

Final Report

The Fragmentation of Equality in the Internationalised University

Society for Research into Higher Education (SRHE) Research Project 1552

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1. Introduction

This study addresses a simple but vitally important question: ***what happens to the principle of educational equality in the internationalised university?***

Most academic, policy and practice literature on educational justice and equality has been framed entirely by the borders of the nation state; yet, on the other hand, most universities in the UK, as in other countries around the world, now recruit an increasingly international student body. In 2014, there were 437,000 international students studying in universities in the UK: together, these students comprised 18% of all higher education students in the country, 69% of taught postgraduate students and 48% of full time research degree students (UKCISA 2016). Across all OECD countries, international students made up 6% of all higher education students in 2014, 12% of all Master's degree level students, and 27% of all doctoral students; the number of international higher education students in these countries increased by 50% between 2005 and 2012 (OECD 2016). Given such figures, the question of how and whether principles of educational equality should apply to international students has significance not just for these students, but for educational institutions more generally, as well as both host countries and sending countries from which international students come.

The study approached this core research question by investigating how higher education leaders, staff and students working at the national level and in a diverse range of twenty different universities around the UK conceptualise and promote educational equality and justice for international as well as home students. The premise of the study was that because UK universities now recruit an increasingly international student body, they are forced to address the question of whether and how ideals of educational equality and justice, that have traditionally been framed at the level of the nation state, should apply internationally; and that, due to the requirements of UK law (among other factors), the two extreme options of either extending national principles of educational equality to all students everywhere without exception or qualification, or alternatively, denying these principles outright to any student not considered to be a "home student" are not viable choices for UK universities in the current historical conjuncture. As a consequence, there is an extensive grey area of global or transnational educational justice that universities in the UK, as in other countries, are now compelled to navigate daily, as they make decisions about such things as home and international student recruitment and admissions, tuition fees and bursaries (or grants), pedagogy and curriculum, institutional culture and structure, social rights and protections. The aim of the study was to understand both the explicit and tacit

models of educational equality that are emerging in this context of higher education internationalisation in the UK; the kinds of equality concerns that are being foregrounded and backgrounded for different students, depending on their original national domiciles; and the conflicts and dilemmas that internationalisation is posing for higher education actors seeking to promote educational equality and justice for all students studying in UK universities today.

Some of the key findings of the study were the following:

- (1) There is considerable ambivalence, uncertainty and contradiction among many professional and academic staff working in UK universities today on the question of educational equality for international students.***
- (2) This uncertainty and contradiction is predictable given that the ideal of educational equality has been consistently framed by the nation state, and that the recruitment of international students in the UK has been overwhelmingly driven by market interests and not social justice or social welfare agendas.***
- (3) The outcome of higher education internationalisation has not been that educational equality has disappeared as an ideal; rather, it has been extensively fragmented.***
- (4) While a single unified model of global educational equality and justice may not be necessary, desirable or possible, this level of contradiction and fragmentation suggests that the question of how the principle of educational equality should be extended across nation state borders demands considerably more sustained attention and coherent policy on the part of UK universities than is currently the case.***

2. The research study

The study was a qualitative, interview-based research investigation funded by the Society for Research into Higher Education (Research Award 1552), under the title, *Educational Justice for All? How UK Universities are Rethinking Educational Equality and Justice in the Context of Higher Education Internationalisation*.

Over a period of eighteen months in 2016 and 2017, I collected institutional documents and statistics produced by universities and higher education organisations, and conducted semi-structured interviews with a total of fifty six individuals, who represented seven different national higher education organisations and twenty universities, including both elite and non-elite (selecting and recruiting) universities in a range of geographical settings in England and Wales. University level interviews included student leaders and primarily professional staff working in a range of different capacities with international students (from recruitment to immigration compliance to student experience), as well as a smaller number of staff working in university equality and widening access offices. Interviews focused on how respondents understood their organisation's approach to conceptualising and promoting educational equality and justice for home and international students at a general level, as

well as probing more specific concerns that related to issues such as recruitment and admissions, tuition fees and bursaries, pedagogy and curriculum, institutional culture, housing and pastoral care, social rights and protection, immigration and visas. All interviews have been logged, transcribed and analysed to identify key empirical as well as conceptual thematic findings.

Universities in the study were selected according to three sets of criteria: (1) they were in the top third of universities in the UK with the highest percentage of international students (and thus were most likely to have to address consequences of internationalisation for student equality and justice); (2) they had some form of national or public recognition for their international and/or equality work (and thus were most likely to be willing to participate in a study on a topic that has been at times politically contentious in the UK); (3) they included both selecting and recruiting universities in a range of geographical locations (thus ensuring a diversity of university type).

In addition to this empirical research investigation, the study also entailed analysing and interpreting the data collected in the context of three relatively discrete bodies of literature: empirical and theoretical literature on the key drivers, structures and consequences of higher education internationalisation; empirical and theoretical literature on equality and justice, both in education generally and higher education specifically; and theoretical literature on the conceptualisation and promotion of global justice. The key theorists and researchers drawn on in this study are referred to in the body of the report below.

3. A state of ambivalence, uncertainty and contradiction

One of the central findings of the study was that when it comes to the matter of educational equality for international students, there is considerable ambivalence, uncertainty and contradiction among many professional and academic staff working in UK universities today.

The following four vignettes can help to illustrate this:

In one Russell Group (elite) university that I visited during the study, the director of international student recruitment insisted that her university's commitment to providing educational equality for international students was no different than for home students. "I was interested by the scope of your research project," she told me at the beginning of our interview, "because you know for me, I read that and thought, 'Well, I can't think of any instances where ... we wouldn't want to be equal and fair and open to international students.'" "Certainly in the admissions sphere, we're very hot on equality," the director continued, "we're committed to making offers that are equitable, ... so we take a very clear line in terms of equality at that stage." But later in the same interview, just a half hour later, the director reflected that perhaps conditions for international students at her university weren't so equal after all. "I suppose [one] thing that struck me was fee levels," she said, as "we charge one fee for home and EU students, [and] we charge one fee for international [students]," and this is "one of the areas where there is clearly a big difference." But, she offered by way of explanation, "that is a legislative reality."

Other staff began with an opposite viewpoint. An immigration compliance officer working at a large former polytechnic in Greater London (who had initially come to the UK as an international student herself) reacted strongly to my question of whether she thought that equality and justice for international students were being promoted at her university. “Absolutely not,” she told me, “it’s so obvious, because [international students] have to go through these very stupid immigration rules and they can’t get a job here, not because they’re not good enough.” “From an immigration point of view,” the officer insisted, “there’s no equality [for international students].... It’s not fair.” But here again, the picture was murky. For, in some respects, the compliance officer argued, equality for international students *was* strongly protected by her university. “While they [international students] are here, when they’re studying,” she explained, “I think it’s fine, I mean from their academic part of the thing.”

