## ProtectED: Valuing the safety, security & wellbeing of university students

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### 1.0 Summary

The security of further education (FE) colleges and higher education (HE) universities and the students that attend them, is a significant issue in the UK. University students are at relatively high risk of victimisation due to their age, circumstances and lifestyles. Current approaches to security in the higher education sector focus primarily on campus facilities rather than the broader student experience and are fragmented, varying widely between different institutions. There is currently no comprehensive best practice standard for universities wishing to more effectively address the issue of student safety and security—or the broader issue of student wellbeing. To address this, the *Design Against Crime Solution Centre* at the University of Salford is developing the *ProtectED* code of practice. Based on an idea generated by security consultancy K7 Compliance and the Head of Security at the University of Salford, the *ProtectED* team is working to develop a code of practice and accreditation scheme initially for higher education institutions in the UK, with the potential for further roll-out in further education colleges and to universities in Europe. Adopting a student-centred approach is particularly important in an increasingly market-oriented UK higher education system, and with growing competition for international students. Ultimately, the success of *ProtectED* will depend not only on its theoretical contribution to student security, safety and wellbeing, but on its design—the ease with which *ProtectED* can be applied in practice and the strength of the business case for its delivery. The paper discusses the business case for *ProtectED,* highlighting issues and challenges relevant to its various stakeholders—including Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), students, commercial companies, police, students and government bodies.

### 2.0 Introduction

The University of Salford is researching and developing *ProtectED*—a Code of Practice and associated accreditation scheme for universities in the UK that has the potential for roll-out in further education (FE) colleges and across Europe. The aim of *ProtectED* is to improve the safety, security and wellbeing of higher education students in England and Wales, as well as to protect university assets and estates. Rather than focus on the security of universities, *ProtectED* adopts a *student-centred* perspective and is focused on the student experience at university, how this can be made safer and more secure and its relationship with the broader concept of student wellbeing. This perspective widens the remit of *ProtectED* to include aspects of the student experience that relate to concepts of safety, but are perhaps less commonly associated with security, such as mental health.

Research and design activities are being undertaken to (i) scope the problem; (ii) review current approaches and issues in the delivery of safety and security within higher education; and (iii) develop an approach that is suited to the issues facing higher education in the UK.

Since little information was available about crime victimisation amongst students in the UK, *ProtectED* researchers analysed the results of the 2013/14 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) focusing primarily on 16 to 24 year olds in full time education. The headline results from the analysis of crime victimisation data are presented in this paper, together with relevant information on student mental health and wellbeing.

It is recognised that the success of *ProtectED* will depend to a large extent on the strength of the business case for its delivery, and factors relevant to the business case have been drawn out from all aspects of the research, design and development. This paper discusses the business case for *ProtectED* from the perspective of the various stakeholders, including universities, students, commercial companies, police, student organisations and government bodies. The authors consider microeconomic factors relating to demand for and service delivery of a code of practice, as well as the wider societal impact of student security, safety and wellbeing—macroeconomic factors.

## 3.0 Background to *ProtectED*

*ProtectED* combines leading academic expertise within the *Design Against Crime Solution Centre* at the University of Salford, operational security capability of the University of Salford's Estates & Property Services division and expert knowledge and experience of partner organisations, in particular Brian Nuttall—proprietor of K7 Compliance Ltd. The original idea to improve security across the university sector by increasing standards came from the external partner, Brian Nuttall. He approached Trevor Jones, Head of Security & Community Support in Estates & Property Services at the University of Salford, and together they developed a list of potential criteria against which universities could be measured in terms of security. In order to help progress the idea, Trevor Jones contacted the Design Against Crime Solution Centre at the University of Salford. Using its expertise in human-centred, design-led crime prevention, the Solution Centre refined the concept and developed the brand—*ProtectED: A Code of Practice for the Safety, Security and Wellbeing of Students, and Protection of University Assets* (see Figure 1). The unique partnership between the University of Salford academics, Professional Services staff and the external business partner was formalised in a partnership agreement.



