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HOW 'INTERNATIONALISED' IS YOUR UNIVERSITY? Moving beyond structural indicators towards social integration

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Helen Spencer-Oatey and Daniel Dauber
Centre for Applied Linguistics

UKCISA



Authors



Dr. Daniel Dauber

Dr. Daniel Dauber is Assistant Professor at the Centre for Applied Linguistics at the University of Warwick. His major research interests and teaching responsibilities include International Business, Cross-Cultural Management and Organisational Behaviour. Dr. Dauber's current research focuses on Internationalisation of Higher Education Institutions, group/team work, and organisational culture change and dynamics. He is also co-founder of the 'Organisational Coherence and Trajectory' (OCT) Project, which focuses on developing a generic model of organisational culture, which can be applied across research disciplines. Since 2010, he is Executive Editor of the 'European Journal of Cross-Cultural Competence and Management' (EJCCM). d.dauber@warwick.ac.uk



Professor Helen Spencer-Oatey

Helen Spencer-Oatey is Director of the Centre for Applied Linguistics at the University of Warwick. Her educational background is in both psychology and linguistics, and throughout her career she has worked at the interface of the two disciplines. She joined the University of Warwick in 2007. Her first teaching experience was in Hong Kong, where she taught English language to sixth-form (pre-university) students, as well as to adults taking evening classes at a British Council language school. Later she spent seven years working at Shanghai Jiaotong University, training teachers of English language from colleges and universities in the eastern region of China. After completing her PhD at Lancaster University, she lectured at the University of Luton (as it was then) for 10 years and while there, established the first MA in Intercultural Communication in the UK. In 2002 she started managing the major inter-governmental eChina-UK Programme on behalf of the Higher Education Funding Council for England, and found it a transforming experience. She joined the University of Warwick in September 2007, where she is Director of the Centre for Applied Linguistics. helen.spencer-oatey@warwick.ac.uk

Executive Summary

Universities all over the world are seeking to 'internationalise' their 'business'. Driven by risk diversification, organic growth, reputation and demands by stakeholders, such as future employers, higher education institutions (HEIs) face a competitive environment that increasingly requires them to operate very strategically towards multiple, sometimes conflicting, goals. This is also reflected in different global university league tables that aim to capture the degree of 'internationalisation' of the institutions. Yet in this race for international students/staff/partners, less attention seems to have been paid to the social viability of internationalising a university's community. In this paper we challenge the adequacy with which current benchmarking data on internationalisation provide the information that HEI policy makers need for designing a strategy that meets the goals they identify. We call for the inclusion of an 'intercultural' component, which takes into account the social complexity of truly internationalised university communities.

“Current benchmarking is all structural”

Current benchmarking of internationalisation: Bi-polar structural diversity

A number of organisations include internationalisation in their benchmarking of worldwide universities, the most well-known of which are Times Higher Education (THE) rankings, QS World rankings, and U-Multirank.¹ The parameters that these organisations use to measure internationalisation are shown in Table 1 and, as can be seen, they are all exclusively structural in nature.

Parameters	Organisation		
	THE	QS	U-Multirank
Composition: international students	•	•	
Composition: international staff	•	•	•
Composition: international diversity		•	
Incoming & Outgoing student mobility		•	•
International student support (religious facilities)		•	
International joint publications	•	•	•

Table 1: Parameters for ranking internationalisation

They focus on different countable measures, most notably national composition of students and staff as well as in the numbers engaged in international movement and research. Clearly there are significant differences between the systems in the number, range and precise definitions of the parameters used (e.g. THE uses ratio of international to domestic students, while QS gives full marks if 20% or more of an institution’s students are international), but they are all united in their exclusive use of frequency and/or compositional counts. Also, most of the time, the definition of ‘diversity’ has been reduced to a bi-polar category: proportion of home vs. international students, with the result that degree of ‘diversity’ cannot directly be deduced from these statistics. This, however, can impact substantially on the social reality of students’ study experiences, such as, for example, if there are large dominant national groups of students on campus. The QS benchmark is a notable exception to this. However, it uses an arbitrary cut-off point of 50 different countries.