Some university staff seemed to have debates with themselves over whether and exactly how educational equality should be promoted for international students in the UK. A senior staff person working in a university widening participation office located in the north of England was quick to criticise the principle and practice of limiting widening participation activities to home students only. “If you believe in equality, it doesn’t stop at the Dover cliffs, does it?” he told me, before going on to question UK tuition fee policy for international students as well: “Why set differential fees for international students compared to home students? What’s the justice and equality in that?” Yet, in the same conversation, the widening participation officer also argued against his own principled claims. Pragmatically, he pointed out, “the fact that international students are such a big foreign exchange earner for this country [is the reason why] the Home Office allows any in at all.” If these students weren’t being charged differential fees, they might not even be able to be in the UK in the first place. Further, he insisted, the UK can’t get into the business of promoting widening participation beyond its own borders. Each national government around the world is responsible for promoting social mobility and social cohesion for its own citizens. “I don’t think it is a role for this country,” the officer argued: “We used to be the imperial power and I think we’ve given it up now.... So I don’t think it’s appropriate for this country to go around saying, ‘We’ll do that for you.’”

Finally, some university staff were ambivalent about whether equality was a core concern or not in the work they did with international students in the UK. At the start of a focus group I did with a group of staff from universities across the UK who worked in the area of international student marketing and recruitment, I was told that equality was not “a topic that comes up that much” in their work. However, the group then spent the next thirty minutes sharing stories, experiences, issues and concerns that suggested that, actually, equality *was* an essential part of an awful lot of the work they did. One recruiter reflected on the recent move by some British universities to reduce the number of Chinese students coming to their campuses, especially to their business schools, where some programmes have become primarily populated by international students from China. “That was widely reported in the newspapers,” he said, but “there was no furore around that to say, ‘Well, you can’t say that, it’s racist.’” “Can you imagine if that was said in relation to any other ethnic group that maybe originated from the UK?” the recruiter asked the rest of us: “You wouldn’t be able to say that, would you? ... For example, say, ‘There are too many Yorkshire people in the University of Bradford, we’re not going to recruit any more Yorkshire people!’”

4. Educational equality and the nation state

The fact that there should be this kind of ambivalence, uncertainty and contradiction in thinking about educational equality and international students is not surprising, when we consider that the ideal of educational equality has been consistently framed by the nation state, while the recruitment of international students in the UK has been overwhelmingly driven by market interests and not social justice or social welfare agendas.

Even more so than national forms of education, international education in the twenty first century has become the epitome of a market model educational system (Bolsmann and Miller 2008; De Vita and Case 2003; Naidoo 2003). Concerns of social welfare, the public good, and global or transnational solidarity, which have been important motivations for international education in other eras, have just not been as central as the market based interests of increasing revenue from international student tuition fees, building economic ties with countries overseas through recruiting international students who subsequently return to these countries, and/or attracting the world's best and brightest to study, work, settle and thus help to drive national economic growth in the UK.

Educational equality is a concept that has been notoriously difficult and contentious to define precisely (Jencks 1988). The concept is sometimes defined as referring to equality of educational opportunity: to the principle that all individuals should have the same chances or prospects as one another for educational achievement and success. Here, there are key differences between meritocratic, radical, formal and substantive models of equality of educational opportunity (Arneson 2015; Brighouse 2010). Others define educational equality in relation to some measure of educational outcome: for example, the idea that equally proportionate numbers of individuals from different social backgrounds should be found at all levels of educational achievement; or that there should be some minimum level of educational achievement that every member of society reaches (Phillips 2004; Satz 2007). Finally, still others have sought to move beyond the simplistic language of opportunity and outcome, and define educational equality in terms of education that promotes an "equality of condition" among all individuals in a given society, or that promotes relational justice by initiating students into "the practices and habits of relating to one another as equals" (Laden 2013; Lynch and Baker 2005).

Despite these debates over the meaning of educational equality, there are nonetheless a number of core areas of certainty and stability that surround the concept, five of which are important to highlight for the purposes of this study:

(1) There is virtually universal acceptance that educational equality, however it is defined, is a concept that is delimited by the borders of the nation state.

The concept of educational equality is shaped by what some have called a "methodological nationalism" that shapes much of educational practice, policy, research, theory and ideology more generally (Shahjahan and Kezar 2013). As Meyer (2001, pp. 155-156) notes:

Equalization [in education] is to occur within national societies as a special mission of the state.... Public discourse, in general, [focuses] on [educational] equality within the national territory.

Analyses show concern about whether Mexican American students in El Paso fare more poorly than students in Seattle; they do not compare the prospects of El Paso students with their relatives across the Rio Grande.

Likewise, as Arneson (2015) observes of the equality of opportunity principle more generally:

The idea of equality of opportunity tends ... to be limited in scope.... Its domains are political societies or nation-states taken one at a time. If all Austrian universities are open to all Austrian youth and all Chinese universities are open to all Chinese youth, it is not ordinarily thought to be objectionable if Austrian universities are not open to Chinese and Chinese universities are not open to Austrians.

(2) *Within the borders of the nation state, there is virtually universal agreement that educational equality is absolutely central to educational practice, policy and purpose.*

As Jencks (1988, pp. 518, 533) observes, for example, “no significant group [in society] defends unequal opportunity” in education, and the concept of equal educational opportunity is an ideal consistent with almost every vision of a good society.” In the context of higher education, this central focus on equality as a core principle is almost always concerned with the question of equality of higher education access above all else; and this question of access is almost always framed by the relative numbers and/or proportions of individuals from different social groups within a given national society who are in higher education, groups that are typically defined in terms of gender, race and ethnicity, social class, neighbourhood or region, and disability (Clancy & Goastellec 2007).

(3) *Within the borders of the nation state, educational equality is generally seen as being concerned with what happens to individuals before, during and after their formal enrolment in institutions of education.*

In other words, there is a core temporal dimension to the concept of educational equality: to speak of educational equality is to speak of individuals’ respective abilities to access and get into educational institutions, their comparable experiences and treatment within these institutions, and their relative positions or situations at the point at which they leave these institutions to head off into the workforce and world. Even the model of equal educational opportunity, which one might expect to be concerned solely with the question of access to educational institutions, tends to be concerned as well with the distribution of resources within educational institutions (see, for example, Jencks 1988), and commonly justifies the importance of why equal educational opportunity matters (e.g., Brighouse 2010; Koski & Reich 2006) and/or measures the relative existence of equal educational opportunity in society (e.g., Phillips 2004) with reference to where individuals are at the end of or after their educational studies have finished.

