

**Press Release:**

## **An Immigration System Fit for the Science System**

**17 October 2019, London:** The [Campaign for Social Science](#) has launched a short briefing paper proposing a streamlined post-Brexit immigration system for universities and recognised research institutes – [An Immigration System Fit for the Science System](#).

The Campaign proposes that UK universities and recognised research institutes should be treated as **‘trusted sponsors’** – able to recruit global talent to research posts (and teaching posts requiring a PhD) in any discipline, from anywhere in the world, with a streamlined visa system. We believe that this would result in more agile recruitment of the best global talent, be auditable by government, and cuts costs for individuals, universities and the government alike.

We note that even in the Australian ‘points-based system’ there is separate provision for employers to recruit the skills and knowledge they need, and a **sectoral deal** for UK universities and research institutes would protect a vital part of the research base, while reducing costs. Dr Ashley Thomas Lenihan, Senior Policy Adviser at the Campaign for Social Science says, *“A sectoral deal would provide more certainty for, and ensure excellence in, a large part of the UK research base. It would reduce costs for individuals, employers, and government alike.”*

**[An Immigration System Fit for the Science System](#) shows that the UK will benefit from including the social sciences, as well as STEM sciences, in a trusted sponsor scheme.** First, the social sciences are necessary to address many of the ‘grand challenges’ that lie ahead. Second, nearly half of international students coming to the UK study social science, and the UK’s comparative advantage rests in part on the excellence of its staff. Third, the report draws on our other work to show that many social sciences disciplines (for instance economics and area studies) already have a high proportion of international-origin staff, and many scarce skills in the social sciences (for instance, number and data skills increasingly needed to address real-world problems) are more commonly found in international-origin staff.

Dr Lenihan adds, *“It is vital that any such visa deal include the social sciences if we are to ensure our continuing ability to address the big and important issues facing our society – which increasingly require working in an interdisciplinary way – and if we want to continue to attract the best international students, who bring economic and cultural benefits as well as needed skills and perspectives to the UK. Finally, it would ensure diversified decision-making, rather than creating an ever-larger bureaucracy to decide who can work on research. We believe a sectoral deal for UK universities and research institutes would both protect and promote the continued global excellence of UK research and teaching.”*

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## **Notes to editors: About the Academy of Social Sciences**

[The Academy of Social Sciences](#) is the national academy of academics, learned societies and practitioners in the social sciences. Its mission is to promote social science in the United Kingdom for the public benefit. The Academy is composed of over 1300 individual Fellows, 44 Member Learned Societies, and a number of affiliates. Together, this body of organisations includes some 90,000 social scientists. Fellows are distinguished scholars and professional practitioners from academia and the public and private sectors. Most learned societies in the social sciences in the UK are represented within the Academy. The Campaign for Social Science is an integral part of the Academy.

## **About the Campaign for Social Sciences**

The Academy of Social Sciences' [Campaign for Social Science](#) was launched to raise the profile of social science in the public, media and Parliament. Its work is evidence led, underpinned by research, policy briefings and reports.

## **For further information, interviews or photos contact:**

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