*Figure 1.* The ProtectED brand

A research and development plan was developed, and is ongoing. From January 2015 to April 2016, in-depth action research is being undertaken by dedicated Solution Centre researchers to understand the needs and requirements of all stakeholders within the

scheme. To date, this has involved interviews, focus groups and surveys with major players in the UK higher education sector, as well as relevant stakeholder and end-user groups. Four interviews and six focus groups were conducted with 21 University Security Managers and 21 Police Higher Education Liaison Officers. An online survey was also conducted to assess working practices and experiences of 61 Security Managers and Police Liaison Officers. Five focus groups were conducted with 19 NUS Student Union Officers. An online survey was also conducted to assess the safety and wellbeing experiences of over 800 students in higher education. The aim is to fully understand the perspectives of students, parents, campus security staff, police and student support staff, as well as providers of related student services such as accommodation, insurance and student welfare.

A *ProtectED* Advisory Board comprising key stakeholders was established in February 2015 to support development, piloting and eventual delivery of *ProtectED*. Membership includes standards bodies, professional associations, insurance companies and police associations. The Advisory Board plays an important role in helping the *ProtectED* team understand the context in which safety and security is delivered, and in refining the design focus and scope of the final Code of Practice.

In the UK, 'Further Education' (FE) is a term that refers to education delivered by colleges that takes place after secondary school, but is distinct from the 'Higher Education' (HE) offered by universities. Advisory Board members have highlighted important differences between FE and HE institutions relevant to the demand for a code of practice.

Differences in university funding and student fees across parts of the UK were also considered. In England and Wales, home students pay £9,000 per annum in fees (around 12,400 EUR) for their undergraduate studies, and student fees are now core to the funding of the higher education sector here. In contrast, Scottish students do not currently have to pay fees to study at Scottish universities. Instead, universities in Scotland receive greater funding support from the Scottish Government, compared to those in England and Wales (www.topuniversities.com/student-info/.../how-much-does-it-cost-study-uk).

The *ProtectED* team therefore decided to concentrate on developing a code of practice for universities in England and Wales in the first instance, and to adapt the code to the needs and requirements of other parts of the UK and to further education colleges at a later date.


## 4.0 Scoping the crime problem

The safety and security of universities and the students that attend them, is a significant issue in the UK. It is also an issue for the communities within which students study, live and socialise and for the wider society in which universities are situated. Students play an important role in the economy and vibrancy of the cities home to universities and colleges (ECOTEC, 2008).

Previous studies have examined specific crimes against students (such as hate crime and sexual assault) or victimisation across a number of university campuses (British Council, 2010; Home Office, 2004; NUS, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c), but information on student victimisation across the UK is not routinely published. Victimisation data is

collected from surveys of individuals and households in three parts of the UK—England and Wales; Scotland; and Northern Ireland. *ProtectED* researchers examined victimisation data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), focusing on student households and individuals (i) aged 16 to 24 years of age (the primary age group for FE and HE students) and (ii) in full time education. The findings for this age and education/occupation subgroup were compared to the average for all 'adults' (defined as over 16 years of age in the CSEW) in England and Wales. This comparison with 'all adults' was used to identify the additional risks for students arising both from their age and personal circumstances or lifestyle.

### *Student crime victimisation*

Survey data on victimisation in England and Wales over 12 months shows that 22 per cent of full time students aged 16 to 24 were victims of crime in 2013/14, compared to 17 per cent of all adults (aged over 16 years) (ONS, 2014c). Increased risk amongst students was observed across a range of crime types, including:

- **Bike theft** – The percentage of bicycle-owning households that were a victim of bicycle thefts for full time students of all ages in England and Wales was 9.52 per cent, compared to 2.57 per cent of all adults (ONS, 2014a).
- **Residential burglary** – The percentage of households that were a victim of burglary of a dwelling for full-time students of all ages in England and Wales in 2013/14 were 2.65 per cent, compared to 1.99 of all adults (ONS, 2014a).
- **Mugging –** Experience of mugging was examined, which is where an individual is a victim of robbery or snatch theft (ONS, 2014b). A snatch theft is when an offender snatches an item belonging to the victim (often their mobile phone) and runs or cycles away. It was found that 0.83 per cent of full time students aged 16 to 24 had be a victim of mugging, compared to 0.42 of all adults (ONS, 2014c).
- **Violence** – It was found that 3.05 per cent of full time students aged 16 to 24 were victims of violent offences, compared to 1.73 of all adults (ONS, 2014c).

