



THE CAREER DISPATCH

October 2025





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TARUN GUPTA
Global Managing Partner



The world of higher education is undergoing a transformation unlike any seen before. The rapid pace of technological advancement driven by artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, automation, and data-led decision-making is not just reshaping industries but redefining how learning itself is delivered, absorbed, and applied. As the boundaries between academic disciplines blur, the demand for hybrid skillsets, those that combine technical expertise with creative and analytical thinking has never been more urgent.

In this evolving landscape, India stands at a pivotal moment. With one of the world's largest youth populations, the country's higher education institutions (HEIs) have both an opportunity and an obligation to reimagine the pathways that connect learning to employability. The challenge is not simply about producing more graduates, but about preparing graduates who are future-ready, who can adapt to disruption, lead innovation, and participate meaningfully in the global economy.

This edition of The Career Dispatch explores how Indian HEIs are responding through stronger industry partnerships that bridge the education-employment divide. From co-designed curricula and credit-bearing internships to joint research and capstone projects, these collaborations are redefining employability by aligning academic outcomes with real-world needs.

At the same time, higher education is becoming increasingly borderless. India's openness to transnational education exemplified by the entry of leading global universities into GIFT City signals a new era of collaboration and opportunity. Initiatives like the upcoming Queen's University Belfast

campus demonstrate how world-class education can be made accessible to Indian students while contributing to the internationalization of India's higher education ecosystem.

Recent developments also underscore how international partnerships are shaping this momentum. T&A Consulting, representing the New Jersey India Center, was part of the Governor-Led Economic Mission and Delegation Visit to India in September, during which 9 MoUs were signed, marking an important milestone in advancing collaboration across education, innovation, and industry between New Jersey and India.

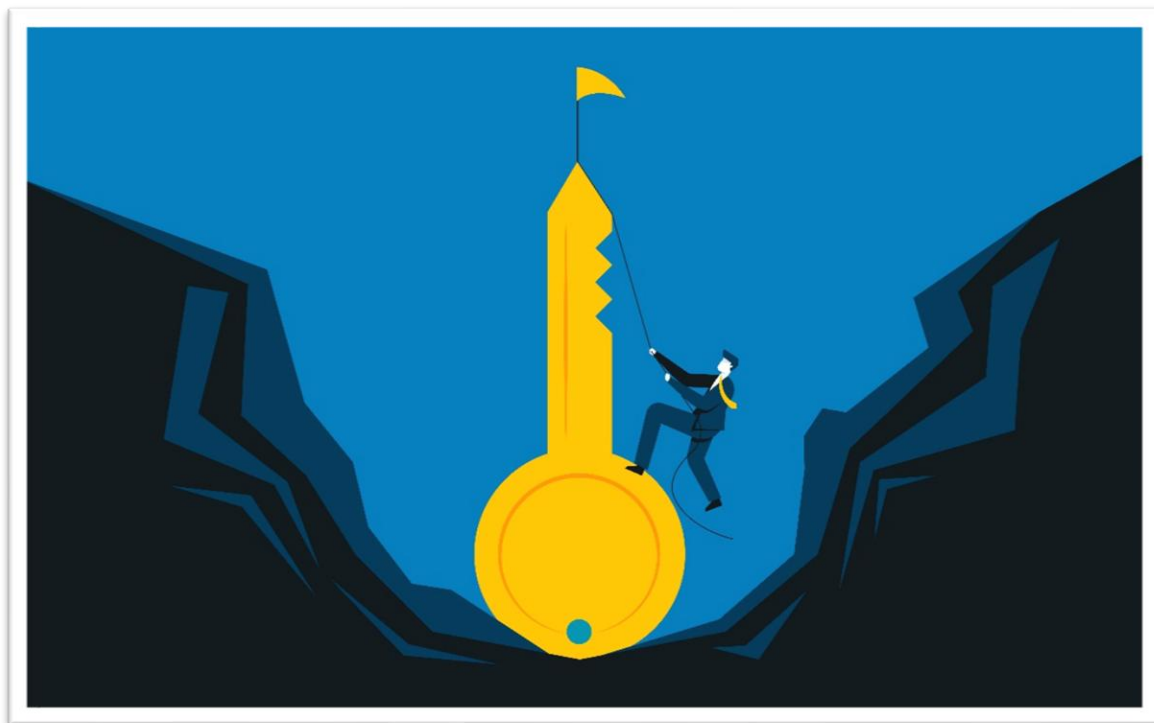
Our Country in Focus section turns to the United Kingdom, a long-standing destination for South Asian learners, to analyze how evolving immigration and post-study work policies are shaping student sentiment. Despite uncertainties, the UK's continued appeal underscores the strength of its academic ecosystem and its deep institutional ties with India.

At T&A Consulting, we remain deeply engaged in this transformation helping international institutions navigate South Asia through informed strategy, local insight, and long-term partnerships. As you explore this issue, we invite you to reflect on how education systems across the world are rethinking their purpose, to not only impart knowledge but to build capabilities, foster collaboration, and prepare learners for a future where adaptability is the greatest skill of all.