(4) *Within the borders of the nation state, there is virtually universal commitment to the principle of non-discrimination or formal equality of educational opportunity.*

Though there may be great disagreement over other aspects of educational equality, the principle of non-discrimination or formal equality of educational opportunity – that is, the

principle that “precludes an educational system from distributing its positions on a discriminatory basis” and demands that education “must be open to all who can learn” (Satz 2007, p. 627) – is not only almost universally accepted, but in most countries is, to a considerable extent, legally required.

(5) Within the borders of the nation state, educational equality is generally seen as a relational concept concerning the nature of the relationships between the educational system, the individuals studying within it, and the entire rest of (national) society.

How these broader relations are understood can vary widely. Arguments that frame educational equality as a matter of distributive justice regarding the allocation of places in educational institutions draw a direct comparison between the proportion of individuals of different social backgrounds at various levels within the educational system, and the overall proportion of individuals from different social backgrounds within (national) society as a whole. Brighouse’s (2010, p. 27) explanation of why the principle of educational equality matters focuses on the relation between educational achievement and subsequent access to a highly stratified labour market and set of social leadership positions:

The intuitive case for educational equality rests on an intuition about what it takes for a competition to be fair. Modern industrial societies are structured so that socially produced rewards – income, wealth, status, positions in the occupational structure and the opportunities for self-exploration and fulfilment that come with them – are distributed unequally. Education is a crucial gateway to these rewards; a person’s level and kind of educational achievement typically has a major influence on where she will end up in the distribution of those potentially life-enhancing goods. It is unfair, then, if some get a worse education than others because, through no fault of their own, this puts them at a disadvantage in the competition for these unequally distributed goods.

A key assumption made here is that these are nationally defined social and labour market structures and that graduates, as citizens or legal residents, will be able to access jobs and social positions within these structures once they have obtained their various degrees and credentials without being blocked by citizenship or visa requirements. Or, to take a different example, Elizabeth Anderson (2007, p. 596) argues that understandings of educational equality should be tied to the idea of education as a public good, that is the idea that the education given to any one individual has, or should have, benefits for all members of a given society:

I believe that we need to reframe this discussion [around educational equality] by shifting our focus from the good education is supposed to do for the individuals who have it to the good the more educated are supposed to do for everyone else. Let us call ‘elites’ those who occupy positions of responsibility and leadership in society: managers, consultants, professionals, politicians, policy makers. In a democratic society, elites must be so constituted that they will effectively serve all sectors of society, not just themselves.

In Anderson’s account, educational equality means that those who become highly educated should both be drawn from all social groups within a given society, and trained in the habits of public service and responsiveness, so that they can be most able to lead a society that is democratic, fair and equal. Once again, though Anderson’s argument is very different from

Brighouse's concern with education as a private good that brings individual advantage, the assumption made is that the relevant frame of reference for defining and promoting educational equality is a nationally defined and delimited society. Thus Anderson, writing in the context of the United States, worries about democratic educational equality for Native Americans, African Americans and immigrants to America – but not how such equality in the US might include other individuals living elsewhere in other countries around the world.

So long as we remain within the nation state container, these kinds of stabilities and certainties regarding the concept of educational equality may seem to be so basic and broad that there is hardly much value in pointing them out. However, all of this changes when we start to consider the concept of educational equality transnationally, as in the case of how it might (or might not) apply to international students. For it is only once we start thinking about the nature and meaning of educational equality across national borders that we start to realize that these stabilities and certainties we have learned to take for granted, basic and broad though they may well be, all of a sudden, just don't seem to hold true any more.

5. The fragmentation of equality in the internationalised university

In the internationalised university, the principle of educational equality does not disappear, it gets fragmented. This is to say that the populations, institutional structures, spatial locations and temporal dimensions in which the ideal of educational equality is to be applied have all been broken up and differentially combined; the vital public character of the concept of educational equality has been erased; and the foundational principles upon which models of educational equality are constructed within the confines of the nation state have been abandoned.

It is only once we understand this landscape of fragmentation that we can make sense of the common phenomenon in which universities, their staff and students regularly invoke claims about the universality of educational equality, in environments in which there exist blatant and transparent social and educational inequalities between home and international students. "I think all students we treat the same," an administrator at an elite Russell Group university in the UK says in a round table discussion: "For instance, in the administration, everything is the same, it doesn't matter whether a person is from home or overseas, the attendance recording is the same, or the administration behind the scenes is the same." However, the administrator goes on to say, "we do have initiatives specifically for international students because we feel that they perhaps need more support in some areas." "So, in that respect," the administrator concludes, "perhaps there is a little bit of inequality. But positive inequality, I would say." In the internationalised university, educational equality is like a carnival house of mirrors: look one way, and absolutely, there is equality for all students, home and international alike; but look another, and there is extreme inequality – of a negative, not "positive" kind, to refer to the administrator above – or, perhaps to be more precise, a complete absence of equality concerns for international students whatsoever.

This fragmentation of educational equality needs to be understood in at least five different senses, as a process of institutional, spatial and temporal fragmentation, fragmentation of

the public dimension of the educational equality concept, and fragmentation of the core foundational principles of education equality that are found within the context of the nation state.

(1) In the internationalised university, there is an institutional fragmentation of the higher education offices that are principally concerned with equality.

At the university level, widening participation (or widening access) offices are the offices that are committed to working “to promote inclusivity and diversity, challenge exclusion,” and ensure that “access to and success in higher education [is] not related to social background but [is] based on ability and willingness to participate” (Action on Access 2017; NEON 2017). Yet, these offices almost never deal with international students (Eade and Peacock 2009). Most universities have dedicated international offices that deal with the full range of issues that concern international students; but these offices almost never deal with the kinds of equality issues that are handled by widening participation offices.

In the original research plan for this study, I had intended to interview staff in university widening participation as well as international offices to understand their views and practices with respect to educational equality for home and international students. I soon had to abandon this plan, however, as it became clear that widening participation staff could not understand why a researcher focusing on educational equality and international students would want to speak with them; on the few occasions that I did manage to interview widening participation staff, they were unable to tell me anything about international students on their campus, or even about the relations between home and international students.

This internal institutional fragmentation is replicated at the national level in the UK:

- The **Equality Challenge Unit’s** (ECU) mission is to promote equality and diversity for both home and international students in UK higher education; but the ECU only addresses equality issues for students who are already in the UK higher education system, while ignoring access and admissions issues entirely.
- This is because access and admissions equality concerns are covered by a different body, which in England is the **Office for Fair Access** (OFFA): OFFA is mandated by the state to “promote and safeguard fair access to higher education for people from lower income backgrounds and other under-represented groups” (OFFA 2017); however, unlike the ECU, OFFA is only concerned with home students and does not address the situation of international students at all.
- THE **UK Council for International Student Affairs** (UKCISA) is the national organisation that is concerned primarily with international students, and has a code of ethics for how these students should be treated; yet this code does not address the kinds of concerns of ensuring fair access to higher education in the way that OFFA does for home students.