Overall, the UK and the majority of countries across Europe, have witnessed a steady decline in crime levels since the mid 1990s. Declining crime levels has been attributed largely to better design and security reducing opportunities for crime (van Dijk et al, 2007; van Dijk et al, 2013; van Dijk, 2012; Farrell, 2013). However, higher levels of crime continue to be a problem amongst particular groups—including students.

The majority of full time students in college and university education fall within the 16 to 24 years age bracket (HESA, 2015, Table 6a). It is known that the likelihood of being a victim of personal crime is relatively high for adults aged 16 to 24—at 11.7 per cent in 2012/13 (ONS, 2013. However, crime victimisation decreases with age and is lowest for those aged 75 and over—at only 1.3 per cent. Higher levels of victimisation amongst younger age groups are apparent across a number of everyday crimes, including violence, snatch thefts, vehicle crime and burglary (*ibid*).

Certain lifestyles and personal circumstances that significantly increase risk of victimisation correlate with the student experience. Universities are often located in or near to major cities, resulting in UK students living in urbanised areas, where crime rates are higher compared to rural locations. Students generally must live on relatively low incomes, making them more

likely to be resident in the cheaper housing found in deprived areas that suffer from higher rates of crime. While students may live in halls of residence owned or managed by the university in the first year, students tend to move out in subsequent years—often into multi-occupancy student homes owned by private landlords. It is recognised that housing in multiple occupation is at higher risk of crime and antisocial behaviour than single-occupancy housing and that this impacts on communities:

*"The concentration of a young transient social grouping, such as students, living in relatively insecure accommodation can lead to increased levels of burglary and crime in an area"* (ECOTEC, 2008, p.13).

Students make greater use of public transport, travel on foot and drive models of car that are older and less secure (Office of National Statistics, 2013; van Dijk, 2013). In addition, while alcohol consumption is declining amongst young people (HSCIC, 2015), student lifestyles continue to be closely associated with the consumption of alcohol—especially during their first year at university. Some students consume illegal drugs or "legal highs"— that is substances that have similar effects to drugs like cocaine or cannabis, but are not classified as illegal to possess. Legal highs are known to carry some serious health risks that are difficult for emergency services to treat effectively (further information available at: http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/drugs/Pages/legalhighs.aspx).

While certainly an area for future research, identifying the relative contribution of different risk factors to victimisation levels amongst students is outside the *ProtectED* team's current remit. *ProtectED* is focused on understanding the scale and scope of the problem, identifying potential solutions and building the business case for intervention.

### *Relevance of victimisation to the business case*

As already outlined, surveys suggest that students are at higher risk of victimisation compared to the average population. Therefore, it is not unreasonable to expect that further education and higher education institutions should consider safety and security issues. Focusing on reducing student victimisation would appear to be an effective strategy for impacting on crime and insecurity more widely in the UK. Further education and higher education students comprise some 11 per cent of the population in the UK (Office for the National Statistics, 2015, http://goo.gl/IIFAOW). Furthermore, the UK student population has increased over the last 15 years by some 18 per cent from 1,948,135 in 2000/01 to 2,299,355 in 2013/14 (HESA, n.d.).

Reports in the media suggest that greater attention should be paid to the problem of rape and sexual assault—especially between acquaintances, friends and those already in an intimate relationship. In the United States, sexual consent is being addressed by universities, and some UK institutions and professional bodies are also attempting to better understand and to tackle this important and complex issue.

Crime and insecurity are also of concern due to their correlation with broader issues of wellbeing. UK charity Victim Support notes that victimisation can impact on a person's mental health and wellbeing:

> *"A person's well-being can be affected in many ways if they have been a victim of crime. There can be short- or long-term effects of crime, and some people cope well with horrific crimes while other can be distressed by a minor incident"* (Victim Support, 2015).

Mental health and wellbeing are important issues in their own right.