We hope this edition of The Career Dispatch offers new perspectives, sparks meaningful dialogue, and reaffirms our shared commitment to connecting education with opportunity.

SOUTH ASIA UNLOCKED

A primer for HEIs looking to enter the market



Indian universities need to transform their higher education delivery to improve employability outcomes for recent graduates and postgraduates. At present, the country suffers from a massive education-employability skill gap, with university education failing to deliver the practical exposure and technical skills necessary to seek quality employment.

Academia-industry collaboration is a critical key to bridging this gap. In this edition of South Asia Unlocked, we examine how Indian higher education institutions (HEIs) are solidifying partnerships with the industry to make students employment-ready. The institutions have moved beyond traditional guest lectures or seminars to form more meaningful partnerships involving wider aspects like curriculum re-design and joint curriculum delivery,

internship programs, certification programs, capstone projects, and joint research programs.

India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 also concurs with the view that Indian HEIs should leverage their industry networks and expand partnerships with the industry to make education outcomes more in line with the industry expectations. With this view, the policy encourages Indian HEIs to introduce credit-bearing internship programs and research collaborations in partnership with industry stakeholders.

Such initiatives go a long way in equipping recent graduates with industry experience and skills and preparing them for the job market.

INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

A Modern Necessity

The Indian job market suffers from significant skill gaps at the entry level. The skills imparted in the country's higher education system continue to fall short of the evolving demands of the industry. This has resulted in a situation in which fresh graduates struggle to secure quality employment opportunities.

The rapid advancement of technology is reshaping job roles across all industries. Automation, AI, and digitalization are not just creating new roles but also upgrading the requirements of entry-level roles. Today, most modern workplaces expect freshers to have some practical experience in AI, data analytics, and visualization tools.

While technical skills are essential, employers equally value business acumen and core soft skills, including communication, collaboration, leadership, and presentation capabilities.

Indian HEIs, however, continue to deliver predominantly theoretical curricula that lack the hard and soft skills needed to become employment-ready. Besides, the education system prioritized rote learning over critical thinking and hands-on problem solving, leaving graduates under-

prepared for real workplace challenges.

This misalignment forces corporations to invest substantial resources—often equivalent to 6–12 months of additional training—to make fresh graduates job-ready.

Strategic Response: The Partnership Imperative

Forward-thinking HEIs have responded through meaningful industry partnerships that transcend traditional guest lecture models. These collaborations create ecosystems where academic rigor meets practical application, producing employment-ready graduates. Meanwhile, the NEP 2020 has provided a regulatory momentum through mandating credit-bearing internships and encouraging corporate-funded research initiatives.

The value proposition proves compelling for all stakeholders: students gain technical skills and exposure to real-world business challenges, companies get a job-ready talent pool, reducing recruitment and training costs, while universities enhance their market reputation and placement outcomes.

Did You Know?

Only 43% of graduates in India are considered employable, as per skill evaluations conducted on 1 million+ students by Mercer and Mettl.

Academia-industry Partnerships Reshaping Higher Education

Current and emerging academia-industry partnership formats :

❖ **Co-curriculum design:** Indian HEIs need curriculum upgradation to align it with the current industry needs. Keeping this in perspective, the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has directed all engineering colleges to develop new industry-based course modules in consultation with industry stakeholders. Meanwhile, Indian universities have started leveraging their industry networks to update their curriculum for both STEM and non-STEM programs.

- ❖ **Corporate internships:** Academia-industry partnerships for internships are pivotal for bridging the gap between theoretical education and practical application. Internships have become a core component of most academic-industry alliances in India. Both AICTE and the University Grants Commission (UGC) have mandated credit-bearing internships across all (both technical and non-technical) undergraduate programs.
- ❖ **Capstone projects and certification programs:** Such programs allow students to learn industry-relevant skills from industry stakeholders.

Key Examples of Academia-Industry Partnerships

Indian HEI	Type of HEI	Partner corporation	Scope of MoU
Vellore Institute of Technology	Private		Joint curriculum design and corporate internships
Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Jammu	Autonomous		Co-curriculum design, research collaboration
Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Patna	Autonomous		Research collaboration, corporate internships, technical workshops
Indian Institute of Creative Technologies	Autonomous		Joint curriculum design, faculty engagement, research collaboration
Manipal Academy of Higher Education	Private		Research collaboration, shared internships, exchange programs
OP Jindal Global University	Private		Co-curriculum design
Lovely Professional University	Private		Capstone projects, certification programs, joint curriculum design and delivery, internships



Private universities, such as the Vellore Institute of Technology, Lovely Professional University, and O.P. Jindal Global University, have established strong industry networks to provide their students with practical experience through embedded certification programs and capstone projects.

Meanwhile, prominent Indian HEIs—particularly IITs and IIMs—have forged collaborations with tech firms and edtech platforms to co-develop online/hybrid certification programs aimed at addressing the employment skill gap. IIT Mandi's No-code AI certification program in collaboration with tech firm Nagent AI, and IIM Kozhikode's professional 'Design Thinking and Innovation with AI' certification program in partnership with edtech platform Emeritus are some key examples.

