**Your Name**
Your Address
Your Email
Date

**MP’s Name**
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Dear [MP’s Name],

**Re: Challenges facing higher education and the future of International Studies**

I am writing as a constituent and a member of the British International Studies Association (BISA) – the leading academic association for International Studies in the UK - to express my deep concern about the growing pressures facing the UK higher education sector, and their impact on the discipline of International Studies. The UK higher education sector is a crucial driver of the UK’s economy, with the world-class education and training it provides and the research it develops being at the forefront of the UK’s productivity and innovation. The sector also constitutes an important export industry, with the total benefit of international students to the UK economy estimated at £41.9 billion for the students who started their degrees in 2021/22. Overall, the footprint of the sector on the UK economy was estimated to stand, in 2023, at £115.7 billion, making higher education institutions one of the main motors of local economies.

Universities across the UK however, are experiencing severe financial strain. Because of this we are seeing job cuts, course closures, and restructuring across departments - including in Politics and International Studies. These developments affect not only staff and students, but also threaten the UK’s global standing in higher education and research. They also have the potential to severely harm the UK economy and the UK’s plans for further economic growth.

Politics and International Studies is a vital discipline. It contributes to an informed democracy, a globally literate workforce, and the training of future leaders, analysts, and diplomats. Our students graduate with highly sought-after skills in critical thinking, policy understanding, research fluency, intercultural understanding, and international engagement.

I am particularly concerned about recent government proposals, including increased visa fees and a potential levy on international student income. I urge you to **think carefully** about the unintended consequences these policies may have on university funding and the UK’s attractiveness as a destination for international students - who bring enormous economic, cultural, and academic value. The fact that students from across the globe wish to study and learn from UK institutions should be celebrated as an achievement that demonstrates the outstanding reputation of the higher education sector. Moreover, it is an opportunity to enhance UK leadership by shaping how future business leaders, scientists, and governmental officials think. These are the very people who will be our partners in addressing the many challenges to come. Why then is your government actively seeking to diminish the UK’s influence in the world and reduce the estimated £41.9bn net gain from international students for the UK economy?

I would be grateful if you could raise these concerns with the relevant ministers and urge the government to work with the sector, including professional associations like BISA, to find sustainable, long-term solutions.

Thank you for your time and attention. I would welcome a response.

Yours sincerely,

**Your Full Name
Your Institutional Affiliation, if appropriate**