### **Participant #2**

### **Academic and Career Factor**

**Researcher: What aspects of the UK/Asian education system are attracting you to pursue a master’s degree here?**

Interviewee: 读研究生的话，我可能比较倾向于去英国，因为他这个时间成本的话比较低，英国是一年制。我本科就是在英国读的，所以我已经习惯了这里的生活。我在这边再读一年坚持一下就可以了。亚洲这边，尤其是国内，我听说研究生导师对于研究生的压榨比较严重，让人觉得压抑。英国这边管得会稍微严格一些，稍微好一些，所以说我更倾向于在英国读研。

For postgraduate study, I may prefer to go to the UK, because the time cost is relatively low, and the UK only need one year to finish the study. I did my undergraduate studies in the UK, so I am used to the life here. I'll just stay here for another year and hang in there. In Asia, especially in China, I have heard that postgraduate tutors are more oppressive to graduate students, which makes people feel depressed. The British side will be slightly more strict, slightly better, so I prefer to study in the UK graduate school.

**Researcher: Do you believe that the academic achievement in the UK/Asia will influence your career destination, why?**

Interviewee: 首先我先说一下我的国家，近几年中国内卷比较严重，无论是国内还是国外读本科的学生在考研，要不然就是考公务员，尤其是我那个地区考公的非常多。所以说对于我来说，影响是有的，所有人都在申请研究生，如果我不读研的话，觉得自己好像少了什么。但是如果我没有研究生学历，以后我去找工作会发现其他应聘者最低都是研究生。我以后想做老师，我们当地的那些学校全部要求至少有研究生学历。

我的本科生并没有学我特别想学的专业，所以我现在申请的专业符合我自己的兴趣，也更有利于我就业。对我个人来说，读研能提升我的背景，能给我的这个履历上面增添一笔。

First of all, I would like to talk about my country, in recent years, China's internal examination is relatively serious, whether it is domestic or foreign undergraduate students in the examination of postgraduate, or civil servants, especially in my hometown. So for me, the impact is there, everyone is applying for graduate school, if I don't go to graduate school, I feel like I'm missing something. But if I don't have a master's degree, I will find that the other applicants are at least graduate students. I want to be a teacher in the future. The schools in my local area all require at least a master's degree.

My undergraduate students did not study the major I particularly want to study, so the major I apply for now is in line with my own interests and more conducive to my employment. For me personally, graduate school would enhance my background and add to my resume.

**Researcher ：Ok，do you think this master degree will boost the chance of getting a job?**

Interviewee：我们国家其实还是蛮认可留学的那个经历的，如果是本科研究生都在国外的话，别人会对我有一种滤镜。包括我去那个需要应聘时，HR可能会觉得我是一个更国际化，与世界接轨的一个人，可能会觉得我能给这个岗位带来多样性的视角。

我去查了我们当地的一些政策，比如在国外读研究生后，无论是我以后回国读博士，还是说选择直接工作，都很有帮助，假如以后我有机会能去大学工作，本科和硕士都在国外读的的优势就更大了。中国其实还是一个看重学历的国家，我们传统文化里分士农工商，读书人的地位是最高的。在招聘时有一个好的学历是一个很大的加分点。 就如果说连这个研究生学历都没有，可能有些公司简历看都不看就直接筛掉了，所以读研对于就业来说不仅提升了个人优势，也多了很多选择。

In fact, our country is still quite recognized the experience of studying abroad, if undergraduate students are abroad, others will have a kind of filter on me. When I apply for a job, HR may think that I am more international and in touch with the world, and may think that I can bring diverse perspectives to this position.

I have checked some local policies in our country. For example, after studying abroad for a master's degree, it is very helpful for me to either return to China for a PhD or choose to work directly. If I have the opportunity to work in a university in the future, it will be even more advantageous for me to study abroad for both my undergraduate and master's degrees. In fact, China is still a country that values academic qualifications. In our traditional culture, there are farmers and businessmen, and the status of scholars is the highest. Having a good degree is a big plus when hiring. If you don't even have this graduate degree, some companies may directly screen out their resumes without looking at them, so studying for graduate school not only improves personal advantages for employment, but also offers many choices.

### **Security Concern Factor**

**Researcher：Have you expereinced any safety issues when you were studying in the UK?**

Interviewee：我之前有碰到过，就是一群喝醉了的人，他们在市中心走着走着开始摔瓶子，我当时非常害怕，因为我一直跟在他们，后面我害怕他们喝醉一时兴起拿瓶子，伤害到路人，自从我大二搬出去住以后，这种事情我经常遇到。我觉得对于我的人身安全来说，碰到这种事我就快速离开，目前还没有真正损害到我的安全。他们没有主观伤害我的意图，但我会觉得有些害怕。

I had one before, a group of drunk people, and they were walking downtown and they started throwing bottles, and I was really scared because I was following them, and I was afraid that they would get drunk and grab bottles on a whim and hurt people, which I've seen a lot since I moved out sophomore year. I think for my personal safety, when it comes to this kind of thing, I leave quickly, and it hasn't really compromised my safety yet. They have no intention of subjectively hurting me, but I feel a little scared.