Such programs are often open to all—undergraduates, fresh graduates, as well as experienced professionals.

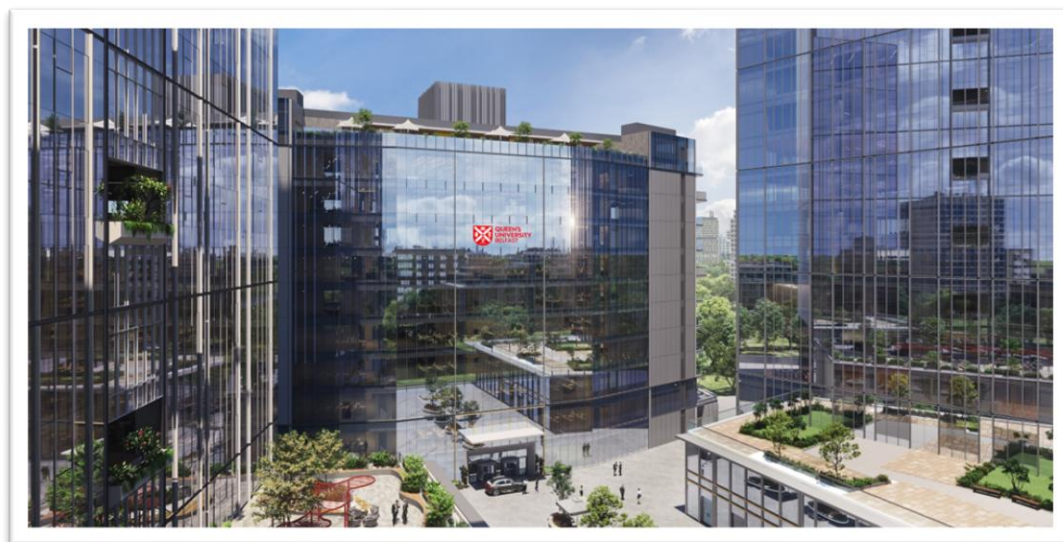
R&D collaboration: It is one of the most common forms of partnerships between Indian HEIs and corporates. Research collaborations in India often take the form of industry-sponsored research

programs, joint research projects, collaborative R&D centres, innovation hubs, and startup incubators. The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) in India have been at the forefront of such partnerships, setting up centres of excellence for collaborative research. Meanwhile, renowned private HEIs like Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE) are also catching pace, conducting joint research programs with industry partners.

In sum: The success of academia-industry partnerships across Indian institutions—from IITs to private universities—demonstrates their critical role in addressing the employability crisis affecting recent graduates. Through co-curriculum design, mandatory internships, and R&D collaboration, these partnerships are transforming higher education from theoretical learning to practical, market-ready skill development. With regulatory backing and growing corporate participation, such collaborations have evolved from optional initiatives to essential foundations for preparing India's workforce for the digital economy.

TRANSNATIONAL EDUCATION

Queen's University Belfast Gift City: India's New Gateway to Global Education



In 2022, the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) introduced a pioneering framework enabling foreign HEIs to establish campuses in GIFT City. The regulations made foreign universities ranked in the top 500 globally (either in overall or subject-specific rankings) eligible to open an international branch campus (IBC) in the Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City).

The IBCs are fully foreign-owned (with an option to repatriate profits) and will award their own degrees with complete academic/administrative autonomy. The permissible academic scope spans high-demand fields such as financial management, FinTech, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, with courses required to mirror the standards of the home institution.

Following this, in 2023, India's UGC issued guidelines to allow foreign HEIs to set up campuses across India.

Such initiatives have allowed Indian students access to a global-standard education without leaving their home country. The initiatives also address challenges associated with stringent visa conditions, uncertain visa rejections, and capping restrictions on international student enrolment.

For India, this initiative reflected a broader policy shift towards internationalization of higher education, reducing the need for outbound mobility while fostering partnerships with global HEIs.

The GIFT City has swiftly positioned itself as an attractive destination for foreign HEIs looking to set up a campus in India.

With its globally benchmarked regulations, tax incentives, strategic global collaborations, and robust academic infrastructure, the GIFT City offers a conducive environment for foreign HEIs.

Two Australian universities—Deakin University and the University of Wollongong have already opened IBCs in the GIFT City. Building on this foundation, more foreign universities, including the UK's Queen's University Belfast (QUB) and the Coventry University are setting up branch campuses in the GIFT City.

Queen's University Belfast in GIFT City

QUB will become the first Russell Group university, and the third foreign institution overall, to open a campus in GIFT City. Established in 1845 and consistently ranked among the world's top universities, QUB brings nearly two centuries of academic heritage and a strong reputation for research excellence. The new campus in India, set to welcome students in 2026, signals Queen's confidence in India's regulatory framework and commitment to deep, long-term engagement.

