Egyptians with education and skills. Since 2010, the British Council has helped 75,000 Egyptians learn English or gain internationally-renowned UK qualifications. Through the prestigious Chevening Awards programme, the UK has offered 170 postgraduate scholarships to Egyptians over the last five years; the number for the next five years is expected to reach over 300. The £20m Newton-Mosharafa science and innovation fund was launched in 2014 and is expected to provide funding for over 300 PhD scholarships, placement schemes, and post-doctorate fellowships.

A British education is already attractive to many Egyptian students. Through independent links between British and Egyptian universities, 15,000 Egyptian students take UK-accredited degrees at universities such as Ain Shams University, the British University of Egypt, and the Arab Academy for Science and Technology in Alexandria, which Professor Grimes and the delegation visited earlier this week.

And coming up... UKTI brings education and training trade mission to Egypt next week

Focus will remain on the British-Egyptian education partnership next week as UK Trade and Investment bring 21 British universities, colleges, and private training providers out to Egypt on a weeklong education and training trade mission.

Looking forward to next week’s visit, head of the delegation Ms Amanda Selvaratnum said:

“It’s a real pleasure to be bringing this delegation of some of the best UK training and education establishments to Egypt. For most it will be their first visit to Egypt and they are keen to start establishing high quality, long term partnerships with both public and private sector organisations focussed on workforce development and supporting national economic growth and the development of the future workforce.”

###

Notes for the Editors

For further information please contact:

Ola Tanani, Corporate Communications Manager, British Council Egypt
Tel: + (202) 3300 1851
Mob: + (20) 10 652 99826
Email: Ola.Tanani@Britishcouncil.org.eg

About the British Council

The British Council is the UK’s international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations. We create international opportunities for the people of the UK and other countries and build trust between them worldwide.



Department
for Business
Innovation & Skills



British Embassy
Cairo



Press release

We work in more than 100 countries and our 7000 staff – including 2000 teachers – work with thousands of professionals and policy makers and millions of young people every year by teaching English, sharing the Arts and delivering education and society programmes.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/eg/en>.

You can also keep in touch with British Council Egypt through

<https://www.facebook.com/BritishCouncilEgypt>