## 5.0 Scoping student mental health problems and wellbeing

From the outset, the *Design Against Crime Solution Centre* argued for mental health and wellbeing to be considered within *ProtectED* together with safety and security. According to the UK mental health charity Mind and the UK government, mental health problems include: sleep problems; stress and anxiety; eating and body image disorders; depression; suicide and self harm; types of personality disorder; mania and bipolar; psychosis, hearing voices and schizophrenia (Mind, 2015a). As well as such problems, Mind also considers a person's general mental state and ability to cope within the concept of "wellbeing". In this context, mental wellbeing is characterised by feeling relatively confident, being able to maintain positive relationships and being able to cope with daily life, change and uncertainty (Mind 2015b).

Research reveals the following mental health and wellbeing issues amongst UK students:

- *Anxiety and depression* – UK students of all ages are more likely to have poor mental health than adults in the general population, with 52 per cent reporting symptoms of mild to moderate depression and anxiety compared to 30 per cent of all adults (Monk, 2004).
- *Suicide* – Between 2006 and 2012, 632 students aged 16–24 committed suicide— that is an average of 105 students per year. Male students aged 16–24 were most at risk of suicide, accounting for 68 per cent of all student suicides 2006–2012. The number of student suicides in England & Wales rose 50 per cent between 2007 and 2011 (from 75 to 112 per year). This is despite student numbers only increasing by 14 per cent over this period (www.theguardian.com/education/2013/mar/23/student-suicide-depression-debt-recession).
- *Excessive alcohol consumption* – Although levels of excessive alcohol consumption are on the decrease amongst young people, alcohol consumption and legal and illegal drug taking continue within universities. The overwhelming majority (89–94%) of English university students consume alcohol (InBev, Noctis & NUS, 2010; Royal Society of Psychiatrists, 2011). A student consumes an average of seven drinks on a night out (InBev, Noctis & NUS, 2010). It is concluded that 15 per cent of students report hazardous drinking levels (Royal Society of Psychiatrists, 2011). Excessive alcohol use means that a student becomes a vulnerable adult, not least because it places the student at increased risk of harm or assault (Royal Society of Psychiatrists, 2011)—which is classified as greater than 51 units per week for men and 36 units per week for women. Furthermore, women who consume more alcohol, and who are drunk more often, are at greater risk of becoming a victim of sexual assault.

### *Relevance of mental health and wellbeing issues to the business case*

Advisory Board members and focus groups confirmed the importance of addressing mental health and wellbeing issues—not only security. It emerged that security staff are regularly called upon to provide pastoral care and deal with mental health issues. Furthermore, mental health issues experienced by students may be extremely serious, including psychotic episodes, attempted suicide or self-harm and sexual violence or abuse. When such incidents occur, they can take up a considerable amount of time and demand competencies that lie outside the traditional remit and training of university security staff.

In recent months, the risk in mental health problems amongst young adults and students has been a focus of research reports, media articles and government-led initiatives. The BBC reported that students are *"definitely feeling more stressed" (Coughlan, 2015, quote from Marina Della Giusta),* due largely to the way in which the current economic climate is impacting on education and jobs:

*"The factors that really drive it are financial stress, university education has become more expensive. And job prospects are more uncertain, so they're not sure whether it's going to pay off (Coughlan, 2015, quote from Marina Della Giusta)."*

In addition, opportunities to relax and enjoy life with friends are being undermined by expectations to be seen to be having a good time, with social media tending to turn young people's social lives into a place of competition—not relaxation *(ibid).*

Students are increasingly seeking out counselling services, which universities are expected to provide to ensure that students successfully complete their education and go on to find jobs.

### 6.0 Security standards and approaches in the FE and HE sector

There is currently no comprehensive best practice standard for higher education institutions (HEIs) wishing to more effectively address the issue of student safety, security and wellbeing. In addition, traditional security is focused on protecting campus facilities and ensuring the safety of the institutional estate—and does not generally consider the broader student experience.

Current approaches to the delivery of security in the UK higher education sector are fragmented, with standards of practice varying widely between universities. Universities may not have developed or fully implemented a security strategy that identifies security risks and details how to deal with them. They may not define or refer to the 'chain of command' or hierarchy of responsibility. Job descriptions, roles descriptions and responsibilities may be missing for some key positions, such as data controller. In addition, security and safety procedures may not have been established for key activities, including: lone working, incident reporting, emergency response, parking and student safety.