Undoubtedly, the above mentioned parameters are key indicators of an HEI’s ability to lay the foundation for internationalisation and as such are important pre-requisites for a university’s international outlook and growth. They are included, therefore, in many universities’ internationalisation strategies. For example, the University of Stirling, to which QS allocates the maximum number of 5 stars for its level of internationalisation, includes the following strategic goals in its 2014-19 Internationalisation Strategy²:

- ▶ To grow international student numbers by 30% during the life of this strategy, with a focus on diversification across programmes and across nationalities.
- ▶ To increase undergraduate student participation in international exchanges from 4% to 15% of the undergraduate population through developing distinctive programmes and curricula and extending the number and range of overseas exchanges available.

Other structural features are also included in many strategies as internationalisation goals, viz. overseas partnerships and an overseas branch campus. These are listed as common KPIs for internationalisation in HESA’s internationalisation report¹ and they are clearly important elements. Partnerships are another structural measure of diversity and yet, interestingly, they are not included as parameters of internationalisation in the major ranking systems.

¹ For a full list, see the HESA report on international benchmarking, available at http://benchmarking.hesa.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/HESA_International_Benchmarking_report.pdf

² <http://www.foi.stir.ac.uk/documents/Internationalisation-Strategy-2014-19.pdf>

“Structural benchmarking provides limited insights”

In view of the above, it appears that the emphasis on achieving increased structural diversity in order for HEIs to demonstrate their greater levels of internationalisation fails to give adequate acknowledgement to the social aspects of their efforts. Assuming that HEIs also aim to improve life on campus through internationalisation and make it a much more enriching experience for everyone (students and staff alike), we identify three fundamentally flawed assumptions about parameters of HEI ‘internationalisation’:

- ▶ Structural internationalisation (automatically) improves students’ satisfaction.
- ▶ Structural internationalisation (automatically) yields an integrated student community.
- ▶ Structural internationalisation (automatically) leads to global skills.

Structural Internationalisation ≠ Student Satisfaction

How satisfactory, then, are these structural measures of diversity as indicators of level of internationalisation? What ‘international benefits’ are they associated with?

Many universities refer to the benefits of having a diverse composition of students and staff in terms of ‘enrichment’. For example, the University of Bristol³ identifies the following as two of its prime reasons for pursuing internationalisation:

- ▶ It means we have a diverse student body from multiple cultures and societies, which enriches our intellectual environment;
- ▶ It means academic staff come to us from all over the world and their different intellectual approaches, as well as their different cultures, again enrich the University.

These are clearly valid and important aspirations, but do students necessarily perceive things in these ways? Statistical analyses suggest that for students in the UK the picture is more mixed and/or complex.

n = 26 universities

		THE Student experience (overall score)	THE Student experience (good social life)	NSS Teaching satisfaction
Non-UK/Total Students	Pearson r Sig. (2-tailed)	-0.538** 0.005	-0.754** 0.000	-0.330 0.099
Non-UK/Total Staff	Pearson r Sig. (2-tailed)	-0.142 0.480	-0.410* 0.034	-0.274 0.176
THE Ranking 2013/14 (international outlook)	Pearson r Sig. (2-tailed)	-0.267 0.188	-0.676** 0.000	-0.245 0.227

Table 2: Correlations between diversity, student experience and international outlook in UK universities

As can be seen from Table 2, the greater the proportion of non-UK students in the total student population, the less positive the student experience ratings are. This is even more evident when looking at one of the sub-categories of the THE student experience rating⁴: Good social life ($r = -0.754^{**}$). These correlations could be interpreted as indicating that growth in ‘structural internationalisation’ has a negative impact on student satisfaction, and especially social integration (see also the negative correlation between ‘international outlook’ and ‘good social life’, $r = -0.676^{**}$). Yet that may be too simplistic an interpretation. In fact, as we show below, in the case of the University of Warwick, many students are highly appreciative of the opportunity to be exposed to different facets of ‘internationalisation’. It matches their expectations as well as their goals of being part of an internationalised university and it also offers them the opportunity to develop the skills needed for working in a multicultural workplace. So we would argue that these social aspects of internationalisation need addressing and benchmarking in addition to the aforementioned structural factors.

