



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

Not content with developing its own successful international strategy, the University of Sheffield took the lead nationally with an initiative designed to show overseas students that the UK still wants them.

To counter the negative impressions created by the heated and contentious debate over student visa and immigration, the institution launched #weareinternational, a campaign clarifying the procedures for Indian and Chinese students applying to the UK academy.

#weareinternational benefited from unprecedented access to the mechanics of the visa process, allowing producers to film biometric testing and interviews by immigration officers.

This footage, recorded in English and Chinese, was unbranded and designed for use across the British higher education sector. It was created with the backing of Universities UK and has now been used by the government, the British Council and more than 100 UK institutions.

On top of this, Sheffield launched #standbyme, a campaign spread beyond the institution and was taken up by politicians and government ministers.

The university also commissioned an independent report into the economic contribution made by international students of the city of Sheffield.

Joanna Newman, one of the judges and vice-principle (international) at King's College London, said that Sheffield's campaign had challenged government policy while delivering a positive message. "This managed to go beyond a local campaign to become something that captured the national imagination about why international students matter."