

Outreach visits (OV) to Kazakhstani higher education institutions Astana and Karaganda cities, 28-29 October 2013

Event rationale

For the first time, the British Council conducted outreach visits (OV) to Kazakhstani universities, on 28 and 29 October 2013, as an extra opportunity for the universities participating in the Education UK exhibition in Almaty and Astana.

It was envisaged that the OV participants will explore opportunities for establishing collaboration and partnerships between UK and Kazakhstani higher education institutions (HEIs), within the context of the Government of Kazakhstan's Academic Mobility Strategy. The visits were organized by the British Council in collaboration with the Center for International Programs (CIP)¹ and the Centre for the Bologna Process and Academic Mobility by the Ministry of Education and Science of Kazakhstan.

A core aim of the Academic Mobility Strategy is that, by 2020, at least 20% of Kazakhstani university students should participate in some form of mobility in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), with a year-on-year increase of 50%, up to 2020, in the number of students studying for part of their education in the EHEA up to 2020. Therefore, the development of sustainable partnerships with foreign universities and international organisations will be key to the Strategy realisation.

The outreach visits included face-to-face and group meetings with senior managers (vice-rectors and heads of relevant departments) and international officers of the leading technical and general HEIs, such as Nazarbayev University, Eurasian National University, Kazakh Agro-Technical University and Kazakh Humanitarian Law University (in Astana), as well as Karaganda State and State Technical universities, and a private Karaganda Bolashak University.

An important part of the visits were introductory briefings by the Center for International Programs and by the Centre for the Bologna Process and Academic Mobility. A CIP representative gave a clear explanation of the USD 100mIn non-degree fellowship programme and its selection criteria.

¹ Operating as Ministry of Education's affiliated body, CIP is the administrator of Bolashak Presidential Scholarship for graduate studies and non-degree fellowship programmes <http://www.bolashak.gov.kz/index.php/en/o-stipendii/istoriya-razvitiya>

Content of the visits in Astana and Karaganda

In total, thirteen UK universities participated in the outreach visits: 12 - in Astana and 7 - in Karaganda (please see the two-day programme and participating institutions in the annex). The reduced participation fee was £500 per institution per city plus 20% VAT (£1,000 for both). The British Council provided technical support and managed overall outreach visits organisation.

The Centre for the Bologna Process and Academic Mobility stated that in 2013 Kazakhstan had 592 inward mobility places for foreign students and invited professors. The Centre would need to fix the misbalance between outward and inward mobility, and therefore, is looking into inward mobility, sustainable financing mechanisms, direct links with existing and new partners – foreign universities, international organizations, funds and programmes.

(<https://naric-kazakhstan.kz>)

The representative from CIP informed that from 2014 the threshold IELTS score for a fellowship will be 4.0 (compared to 3.0 in 2012-2013). Also, the category of civil servants will be included to the existing fellowships for the teachers and pedagogical staff, health providers, engineers and technical workers. The approval process includes 5 stages, and reviews the following submitted documents:

- 1) Study/research programme, confirmed by the hosting institution
- 2) Invitation letter, including the duration (1-12 months), language courses if envisaged, tuition fee for a fellow/fellows and other relevant information
- 3) Cost breakdown should be attached as a separate document

Feedback and recommendations

- **Out of the 12 UK universities, 9 submitted the feedback forms.**

The UK universities acknowledged there are good opportunities for partnership development, but flexibility will be required on both sides. For some UK HEIs, the news was that funding is available for internships, guest lectures etc. Student exchange may initially be of more benefit to Kazakhstani partners, e.g. more outward mobility to the UK vs. an inward one. Overall, the impression was very good to learn more about national universities in Astana, and the regional ones in Karaganda.

The British Council support before and during the visits was evaluated as 5 out of 5 by all interviewed. The value for money indicator was not evaluated by 5 of the respondents, while the three HEIs marked it as 3, and 1 HEI – as 4 out of 5.

The initial briefing (similar to the Education UK exhibition) on the local universities would also be beneficial. Speed dating set-up of 20 minutes would be good to agree on the main points (1+1 format). For this, Kazakhstani universities need to come well prepared.