³ <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/university/migrated/documents/internationalisation.pdf>

⁴ Student experience ratings are based on the THE Student Experience Survey 2014 and include responses from both UK and international students. Available at <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/news/times-higher-education-student-experience-survey-2014/2013333.article>

“Global education should lead to integrated communities”

Structural Internationalisation ≠ Integrated community

A recent British Council report⁵ makes the following extremely important point:

“Simply having a diverse student body does not mean the education or even the campus is global in nature. What comes as an essential part of a global education is the inclusion of international students in communities and classes. Integration of all students is an elemental factor in the expanding concept of internationalisation.”

Unfortunately a range of reports have repeatedly argued that there are low levels of intermixing in further and higher education communities⁶. So while having a diverse population is an important prerequisite for reaping benefits, it does not in itself ensure that people will interact meaningfully with each other. This could explain the correlations in Table 2, and is further illustrated by Research Insight 1.

Research Insight 1: Does diversity aid intercultural interaction?

Groepel-Klein, Germelmann and Glaum⁷ carried out a longitudinal study at a 'border university' near the German-Polish border. They explain that border universities attract students from two or more neighbouring countries and have typically been established to promote intercultural understanding between the peoples of these neighbouring nations. The authors conducted a 7-year longitudinal study among the German and Polish students of their selected border university, and found that contrary to the establishment aims, interaction between members of the two groups did not increase over the period. They also found that the key to levels of interaction was not nationality but 'cultural openness': "Students with a high level of individual cultural openness reported significantly higher levels of interaction than students with a low level of cultural openness."

⁵ British Council (2014) Integration of international students. A UK Perspective. Available at <http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/ihe/knowledge-centre/student-mobility/report-integration-international-students>

⁶ E.g. NUS: "Building an Internationalised Students' Union" Available at <http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/internationalisation/resources/>; ECU: "Internationalising equality, equalising internationalisation" Available at <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/internationalising-equality-equalising/>

⁷ Groepel-Klien, A., Germelmann, C.C. and Galum, M. (2010) Intercultural interaction needs more than mere exposure: Searching for drivers of student interaction at border universities. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 34, 263-267.

“Institutional support for community integration is vital”

Since the mere existence of a diversified student body in itself does not necessarily lead to interaction, it is important to consider what conditions can facilitate or hamper helpful interaction and for this, *Contact Theory* may offer us some insights.

Contact theory was first put forward by the social psychologist, Gordon Allport⁸, in the 1950s, and since then it has generated a massive amount of ongoing research. The theory attempts to describe and explain what happens when members of different cultural groups come into contact. It argues that generally speaking, contact has a positive effect, especially in terms of reducing prejudice. However, it also argues that different contact conditions can affect the impact of contact. Some conditions are particularly effective in promoting positive outcomes, while others have the opposite effects. Allport proposed that the following conditions are particularly effective in reducing prejudice:

- ▶ equal status
- ▶ common goals
- ▶ institutional support
- ▶ perception of similarity between the two groups.

Clearly, universities have a major role to play in providing institutional support through both establishing goals and enabling support (financially and procedurally) for achieving them. Many are committed to doing this and numerous initiatives are being undertaken at a wide range of institutions. For example, the University of Sheffield⁹ has identified the establishment of “a truly international University community” as one of its key aims and has listed a number of strategies for achieving it, such as “*Providing more social and extra-curricular activities that bring home and international students together; providing all students with an opportunity to develop/acquire a second language (including the opportunity for international students to develop their English language); internationalising our curricula so that all students have exposure to an international learning experience and all students understand their subject in an international context*”. Case study examples of practical ways of implementing these strategies can be found in a recent report on the promotion of integration on campus¹⁰. In addition, a large number of resources on intercultural competence and tools for helping achieve it are available on the Global PAD website¹¹.