**Researcher：Do you believe this experience determine your final choice in postgraduate school?**

Interviewee：我觉得肯定会有影响，因为你不能说为了读研究生，你的命都不要了对不对，所以人身安全是最基本的最基本要考虑的问题。然后我其他的一些朋友，他们在伦敦，在曼彻斯特这些学校，同学他们都和我提到过人身安全问题。我觉得无论哪个地方都会有这种安全问题。我们杜伦这边算是比较安全，其他地区可能还有抢劫枪击之类的，我们这种情况都算比较轻的了。像我们周边城市纽卡斯尔。我知道曾经有人在社交媒体上说自己走夜路被小混混打了，这可能是因为有种族歧视，也可能就是无差别攻击。我觉得比较惊心动魄吧。如果说我真的收到了伦敦学校的offer，我还是会考虑的。但是假如说我有两个选择，其中一个学校更安全的话，我可能会选择更安全的那个。

I think it definitely has an impact, because you can't say you're going to die for graduate school, right, so personal safety is the most basic, the most basic thing to consider. And then some of my other friends, who went to school with me in London, in Manchester, they all talked to me about personal safety. I think there are security issues everywhere. We're a little safer here in Durham, but there's probably some robberies and shootings in other parts of the country, so we're on the lighter side. Like the city around us, Newcastle. I know people who have said on social media that they were beaten up by thugs while walking at night, and it could be because of racism or it could just be an indiscriminate attack. I think it's more thrilling. If I do receive an offer from a school in London, I will consider it. But if I had two choices and one school was safer, I would probably choose the safer one.

**Researcher：Are there any special safety concerns facilitate your choice to study in one place over another?**

Interviewee：我会去查一下这个地区周边的治安，如果说治安不好的话，我可能就会放弃这个学校，然后同时我在住宿方面会去选择一些更有保障的房子，比如说离学校比较近，稍微贵一点也没关系。然后我在大一住的是学校的宿舍，我碰到的安全问题就比较少，但是社会房源的话就没有这些保障了，遇到问题不能第一时间向安保求助，觉得如果真的有避免安全问题的话，可能你就得住在偏郊区的地方，那样也太不方便了。但其实也有利有弊，在市中心地区有更多抢劫事件，但遇到这种事也更容易呼救，在郊区就叫天天不应了。

I will check the public security around this area, if the public security is not good, I may give up this school, and at the same time, I will choose some more secure housing, for example, it is close to the school, but a little expensive is OK. Then I lived in the university dormitory in my freshman year, and I encountered fewer security problems, but the social housing does not have these guarantees, and you can not turn to the security for help at the first time when you encounter problems. If you really have to avoid security problems, you may have to live in a suburban place, which is too inconvenient. There are more robberies in downtown areas, but it's also easier to call for help than it is in the suburbs.

### **Financial Factor**

**Researcher：What do you think of the cost of education (e.g. tuition fees, rent and transportation) in the UK during your undergraduate years?**

Interviewee：就花费这一块儿来说，首先就是学费吗，然后再其次就是房租，我想离市中心近一点，所以说我就选择了三百多磅一周的房子，其实其他房源有更便宜的，我错过了和同学合租的机会，导致我只能租昂贵的学生公寓。所以我觉得生活开销挺大的。我自己不会做饭时候，每个月花的比较多，大二开始我其实有控制我自己消费，比如说限制自己一个月只能花多少，然后每天都做饭，减少订外卖的次数，大三的话，我点外卖的次数就更少了，觉得自己还是在省钱的。如果在国内的话会过得比现在好，都不用考虑买个东西要花多少钱。在英国，我会想着这个太贵了，这个没有折扣，点个外卖都心疼很久。还有包括这个机票啊，交通费用，我觉得也是很大的一部分。

虽然说丰俭由人，你可以天天外卖，坐飞机都坐公务舱，也可以节衣缩食选最便宜的机票来回转机，但必须承认的是再便宜也便宜不到哪去，英国消费水平太高了。

I want to be closer to the city center, so I chose a house that costs more than 300 pounds a week. In fact, other houses are cheaper. I missed the opportunity to share a room with my classmates, so I could only rent an expensive student apartment. So I think living expenses are pretty high. When I didn't know how to cook, I spent more money every month. In my sophomore year, I actually controlled my consumption, such as limiting how much I could spend in a month, and then cooking every day to reduce the number of take-out orders. In my junior year, I ordered take-out even less, thinking that I was still saving money. If I live in China, I will have a better life than now, and I don't have to think about how much things cost. In the UK, I would think that this is too expensive, there is no discount on this, and it would take a long time to order a takeaway. And including this ticket ah, transportation costs, I think is also a big part of it.

