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POSTGRAD PERSPECTIVES

Seizing opportunities: African outbound mobility and its impact on UK postgraduate recruitment



In the dynamic landscape of international education, UK postgraduate recruiters face unique opportunities driven by outbound mobility trends in Africa. As universities in Western and Eastern Europe intensify efforts to attract African students, understanding the dynamics of outbound mobility becomes crucial for UK institutions.

In this article, we explore recent trends in South Africa, Egypt and Morocco, and examine how they can significantly impact UK international postgraduate recruitment.

Rising interest in overseas education in South Africa

South Africa – a traditional education hub – is witnessing a resurgence of interest in overseas education, especially among the younger demographic. According to a 2023 study by Brandmapp, 12% of respondents from higher-income households considered studying abroad, rising to 48% among those aged 25 and under. UK recruiters can capitalise on this growing interest and position their institutions as top choices for South African students seeking advanced degrees overseas.

Strategic partnerships and branch campuses in Egypt

Egypt's pursuit of internationalisation through partnerships and the establishment of foreign branch campuses presents new opportunities for UK postgraduate recruiters. In 2024, the Egyptian government's commitment to enhancing education quality aligns with the UK's academic excellence, providing a favourable environment for collaboration. The recent influx of foreign branch campuses into Egypt's New Administrative Capital offers UK recruiters a chance to engage with students interested in pursuing postgraduate studies. This strategic approach enhances the appeal of UK institutions to Egyptian students seeking high-quality education.

Morocco as a growing hub for international students

Morocco – a priority student market for Canada and France – continues to attract international students. The country's role as a regional education hub for North Africans – particularly students from Gabon, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea and Senegal – also provides UK recruiters with an opportunity to appeal to students from these other countries when it comes to postgraduate recruitment. By emphasising the linguistic diversity of UK postgraduate programmes, recruiters can cater to the preferences of Moroccan and other North African students, and strengthen the overall appeal of UK institutions.

Canada & UK – popular choices for Moroccan students

There is also a growing number of Moroccan students choosing to study in Canada and the UK, with a 23% increase in Canadian enrolments in 2022 and an estimated [5,000 aspiring-professional Moroccan students choose Canadian universities](#) for their studies each year, plus around [1,500 Moroccan students enrol in UK universities](#) each year. These trends signal a rising interest in Western education, something that UK recruiters are starting to tap into.

In conclusion

Outbound mobility trends in South Africa, Egypt and Morocco offer exciting prospects for UK postgraduate recruiters. Understanding and adapting to the evolving dynamics of education in these African markets can position UK institutions as preferred destinations for ambitious students seeking advanced degrees. The affordability, quality partnerships and regional influence make these trends strategic opportunities for UK postgraduate recruitment efforts.

Further reading

[Why students from Morocco study in Canada](#)

[University World News: Africa Edition](#)

[British Council: Transnational Education in Egypt](#)

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