QUB Gift City's initial academic portfolio comprises four postgraduate programs, designed in consultation with industry to meet sector-specific demands in India. Degrees in construction & project management, business analytics, financial analytics, and finance will combine rigorous academic content with employability-focused outcomes. Going forward, the university also plans to offer PhD programs in India.

Students enrolled at QUB Gift City will benefit from live projects, internships,

and mentorship from industry leaders, ensuring that learning remains closely aligned with the needs of India's dynamic economy.

Expanding Access through Scholarships

Affordability and access are central to QUB's approach. Tuition for the GIFT City programs is set at approximately USD 20,450 (£15,000), significantly below the cost of studying in the UK when living expenses are considered. Scholarships will further expand opportunities for talented students.

Among these, the Women in STEM Scholarship stands out as a pioneering initiative, wherein Queen's is offering 20 full scholarships covering 100% of tuition fees to outstanding female students enrolling in postgraduate programmes at Queen's GIFT City in January 2026. The scholarship underscores Queen's commitment to advancing gender equity and fostering women's leadership in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Additionally, students will enjoy access to global alumni networks, career services, and value-added certifications (leadership credentials from the UK's Chartered Management Institute).

Going forward, QUB's GIFT City campus is poised to become a landmark in international higher education—uniting global standards with local relevance and demonstrating how hubs like GIFT City can redefine the future of academic collaboration. For India, QUB's arrival validates its strategy of attracting top global institutions while enriching its own higher education ecosystem.

COUNTRY IN FOCUS

United Kingdom



The United Kingdom (UK) has been one of the world's most attractive destinations for international students, with enrolment figures reflecting both scale and diversity. Between 2018–19 and 2022–23, the number of international students in the UK's higher education institutions rose from ~496,000 to almost 759,000, enabling the UK to meet its 600,000 international student target nearly a decade ahead of schedule.

At the heart of the UK's international student boom was India, which rapidly became the largest single source market. Indian student enrolments in the UK universities grew more than six-fold in just five years, from ~27,500 in 2018–19 to over 173,000 in 2022–23 in 2022, before falling to ~166,300 in 2023–24.

The UK's globally recognized English-taught programs, renowned universities

like Oxford and Cambridge, and a vast Indian diaspora have made it one of the most preferred study destinations for Indians. AI, machine learning, robotics, and business analytics are some of the courses in the UK that are popular among Indian students.

However, the downturn in international student enrolment in 2023–24 has been closely tied to the UK's shifting policy environment for international students. In January 2024, the country announced a ban on dependent visas for new international students (other than those enrolled in postgraduate research programs).

The UK has also tightened regulations regarding transition to a 'Graduate Work Visa', now mandating students to complete their study program before applying for a work visa.

Besides, the minimum financial requirements for international students have also been raised (from GBP 1,334 to GBP 1,529 per month for students in London and from GBP 1,023 to GBP 1,171 per month outside of London).

Further, in May 2025, the UK government released a 'Restoring control over the immigration system' white paper, with guidelines to further tighten regulations for foreign immigrant students. Some of the proposed policy changes laid out by the white paper include:

- ❖ Reduction in the validity of the Graduate visa from 2 years to 18 months.
- ❖ Increase in the Basic Compliance Assessment (BCA) pass thresholds for the UK's sponsor HEIs. This will ensure that the country's HEIs have a minimal visa refusal rate and high course enrolment and completion rates.
- ❖ Increase in English language requirements for the UK visa holders and dependents.

What the future holds for the UK's international student intake

Looking forward, the UK stands at a critical juncture. On one hand, it retains undeniable strengths: a globally respected higher education system, strong institutional brands and alumni network. The cultural appeal of studying in the UK, coupled with its shorter,

intensive Master's programs, continues to resonate with career-focused international students. Besides, with the USA stiffening its stance on immigration, visa policy and tariffs, the UK's relative international appeal rises.

Additionally, the recently signed India-UK free trade agreement is likely to improve career prospects for Indian students in the UK going forward, with provisions for streamlined visa procedures, exemptions from social security contributions for temporary workers for upto 3 years, and improved pathways to employment in high-demand sectors such as IT, finance, education, and professional services.

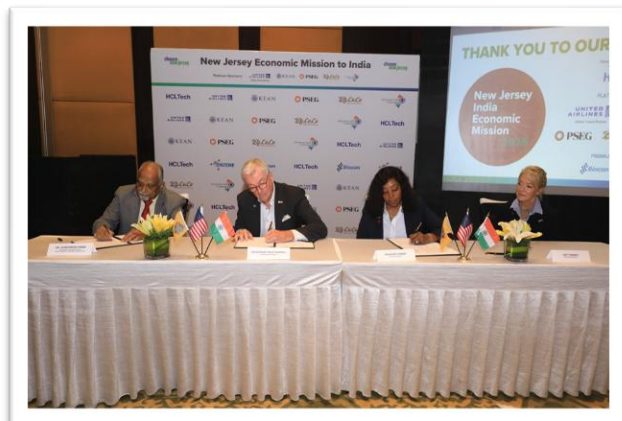
On the other hand, policy instability, restrictive immigration measures, and rising living costs erode the UK's competitiveness compared to Asian economies like Malaysia, Japan and South Korea, and other European countries like Germany, France, Italy and the Netherlands. These countries are being increasingly seen as offering strong academic value, more accessible immigration pathways, and lower tuition fees, making them competitive alternatives.