The delivery of security is often unsystematic and erratic. Security staff are not always recruited effectively, screened prior to employment or provided with appropriate training. For instance, there is a need for training in key topics, including: conflict management,

emergency planning, risk assessment, CCTV monitoring and key-holding. Security managers are often not appropriately qualified, and staff hiring and training policies are often *ad hoc*— i.e. introduced to tackle an immediate problem or task, rather than to support achievement of more strategic purposes.

The delivery of security is being held back by old systems that are non-operational or past their economic life, including non-operational or compromised alarms. CCTV systems are often not fit for purpose, with problems including: outdated and/or not fully operational equipment; poor image quality (making it unusable as evidence); and inappropriately located cameras (e.g. CCTV covering a football pitch whilst a high-risk IT facility has no coverage). Security systems may represent poor value for money due to: multiple contracts with multiple suppliers for the same services; wide variations in maintenance and monitoring costs by different suppliers; and inconsistency across different sites. In addition, there is anecdotal evidence of mis-selling of security systems to uninformed institutions and a lack of understanding of relevant legal frameworks, such as CCTV rules and codes of conduct.

## 7.0 The proposed solution

A quality standard for safety, security and wellbeing is being developed, tailored to the higher education sector in England and Wales. The quality standard will be delivered through a code of practice—i.e. a set of written criteria providing minimum requirements to meet for universities and the professions responsible for students. The code of practice will draw on existing best practice, including the Security Industry Authority's *"Approved Contractor"* scheme (SIA, http://www.sia.homeoffice.gov.uk/Pages/acs-intro.aspx).

The code of practice will be part of an HEI-specific accreditation scheme approved by significant and relevant sector bodies, such as: The Association of University Chief Security Officers (AUCSO); Security Industry Authority (SIA); International Professional Security Association (IPSA); National Union of Students (NUS); Association of Managers of Student Services in Higher Education (AMOSSHE); and the British Council. Higher education institutions would be invited to apply to an authorised body for 'accreditation'—a process of inspection to determine the institution's competency, authority, or credibility that potentially results in the awarding of a certificate for institutions that meet the agreed standard. It is anticipated that accreditation would be audited and awarded by trained assessors every three years (major audit), with progress reviews conducted annually. *ProtectED* aims to be the first UK HEI security accreditation scheme to focus on safety, security and wellbeing of students.

Through research, idea generation and consultation, the *ProtectED* team has worked to define the problem domain, identifying four key areas:

1. Student crime victimisation
2. Student well-being issues
3. Issues with current FE and HE institution security provision
4. Parental concerns

The *ProtectED* team developed a conceptual model to represent the holistic approach it will adopt, see figure 2.
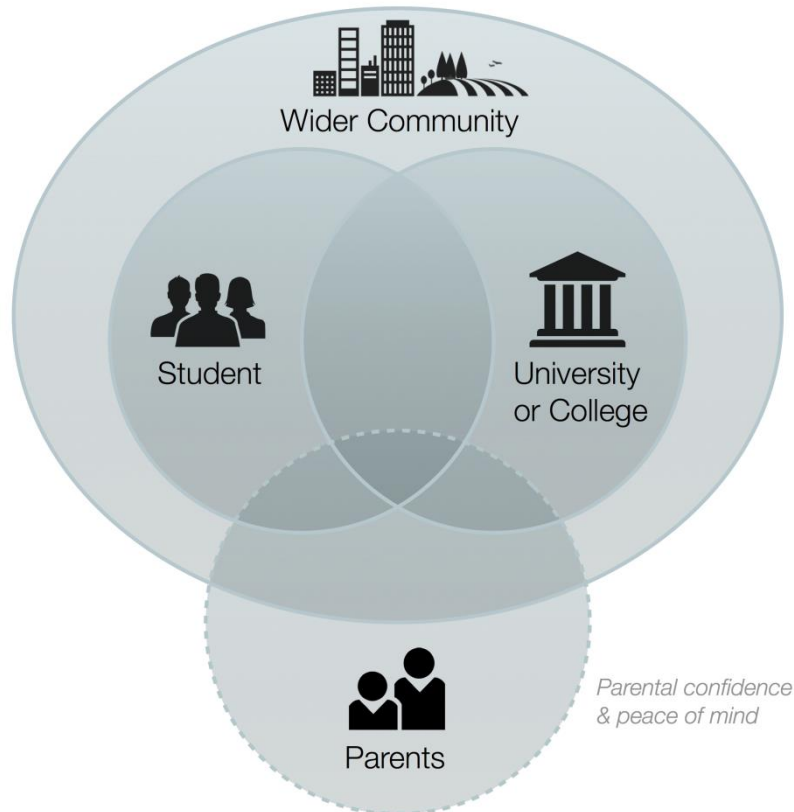