On the other hand, the UK delegation would need to include decision-makers, such as heads of relevant departments. For this, the British Council provided the list of possible partnership topics for the both parties. In future, we could compile detailed prior report/information on offered degrees and specialisations of participating Kazakhstani universities. However, at this stage, majority of local HEIs are not fully aware of their needs and long term co-operation strategy. There is a potential in future through networking and further discussions – a follow-up is required from both sides.

ROI: Established links post-OVs

There are good opportunities from Nazarbayev University (NU). For instance, science and technology school is looking for partners in IT, robotics, science and mathematics. NU Career Centre is also interested in the partnerships and study abroad options for the current students.

Eurasian National University started negotiations with Xi'an Jiaotong - Liverpool University on inviting guest lecturers/professors in 2014.

University of West London will be sending one of the professors to Karaganda State Technical University for guest lecturing for two weeks on tourism and hospitality studies.

Programme for outreach visits to Astana and Karaganda 28 and 29 October 2013

Time	Meetings	Details
Monday 28 October 2013, Astana, Eurasian National University		
08.30–09.00	Transfer from Park Inn hotel to Eurasian National university	Mini bus booked
09.00– 09.05	Welcome speech	Rector of Eurasian National University
09.05–09.35	Presentation on Programme for Academic Mobility (15 min. plus time for translation)	Centre for Bologna Process and Academic Mobility
09.35–10.00	Partnerships of Kazakh and British Universities in frames of “Bolashak ” programme (20 min. followed by a Q&A session)	Gani Nygymetov, President of the Center for International Programs
10.00–11.00	Presentations by representatives of the Kazakhstani universities (15 min.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nazarbayev University • Eurasian National University • Kazakh Humanitarian Law University • Kazakh Agro-Technical University
11.00–11.30	Coffee-break	
11.30–13.30	Individual Q&A sessions with the Kazakhstani universities (detailed schedule is attached below) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nazarbayev University • Eurasian National University • Kazakh Humanitarian Law University • Kazakh Agro-Technical University 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newcastle University • University of Dundee • University of Huddersfield • The University of Manchester • London Business School, University of London • University of Bradford • Durham University • The University of Nottingham • University of West London • University of Southampton • University of Hull • Xi’An Jiaotong-Liverpool University
13.30–14.30	Lunch	

15.00–17.00	<p>Individual Q&A sessions with the Kazakhstani universities (detailed schedule is attached below)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nazarbayev University Eurasian National University Kazakh Humanitarian Law University Kazakh Agro-Technical University 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newcastle University University of Dundee University of Huddersfield The University of Manchester London Business School, University of London University of Bradford Durham University The University of Nottingham University of West London University of Southampton University of Hull Xi'An Jiaotong-Liverpool University
17.30	Transfer to Park Inn hotel	Minibus is booked
Tuesday, 29 October 2013 - Karaganda, Karaganda State Technical University		
08.00–10.00	Travel to Karaganda	Minibus booked
11.00–11.30	Coffee-break	
11.30–11.40	Welcome speech	Rector Karaganda State Technical University
11.40–12.40	Presentations by representatives of the Kazakhstani Universities (15 min. plus time for translation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Karaganda State Technical University Karaganda State University Bolashak Karaganda University
12.40–14.30	<p>Individual Q&A sessions with the Kazakhstani universities (detailed schedule is attached below)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Karaganda State Technical University Karaganda State University Bolashak Karaganda University 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Dundee The University of Nottingham University of West London University of Southampton University of Hull London Business School, University of London University of Bradford
14.30–15.30	Lunch	

15.30–16.30	Individual Q&A sessions with the Kazakhstani universities (detailed schedule is attached below) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karaganda State Technical University • Karaganda State University • Bolashak Karaganda University 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Dundee • The University of Nottingham • University of West London • University of Southampton • University of Hull • London Business School, University of London • University of Bradford
16.30–17.00	Coffee Break	
17.30	Transfer to the restaurant	Restaurant booked
18.30–19.30	Dinner	
20.00	Transfer to Karaganda Airport	Taxis booked
22.15	Flight from Karaganda to Almaty	Arrangement of travel from Karaganda to Almaty (purchasing of air ticket) is the responsibility of the university. Hotels in Almaty are booked for all the delegates.