



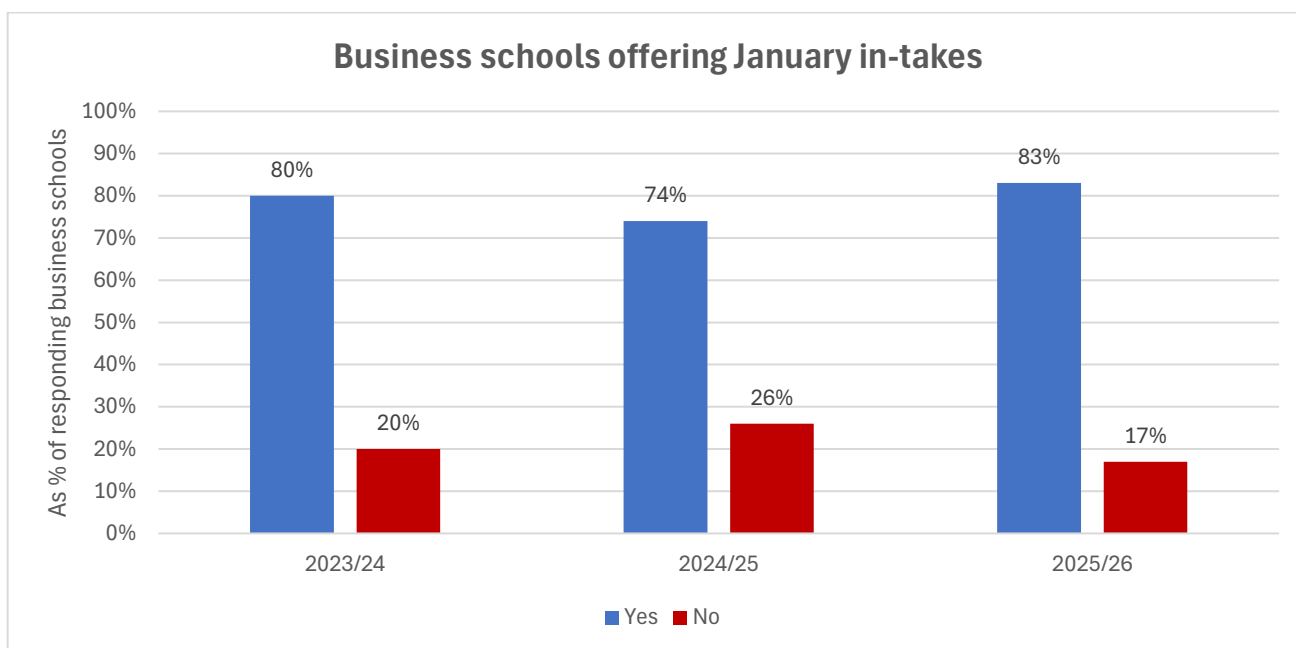
## **PULSE SURVEY: INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ENROLMENTS IN JANUARY 2026**

Chartered Association of Business Schools  
April 2026

## INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of our third consecutive annual survey on enrolments of international students on programmes with January in-takes. This is part of our on-going monitoring of the impact of the evolving policy environment on international student recruitment. This year's survey received responses from 36 Chartered ABS member schools.

## BUSINESS SCHOOLS OFFERING PROGRAMMES WITH A JANUARY IN-TAKE



**Figure 1:** Proportion of responding business schools offering January in-take programmes between 2023/24 to 2025/26

- Courses with a January start were offered by 83% of the responding business schools in 2025/26. This is an increase on the 74% recorded last year but year-on-year comparisons should be made cautiously given that the schools who complete this survey are not identical each year.
- In the written comments one respondent noted that their school had only offered courses with January in-takes during the pandemic and had since stopped offering them.

### Proportion of business schools offering January in-take programmes for the first time in 2025/26

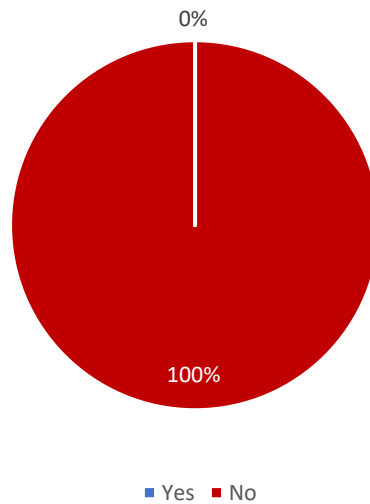


Figure 2: Proportion of business schools reporting they offered January in-takes for the first time in 2025/26

- The results in figure 2 show that none of the schools who offered January in-takes were doing so for the first time in 2026.
- January in-takes would appear to be a long established offer for many business schools. This is substantiated by the results to this survey in 2024 and 2025, when only 3% and 8% of the schools, respectively, said they were offering January in-takes for the first time.

