

Edinburgh University Students' Association

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An open letter:

Being in the EU brings benefits to the University of Edinburgh and its students

On the 23rd of June, the UK will hold a referendum on its continued membership of the European Union (EU). In our respective roles as President of Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA) and Principal of the University of Edinburgh, we wish to highlight the benefits of the UK's EU membership for the University and its students.

Being in the EU brings many benefits for the University and its students: we are an attractive destination for talented staff from other EU countries, ensuring that our students are taught by some of the best minds from across Europe; the University can easily collaborate with world-class universities in Europe to carry out cutting-edge research and innovation, from advances in medicine and healthcare to sustainable energy and new technologies - all of this is enabled by £45 million of research funding from the EU each year.

EU membership also helps us build a truly diverse student community, with 4,500 non-UK EU students guaranteed access to funding from the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) to support their studies at Edinburgh. These students add a great deal to university life, through academic research and active participation in societies, sports and volunteering activities. A diverse campus also helps build tolerance, cultural awareness and a global outlook within our student community.

Last year 1,100 University of Edinburgh students received funding from the EU's Erasmus + programmes to study, volunteer and work abroad; providing many with a life-changing experience and a unique opportunity to further their personal development.

It may not be the case that the University and its students would lose all of these benefits if the UK votes to leave. However, keeping them would depend upon very favourable results from a renegotiation process with very uncertain outcomes. We sincerely hope that our University, researchers and students continue to be supported by the EU, regardless of the result. Of course inside the EU access to these benefits in research funding, student funding and Erasmus opportunities are guaranteed.

Most importantly in the run-up to the referendum, we are committed to raising awareness of the debate, and the issues at stake, among our 50,000 staff and students and encourage everyone eligible to register to vote before the deadline on the 7th of June and to cast their vote on the 23rd of June.

Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea
Principal,
University of Edinburgh



Jonny Ross-Tatam
President,
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