



**Cónaidhm Éireannach na Múinteoirí Ollscoile  
Irish Federation of University Teachers**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**SUNDAY, 22 NOVEMBER 2009**

**IFUT reacts to HEA statement on overseas students**

The announcement by the HEA that there are now students from 139 countries studying here only serves to illustrate the diversity of educational, social and cultural challenges faced by third-level institutions and staff in assisting these students to adapt and gain from their time here, Mike Jennings, General Secretary of the Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT), has said.

“It is immensely frustrating that neither the HEA nor the Minister for Education seem to have any idea of the extra time and commitment needed from higher education staff to try to assist overseas students and to ensure they get the full benefit from their time in Ireland.

“Some higher education colleges cynically view overseas students as a mere cash cow source of income, without due regard to the needs of these students. The HEA's breathless PR seems closer to that of a schoolboy listing off his 139-country stamp collection than a description of real people with real and different needs.

“The fact that Irish universities, with 50% pro-rata funding compared to their counterparts in the UK, can attract such a number and diversity of overseas students is remarkable. However, the question must be asked: ‘How are these fully fee paying students not to be short-changed by a higher education system starved of funds, staff and resources?’”, Mike Jennings said.

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