

Cherry calls for control of student visas to be devolved

New visa rules for international postgraduate students announced on Wednesday will result in millions of pounds lost to the Edinburgh economy according to the Edinburgh South West MP.

In response Joanna Cherry KC, MP, called on the UK Government to devolve powers over student visas to the Scottish Parliament.

Speaking in the House of Commons the MP said: "My Edinburgh Southwest constituents do not share the Tory and Labour obsession with net migration.

"They understand that Scotland benefits from inward migration. And in fact, the University UK research shows that my constituency's net economic benefit from international students is £170.8 million which gives the lie to most of what the Minister has said.

"Now, continuing as a member of the United Kingdom is damaging Scotland's universities, including Edinburgh Napier and Harriet Watt in my constituency. First Brexit, now this. The union has to work for both partners. So why won't the Minister sit down with the Home Secretary and consider devolving immigration policies relating to student visas to the Scottish Parliament?"

New figures from Universities UK estimates that that Edinburgh

and Lothians economy benefits by £842.6m a year from international students:

<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/latest/news/international-students-boost-uk-economy>

East Lothian	50.3
Mid Lothian	33.3
Edinburgh East	267.7
Edinburgh North and Leith	136.2
Edinburgh South West	170.8
Edinburgh West	51.1
Edinburgh South	183.5

Universities Scotland, the umbrella body representing Scotland's 19 universities estimates that University exports of education, research and commercialisation add £1.9 billion to the Scottish economy annually.

The MP was speaking in response to [UK Government plans](#) to prevent fee-paying postgraduate students from travelling to the UK to study from bringing their partners and children. She explained that international students and their family pay both visa fees and a health surcharge which is a contribution to the NHS.



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