While it is important to grasp the big picture of HE in the UK, it is even more important to understand the social dynamics on each university campus. Recent research at the University of Warwick, using data from i-Graduate’s Student Barometer (SB) and International Student Barometer (ISB) (with a sample of 2000 students which was collected in the summer of 2014), underlines the importance of diversity in friendships in order for students to feel part of the university community.

8 Allport, G. W. (1954). *The Nature of Prejudice*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

9 http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.2066471/file/International-strategy-Senate-approved.pdf

10 Spencer-Oatey, H., Dauber, D. & Williams, S. (2014). *Promoting integration on campus: Principles, practice and issues for further exploration*. Report commissioned by UKCISA and available at: http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/cross_fac/globalpeople/integration/

11 <http://www.warwick.ac.uk/globalpadintercultural>

“All types of friendship are important”

		I feel part of the University/Institution community
Making friends from my home country ¹²	Pearson r Sig. (2-tailed)	.281** 0.000
Making friends from this home country (i.e. UK)	Pearson r Sig. (2-tailed)	.369** 0.000
Making friends from other countries	Pearson r Sig. (2-tailed)	.395** 0.000

Table 3: Correlations between friendship and sense of belonging to the university community

As can be seen from Table 3 (and in line with early research by Stephen Bochner¹³), all three types of friendships - co-national, host country and other international - are important for home as well as international students to feel a sense of belonging to the university community. Considering the level of satisfaction that students have with making friends at Warwick, they appear to be (a) generally very satisfied (Figure 1) and (b) report that they have friends from different countries (Figure 2). Nevertheless, it also appears that international students find it considerably harder to make friends with students from the host country (i.e. UK in this case).

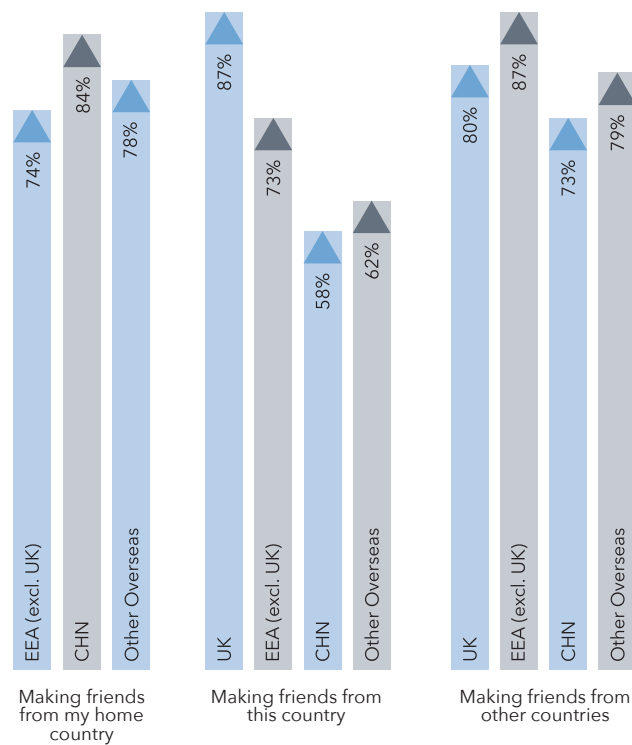


Fig. 1: The proportion of students ($n = 2000$) who are satisfied with making friends from different places.

¹² This question was not included for UK students, thus only reflects international students' perception.

¹³ E.g. Bochner, S. (1977). Friendship patterns of overseas students: A functional model. *International Journal of Psychology*, 12(4), 277-294.

“Is socialisation across cultures difficult?”

Within my friendship groups, there are people from different countries.

