INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY – GLOBAL BRISTOL

1. Introduction

The function of the international strategy is to provide a framework within which we can oversee and develop the many aspects of University life that are in some way international, thereby enriching the University and enhancing both its national and international reputation, whilst enabling the delivery of the Education and Research strategies. The enhanced reputation will be achieved through the quality of our engagement between our students, staff, alumni and collaborators.

The results of a successful strategy will be manifold, but will include: a richer cross-fertilisation of ideas, leading to improved research outputs; a student experience that is enhanced both by improved international mobility and by sharing the Bristol learning environment with peers from around the globe; and financial benefits, primarily through consolidating - and in some areas growing – our international student and staff communities.

The full extent of these benefits may only be achieved with initial and ongoing financial investment from the University, but will in the longer-term will grow income and be financially self-sustaining.

2. International Perceptions of Bristol

By any measure, Bristol is an excellent university and has a strong international profile in many areas of endeavour, along with a history that amply demonstrates that our outputs are amongst the best in the sector. The university is also fortunate to be located within a city which is an attractor in its own right. The intention is to project these attributes and make them more visible and accessible to international audiences. Alongside improvements in our profile, we should be regarded as an organisation that is trusted and facilitating. Ultimately we should attract international students, collaborators and funders both because of our academic excellence and because we are an accommodating partner with a track-record of fruitful collaborative working across education and research.
3. Aspirations
Quite simply the best universities in the world draw to them the most able people, both staff and students. Thus the central plank of the international strategy is to attract the best scholars and partners – at all levels – to come and work with Bristol academics. The delivery of a successful international strategy will ensure that:

*Bristol becomes a beacon of attraction for the leading scholars, institutions and governments across the globe*

4. Constituencies
To achieve the outcome of attracting students and collaborators, we must demonstrate externally a recognition of Bristol being an outstanding University projecting excellence in education and fundamental research in a vibrant and safe city.

The areas of international policy we need to populate relate to our communities, both people and partnerships: the former being internally focussed and the latter externally facing. For both of these groups we should define our objectives along with appropriate targets and time frames.

*People*
- Undergraduates
- PGT
- PGR
- Alumni
- Researchers
- Academics
- Professional Services

*Institution-Institution links*
- Individual – individual, research led
- Group-group/department-department, research led
- Institution-institution e.g. Kyoto, Rochester – research or educationally led

*Government/Corporate links*
- Governments (through their agencies/Embassies)
- Industry (with an international presence)
- NGOs, IGOs e.g. OECD, World Bank
- Foundations and Charities
5. **Priority areas**

To achieve tangible outcomes in relation to our international communities, the strategy will be supported by a plan in each area including: measurable objectives, calibration of where we are in relation to the objective, a plan and a realistic assessment of resources. Looking at our communities, we have four priority areas supported by a key aim. These are:

**Students**

- Attract, recruit and retain the leading scholars to Bristol by virtue of outstanding educational provision that is relevant to both home and international students

**Education**

- Ensure our educational provision is internationally relevant, skilling all students to contribute to global questions and work in diverse environments globally, achieved either through mobility or our own curriculum

**Research**

- Be recognised globally for the quality of our research attracting the leading researchers either to work with or at Bristol

**Bristol's global presence**

- Become a beacon of attraction for the leading scholars, institutions and governments across the globe
KEY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

6.1 STUDENTS.
Our aim is to attract, recruit and retain the leading scholars to Bristol by virtue of outstanding educational provision that is relevant to both home and international students.

Our priority objective is:

- To increase our overseas UG and PGR numbers whilst maintaining quality and improving the diversity, balance and integration of the student body

We will do this by:

- Developing robust evidence-based market intelligence, seeking to understand:
  o why students and staff come to Bristol;
  o target markets for UG, PGT and PGR student recruitment; and
  o how our current programme offering for UG, PGT and PGR students matches international student demand
- Working to reduce the reliance on single markets
- Identifying exceptional scholars and attract them through targeted scholarships
- Developing a pricing structure which incentivises recruitment of the best students and positions us competitively relative to UK and international competitors
- Developing recruitment strategies around individual regions deploying local officers where appropriate, and using our alumni as a key resource.
- Continuing to develop the professional approach to international student recruitment, developing and maintaining positive relationships with key influencers, including agents, and developing an admissions process tailored to international students
- Providing a student experience for international students which meets their needs for accommodation, involvement in extra-curricular activity and pastoral support
- Developing a strategy for more effectively using foundation programmes and our mobility programme to identify and attract full-time international students

Objectives of the Education Strategy supported and reinforced by this area of the International Strategy:

- We will enhance the international character of the University by increasing the numbers of international students in the University, and by striving to deepen their integration into the University community
6.2 EDUCATION
Our aim is to ensure our educational provision is internationally relevant, skilling all students to contribute to global questions and work in diverse environments globally, achieved either through mobility or our own curriculum

In support of our priority to increase our overseas student numbers, our priority education objectives are:

- To have internationally relevant curricula for all students that enable global careers
- To have an employability offering that equips all students for wherever they are based in the world (building on existing strengths in this area)
- To have a distinctive provision for Bristol around doctoral education via the Bristol Doctoral College