What this means is that the principal equality issue that is at the heart of most higher education theory, policy and practice in the context of the nation state – that is, the issue of higher education access and representation – has no institutional coverage for international

students in the UK whatsoever: for there is no organisational body tasked with looking at this question. This vital educational equality issue of fair access for international students is thus able to vanish through the cracks between different higher education organizations in the UK, all of which are nonetheless carrying out fully their mission agendas of promoting equality, equity or fairness as located within their own carefully delimited domains of responsibility.

(2) *In the internationalised university, there is a spatial fragmentation of educational equality.*

Spatial fragmentation is partly due to the fact that student populations in UK universities are divided up not just in terms of citizenship and residency rights but also what is called “ordinary residency” – where an individual has been living on a continuing basis prior to entering university. Tuition fees vary widely for international and home students based on a combination of their nationality and residency: thus a UK citizen who has not been ordinarily resident in the UK or EU will be treated for fees purposes as an international student and charged international tuition fees. But so too does student access to various forms of financial student support and widening participation outreach; and in these cases, there is less of a binary home/international divide and more of a scalar relationship based on geographical proximity to a university campus, such that the further one moves away in spatial distance from campus the less direct support there generally is available.

Due to the devolved nature of UK higher education, both fees and financial support for UK students are shaped by the home country (England, Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland) in which they are ordinarily resident. European Union students who have been living in the UK for an extended period of time can access full student support (which includes loans for tuition fees and living costs, maintenance grants and bursaries) just like UK students can; but EU students who have been living in continental Europe can generally only access partial student support, namely loans for tuition fees. University widening participation agendas are set and measured nationally in terms of the proportion of under-represented groups who enroll and graduate from each higher education institution, and thus effectively end at the UK national border. But in practice, widening participation activities actually tend to take place not nationally, but regionally and locally. Welsh universities, for example, only run widening participation programs for students in Wales, and not across the border in England; and within Wales, they focus their outreach with schools and neighborhood communities in their immediate geographical vicinity.

Spatial fragmentation of equality is also due to the ways in which immigration law in the UK intersects with educational policy and practice for international students. Once admitted into a higher education institution, and while studying on a specific course at that institution, international students are for the most part considered to be complete equals to home students within the confines of the academic environment. But as soon as students step outside of that environment, then inequalities immediately start to accumulate.

Unlike home students, international students in the UK: have restrictions placed on whether they can work while studying, what kinds of work they can do, and how many hours of work per week they can work; have restrictions placed on whether they can bring their husbands,

wives, partners or children with them while they are studying in the UK; have restrictions placed on their right to vote in UK elections and their freedom to engage in political protest, due to their risk of being deported if they are arrested during a protest; and are required to present themselves for fingerprinting in order to obtain a Biometric Residence Permit, to register with the local police and to inform the police immediately of any changes in their home address or other details. It is for these reasons that university staff and students in the UK may sometimes argue that their own university campuses remain beacons on enlightened internationalism that are committed to educational equality for all, regardless of national or social origin, but that are surrounded by a deeply unequal social, economic and political environment that has been created by a hostile and xenophobic state that they can do little about. In May 2017, for example, the Oxford University student union passed a motion to make Oxford a “Sanctuary Campus” by building “a movement in our School/college/university ... to stop the government organised harassment of immigrant, Muslim and international students and teachers and the immigrant workers in our colleges/universities” (OUSU 2017).

But there is another way in which equality in the internationalised university is spatially fragmented, and this has to do with the policies and practices of UK universities themselves. As Waters (2012, p. A1) writes, “the process of internationalisation” has led to higher education “becoming increasingly spatially (and *socially*) differentiated, with potentially profound consequences” (emphasis in original). In some cases, the university has become increasingly disassembled as an institutionally and geographically centralised entity, as it reorients itself toward the international student market. In their bids to attract and cater to international students, some UK universities have worked with the private sector to construct purpose built student accommodation that caters primarily or even exclusively to international students. One consequence is that there is in some university campuses a growing separation of housing experience between international and home students, as the latter may still live with their parental families and commute into campus from their family homes.

Some UK universities run degree programmes that are primarily or exclusively attended by international students, so that home and international students may not even be enrolled in the same courses as one another. University staff speak of international students being “siloes” on campus and refer to common complaints from these students that “I’m just sitting here within a group of my own peers from my own country,” rather than interacting with UK home and other international students (international student advisor focus group, June 2016). About fourteen universities have established satellite campuses in London that cater primarily or exclusively to international students: including the universities of Sunderland, Coventry, Liverpool, Loughborough, Ulster and Glasgow Caledonian (QAA 2014). In these cases, international and home students at the “same” university may often be living and studying in completely different geographical, social and institutional settings that are located hundreds of miles apart from one another. While international students in these London branch campuses may actually benefit from staff and programmes that are dedicated almost entirely to their needs and interests, their university experience will be markedly different from UK home students on the main campus. As an international student recruiter at one university with a London branch campus observes:

Resources wise, of course, the students studying in London get a different sort of campus experience. Because there's no such campus thing in London. It's just the buildings. Here you get a lot of support – the libraries, sports centres, but in London, there is relatively less support or facilities for international students.

More dramatically, UK universities have also built campuses overseas; or more commonly, they have developed vast and rapidly growing networks of transnational university franchises and other partnership arrangements. Indeed, transnational education – where international students study at UK institutions outside of the UK – is the largest and most rapidly growing part of the internationalised higher education sector in the UK. As the British Council (2013, p. 9) reports, there are “more international students studying for UK degrees located outside the UK than inside.” In 2014, alongside the 437,000 international students at universities in the UK, there were also close to 666,000 international students at UK run transnational higher education programmes studying outside the UK (British Council 2016). Here, UK home and international students, though they may technically be at the “same” university, studying for the “same” degree, may not even be located in the same country as one another – and most importantly from an equalities perspective, may not even be subject to same national equality laws during their time at their shared UK university.

Within this networked archipelago of higher education institutions, universities have constructed increasing complex course structures, particularly for international students. Over the last decade, there has been a massive growth in the UK of private, for-profit companies that offer pre-degree pathway (or foundation) programmes for international students that lead into guaranteed places on degree courses at partner UK universities. The sector is dominated by five companies (Study Group, Kaplan International Colleges, INTO University Partnerships, Navitas and Cambridge Education Group) that often run their pathway programmes either on or directly adjacent to their university partner campuses (Matthews 2014; StudyPortals 2016). International students, unlike home students, may thus spend the first year of their higher education career in the UK being taught and assessed not directly by the UK university to which they are affiliated, but by a private, for-profit subcontractor instead. International students may also spend one or two years of their degree programme itself either being taught on a private pathway programme, or studying overseas at a transnational higher education partner, before they transfer over to their UK university directly in order to complete their degree. One university that I visited for this study, for example, ran an undergraduate business administration programme in which international students, mostly from China, would spend the first two years of the degree studying at a partner university in China, before coming over to complete their degree by studying their final year in the UK – all in order to get a UK university certified degree overall. “It's very, very attractive to their market,” the programme administrator explained to me when I asked why his university had designed such a course.