### BUSINESS SCHOOLS WITHDRAWING COURSES FOR JANUARY IN-TAKE

#### Proportion of business schools withdrawing courses for January start

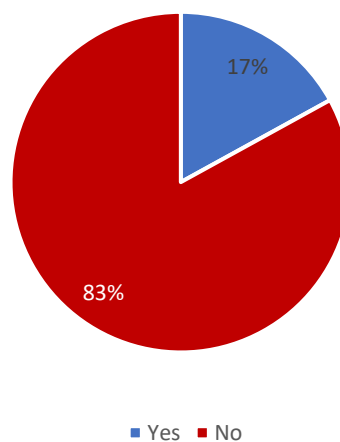


Figure 3: Proportion of schools withdrawing courses for January in-take in 2025/26

- 83% of the schools offering January in-takes had not withdrawn any courses for start in January 2026, which is virtually unchanged to the 84% who reported this last year.
- Of the 17% which had withdrawn some courses, these were mostly MSc programmes with those relating to Marketing, including Digital Marketing, being withdrawn most frequently.
- Other MSc programmes withdrawn were Finance, International Tourism and Hospitality, and Urban Planning. One school reported withdrawing a range of PhD programmes, covering Informatics, Management, and Marketing.

### LEVEL OF STUDY FOR JANUARY 2026 IN-TAKE PROGRAMMES

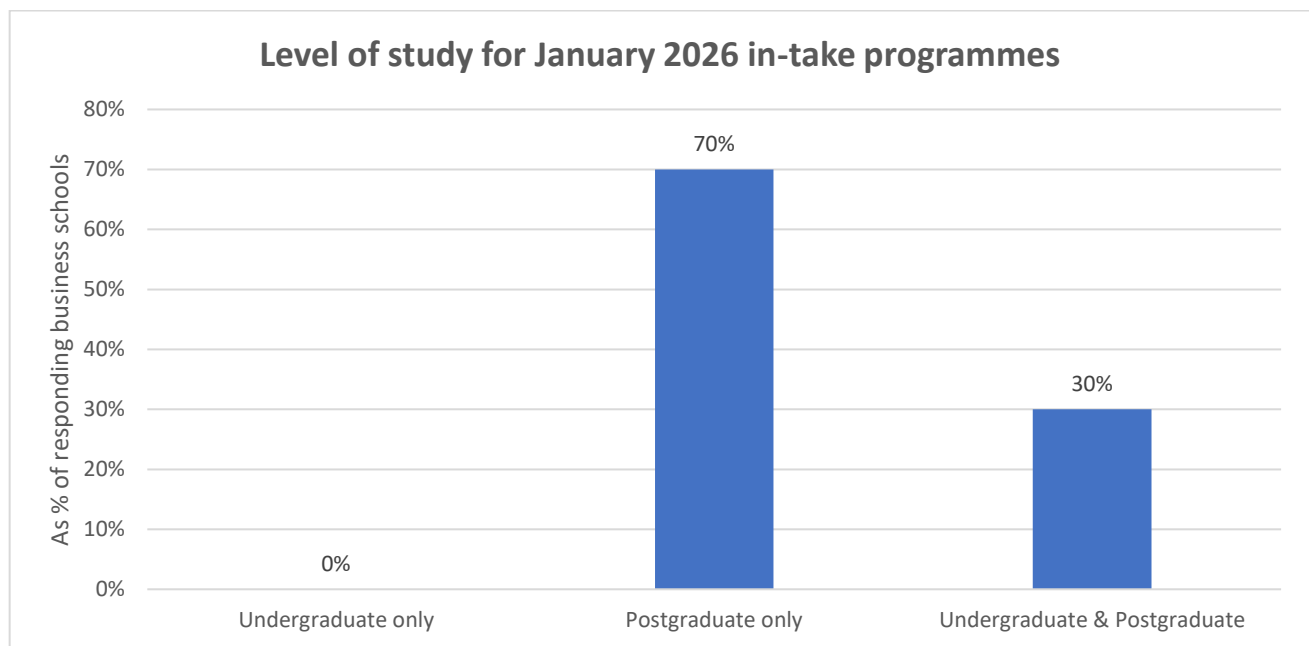


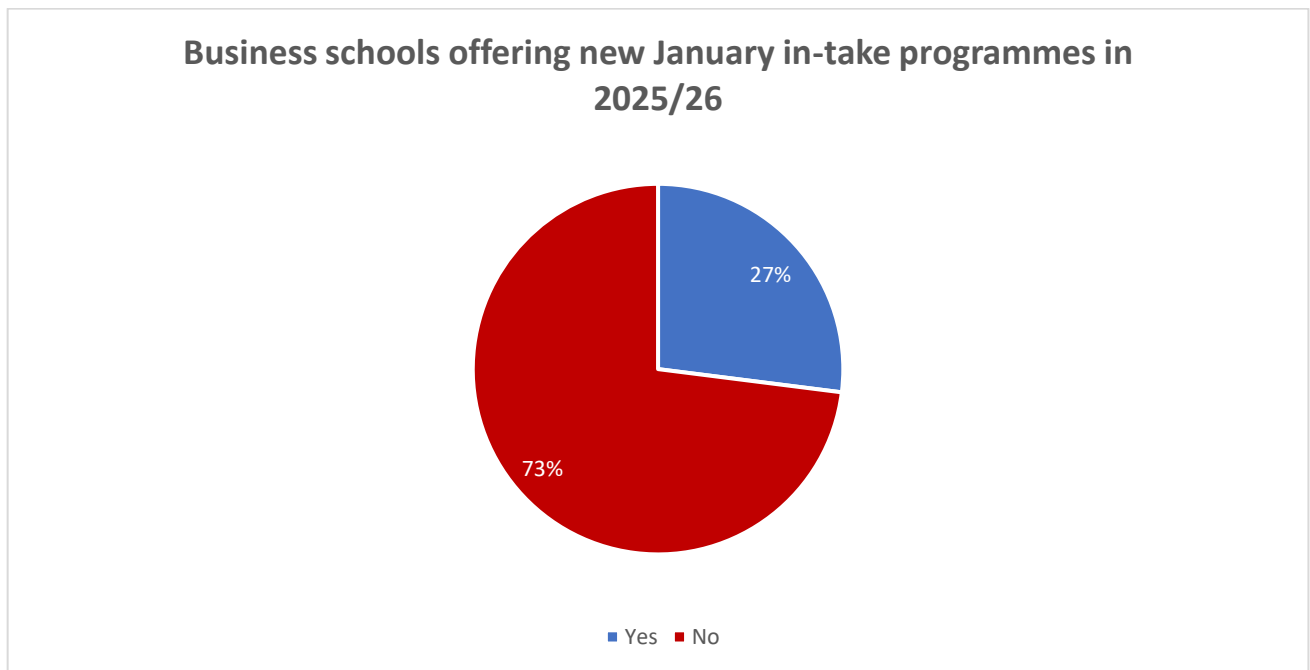
Figure 4: Level of study available for January 2026 in-takes

- Of the schools who said they offered January in-takes in 2026, the most common approach was for the in-takes to be at postgraduate level only (70%), with the remainder offering them for both undergraduate and postgraduate courses.
- As with responses to this survey in previous years, it is unusual for schools to offer January in-takes solely at undergraduate level and this year none of the respondents reported this approach. A difference from the 2025 survey is that last year a higher proportion of the schools reported offering January in-takes at both undergraduate and postgraduate level (42%).
- The responding schools provided details on the courses which were available for start in January 2026. A list of the distinct subjects covered is provided in the table below. Based on the information received, the most common undergraduate courses offered for start in January 2026 are related to Accounting, Business & Management, and International Business.
- At postgraduate level, MSc courses in Accounting & Finance, Finance, International Business, Management, and Marketing were most frequently a part of the responding schools' offer for January 2026. Several schools also offered DBA and MBA courses and PhD programmes focused on a variety of specialisms.