To maintain a quality influx of foreign students, the UK government will need to maintain its global competitiveness while maintaining a welcoming study and work environment for immigrants.



NEWS IN FOCUS

New Jersey Strengthens Academic Partnerships in India



T&A Consulting, representing the New Jersey India Center, played a key role in advancing international education collaboration during the Governor-Led Economic Mission and Delegation Visit to India in September 2025.

As part of this mission, nine Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) were signed between New Jersey's leading universities and prominent Indian higher education and innovation institutions, reflecting a shared commitment to research, innovation, and talent development.

The agreements, signed across Delhi, Bengaluru, and Mumbai, mark a significant milestone in fostering academic and innovation-driven ties between India and New Jersey.

1. In Delhi, Montclair State University and the Association of Indian Universities (AIU) signed an MoU through which Montclair will host a delegation of Indian universities in 2026 to explore collaborative academic opportunities.
2. In Bengaluru, multiple partnerships were forged:
 - Rowan University and the Bangalore BioInnovation Center will explore a collaborative framework to support innovation-driven start-ups across AgTech, FoodTech, MedTech, and health and wellness sectors.
 - Rutgers University entered into three separate MoUs with the Sri Sathya Sai



Institute of Higher Learning and the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences to advance cardiac research collaboration.

- The New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) signed MoUs with Dayananda Sagar University, Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), and Vignana Jyothi Institute of Management (VJIM) to promote academic exchange, cultural cooperation, and student mobility, including an accelerated pathway for VJIM students to pursue MBA or MSM degrees at NJIT.
3. In Mumbai, Montclair State University formalized its partnership with Somaiya Vidyavihar University, focusing on academic and cultural collaboration, including the launch of a certificate program in adult and elderly care designed to prepare students for the NCLEX examination.

These MoUs reflect New Jersey's growing engagement with India's higher education ecosystem, creating new pathways for joint research, student exchange, and innovation-led collaboration between the two regions.

As the official representative of the New Jersey India Center, T&A Consulting continues to play a pivotal role in facilitating such international partnerships, fostering meaningful collaborations that strengthen educational and innovation linkages between India and New Jersey.

NEWS AND UPDATES

University of Southampton inaugurates offshore campus in India



The UK's University of Southampton officially inaugurated its India campus in July 2025. Located in Gurugram, it is India's first foreign university campus set up under the UGC (Setting up and Operation of Campuses of Foreign Higher Educational Institutions in India) Regulations, 2023. The university aims to have a yearly intake of ~5,000 Indian students by 2035.

The new campus initially offers undergraduate and postgraduate degree programs in business management, accounting & finance, computer science, economics, international management, and finance. The university will also offer internships and placement schemes to students, leveraging its connections with prominent Indian corporate firms, including Deloitte India, Comviva, and Investec.

New Zealand eases regulations to boost foreign student enrolment

The New Zealand government has announced plans to ease in-country work restrictions for international students. The move is aimed towards the government's broader strategy to increase international student enrolments from 83,700 in 2024 to 119,000 by 2034.

Starting November 2025, the government will increase the permitted work hours for eligible study visa holders from 20 to 25 hours per week. Besides, the government will also extend in-study work rights to all tertiary students enrolled in approved exchange or study abroad programs (including those on one-semester courses). The new rules on work hours will apply only to students who have been granted a visa from November 3, 2025, onwards.

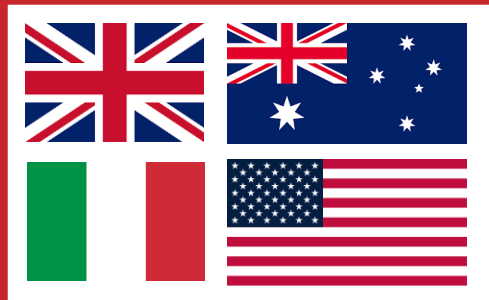
NVIDIA to set up AI university in India

California-based technology company NVIDIA, in collaboration with the Government of Andhra Pradesh, is planning to set up an AI university in the state. Apart from this, the company has committed to offering 500+ AI startups in the state access to NVIDIA's Inception Programme for startups. The programme provides startups access to advanced technology, marketing support, and opportunities to connect with NVIDIA experts.

USA suspends international student entry at Harvard

The US government has announced a six-month suspension on the entry of international students intending to study or participate in exchange programs at Harvard University. The announcement comes amid an overall uncertain policy environment in the country, including widespread visa revocations and a travel ban on 12 countries.

UGC issues LoI to foreign universities to set up campus in India



The UGC has recently issued letters of intent (LOIs) to various foreign HEIs to set up branch campuses in Indian.