We will do this by:

- Reviewing and refreshing our curriculum and courses so that they include relevant international context to ALL of our students for an increasingly globally mobile career: a global University needs a globally relevant curriculum
- Ensuring our teaching delivery and welfare support are integrated across the student body
- Developing new courses using a centralised market analysis capability to ensure viability
- Building upon the existing strengths of our mobility programme, providing the opportunity for more students to study abroad and if appropriate exploring and promoting joint degrees at both undergraduate and postgraduate level
- Developing a language strategy for the University and provide appropriate and effective language support for international students alongside language provision for native English speakers
- Seeking to improve employability of all students both through our education and providing links to international companies and organisations
- Investing in global alumni groups to help with employability;
- Using of the website as a key resource to project a globally relevant University
- Understanding and managing the integration of international cohorts on the student experience
- Providing a network of summer schools to raise visibility of our taught course and research activity
Objectives of the Education Strategy supported and reinforced by this area of the International Strategy:

- We will offer students opportunities to learn about global environmental and sustainability issues

- We will increase students’ awareness of the benefits of studying at a university with a global focus and an international constituency, so that they gain an understanding of the international cultural, professional and academic context of their chosen discipline and develop the skills and knowledge they need to participate, innovate and lead in an international context

- We will aim to offer our students the opportunity to develop their language skills and to travel through the development of ‘study abroad’ and ‘exchange’ opportunities or through dedicated arrangements with various partners in specific disciplines where possible

- We will support the Students’ Union to enable it to meet the social, cultural and recreational needs of all students, whether undergraduate or postgraduate, UK or international, thereby enhancing the students experience

- We will improve the coordination and promote the development of our professional student support services that support student learning with particular reference to specific student groups (e.g. international students)
**6.3 RESEARCH.**

Our aim is to be recognised globally for the quality of our research attracting the leading researchers to work with or at Bristol

**Our priority objectives are:**

- To have a handful of strategic university partnerships to act as foci for collaborative research and to enable collaborations with other bodies in their countries (e.g. government, charities, foundations and industry)
- To encourage international activity at an individual level
- To increase funding (for research and scholarships) from international and foreign bodies (including governments, agencies, foundations and industry)
- To provide pastoral and logistical support for new international staff and visitors

We will do this by:

- Growing our internationally funded research portfolio through partnership both with academically aligned institutions and funding bodies.
- Building a picture of our international networks to enable and foster new and existing collaborations
- Enabling institutional and ground level interactions between researchers in Bristol and international partners and networks
- Encouraging – and pump priming – our staff to develop individual international research links either through international sabbaticals or placing doctoral students in partner institutions
- Utilising our membership of the Worldwide Universities Network (WUN) to further our international research aspirations and as a reflective tool or 'living laboratory' of how to grow global, multi-partnered and sustainable research projects of relevance to policy makers and NGO/IGOs such as the OECD, World Bank, foundations and charities
- Understanding our international staff and students and why they come to Bristol
- Support outgoing visits including education on cultural and ethical norms
- Organising Grand Challenge workshops which place Bristol at the heart of the globally relevant issues
- Ensuring our doctoral students are internationally engaged by providing opportunities for mobility either through exchanges or joint PhD programmes
- Host and support conferences within Bristol (either at the University or within the city)
Objectives of the Research Strategy supported and reinforced by this area of the International Strategy:

- To seek further collaborative and multidisciplinary opportunities, both within the University and externally, including partnerships with leading overseas institutions where there are complementary research strengths and synergies

- To promote the role of the Institute of Advanced Studies, whose mission is to develop research at the University of Bristol by facilitating visits by scholars from the UK and overseas to encourage interdisciplinary research

- To seek international postgraduate and postdoctoral exchanges/secondments
6.4 Bristol’s global presence.
Our aim is to become a beacon of attraction for the leading scholars, institutions and governments across the globe.

Our priority objectives are:

- Projecting a strong Bristol brand that is recognised internationally
- To identify and nurture those who can act as ambassadors and advocates for the University of Bristol
- To exploit and leverage existing international activity

We will do this by:

- Engaging with our alumni as ambassadors for Bristol and providing the support to enable them to do this
- Appointing international ambassadors from our academic or professional services staff to engage in regions in which they have local expertise and/or contacts
- Focusing our external presentation at PGR level around the Bristol Doctoral College
- Developing a relationship management strategy
- Building a web and Social media presence which is sector leading
- Holding international events, hosting more international conferences at Bristol and increasing the profile of existing activities that have international relevance
- Demonstrating through our published materials the international relevance of our activities both in education and research
- Producing dedicated materials for international recruitment
- Projecting ourselves to UK students who want an international educative experience building on student mobility programmes, a diverse student body and courses that have an international perspective
- Further develop the Bristol brand by cultivating and broadcasting traditions that are unique to Bristol and making the most of the strong brands of the city and its industry
Each of the priority areas and objectives will be supported with:

- A positive environment, professional service and appropriate infrastructure to support international staff and students which is culturally aware and facilitates collaboration

- Access to information and intelligence to inform planning, monitor progress and celebrate Bristol’s strengths

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