Table 1. List of subject disciplines offered by business schools in courses for January 2026 in-takes

Undergraduate	Postgraduate
Accounting & Finance Accounting & Management Business & Management Business Technology Events Management Financial Technology International Business Management International Hospitality Management Project Management	Accounting & Finance Banking & Finance Business & Management Business Analytics Coaching DBA Digital Marketing Economics Entrepreneurship Events Management Finance Finance & Management Fintech Management Global Investment Management HRM Innovation Management International Business International Tourism Investment Management Leadership & Strategy Management Market Research Marketing Marketing Management MBA Project Management Real Estate Sport Business Strategic Accounting Strategic Leadership Supply Chain Management Sustainable Business Management

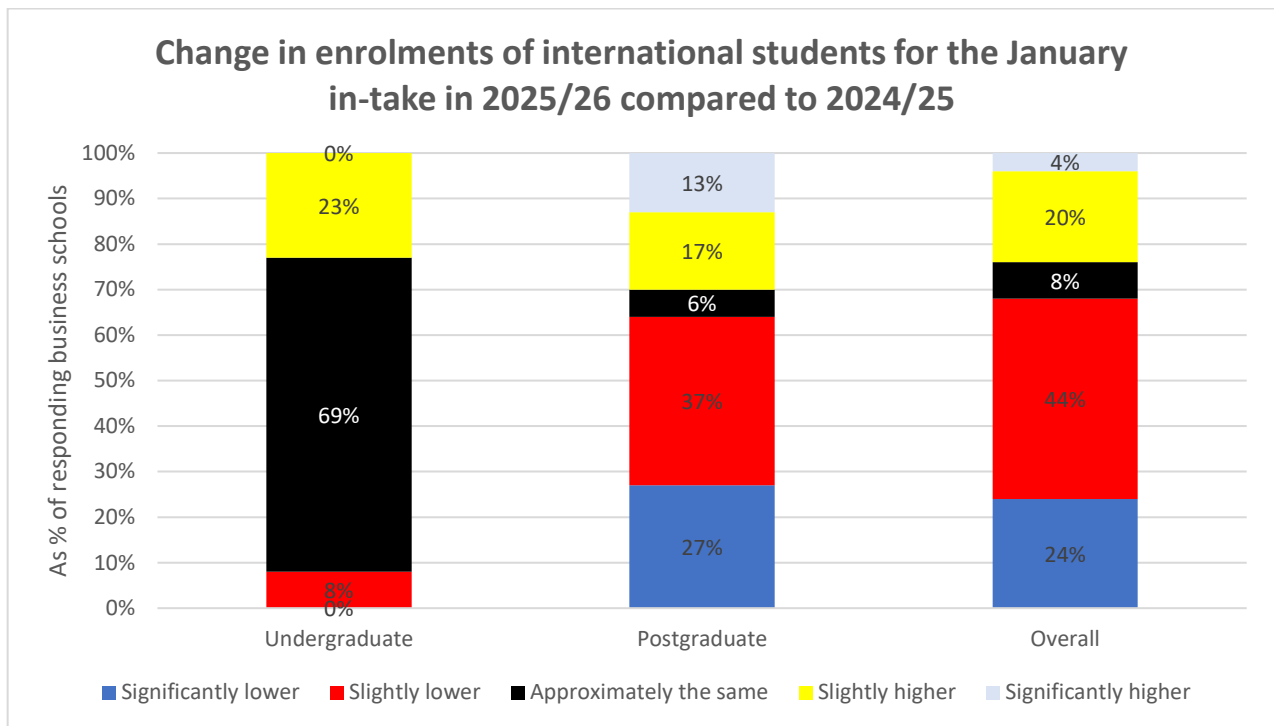
## NEW JANUARY IN-TAKES FOR BUSINESS SCHOOLS



**Figure 5:** Proportion of business schools offering new January in-take programmes in 2025/26

- Nearly three-quarters of the business schools who completed the survey did not offer any new programmes with in-takes in January 2026. This result is unchanged from last year.
- From the additional comments to this question, courses being offered by schools for January start for the first time were largely MSc programmes, covering Business Analytics, Finance & Management, Management, Sport Management, and Supply Chain Management.