Six universities—including the University of Bristol (UK), University of York (UK), University of Aberdeen (UK), University of Western Australia, Illinois Institute of Technology (USA), and IED Istituto Europeo di Design (Italy)—have received LoIs to open campuses in Mumbai

with the University of Western Australia also planning a campus in Chennai. Apart from these, the UGC has also issued LoIs to Australia's La Trobe University, Victoria University, and the Western Sydney University to set up branch campuses in India. The universities are considering new campuses in Bengaluru, Noida, and Greater Noida, respectively.

Kazakhstan to set up 7 international university branches

Kazakhstan is set to welcome seven new international university branches in 2025–2026. Astana will host campuses of Russia's Moscow State Institute of International Relations, and the UK's Cardiff and Coventry Universities, while Shymkent will see a branch of Turkey's Gazi University. Turkistan, Almaty, Taldykorgan, and Kostanai will host branches of South Korea's Woosong University and Dong Eui University, Germany's Anhalt University, and Italy's Politecnica delle Marche, respectively.

Currently, Kazakhstan hosts 23 branches from leading universities across China, France, Italy, Russia, South Korea, the UK, and the USA. The country is increasingly attracting Indian students seeking affordable, high-quality medical education, offering English-taught programs and globally recognized MBBS degrees.

Dubai set to host 3 foreign university branches

Between August 2025 and July 2026, three international higher education institutions will

establish branch campuses in Dubai: India's Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Ahmedabad, Lebanon's American University of Beirut, and Saudi Arabia's Fakeeh College for Medical Sciences.

Currently, Dubai hosts 41 international higher education providers, including 37 branch campuses, featuring globally renowned institutions such as the University of Manchester, University of Birmingham, London Business School, and ESCP Business School.

Delhi Technological University partners with University of Houston for academic collaboration

The Delhi Technological University (DTU) has formalized a 5-year partnership with the USA's University of Houston to promote academic collaboration. The partnership will include faculty exchange programs, joint research initiatives, dual degree programs, and access to paid internships.

DTU has partnerships with various HEIs, including the Illinois Institute of Technology, La Trobe University, and Nanjing University of Aeronautics & Astronautics in China.

EVENT IN FOCUS

Connecting Talent and Opportunity: T&A Consulting's Finland Visit under the Talent Boost Programme



In late August, T&A Consulting's Talent Boost team visited Finland for a week-long engagement aimed at strengthening partnerships in talent attraction and higher education. The visit formed part of T&A's ongoing work under Finland's Talent Boost programme, focused on building bridges between Finnish opportunities and Indian talent.

Across Helsinki, Tampere, Vaasa, and Oulu, the team participated in a series of Talent Boost events that brought together universities, regional development agencies, innovation clusters, and employers. These engagements offered valuable insights into Finland's coordinated efforts to attract international students and professionals, as well as its growing focus on linking education with labour market needs.

In addition to participating in these events, the team also met with leading Finnish universities — including Aalto University, University of Helsinki, Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences, Tampere University, University of Vaasa, University of Oulu and Lapland University of Applied Sciences.

Discussions centred on fostering joint research, student and faculty exchanges, and building structured pathways for Indian students and skilled professionals



seeking study and career opportunities in Finland.

The visit highlighted a significant shift in how Indian students increasingly prioritise employability and post-study career options when choosing destinations abroad.

Finland, with its innovation-driven economy, strong focus on practical learning, and growing demand for international talent, is emerging as a promising market for Indian students. Finnish institutions are keen to enhance visibility in India and showcase their strengths in technology, sustainability, and applied sciences — areas that align closely with India's evolving academic and employment aspirations.

The visit reaffirmed T&A Consulting's commitment to advancing the Talent Boost initiative in India, helping Finnish institutions and employers connect with India's skilled talent pool and fostering deeper collaboration in education, research, and innovation.



T&A EVENTS AND INITIATIVES

Finland Pathways: Stories, Mentors and Success



The Finland-India Alumni Committee, in collaboration with Business Finland and T&A Consulting, hosted “Finland Pathways: Stories, Mentors and Success” – an inspiring evening that celebrated the growing Finland-India education and talent ecosystem.

The event brought together Finnish alumni, aspiring students, industry experts, and professionals who shared a common connection with Finland.

The session featured engaging discussions and personal stories from alumni who have studied and worked in Finland, offering valuable perspectives on Finnish education, academic culture, and professional growth.

A key highlight of the evening was the launch of the Finland-India Mentor-Mentee Programme,

a first-of-its-kind initiative designed to foster long-term guidance and collaboration between alumni and aspiring students and professionals.

Through this initiative, participants will gain access to one-on-one mentorship, practical insights, and a supportive network to help them navigate their academic and career pathways in Finland.

The programme aims to strengthen the Finland-India ecosystem by encouraging cultural exchange, career development, and deeper engagement between both countries.

T&A Consulting is proud to support this initiative as part of its broader efforts to connect global talent with meaningful opportunities through the Talent Boost framework.

Business Finland Talent Boost: Advancing Alumni Networks and Recruitment Partnerships



T&A Consulting recently supported two significant initiatives under the Business Finland Talent Boost Program—the Finland–India Alumni Committee meeting and a focused interaction with recruitment partners.