Although you can take out food every day, fly business class, you can also save money and choose the cheapest ticket to transfer but it must be admitted that no matter how cheap it is, the level of consumption in the UK is too high.

**Researcher：What are the financial aspect (transportation, rental issues, tuition fee and exchange rate) in your decision to pursue a master’s degree in the UK versus Asia?**

Interviewee：我在香港没什么竞争力，有很多大陆学生申请香港，我的成绩也不算出众。香港也和大陆差不多，学习节奏比较紧促。但我还是挺喜欢香港的，我转机时经常路过香港，有机会我想去看看。我同时申请了香港的大学，如果能拿到香港的offer，我会考虑，但是实话说，在香港生活也不便宜，而且香港最出名就是房租高，汇率也没有低到哪里去。

**Researcher：Does the potential return (successful rate of gaining the degree, job opportunity after graduation and whether the future salary can offset the cost of pursuing this degree)on investment from a UK master’s degree justify the higher costs for you? Why or why not?**

Interviewee：这个问题其实身边很多人都或多或少地和我提到过。我在考虑已经花了很多钱，一年花好几十万，我会问自己值不值得。以后回国就是个小职员，有没有必要花这么多钱。但是现实又很残酷，投简历时，你会发现本科生找到工作就是很难。我妈妈安慰我说这个产出比是不可以这么算，教育费用这个应该是父母他们来负责。可能长期来看，有些人能把学费赚回来，但是短期内的话，我觉得是不太可能。一个毕业生不可能突然就赚到几十万啊几百万呀，除非他去当明星了，或者说炒比特币了。

我觉得自己既然已经选择了就努力去完成，至于读研究生这个，我其实真的有点纠结，甚至我都跟我家人说，我拿到这个offer都不一定想去，太贵了。

In fact, many people around me have more or less mentioned this problem to me. I'm thinking about the amount of money I've spent, hundreds of thousands a year, and I'm asking myself if it's worth it. After returning home is a small staff, there is no need to spend so much money. But the cruel reality is that when you send your resume, you will find that it is very difficult for undergraduates to find jobs. My mother comforted me and said that the output ratio could not be calculated in this way, and the education cost should be taken care of by parents. Maybe in the long term, some people will be able to earn their tuition back, but in the short term, I don't think it's possible. A graduate can't suddenly make hundreds of thousands or millions of dollars unless he becomes a star or speculates in Bitcoin.

I think that since I have chosen it, I will work hard to complete it. As for postgraduate study, I am really a little confused. Even I told my family that I do not necessarily want to go after getting this offer, because it is too expensive.

### **Cultural and Social Factor**

**Researcher：Have you experienced any racism in the UK?**

Interviewee：非常多。我大一的时候没有遇到种族歧视啊，当时我住在学院，我身边的室友和宿舍工作人员对我都很友善。但我也在社交媒体上看到有下一届的学生在我大一的宿舍里遇到了很糟糕的室友，工作人员也不作为。

我大二搬到了市中心的学生公寓，虽说离我上课的地方近了，但我经常因为晚上下课遇到种族歧视。这种歧视不是肢体上的，也不一定有言语冲突，就是一些小细节上让你觉得被歧视了。有一次就是我在Tesco，有一个收银员他每次面对华人的时候他就非常不友好，结账的时候他会把我的买的东西，都放在离我们很远很远的地方让我们自己拿。但他面对白人顾客啊，他就帮他们装到袋子里。可能是我想多了，但他的态度差的很大很大。这种歧视很隐形，有时候会被忽视，但你不能说不存在。其实我觉得白人或多或少都有种族歧视，只是有些人装得很好。

A lot. I didn't experience racism when I was a freshman. I lived in college and my roommates and the dorm staff were very nice to me. But I also saw on social media that there were next year students in my freshman dorm who had terrible roommates and staff members who didn't act.

I moved downtown to a student housing complex my sophomore year, and even though it was closer to where I was taking classes, I often encountered racism after class at night. This kind of discrimination is not physical, nor does it have to be verbal conflict, but some small details make you feel discriminated against. Once, when I was in Tesco, there was a cashier who was very unfriendly to Chinese people every time. He would put all my purchases far away from us and let us pick them up by ourselves. But when he's with white customers, he puts them in bags. Maybe I'm overthinking it, but his attitude is really, really bad. This kind of discrimination is invisible and sometimes overlooked, but you can't say it doesn't exist. I actually think that white people are more or less racist, but some people pretend to be very good at it.