## CHANGE IN ENROLMENTS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FOR THE JANUARY IN-TAKE IN 2026 COMPARED TO 2025

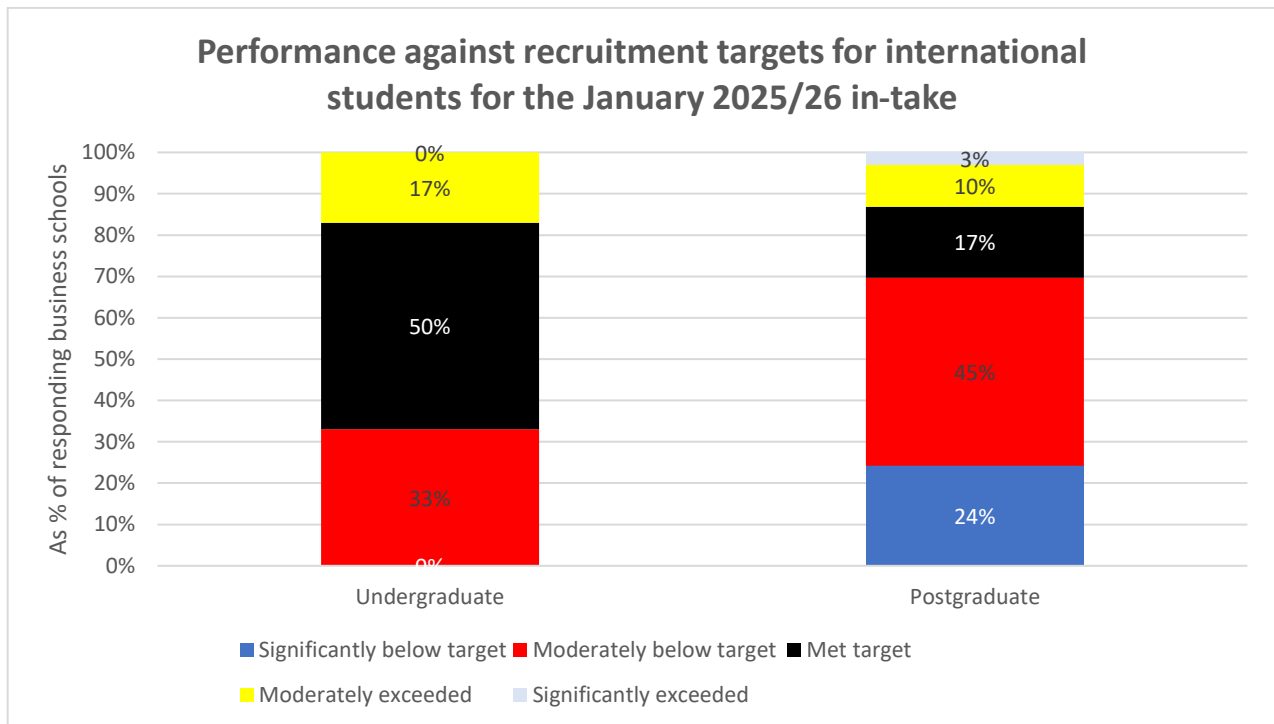


**Figure 6:** Year-on-year change in enrolments of new students for the January in-take (2025/26 compared to 2024/25)

- For courses starting in January 2026, enrolments of international undergraduates were approximately unchanged compared to January 2025 for 69% of the responding schools, and were slightly higher for 23%. This highlights more stability compared to January 2025, when only one-quarter saw unchanged international undergraduate enrolments and the remainder were split evenly between schools who saw either lower or higher enrolments.
- The situation is once again much more challenging for enrolments of international postgraduates, which were lower compared to January 2025 for nearly two-thirds of schools, of which they were significantly lower for 27%. On a more positive note, 30% recorded higher enrolments.
- The trend for postgraduate enrolments is largely unchanged from last year's survey, with the only difference being that slightly more schools reported higher enrolments this year but these remain a minority.
- The overall results for enrolments at both levels of study show a decline for 68% of the responding schools compared to January 2025, of which the declines were significant for one-quarter. However, one-quarter recorded higher enrolments compared to a year ago but these were only slightly higher in most cases.
- Compared to the results for last year's survey, there is a 10% increase in the proportion of schools who saw a fall in overall international enrolments and an 8% decrease in those reporting that enrolments were higher.

- The overall decline in enrolments for January 2026 start reflects the deteriorating environment for the recruitment of international postgraduates which typically comprise the majority of international students at most business schools.

## PERFORMANCE AGAINST RECRUITMENT TARGETS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FOR THE JANUARY 2026 IN-TAKE



**Figure 7:** Performance against international student recruitment targets for courses starting in January 2026

- One-third of the schools fell short of target for the recruitment of international undergraduates for courses starting in January 2026, all of which were moderately below target. For the remainder, 50% met target and 17% moderately exceeded. These results are somewhat improved compared to the survey for January 2025 when 55% fell short of target for international undergraduates.
- For recruitment of international postgraduates, the results are virtually unchanged from last year, with 69% of schools being below target, of which 24% were significantly below, and 13% exceeding target. The overall picture is consistent with the continued difficulties in recruitment for international postgraduates.