The key point here, of course, is that when you have this degree of spatial, social and institutional fragmentation in internationalised higher education, it becomes increasingly difficult not just to produce a situation of educational equality for home and international students, but even to know what educational equality should mean and look like in such a

context. Take, for example, the argument of Lynch and Baker (2005, p. 149) that educational equality necessarily involves “resolving inequalities of power in schools” by “democratizing the pedagogical and organizational relations of schooling” through “institutionalizing and resourcing democratic structures such as student ... councils that exercise real authority and responsibility.” As the National Union of Students (NUS) points out, this task grows increasingly difficult in the context of transnational education, where international students spend some or all of their time studying in remote partner institutions in foreign countries with completely different sets of national social and educational policies. On the one hand, the NUS (2014, p. 1) argues that:

If UK transnational higher education is to be recognised as a genuine provider of equitable learning and teaching opportunities overseas, then it is essential that issues such as student engagement and representation are highlighted and investigated.

But, on the other hand, an NUS (2014, p. 14) survey of UK universities found that “the majority of participants from students’ unions highlighted that they had very little knowledge of students studying on transnational programmes” (see Brooks, Byford and Sela 2015 for a similar finding). At one university that I visited for this study, the student union sent union representatives to visit all of the university’s partner institutions overseas, and the representatives explained just how difficult and complex the project on ensuring proper student voice and representation in this context can be. Not only do partner universities have “their separate systems for dealing with” student problems and complaints; but “a lot of the partners themselves, they actually have more than one partner, so they also got partners in different universities.” One partner college in Turkey has “about twenty” other university partners: the representatives explain that the college has a psychology degree programme that is “our programme,” a “business programme that’s run through [an American university],” and other programmes run through other universities as well. Thus the student union that represents students on the UK accredited psychology programme is not only based thousands of miles away in the UK university sponsor’s main campus; but students on other programmes in this single college are represented by up to twenty other student unions based in up to twenty other sponsor universities that are spread all over the world.

(3) *In the internationalised university, there is a temporal fragmentation of educational equality.*

Once an international student has commenced their course of study at a university in the UK, that student is for the most part considered to be a complete equal to all home students within the context of the academic environment up until the point at which he or she completes his or her degree programme. There may, of course, be *experiences* of inequality for international and/or home students in this time and space limited context. But from a legal, ethical and education policy perspective, the core assumption is that all students in this setting are complete equals. Thus, when the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education – the organisation responsible for setting and enforcing university quality standards in the UK – issued a guide for *Supporting and Enhancing the Experience of*

International Students in the UK, it was able to tell universities, upfront and without qualification, that:

In all aspects of provision, consideration should be given to equality and diversity. This means treating everyone with equal dignity and worth, while also raising aspirations and supporting achievement for people with diverse requirements, entitlements and backgrounds. An inclusive environment for learning anticipates the varied requirements of learners, and aims to ensure that all students have equal access to educational opportunities. Higher education providers, staff and students all have a role in, and responsibility for, promoting equality. (QAA 2015, p. 2)

Likewise, a 2012 report commissioned by the Equality Challenge Unit on how universities in the UK should work to advance equality and diversity for international students covers a full array of campus based services and programmes, including: accommodation, careers, catering, chaplaincy, disability, finance, health, sport, leisure and exercise, students' unions, support for students with dependents, promoting campus cohesion, fostering community engagement and encouraging volunteering (Arshad and de Lima 2012).

Equality in the internationalised university, however, is not just spatially fragmented, it is temporally fragmented as well. Thus, where equality between international and home students begins to break down is both before and after this closely time-defined period of enrolment on a single course of study. Inequality between international and home students that arises *after* enrolment in a course of study comes mostly due to the interference of UK immigration law. UK Tier 4 student visas now impose a standard five year time limit for international students to study at degree level at UK universities (with only PhDs and some professional courses exempted); time spent on a previous degree programme in the UK is counted towards the time cap. International student advisors explain that the visa time limits not only place restrictions on whether a student who has already been in the UK for a period of time can even be admitted to a programme in the first place; it also creates challenges for students who fail a module, are at the end of their visa time limit and are unable to secure a visa extension. Universities in such cases may try to arrange for the final assessments to be done from overseas, so students "can at least finish off the programme and get their final awards," but student advisors say this is not always possible, and even when it is, "well, they're already quite a weak student really, and you're putting that added pressure on them" (international student advisor focus group, June 2016).

Transferring between courses, or progressing from one degree level to another is carefully controlled and limited, and international students are often forced to travel home in order to apply for a new student visa from outside of the UK. Pregnancies, medical and mental health issues that arise while studying at a university in the UK can lead to international students being forced to return to their home countries. As one outraged international student advisor exclaims:

If you're an international student, there is no equality with a home student now. If you are pregnant, you will be told to leave. So it doesn't matter the fact that you're part way through a PhD, it doesn't matter that you could, under the old system, have had your baby, stay in the UK, had a reasonable amount of time off from your studies, then resume your studies. Now, it is 'Oh

my goodness, we must report you, get on a plane, go!' ... I really think it's not only sort of international inequality, it's gender inequality, because it's actually women students who are bearing the brunt of this.

For those international students who are able to complete their degree programmes in the UK, they then have strictly limited access to the UK labour market after graduation, and no indefinite (or even definite) leave to remain in the country after their Tier 4 student visa expires: with very limited exceptions, they all must leave. When viewed in this temporal light, the level of inequality between home and international students is stark; and contrary to the statements of the QAA and ECU, equality between these two sets of students in the UK simply does not exist.

Inequality that arises between international and home students *before* enrolment in a course of study at a UK university is considerably more complex. Equality law in the UK actually applies to an international university applicant from the moment that they make contact with a university in the UK – long before and regardless of whether that applicant ever enters the country in person. Thus, it is illegal for a UK university to discriminate against international applicants on the basis of their nationality. As an advisor with the ECU explains:

The way our law is constructed, you can't say to a Chinese student, 'We can't admit you now because we've reached a quota for Chinese students.' Because that would be unfair discrimination.

In theory, an international applicant rejected in this manner could sue a UK university under UK equalities law; although, as the advisor points out:

Is that one Chinese student likely to know about equality law in the UK and how it might apply to them? Probably not. So the risk of them being sued is probably very, very slim, unless you've somehow got a really savvy person who understood the court system and the ways of engagement through that.

