



U N I V E R S I T Y O F

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L I V E R P O O L

A member of the Russell Group

# Strategies for Internationalisation: Some Issues and Responses

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# What is internationalisation?

A historical view: the wandering scholar

A modern view: the response to globalisation

A definition:

“the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, function or delivery of post-secondary education” (Knight, 2003)

# Changing motivations

Many different motivations:

- Social and cultural: enriching teaching and research, university life
- Academic: perceptions of quality, institutional development
- Political factors: Bologna, ERA
- Economic gain; fees, spending, workforce
- Competition; rankings
- Diverse local factors; maintaining subject areas

Governments and universities – different motivations

Encouragement and control

# Management of internationalisation

Management of internationalisation has changed:

- Notions of status and quality are measured or perceived at an international level
- Expectations of global impact
- Recognition that internationalisation is an all-embracing concept
- Understanding that internationalisation is a long-term process
- Recognition that internationalisation requires the commitment of scarce resources and involves (calculated) risk
- Acceptance of the breadth of international contacts (not just higher education)
- Acknowledgement of institutional responsibilities (including ethical)
- Need for quality

These all demand a management response – the development of strategy

# The Management Response

- Recognition that internationalisation is a key management function
- Willingness to review activities
- Leadership (vision, communications, organisation, calculated risk, ambition, networking)
- Centralisation and control
- Selectivity
- Value for money
- Coordination

# Content of an International Strategy

Typical content:

- International student recruitment
  - Student mobility – “in” and “out”
  - Student experience
  - Languages
  - Curriculum
  - Services
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- Staff recruitment
  - Staff mobility
  - Partnerships and networks
  - Research collaborations
  - Service

# Managing the Strategy

## Leadership

- Vision
- Governance
- Infrastructure

## Preparing the strategy

- Institutional assessment; environment scanning

## Dissemination

## Implementation

- Targets
- Responsibilities

## Evaluation and monitoring



# International Offices

Different models – unitary, binary, centralised, devolved

Different activities:

- Strategy
- Coordination
- Recruitment
- Student exchanges
- Student support
- Research support
- “Big projects”
- Partnerships
- Curriculum

# Networks and partnerships

Often a key part of institutional strategy:

- Added value – collaborative research
- New opportunities – for students and staff
- Political advantage
- Status and profile

# Managing partnerships

“Key to the success of the Strategy is the careful management of international relationships.....Issues include why we have particular relationships.... The University must ensure that those institutions and organisations with which it collaborates, at whatever level, reflect back the brand of excellence in all we do” (UK university)

“The development of international partnerships is currently School-led.... It could be argued that this fails to capture deeper and institution-led benefits for staff and students.....a more focused approach to partnership building .... Deeper partnerships would be multi-faceted, covering undergraduate, postgraduate and research links.....”(UK university)

Growth of centralisation and control; targeting of partners  
Senior officers and International Offices

# Criteria for partnerships

- Contribution to the core mission of the university
- With an institution whose reputational profile adds value to the university
- Potential to increase academic capacity and access to funding
- Positive contribution to the university's reputation
- Should open new markets
- The partnership should be financially sustainable on a standalone basis
- Should be championed by a senior person in the university
- Should be championed by somebody similar in the partner university.

(UK university)

# Reasons for choosing partners

- Previous collaborations
- Complementary expertise
- Perceived excellence
- Clear rationale
- Personal recommendations – networks
- Expected future collaborations

# Some practical considerations

- Common understandings of issues and problems – academic and administrative
- Importance of language
- Clear, agreed working procedures – who does what and when (and stick to it)
- Simple structures – who reports to who
- Leadership
- Size of group – not too large
- Good communications
- Look to the future – the importance of the next collaboration
- Geography

## Some issues

- Integration of internationalisation with other institutional strategies, teaching and research
- Incentives and rewards
- Centralisation/devolution
- Levels of intervention
- Funding arrangements: top slicing, self-financing
- Collaboration or competition
- Performance indicators/KPIs
- Ethical issues
- Universities and governments

# University of Liverpool

- International student recruitment
- Opportunities for Liverpool students
- International staffing
- Curriculum

## Some further activities

- Online programmes
- XJTLU
- Other partners



THANK YOU

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# Quality in International Higher Education

OECD/UNESCO Guidelines on Quality Provision, Paris 2005

4 objectives:

- Students/learners protection from risks of massification, low quality provision and qualifications of limited validity
- Qualifications should be readable and transparent in order to increase their international validity and portability. Reliable and user-friendly information should facilitate this.
- Recognition procedures should be transparent, coherent, fair and reliable and impose as little burden as possible to mobile professionals
- National quality assurance and accreditation agencies need to intensify their international cooperation in order to increase mutual understanding

# Actions

- Governments – establish a comprehensive, fair, transparent system of regulation, establish comprehensive capacity for quality assurance recognising the responsibility of both sending and receiving countries, provide accurate , reliable, accessible information, develop bilateral and multilateral agreements
- Institutions – ensure that programmes delivered across borders and at home are of comparable quality, quality reflects the quality of staff and faculty, maintain internal quality management systems, provide accurate information, share good practice, develop networks and partnerships, transparent financial status
- Student bodies – positive partners in quality development, encourage students to ask questions
- Quality accreditation bodies – ensure their procedures cover cross border activities, create regional and international networks, good information, mutual recognition agreements, international membership of panels
- Academic recognition bodies – fair recognition of international qualifications