**Researcher：Are cultural or social factors in either the UK or Asia pushing you away from studying there?**

Interviewee：这个问题有点难，回答社会因素的话，我觉得是这两个地方都有吸引我的地方。职场环境而言，国外的职场环境可能好很多，因为国内人情世故比较多，你需要考虑很多人际关系，尤其我是山东人，我们的人情往来非常复杂。但如果只说学习和生活，我更希望在亚洲生活，无论是饮食，还是语言，还是说就是说和周围人的一些相处，都更简单一定。学习的话我还是觉得英国好一点，反正最后我也会回去。

This question is a bit difficult, to answer the social factor, I think both places have attracted me. In terms of the workplace environment, the foreign workplace environment may be much better, because there are more worldly people in China, you need to consider a lot of interpersonal relationships, especially I am from Shandong, our human relations are very complicated. However, if I only talk about study and life, I would prefer to live in Asia, whether it is food, language, or just getting along with some people around me, it is easier. I think it's better to study in England, and I'll go back eventually anyway.

**Researcher：Have you gained a sense of integration in the UK?**

Interviewee：我觉得第一点就是语言不通，第二就是你会发现身边的人和事儿，和你所认知的很不一样，例如LGBT文化。我经常能见到来自不同背景的人，学校是希望我们一起去沟通，跟外国人交朋友。真正两个人相处起来其实没有那么简单，我之前住宿舍，室友中有外国人，一开始的时候大家一起交流，但是没法深入成为朋友，因为有文化差异和沟通问题，我觉得有的时候因为语言，大家想表达的那个意思和真正的心里想说的可能会词不达意吧，出现一些偏差，

**Researcher：Does this affect your decision to stay?**

Interviewee：我自己个人的想法，我觉得这个影响不到我，我也没有心情考虑这个。大三事情多，生活费用又高，新的一年新的压力又来了。研究生要学的东西比本科学的东西更多，更头疼。我已经要思考很多事情了，研究生一年任务量很大，我能不能扛住这个压力，这些都是更重要的因素，相比之下融入感实在不算什么。

My own personal thoughts, I don't think it affects me, and I'm not in the mood to think about it. There are many things in the third year, the cost of living is high, and the new pressure comes again in the New Year. Graduate students have more to learn than undergraduate studies, more headaches. I already have to think about a lot of things. As a graduate student, there are a lot of tasks in one year, and whether I can bear the pressure is more important, compared with the sense of integration is nothing.

**Researcher：Are global events (e.g., political climate, pandemics) acting as push or pull factors in your decision? Why?**

目前为止没有。英国没有那么那么离谱，我知道了是特朗普上任之后，他的政策影响了很多美国留学生。但我申请的是香港跟英国，所以说对我的影响其实不大。但是我个人觉得，国家的政策改变可能会影响到我，比如说一个国家的文化就本来很平等，然后他突然倒退，比如说禁止堕胎这个事情，会给我那种负面的印象。我会觉得这个国家，我大老远去学习你换一个环境肯定是希望去一个比较平等的地方，这也是为什么有很多人移民去美国，但是如果他突然变成一个对那些移民的，还有就是对留学生的政策不好，那我肯定不去了。

疫情的话，我们国家的媒体也经常塑造国外的负面形象，其实我觉得东西方媒体在提起对方的防疫政策时都有所偏颇，可能没有那么严重的问题被放大了。还好现在疫情结束了，不然不说我自己的意愿与否，国家就施加很大压力让你无法出国，作出留学选择需要更大的决心，就好像你在人群中逆行。但是也有一部分人，会觉得国内当时管控太严格，例如上海有一段时间封城，一个繁华的国际大都市一下子强制封锁，大家一下子无法接受。所以当时很多上海人的移民欲望都更强烈了。

Not so far. The UK is not so far off. I know that after Trump took office, his policies have affected many American students. But I applied to Hong Kong and the UK, so it doesn't affect me very much. However, I personally think that changes in national policies may affect me. For example, a country's culture is already very equal, and then it suddenly regress, such as banning abortion, will give me a negative impression. I will feel that this country, I come all the way to study you change an environment must be hoping to go to a more equal place, which is why there are many people immigrating to the United States, but if it suddenly becomes a policy for those immigrants, as well as for international students is not good, then I will definitely not go.

When it comes to the epidemic, Chinese media often create a negative image of foreign countries. In fact, I think the eastern and Western media are biased when they mention each other's epidemic prevention policies, which may not be such a serious problem. Fortunately, the epidemic is over now, otherwise, regardless of my own will or not, the state will exert a lot of pressure to prevent you from going abroad, and making a choice to study abroad requires greater determination, as if you are retrograde in the crowd. However, some people would feel that the domestic control was too strict at that time, for example, Shanghai had a lockdown for a period of time, and a bustling international metropolis suddenly forced a lockdown, and everyone could not accept it. So at that time, many Shanghai people's desire to emigrate was stronger.