However, there are more problems than this for ensuring equality for international students before they have commenced a course of study at a university in the UK. First, UK immigration law can be exempted from UK equalities law (Spencer and Pobjoy 2011). Thus, while universities in the UK may be prohibited from discriminating against international applicants on the basis of their nationality, UK immigration authorities can and regularly do discriminate against these same applicants on this same basis. Immigration rules for Tier 4 student visas, for example, differentiate between "high" and "low risk" countries, and impose stricter requirements on applicants from high risk countries. As an international student recruiter explains:

We have to have different criteria for different students from different countries. Like, for example, the US student and the Canadian student, they are classified as low risk countries. The [immigration office] policy is that for the US or Canadian students to study in the UK, they don't need to show bank statements. They just presume that you have got money to study. But the same rules don't apply to a students from India, Pakistan, from other Asian or African countries

where the student must show the bank statement to show that they have got the money in the bank for 28 days. They need to be interviewed, they need to submit additional documents to prove where the money came from.... So these are not equal.

Second, UK higher education law directly excludes international students from access to the student loans, bursaries and other public funds that home students are able to access to support themselves during their university studies. But third, UK universities simply do not pursue any substantive programme of fair and equal access, or widening participation, for international students, in the way that they do – and indeed, are required by law to do – for home students. Some universities do have a small handful of bursaries for international students, but most international student scholarships are based entirely on academic merit.

There is no question that the construction and pursuit of a substantive, transnational or global fair access or widening participation programme would be extremely challenging for any UK university that wished to do such a thing. Immigration law in the UK, as noted above, places limitations on what kind of international students UK universities are able to welcome onto their programmes – and in general, blocks universities from bringing in precisely the kinds of students from low income backgrounds that domestic widening participation programmes are expressly intended to welcome into higher education in the country. What is called in the global justice literature the “metric objection” – the concern that simply measuring what equality is and should be can become increasingly difficult at a global as opposed to national level – presents genuine obstacles (Armstrong 2009). An international student advisor working for a higher education organisation in the UK that provides a small number of need based scholarships for international students explains the challenges involved in determining financial need across international borders:

Financial need [for international students] is a difficult one to judge. We sort of rely on data about their country ... you know, the world's assessment of what's a developing country, or nowadays it's what a low income or a low to middle income country. So that's a starting point, and then, when we're looking at applications, we're looking for people who are saying, 'I had a scholarship for my high school,' or 'I had a scholarship for my undergrad,' so that's kind of a validation of the fact that they've been assessed before in their home country. Or people who are saying, 'I'm the first of my generation to go to university.' ... [But] if you said, 'Send me bank statements,' we wouldn't understand them. They would fake them, you know, they would just give you what you're asking for.

This is in marked contrast to the situation within UK, where universities are able to access much more detailed and verifiable information on the financial backgrounds of home students and their parental families.

At the end of the day, however, there is no evidence – whether from this study, prior research or institutional or media reports – that fair access and widening participation programmes for international students are even on the radar as a policy interest, let alone a policy priority, for UK universities. What this means is that the heart and soul of higher education equality practice, policy, theory and ideology for home students – that is, the agenda of providing fair access and equal representation in higher education for students

from all social backgrounds – is essentially missing completely for international students applying to study at universities in the UK. Thanks to a combination of institutional, spatial and temporal fragmentation, we have a surreal and perverse situation in which universities and higher education organisations can claim to be completely committed to promoting equality for home and international students alike, at the same time as international students are excluded from the one aspect of educational equality that for home students has long been singled out as being more important and central than all others.

(4) In the internationalised university, there is an erasure of the public aspect of educational equality.

Educational equality is generally recognised, within the context of the nation state, as having a vital public character: what matters is the relationship between an educational institution, the individuals studying within it, and the broader (national) society. In the context of the neoliberal university, with the rise of marketisation and the student as consumer model, this public character is often obscured; but nonetheless, it remains a pivotal part of general understandings of what educational equality means in higher education and why it matters. One way to think of this is to consider that educational equality in the nation state context concerns not just those who are present in an educational institution, but those who are missing or absent as well. If a school or university admits solely or disproportionately male students from white, middle class backgrounds, few would see this school or university as promoting equality, even if within its own programme, all students were treated completely and inclusively as equals. The reason is because of the problem of those groups of students who are missing. Our ability to assess whether education equality is present is dependent not just on attention to what is happening with students inside an educational institution, but on being able to compare the proportions of students from different social backgrounds who have been admitted to and are succeeding at different levels of education in this institution with the overall proportion of these different social backgrounds in the national population as a whole. For international students in the UK, no such metric exists; for educational equality in the international context has been constructed to consider only those international students who are already in the UK higher education system.

What happens in the internationalised university is the radical individualisation of educational equality for international students, and the erasure of this vital public aspect of the educational equality ideal. As individuals, international students are entitled to an expectation of equality during their brief period of enrolment; but this entitlement is cut adrift and unmoored from the interests of any broader social public. With international students, unlike with home students, there is no concern that there be proportionate representation of social groups in the global population, whether this is measured in terms of nationality, race or ethnicity, gender or social class. When universities worry about having “too many” Chinese students in their programmes, this may be about a number of things: for example, fear of market vulnerabilities caused by relying for income generation on a single country overseas; or concern over the disappearance of the international character of the international education experience. But what is not about is an assessment of imbalance in comparison to the relative number of Chinese people in the global population. Likewise, the concern with social mobility or producing healthy democratic, equal and fair societies

that motivates the principle of educational equality for home students is missing when it comes to international students. There is no attention paid, for example, to whether proportionate numbers of international students from different social backgrounds are able to access high paying, professional positions of power in society, thanks to the provision of fair and equal educational opportunities throughout the formal education system. Rather, international students are directly and explicitly excluded from accessing the UK labour market after graduation, with only rare exceptions. Nor is there attention paid to whether international graduates of UK universities contribute or fail to contribute to the production of healthy democratic, equal and fair societies overseas – for any measurement of the value of international students in the UK tends to be framed by UK national economic, political and foreign policy interests. What we are left with, in the case of international students, is the formal shell of educational equality discourse, policy and practice, while the underlying social or public rationale, motivation and context have been vanquished entirely.

(5) In the internationalised university, there is an abandonment of the core foundational principles upon which the ideal of educational equality in the nation state is constructed.

