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I am writing to you in relation to Radio 4's broadcast of 'Foreign Bodies' transmitted on 3<sup>rd</sup> October at 5pm. I had been looking forward to tuning in because of the real value, both economically and culturally, that foreign students bring to the UK when they decide to study here. My constituency of Newcastle Central certainly benefits.

My interest turned to concern, however, when the presenter said that Chinese students of subjects like engineering were likely to find themselves isolated with other students from foreign countries where a degree in engineering had more value.

Is the BBC saying that engineering has more value in China than in the UK, even as we try to rebalance our economy in favour of manufacturing and engineering? Or that engineering is more important in China than in the UK? Or that it commands higher salaries there than here?

I think the BBC was actually trying to say that engineering is less *valued* in the UK than in other countries, particularly, I would suggest, by media organisations such as the BBC. Engineering has always been valued in the North of England. Could I have some reassurance that such sloppy journalism will be avoided in future?

I worked as an Engineer prior to my election and am currently on the Business, Innovation and Skills Select Committee. I am actively looking at ways of encouraging more young people into engineering, and national media references downgrading the value of engineering in the UK do not help.

Yours sincerely

Chi Onwurah MP  
cc ncjmedia