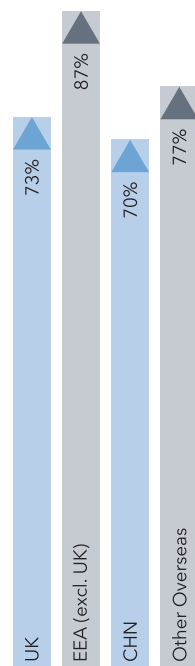


Fig. 2: The proportion of students (n = 2000) who agreed with the following statement: “Within my friendship groups there are people from different countries.”

I find it difficult to socialise with people who are from different countries

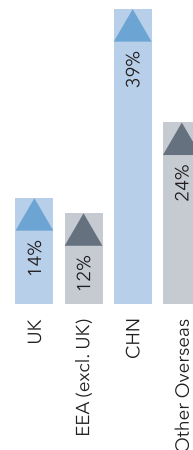


Fig. 3: The proportion of students (n = 2000) who agreed with the following statement: “I find it difficult to socialise with people who are from different countries.”

Yet not all find it equally easy to make such friendships. As can be seen from Figure 3, there were differences across regional clusters in the degree of difficulty they perceived in making friends with people from different countries, and these were statistically significant. Although the proportion perceiving it to be difficult was less than 50% for all regional clusters, Chinese students found it noticeably more difficult than other regional clusters, and research is needed into why this might be the case¹⁴.

Some recent European research indicates that it is the quality of interaction that is of crucial importance (see Research Insight 2), and this underlines the importance of facilitating high quality interaction.

Research Insight 2: Does diversity in class necessarily promote positive relations among different ethnocultural groups?

A Belgian study by Dejaeghere, Hooghe and Claes¹⁵ investigated whether diversity in class had an impact on students' ethnocentrism. The researchers conducted a two-year study with nearly 3000 late-adolescent students at schools across Belgium, comparing classes with high diversity of pupils with those with low diversity. They found that level of diversity did not predict intercultural understanding – the key factor was quality of relations. They therefore drew the following conclusion: “Schools where there is a high level of diversity offer good opportunities to counter ethnocentrism according to our analysis, but this has to be framed within a positive intergroup climate. If schools or education systems want to develop a policy aimed at reducing ethnic prejudice, it is crucial therefore to try to influence the quality of the interaction between the various ethnic and cultural groups at school.”

¹⁴ Chinese were treated as a separate group because it is the largest international student group on campus and were also the most frequently mentioned group in comments.

¹⁵ Dejaeghere, Y., Hooghe, M. and Claes, E. (2012) Do ethnically diverse schools reduce ethnocentrism? A two-year panel study among majority group late adolescents in Belgian schools. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 36, 108-117

“Employers are seeking ‘global skills’ in their new employees”

Structural Internationalisation ≠ ‘Global skills’

While integration is an important characteristic of successful internationalisation, high quality interaction is not simply an end in itself. It is often closely associated with the development of ‘global skills’ (more formally known as intercultural competence) – qualities that many employers are now seeking/demanding/expecting in their new employees. Several recent reports have drawn attention to these needs, as illustrated in Table 4.



Global Graduates. Global graduates into global leaders, Diamond et al. on behalf of agr, CIHE, & CFE (2011)

Available at: <http://www.ncub.co.uk/reports/global-graduates-into-global-leaders.html>

Top 10 skills sought by 12 leading employers collectively representing 3500+ graduate recruits:

1. A ability to work collaboratively with teams of people from a range of backgrounds and countries;
2. Excellent communication skills: both speaking and listening;
3. A high degree of drive and resilience;
4. An ability to embrace multiple perspectives and challenge thinking;
5. A capacity to develop new skills and behaviours according to role requirements;
6. A high degree of self-awareness;
7. An ability to negotiate and influence clients across the globe from different cultures;
8. An ability to form professional, global networks;
9. An openness to and respect for a range of perspectives from around the world;
10. Multicultural learning agility (e.g. ability to learn in any culture or environment).