Indeed, as we consider the various dimensions of fragmentation of educational equality in the internationalised university, we can see how many of the core certainties and stabilities that surround the concept in the context of nation state disappear. Despite claims of wanting to promote equality for international students, there is no universal conviction that the principle of higher education equality (or equity), as determined in terms of fair and equal access and representation, should be central to higher education policy and practice in the international arena. There is no general agreement that educational equality for international students should concern what happens to these students before, during and after their enrolment in formal courses of study in UK universities; nor is there any widespread recognition of the vital public character of educational equality globally or transnationally, that this is a concept that should properly be concerned with the relations between educational systems, their students and the (global or transnational) public. There is also ambivalence, uncertainty and contradiction about whether and how educational equality should or could apply beyond the borders of the nation state – in particular, to whom exactly it should and should not apply, and what its proper boundaries in terms of scope of application should be.

Perhaps, more than anything, the contradiction between how educational equality is promoted inside and outside the nation state is in respect to the principle of formal educational equality of opportunity: the ideal that higher education should be open to all who have the ability and interest to learn at the post-secondary level, without discrimination on the basis of personal social characteristics; and that no one with this ability and interest to learn should be barred from accessing higher education due to their lack of financial resources. This is a principle that politicians and education leaders in the UK regularly give lip service to. Theresa May, the current prime minister of the UK, for example, in her very first statement as prime minister in July 2016 stated:

We believe in a union ... [of] every one of us, whoever we are and wherever we're from. That means fighting against the burning injustice that ... if you're a white, working class boy, you're less likely than anybody else in Britain to go to university. If you're at a state school, you're less likely to reach the top professions than if you're educated privately.... When it comes to opportunity, we won't entrench the advantages of the fortunate few. We will do everything we can to help anybody, whatever your background, to go as far as your talents will take you. (May 2016)

When it comes to international students in the UK, however, this principle is violated all of the time. It is not just the fact that international students are charged higher tuition fees than home students, and are not provided with the same access to student financial support. More than this, the UK government has warned that universities that reach more than a 10% visa refusal rate for international students that they have accepted onto their programmes can have their Tier 4 right to recruit internationally suspended. One central effect of this is that universities in the UK will now typically only make formal offers of acceptance to international students – through issuing them with a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) statement – who they are confident will be able to obtain a Tier 4 visa from the government. As one international student admissions officer explains:

There's a part of the immigration application [where] you have to prove ... that you've got finances in place.... There's quite a lot of background checks that have to go on on each student, and [we ask them], 'Can we please see evidence of your finances?' And then it may be that they have managed to scrape some together, but not at the right time or it's not in the right format, and sometimes we can't support student visa applications if it doesn't meet the criteria because as soon as you start getting refusals, that affects the license of the university.

Other university international student admissions staff speak of “not recruiting students from certain areas [countries] where we knew that visa refusal rates are high,” due to their need “to ensure that our visa refusal rate doesn't go above 10%.” What this means is that universities in the UK are now deciding to recruit and not recruit, and admit and not admit international students not just on the basis of their academic merit, but on their nationality, immigration history, and financial well being and security. The paradox here is that the UK government justifies its increased restrictions for granting Tier 4 international student visas on the basis of a need to crack down on “bogus” students, in order to ensure “that only the brightest and best can come to study at reputable universities in Britain” (Ross 2016). In the process, however, the UK government has managed to undermine precisely the foundational principle of formal equality of educational opportunity based on merit for international students that they claim to hold so dear.

6. Taking educational equality across national borders

Though a single unified model of global educational equality and justice may not be necessary, desirable or possible, the level of contradiction and fragmentation in how educational equality is handled in the internationalised university suggests that the question of how the principle of educational equality should be extended across nation

state borders demands considerably more sustained attention and coherent policy formation on the part of UK universities than is currently the case.

The question of whether and how nationally defined ideals of equality could and should be extended to apply globally has long been one of the core debates in the growing literature on global justice. While this literature has somewhat surprisingly not directly addressed the issue of educational internationalisation (with a few notable exceptions, such as Enslin & Hedge 2008), it nonetheless offers a set of important and useful considerations for how we might think through the question of educational equality transnationally. Some scholars working in the cosmopolitan tradition of global justice have argued that there should be a principle of global equality of opportunity that directly extends the principle of (national) equality of opportunity across nation state borders. “If one thinks ... it is unjust if persons fare worse because of their class or ethnic identity,” writes Caney (2005, p. 123), “one should surely also think that it is unjust if persons fare worse because of their nationality.” The global equality of opportunity principle, in Caney’s version, thus holds that “persons of different nations should enjoy equal opportunities: no one should face worse opportunities because of their nationality” (p. 122). This argument has been critiqued by other scholars – on such grounds as that it undermines national sovereignty, risks imposing a form of cultural imperialism, fails to hold nation states responsible for the opportunities enjoyed by their own citizens, and is difficult if not impossible to define, measure and implement – and subsequently, there has been a continual reframing of the original argument and rebuttal of these kinds of critiques by those who, like Caney, support the principle of global equality of opportunity (Armstrong 2012). It is the contours of this debate that are particularly helpful for guiding how we might think about educational equality in a transnational context, as in the case of international students.

Some of the criticism of the argument for a global equality of opportunity principle has focused on the assumption that this would involve imposing a single set of justice demands on individuals and institutions in different countries that are otherwise separate and distinct from one another. Miller (2007, pp. 66-67), for example, questions how global equality of opportunity could be fairly determined and demanded for citizens of Iceland and Portugal or Niger and France (his examples), given that individuals and institutions in each of these countries are likely to have different (nationally defined) values, practices and histories for understanding what development, well-being and opportunity should properly entail. However, though some proponents of global equality of opportunity base their claims on the universal (or non-relational) principle that all human beings everywhere have equal moral worth (and therefore, the ideal of equality of opportunity should apply universally), there is a much broader consensus in the literature that if the principle of equal opportunity is going to apply anywhere beyond national borders, it should *at least* apply in situations where there are already strong transnational institutional and individual networks and relationships (Armstrong 2009). Young (2006, p. 102) thus argues, for example, in her social connection model of global justice, that:

obligations of justice arise between persons by virtue of the social processes that connect them.... Claims that obligations of justice extend globally for some issues ... are grounded in the fact that some structural social processes connect people across the world without regard to political boundaries.

Fraser (2009b, p. 263) argues that this “all-affected principle” for extending social justice across national borders risks becoming too broad, and needs to be qualified by what she refers to as an “all-subjected principle:”

what turns a collection of people into fellow subjects of justice is not shared citizenship or nationality, or common possession of abstract personhood, or the sheer fact of causal interdependence, but rather their joint subjection to a structure of governance, which sets the ground rules that govern their interaction.... Not restricted to states, governance structures also comprise non-state agencies that generate enforceable rules that structure important swaths of social interaction.

What arguments such as these highlight is that the same (or similar) grounds that are often used for making social justice claims in the context of the nation state, in today’s globalised world, also exist transnationally. In the context of education, then, there is a strong case to be made, based on these kinds of relational accounts of global justice, that at least for those parts of the education system that are already well internationalised – where there are cross-border examples of Young’s “structural social processes” and Fraser’s “governance structures” – then there should be a transnational (if not fully global) principle of equality that can work to differentiate just from unjust practice, and make transnational educational “rule-makers ... accountable ... to those whom they govern” (Fraser 2009b, p. 293).