*Figure 2.* Conceptual Model – ProtectED approach

The *ProtectED* scheme is innovative in its formulation and delivery, being oriented around the student experience and combining requirements for safety, security and wellbeing—rather than merely securing campus facilities and the institutional estate. This student-centred approach is particularly important in the increasingly market-oriented UK higher education system, as well as competition for international students. The code of practice is branded: *"ProtectED: Safety, Security & Wellbeing" of HEI students & assets".* *ProtectED*'s student-centred and holistic approach and branding is designed to appeal to FE and HE sectors and to suit their particular needs and requirements.

Importantly, student safety, security *and* wellbeing are being addressed in parallel with the institution's safety, security and success—as this will not only help bring about improved student security, but also stimulate and motivate action amongst universities.

The *ProtectED* team suggests that universities in the UK cannot confine themselves to considering the safety, security and wellbeing of students only when on the university's campus, but must consider these issues within the broader context of where students live, where they socialise, and their travel to and from the campus. Problems of crime and disorder often occur "off campus" and should therefore be addressed in the situations and locations where they occur. While students contribute to local economies and bring vibrancy to a city during term time, their presence can also foster problems and create conflict with

local communities (ECOTEC, 2008). Furthermore, students make use of a wide range of public and private services, including retail, healthcare, public transport and policing. At the core of *ProtectED* is the requirement that higher education institutions work together with other agencies (local authorities, police and healthcare providers) to ensure that students' needs are met, and potential risks and sources of conflict identified and managed. Such partnership working is enabled by *ProtectED Safety and Wellbeing Partnerships* (PSWP) that the *ProtectED* Code of Practice encourages HEIs to establish with other stakeholders.

In addition, media reports on crime and disorder involving students frequently link a student victim—or offender—with his or her institution. This is potentially damaging to the institution's reputation for safety and security, and indeed to the university town or city.

The *ProtectED* team has identified the importance of addressing parental concern about the safety, security and wellbeing of their children whilst at university.

### 8.0 The Business case for *ProtectED*

#### *Competition for students*

#### *Role of parents in applicant's choice of university*

Choice of university is driven by many factors—including parental views. The cost of attending university is now the biggest financial contribution that parents make to their adult children—replacing the traditional contribution towards the cost of weddings. Indeed, two in five (40%) of parents said they had helped with university costs, whereas just one in five (21%) had contributed towards a wedding (Standard Life, 2013. p.9). This increased financial role in the children's university education legitimises parents having a greater voice in university choice and related decision-making.

Parents naturally worry about the safety, security and wellbeing of their children at university. It may therefore be important for HEIs wanting to attract students to consider parental confidence and peace of mind—not just when choosing an institution, but throughout the education process, up until course completion and into subsequent employment.

The issue of student safety at university is therefore a sensitive one, and there is potential for university comparison guides and media reports on crime to deter applications and damage reputations.

Information about student and university safety and security issues are brought to the attention of applicants both in official guides and the media. The "Complete University Guide" is an independent organisation that aims to help potential students worldwide to research and compare UK degree courses, universities and colleges. The Complete University Guide also compares factors such as accommodation and careers, aiming to inform prospective applicants and help them *"make the right choice in changing times"* (http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/about-us/).

The Guide attempts to rank higher education institutions in terms of their differing risk of crime while studying there. However, in the absence of victimisation data for different institutions, the Guide estimates the crime risk at different universities using a problematic

methodology. Data on crimes such as burglary, robbery and violent crime occurring in a 1km square area around the main university campus is used to represent a university's relative risk. The problem is that for urban Universities, this area may include parts of the city centre, or crime hotspots such as bus and train stations, skewing the data and unfairly inflating the crime risk at such institutions. In addition, this 1km area may not be where students actually live or socialise, and so will not correspond to the actual risk relating to the student experience at such universities.