Education and Skills Survey (2012)

Available at http://www.cbi.org.uk/media/1514978/cbi_education_and_skills_survey_2012.pdf

542 employers collectively employing around 1.6 m people:

- Out of 13 employability skills, employers were least satisfied with employees' skills in: **Foreign Languages + Cultural Awareness**



Competing across Borders. How cultural & communication barriers affect business., Economist Intelligence Unit (2013)

Available at <http://www.economistinsights.com/countries-trade-investment/analysis/competing-across-borders>

572 executives:

- Expect prospective employees to be **fluent in key foreign languages**.
- Misunderstandings rooted in **cultural differences** → **greatest obstacle** to productive cross-border collaboration.



Culture at Work. The value of intercultural skills in the workplace, British Council (2013)

Available at <http://www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/publications/culture-work-intercultural-skills-workplace>

HR managers working for 367 large employers in 9 countries:

- Intercultural skills are **highly valued**
- Intercultural skills bring **strong business benefits and mitigate risks**

Table 4: ‘Global skills’ required by employers, according to recent reports

“Experience of mixed nationality group work is particularly important”

My experiences during my degree programme are helping me develop the skills needed for working effectively in international contexts.

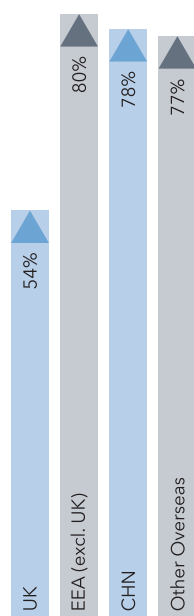


Fig. 4: The proportion of students (n = 2000) who agreed with the following statement: “My experiences during my degree programme are helping me develop the skills needed for working effectively in international contexts.”

The outcomes from these large-scale studies reflect the views of over 1400 employers and it is clear from them that communication skills, especially in multicultural contexts, consistently outrank other, presumably important outcomes of studying at an HEI, e.g. technical expertise.

According to the EAIE Barometer¹⁶, preparing students for a global world was identified as the second most important reason for a university to internationalise, and this is often referred to in university internationalisation strategies. For instance, the University of Glasgow¹⁷ identifies the following goal in its internationalisation strategy: *To enhance the student experience at Glasgow by offering a culturally diverse learning environment that prepares students for global employment and citizenship.*

However, this raises some fundamental questions for benchmarking internationalisation, including how we can foster such ‘global graduate’ skills and whether university degree programmes are helping significantly to nurture them.

Recent research at the University of Warwick using data from i-Graduate’s International Student Barometer data throws some light on these questions. As can be seen from Figure 4, most students felt their experiences during their degree programme were helping them develop the skills needed for working effectively in international contexts. However, there were some significant differences across the regional clusters, with UK students agreeing significantly less strongly than EEA students.

In terms of the impact of different elements of their university experiences, correlation analyses reveal that experience of both mixed nationality friendships and mixed nationality group work are positively associated with students’ perceptions that they are developing the skills needed for working effectively in international contexts and these associations are statistically significant (see Table 5). This further corroborates our assertion that while student composition is important, enabling students to build positive social bonds (in line with recent European research – see Research Insights above) with their peers is equally important and should be of similar priority for HE policy makers.

	Degree programme experiences have helped develop ‘global skills’			
	UK	EEA (excl. UK)	CHN	Other Intl
Has friends of different nationalities	.318**	.380**	.373**	.337**
Mixed nationality group work has been enriching	.483**	.456**	.541**	.452**

Table 5: Correlations between (a) experiences of mixed nationality friendships and group work and (b) perceptions that ‘global skills’ are being fostered in their degree programme

In some respects these results are not surprising, as it has been widely assumed that friendships with people from different countries will help foster ‘global skills’. Many universities, therefore, have developed initiatives to help promote such diversity in friendships, some case study examples of which can be found in Warwick’s recent report on the promotion of integration on campus. However, it is interesting to note that the correlations between the development of ‘global skills’ and an enriching experience of mixed nationality group work are even stronger than between the development of ‘global skills’ and experience of mixed national friendships. Finally, it is noteworthy that these relationships appear to exist irrespective of the cultural background of the students. Both elements, making friends and mixed national group work experiences, contribute significantly to students’ perceptions of their development of global skills, at least at the University of Warwick.