Both engagements reinforced the growing collaboration between India and Finland in the fields of higher education, talent mobility, and professional development, reflecting a shared commitment to building sustainable knowledge and innovation linkages.

The Finland–India Alumni Committee meeting served as a dynamic platform for reconnecting active alumni who continue to contribute meaningfully to India's education and industry ecosystem after completing their academic journeys in Finland.

Discussions centered on developing structured engagement models for alumni chapters across Indian cities, with the aim of creating stronger local networks and amplifying Finland's visibility as a global study and work destination.

The deliberations also explored avenues for alumni to play an active role in mentoring prospective students, supporting returning professionals, and facilitating partnerships between Indian institutions and Finnish universities.

The evening was further enriched by the presence of H.E. Mr. Kimmo Lähdevirta, Ambassador of Finland to India, whose address offered valuable insights into Finland's strategic

approach towards talent collaboration and education diplomacy. His participation underscored the role of alumni as key connectors between both nations, fostering cultural understanding and long-term professional relationships.

The recruitment partner interaction brought together organizations and representatives who had recently participated in delegation visits to Finland. The session provided a forum to exchange first-hand experiences, discuss emerging industry trends, and reflect on opportunities created through interactions with Finnish companies and talent stakeholders.

Participants emphasized the need for continued dialogue on enhancing employability pathways, strengthening institutional partnerships, and building sector-specific talent pipelines in areas such as technology, healthcare, and clean energy.

Both engagements collectively advanced the objectives of the Talent Boost Program—bridging talent ecosystems, promoting mutual learning, and fostering sustained partnerships between India and Finland. They also reaffirmed Finland's growing appeal as a destination for high-quality education, meaningful careers, and long-term collaboration.

T&A Consulting remains committed to facilitating such impactful initiatives that drive international cooperation and help connect global education and talent networks.

All India Convention for Career Counsellors



On August 23, 2025, T&A Consulting participated in the All India Convention for Career Counsellors (AICCC), organized by the Association of Professional Career Counsellors of India (APCCI), representing Queen's University Belfast's India initiative—the Queen's University GIFT City Campus.

This first-of-its-kind summit brought together career counsellors, education consultants, and education partners from across India.

The summit featured focused sessions on:

- The need for a mindset shift in higher education and the increasing importance of research-driven learning.
- Leveraging AI as a partner to scale impact and maintain consistency in education
- Global education finding deeper roots in India, while Study in India gains

momentum.

- Ensuring equal access to guidance for all students, irrespective of background.
- Transitioning from traditional competitive exams to globally recognized assessments: a transformative opportunity for students.

As part of this platform, T&A Consulting introduced Queen's University Belfast's upcoming GIFT City Campus, which counsellors warmly received as a landmark step for international education in India.

The event generated significant enthusiasm, with counsellors expressing a strong intent to explore collaborations, gain deeper insights into the specialized 1-year MSc programmes, and engage with the QUB GIFT City Campus firsthand. Many participants expressed their interest in visiting the campus to establish meaningful partnerships.

IDP Panel Discussion on Employability in the UK



In July 2025, T&A Consulting represented Queen's University Belfast (QUB) at a panel discussion on **'Employability in the UK'**. The event was hosted by IDP Education, alongside King's College London and the University of York.

The event witnessed participation from prospective undergraduate and postgraduate students, along with their families, who were seeking deeper insights into career pathways, employability prospects, and the value of a UK degree in today's competitive job market.

The team directly engaged with attendees and delivered an impactful session on comprehensive career support services offered at QUB, strategies for approaching the UK job market, and the importance of building strong soft skills in addition to academic knowledge.

The session also provided an opportunity to highlight key differences between the employment landscapes in the UK and India, offering students practical insights as they

prepare for their academic and professional journeys.

Some of the key insights that came out of the discussion include:

- Students are increasingly focused on return on investment (ROI) when choosing higher education options.
- Industry expectations are evolving due to rapid technological advancement and the automation of business processes.
- Universities in the UK are adapting academic offerings and integrating AI modules in most programs to align with current and future industry needs.

Through this engagement, QUB affirmed its commitment to supporting students through academic excellence and by preparing them for meaningful careers in a rapidly changing global employment landscape.

Queen's University Belfast: Strengthening Engagement with Offer Holder & Pre-Departure Sessions Across India



During May–August 2025, the South Asia team at Queen's University Belfast (QUB) delivered a series of impactful initiatives to engage with offer holders, prospective students, and their families across key Indian cities. These efforts were aimed at providing timely guidance and supporting students throughout their admissions journey with QUB.

Offer Holder Sessions: The team hosted 7 dedicated offer holder sessions, enabling students to interact directly with university representatives, clarify queries, and receive personalized guidance.

On-Spot Offer Events: A series of on-spot offer engagements allowed eligible applicants to secure instant admission decisions, reducing waiting times and providing greater clarity on

their next steps.

Pre-Departure Sessions: The team conducted nine sessions to help students prepare for their transition to Belfast, offering valuable insights into student life, travel, and academic readiness.

