

Transport Masters Student Numbers Increase for Second Year

The total number of students studying for a transport Masters at 12 UK universities has increased for the second year.

The annual TPS survey of transport Masters students has found an increase of 7, to a total of 359 'Full Time Equivalents'; up 22 on last year.

However, the number of UK students has declined, from 127 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) last year to 94 this year. The decline has been in both full time students, down by 5 to 46, and in part time students in their second or later year, down by 19 FTEs. While that reflects a reduction in new part time students in 2013, the number of part time UK students starting this year is up by 46%, to 40.

The good news for the universities is that the decrease in UK students has been more than offset by students from elsewhere, with those from the rest of the EEA increasing by 8% to 65 and those from beyond Europe by 16% to 178.

	Total 2014/15	Total 2013/14	Change 2014 relative to 2013	%age change 2013 relative to 2014
Student Category	Total FTEs	Total FTEs	Total FTEs	
UK full time students	46	51	-5	-10%
UK part time students starting 2013	40	28	13	46%
UK part time students continuing from previous years	29	48	-19	-39%
Total UK	94	127	-11	-9%
Other EU/EEA	65	57	8	14%
Rest of the World	178	153	25	16%
Overall Total	359	337	22	7%

Note: the above figures are based on 'Full Time Equivalents' (FTEs) and include rounding errors

Table 1 Total Transport Masters Students

While Loughborough no longer offers its transport Masters courses, UCL now provides a Masters in Transport and City Planning, which is included for the first time, and Glasgow is planning to introduce a Masters in Urban Transport in 2015.

Funding for UK Students

Table 2 shows that 43 of the 98 UK students (full and part time) have full employer financial support (covering fees, their salary while attending the course and out of pocket expenses), while 38 are fully self funding.

Funding Source	2014-15		2013-14	
	Full Time	Part Time - FTEs	Full Time	Part Time - FTEs
University Bursary	4	1	3	0
Full bursary	6	0	8	0
Other Bursary (ie not "full")	3	0	5	0
Full Employer (fees, salary, costs) Funding	0	43	1	49
Partial Employer Funding	0	2	0	9
Fully Self Funding	31	7	29	11
Other	1	0	0	0
Total	45	53	46	68

Note: the above figures are based on 'Full Time Equivalent' (FTEs) and include rounding errors

Table 2 Funding of UK Students

Martin Richards, the Society's Director for Skills, said

“At a time when many employers, particularly those on the private sector, are recruiting graduates, it is worrying that the number of UK full time students is decreasing, but good that the number of part time students starting courses is on the increase. The continued support of employers for staff studying part time demonstrates the commitment of employers to the development of highly capable professional transport planners. However, the dramatic reduction in UK students since the onset of the recession and austerity measures, from a 2009/10 peak of 239 (81 full time and 158 part time FTEs) serves to emphasise the need for in-house graduate training, such as the Society's Professional Development Scheme, to provide a clear structure for obtaining the knowledge and experience true professionals require.

The increase in students from outside the UK will help secure the viability of courses, particularly the increase in those from outside the EEA who pay considerably higher fees than those from within it. However, there has long been concern that with a majority of students from outside the UK, the courses will become more oriented towards their needs, and less relevant to the needs of UK employers.”

The Participating Universities

The universities participating in the annual TPS census are Cardiff, Edinburgh Napier, Imperial College/UCL (joint Masters courses), Leeds, Loughborough, Newcastle, Salford, Southampton, UCL UWE and Westminster.

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