## IMPACTS ON ENROLMENTS AS A RESULT OF THE BAN ON DEPENDENTS' VISAS

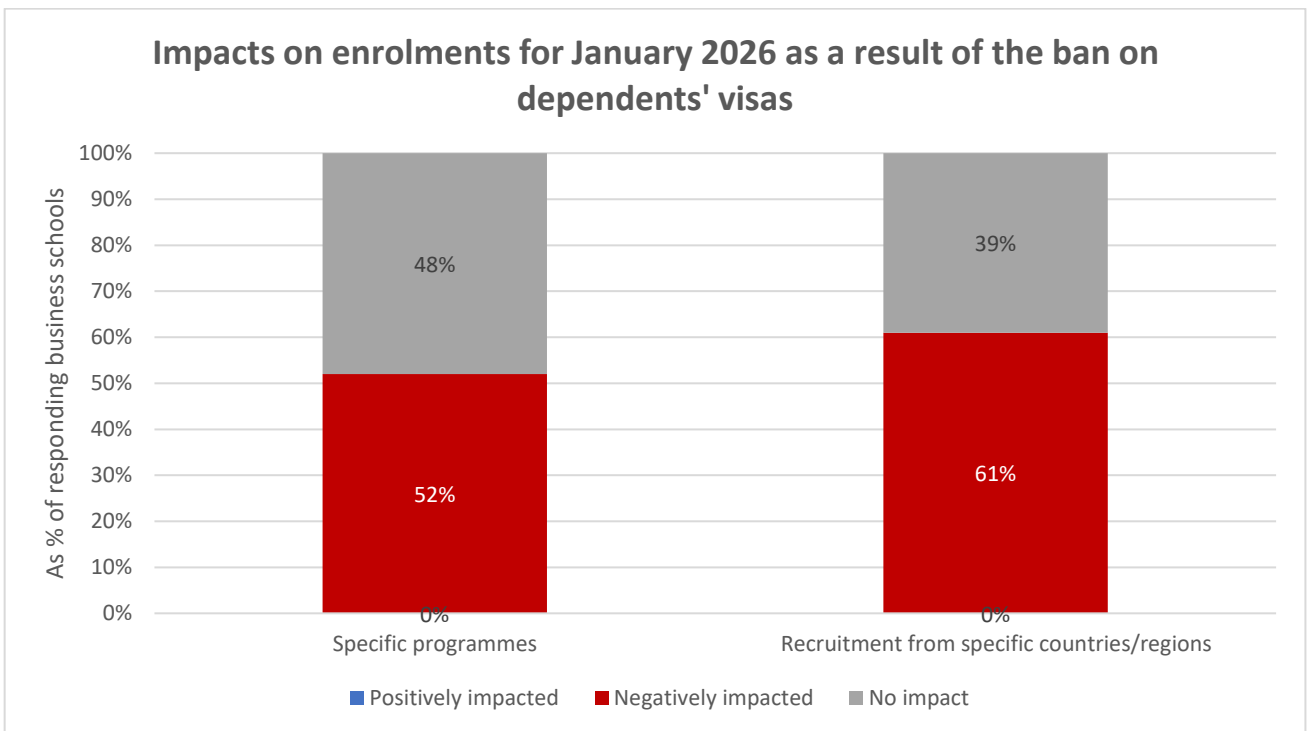


Figure 8: Impacts on enrolments of international students in January 2026 as a result of the ban on dependents' visas

- A majority of the schools continue to report that the ban on dependents' visas has continued to negatively impact their recruitment for specific programmes and from specific countries/regions for courses starting in January, although the proportions of schools experiencing this are significantly lower than in the 2024 and 2025 editions of this survey.
- This year the proportions of schools reporting no impact in their recruitment for specific programmes and from specific countries/regions, was 48% and 39%, respectively, which is an increase from 23% and 16%, respectively, reporting no impact in the January 2025 survey. This may suggest that the worst effects of the dependents' visas ban have already occurred.
- In the written comments to this question, recruitment to MSc and MBA programmes was seen as having been most adversely impacted by the dependents' visas ban, although several respondents commented that all of their programmes had been adversely affected.
- Recruitment from the following countries was most frequently cited as being negatively impacted by the dependents' visas ban: Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan. The West Africa region, including Ghana, was also cited by several respondents as being negatively impacted.