In addition to these focused interactions, the team participated in 45 agent fairs to reinforce partnerships with education consultants and 36 school events to connect directly with undergraduate aspirants.

Through these extensive outreach efforts, QUB significantly enhanced its visibility and built meaningful connections with students and partners across India.

Learn. Unlearn. Relearn – 21st Future L&D Summit & Awards



T&A Consulting, representing Aalto University Executive Education and Professional Development (Aalto EE), participated in the 21st Future L&D Summit & Awards, which brought together senior HR, learning, and talent development leaders to discuss the future of workplace learning in a rapidly evolving business environment.

The summit provided a platform for meaningful discussions on how organisations are redefining learning strategies in response to automation, digital transformation, and shifting workforce expectations. Industry leaders shared how the focus is moving from traditional classroom-based instruction to continuous learning ecosystems that combine AI-driven platforms, gamified experiences, and microlearning formats to make professional development more adaptive and engaging.

A recurring insight from the discussions was the increasing importance of reskilling and upskilling as business imperatives rather than optional initiatives. As organisations across sectors face widening skill gaps, the emphasis is shifting toward building a culture of lifelong learning that aligns employee growth with business transformation goals.

These insights strongly resonate with Aalto EE's approach to executive education, which blends academic rigour with real-world relevance. Through its collaboration with Aalto EE, T&A Consulting continues to bring customised leadership and management development programmes to India empowering organisations to future-proof their talent, strengthen leadership pipelines, and build learning cultures capable of thriving amid change.

Expanding Outreach: University of Derby Strengthens Student Engagement in South Asia



Between July and October 2025, the South Asia team of the University of Derby undertook a series of strategic initiatives to enhance institutional visibility and support student recruitment across the region. The focus during this period was on counselling prospective students for upcoming intakes and raising awareness of the university's academic offerings.

The team organized and participated in 10 virtual and 32 in-person events across India, Nepal, and Bangladesh. These included both agent-led and school-based interactions, primarily designed to provide one-on-one counselling for prospective undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Engagement with offer holders was a central element, helping them navigate the final stages of their decision-making by providing insights into the University of Derby's academic environment, student support services, and campus experience.

A key highlight was participation in the British Council School Events in Mumbai and Ahmedabad, where the university was prominently represented.

In parallel, several training sessions—conducted virtually and in person—were delivered to the university's agent network. These sessions addressed common queries and ensured that partners were equipped with accurate, up-to-date information to effectively support prospective students.

Across all activities, ~550 students and their families engaged directly with the University of Derby, gaining valuable insights into academic programs, admissions processes, and student life. These interactions played an important role in expanding outreach to a broader and more diverse student base across South Asia.

ABOUT T&A CONSULTING

India and South Asia Education Representation Services



T&A Consulting (hereinafter referred to as T&A) is a global consulting practice to Government economic development agencies, businesses and academic institutions across North America, Latin America, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. We offer an in-house portfolio of end-to-end services across the trade and investment spectrum.

Our team of over 60 full-time professionals, primarily based in our Global HQ in Gurugram near New Delhi, which is also the lead team for Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, is complemented by offices in Canada, covering the Americas, and representatives in the UK and Dubai.

For entry into South Asia only, T&A Consulting has advised multiple foreign governments and their Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) on the opportunities for growth arising from student mobility and, more latterly, partnerships, especially in India, following the introduction of the New Education Policy.

We represent a number of universities, overseeing and managing their relationships with agents and schools, attending multiple recruitment events and offering ongoing guidance to their international teams and academics on government policy, course design and emerging higher education trends.

We believe in the adage that the pursuit of higher education is a journey and not a destination. While we help the students begin their journey with all the needed preparations, we also ensure that the destination at our client's end is well served with all the necessary back-end support.

As we continue to expand our international network and expertise, T&A's position as a respected strategic advisory and consulting firm has enabled us to continue our original guiding principle for success – **WE GO BEYOND** – our clients' expectations.

HOW CAN WE HELP?



- Act as an on-ground local representative, promoting international universities to enhance their brand visibility and reach in India through strategic engagement initiatives.
- Develop innovative and targeted marketing strategies along with promotional campaigns to increase awareness and visibility of the represented universities among prospective students, parents, and educational institutions.
- Conduct in-depth market research and analysis to identify and prioritize target regions, institutions, and opportunities across India.
- Prepare and present detailed industry insights through country reports, market analysis, and industry deep-dives to provide actionable intelligence to partner universities.
- Guide students through the entire application process, offering personalized counselling to help them make informed academic and career decisions aligned with their aspirations.
- Offer comprehensive pre-departure support, including orientation sessions for offer holders, ensuring a smooth transition to the represented universities.
- Collaborate closely with universities to optimize and streamline the admissions process, ensuring a seamless experience for Indian students.
- Build, nurture, and sustain robust relationships with Indian educational institutions, government bodies, and other stakeholders to create long-term collaboration opportunities.
- Keep partner universities updated on evolving market trends, competitor strategies, and changes in Indian education policies, offering valuable insights to refine their approaches.

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