Institutions may have grounds to challenge the validity of crime data presented by the Complete University Guide. However, this questionable data on crime risk at universities is currently being presented to prospective students and their parents as fact, and is potentially informing their choices.

Furthermore, information about crime is regularly picked up by the media and translated into headlines that are potentially damaging for an institution. For example, the UK's Independent newspaper ran a story with the headline *"Crime watch: Why students should think twice about studying in Manchester"* (The Independent, Tuesday 03 June 2014).

*Increasing competition for international students*

International students pay higher fees than home students and are therefore an important source of income for universities. In England, nearly a fifth (19 per cent) of students enrolled at university in 2013/14 came from abroad. Five per cent of these came from countries within the EU (including a significant proportion from Germany), but 14 per cent were from beyond Europe (HESA, 2015). For non-EU domiciled students, the Higher Education Statistics Agency data shows that 56 per cent were from China; 12 per cent from India; 11 per cent from Nigeria; 11 per cent from Malaysia; and 10 per cent from Hong Kong.

The largest proportion of international students studying in the UK come from non-EU countries, for whom media articles disseminated via the Internet are likely to be the main source of information, as noted by an NUS representative:

> *"A lot of our International students come from non-EU countries, even if you are in an EU country, overwhelmingly you won't have chance to visit the campus before you get there. So everything that you're going to hear about in terms of safety and stuff look up yourself online".*
>
> (NUS *ProtectED* Focus Group)

International students apply to study in the UK for a variety of reasons, with many seeking the opportunity to study and live in an English speaking country. In this respect, the UK competes with the US. However, university campuses in the US have been plagued with reports of rape and sexual assault, as well as certain shootings by lone gunmen—often current or ex-students. Concerns have been expressed about such problems existing or occurring in the UK, and steps are being taken to anticipate and prevent problems.

**Emerging 'consumer' perspective of students (and their parents).**

*Increasing parental involvement in students' lives*

High university fees and competition between universities may be helping to generate a 'consumer' perspective in relation to higher education—including amongst parents. Besides the issue of university fees mentioned above, there is anecdotal evidence of parents being involved in student's lives when studying in higher education—including supporting children to purchase or rent property, helping them find work placements, contacting security staff when children fail to ring home, and contacting staff members when students suffer mental health issues or significant life events (such as bereavement). As a result of some students choosing to save money by living at home, parents are playing a key role as providers of accommodation within the family environment. All these issues make parents a key stakeholder in the safety, security and wellbeing of university students.

*Increasing demand to ensure completion*

Of particular importance for parents investing in higher and further education are completion rates. In 2010/11, over 26,000 students failed to complete their first year (Higher Education Statistics Agency, 2014). It could be argued that victims of crime, stress, etc. need support whilst at university to reduce the risk of them 'dropping out' and not continuing or completing their studies. A recent report in The Sunday Times (Griffiths & Henry, 11.10.15) stated that the UK government is considering penalising universities if they fail to provide places for students from more deprived backgrounds and ensure that they complete their degrees and find good jobs. Universities that fail to ensure that students from deprived backgrounds successfully complete their first year may be prevented from raising tuition fees.


## 9.0 Conclusion

From the research conducted to date and the input of key stakeholders, there appears to be a strong business case for universities to improve the safety, security and wellbeing of students and better protect institutional assets. Being over a tenth of the population and a high-risk group, reducing crime victimisation and insecurity amongst students has the potential to impact positively on security across the UK.

Support for a code of practice has been forthcoming from key stakeholders, and the broader, student-centred approach adopted by *ProtectED* widely endorsed. This approach reflects the wider remit of University security staff, who spend the majority of their time dealing with issues that are more closely related to pastoral care than the common paradigm of security. *ProtectED*'s definition of the role of university security staff will challenge the perception by some university senior managers that the role of university security is solely a policing one. However, our research suggests that in practice this is just not the case, and so the recruitment, training and working procedures of staff in a university security role need to reflect this.

The development and delivery of the scheme continues to present challenges for the *ProtectED* team, which aims to undertake prototype testing at a number of institutions between December 2015 and March 2016. The first version of the *ProtectED* Code of Practice will then be launched at the AUCSO international conference at MediaCityUK, Salford in April 2016.

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