Some objections to the principle of global equality of opportunity, as Armstrong (2009, p. 165) notes, closely parallel the debates and disputes over how equality of opportunity should be understood at the national and subnational level. Take, for example, the concern of cultural difference raised by Miller above. Miller (2007, pp. 67-68) objects to the principle of global equality of opportunity, in part, because of:

the problem of saying what equality of opportunity *means* in a culturally plural world in which different societies will construct goods in different ways and also rank them in different ways.... [It is not just because] it is hard to determine how much educational opportunity an average child has in any given society, but because the meaning of education, and the way in which it relates to, or contrasts with, other goods will vary from place to place. (67-68)

Yet, the exact same concerns have also been raised by critics of the equality of opportunity principle in the nation state context, who fear that it imposes a cultural, moral and political conservatism that militates against the possibility of change, diversity and contestation within national societies. As Schaar (1997, p. 138) writes:

Not all talents can be developed equally in any given society.... Every society has a set of values, and these are arranged in a more or less tidy hierarchy.... Hence, to be accurate, the equality of opportunity formula must be revised to read: equality of opportunity for all to develop those talents which are highly valued by a given people at a given time. When put in this way, it becomes clear that commitment to the formula implies prior acceptance of an already established social-moral order. Thus, the doctrine is, indirectly, very conservative.... Before one subscribes to the equality-of-opportunity formula, then, he [sic] should be certain that the dominant values, institutions, and goals of his society are the ones he really wants.

The fact that the same debates and concerns regarding the equality of opportunity principle may be found at the nation state level suggests these do not actually constitute arguments against extending this principle across borders, transnationally and/or globally. Rather, it suggests that if we do start thinking about educational equality transnationally and globally, there will be no escape from the ambiguities, complexities and disagreements that currently exist within the framework of the nation state. The same kinds of questions and concerns will continually need to be raised and addressed, even if we are considering the principle of educational equality across borders solely for individuals and institutions who are mutually subjected to and affected by shared transnational governance structures and structural social processes.

Finally, some of the key objections to the principle of global equality of opportunity, even if we do not accept them as valid reasons for not extending commitments to equality of opportunity across national borders, nevertheless do point to very real and important sets of issues that any such agenda of transnationalising educational equality would need to confront. These include, in particular, the metric objection (as noted earlier, this is the concern that simply measuring what equality is and should be can become increasingly difficult at a global as opposed to national level), as well as the objection that there is something special (whether as a matter of principle or practical reality) about the nation state as a frame for making justice demands – in other words, that there are dense networks of social relationships, moral commitments and institutional links that have been built up around the nation state and that, partly as a consequence, much of the responsibility and agency for addressing issues of equality are structurally organised at the national level (Armstrong 2012; Cramme & Diamond 2009).

A simple example can indicate the nature of some of these dilemmas. Imagine that a university decided that it wanted to extend its domestic widening participation agenda to become transnational or global in scope: it would immediately face basic data gathering challenges for how to accurately measure and determine the relevant differences in social backgrounds of international applicants, of a kind that are categorically different to challenges in the nation state context; it would be unable to act as part of a pre-existing (national) system of educational institutions, but instead would have to think through how it could work collaboratively with governments and educational systems in other countries (and perhaps, with transnational NGOs) to construct a comprehensive and effective widening participation programme; and it would have to decide on the appropriate scope of its global widening participation agenda, for example, determining whether it should be applied to every country in the world, those countries from which it currently recruits students, or some other selection of global regions and nations. None of this is necessarily impossible or undesirable for this university to do; but it would present a far greater and different set of challenges than if the university were to continue to limit its widening participation agenda to the domestic, nation state context.

At a more general level, any attempt to extend educational equality across borders would also need to consider the broader social collective or public that provides the frame and reference point for making transnational justice demands: for equality concerns are never just about a set of individuals considered in isolation from their wider social contexts. Either this collective or public is considered to be the whole of humanity; or it is relationally

defined, along the kinds of terms proposed by Young and Fraser above. In this latter case, the development of transnational principles of educational equality does not necessarily have to displace nationally defined commitments to educational equality, but could be seen as adding to and complementing them. As Fraser (2009a, p. 43) argues:

the point ... is not to replace the [nation state] frame [of social justice] with a single all-encompassing global frame. Insofar as globalization involves the interpenetration of multiple spheres of injustice, the point is rather to generate ... a more adequate, intersubjectively defensible understanding of who is entitled to consideration in a given case. The probable result would be a set of multiple, functionally defined frames [of social justice].

In what Wollner (2013) and others call a “pluralist internationalist” model of global justice, the increasing globalisation of social institutions and relations could lead not to a simplistic extension of the frame of social justice from the national to global level, but instead a multiplication of frames or grounds for making justice and equality demands. In the context of education, there remain solid reasons for conceptualizing and promoting equality at the nation state level: for education systems all over the world remain overwhelmingly national in their organization, legislation and financing. At the same time, however, as educational institutions become increasingly internationalised, there are also compelling reasons for further conceptualizing and promoting educational equality at the transnational level, as a principle of global educational justice that can be claimed by the growing transnational networks of educational staff and students, as well as the families, communities, regions and nations located all over the world from which they come.

7. Future outputs

I am currently working on a book manuscript based on this study, titled *Educational Justice for All? International Students and Educational Equality Across Borders*, that is under review with an academic publisher. The book will have seven chapters with an introduction and conclusion: topics include educational equality and methodological nationalism; international students and global justice; immigration rules and international students; higher education internationalisation and the commitment to educational equality; and issues of international students and equality in relation to tuition fees, pedagogy, curriculum and attainment.

In June 2016, I will be running a workshop on “Educational Equality and International Students in the UK” at the annual UKCISA conference in Exeter, with Lynsey Berrecloth, the Head of Student Services at London Metropolitan University, and Mostafa Rajaai, who has been serving at the NUS International Students’ Officer for the last two years:

The issue of educational equality has been a largely neglected topic in discussions about international students in the UK in recent years. This session presents the perspectives of a researcher, practitioner and campaigner on the key questions of how educational equality for international students is being conceptualised and promoted in UK universities today, where key problems lie, and what could and should be done to ensure educational equality for all across the UK higher education sector. The aim of this interactive session is to foster a collective discussion with audience members that can help to identify key principles, issues and

campaigning goals that could be actively embraced in the coming years as an ideal model of educational equality for home, European and international students alike.

There will also be future academic articles and conference presentations based on this study, including a planned presentation at the SRHE Annual Conference in December 2017.

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