16 <http://www.eaie.org/home/in-the-field/barometer.html>

17 <http://www.gla.ac.uk/about/internationalisation/internatatgla/internationalisationstrategy/>

“Careful facilitation of group work is vital”

Mixed nationality group work is an aspect of internationalisation that is relatively rarely mentioned in internationalisation strategies, and yet the findings here indicate that it plays an important role, at least in students’ eyes. Previous research¹⁸ has found that there are major challenges associated with it and that careful facilitation is needed for the enrichment benefits to emerge. We would argue that universities need to start prioritising this more, especially since the ability to work in multicultural teams has been identified by employers as the top skill they are looking for, according to at least one report (see Table 4, agr, CIHE, CFE report).

Benchmarking of Internationalisation: Moving beyond structural parameters

A European funded project, IMPI (Indicators for Mapping and Profiling Internationalisation, 2009-2012)¹⁹, has drawn up a detailed set of indicators that institutions can use to assess their level of internationalisation. With regard to preparing students for life and work in an intercultural and globalising world, they have developed the set of indicators shown in Table 6.

Goal dimension: to well-prepare students for life and work in an intercultural and globalising world

1. Out of all students in the unit, what proportion studies abroad in a given year?
2. Does the unit have a clearly defined strategy for internationalisation?
3. Out of all international students in the unit in a given year, what proportion are exchange or mobility programme students?
4. Out of all courses offered by the unit in a given year, what is the proportion of courses taught in a foreign language?
5. In a given year, what proportion of the unit’s academic staff members follows an English language course?
6. Are all facilities provided by the unit to domestic students also available to international students?
7. What proportion of students from the unit participates in outgoing exchange or mobility programmes in a given year?
8. In a given year, out of all academic staff members in the unit, what proportion are visiting staff members from abroad?
9. Does the unit provide a mentoring or “buddy”-system for international student support?
10. Out of all degree programmes offered by the unit in a given year, what proportion are international joint/double/multiple degree programmes?

Table 6: IMPI internationalisation indicators relations re preparing students for a global world

18 E.g. Popov, V., Brinkman, D., Biemans, H. J. A., NMulder, M., Kuznetsova, A., & Noroozi, O. (2012). Multicultural student group work in higher education. An explorative case study on challenges as perceived by students. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 36, 302-317.

Turner, Y. (2009). “Knowing me, knowing you,” is there nothing we can do? Pedagogic challenges in using group work to create an intercultural learning space. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 13(2), 240-255.

Volet, S. E., & Ang, G. (2012). Culturally mixed groups on international campuses: An opportunity for inter-cultural learning. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 31(1), 21-37.

19 <http://www.impi-project.eu/home>

“A truly internationalising university needs to focus on community building”

It is excellent that such detailed work has been carried out on developing indicators for internationalisation. Some of the indicators offer a relatively holistic picture of internationalisation, such as the ‘clearly defined strategy of internationalisation’ as well as ‘provide a mentoring or ‘buddy’-system’. Nevertheless, as can be seen from Table 6, all of them are still structural in nature and, most likely, would produce ‘more of the same’ findings as current benchmarks do.

Since internationalisation is considered to be a process rather than a state of an organisation, it is fair to say that many HEIs have begun to shape their institutions towards a more internationalised community. By attracting students and staff from other countries and taking initiatives to help them adjust, the internationalisation process in terms of developing intercultural skills and an integrated community has already begun. However, it needs to be broadened in scope to include ALL members of the community (i.e. home as well as non-UK) and it needs to be acknowledged that current benchmarks are not yet capturing the social/skills aspects of internationalisation.

Important though structural internationalisation can be, we would argue that those elements on their own are inadequate and may even give a misleading impression of students’ levels of intercultural competence or satisfaction. They need to be supplemented by indicators that probe people’s lived experiences of cultural diversity, such as the amount and quality of mixed nationality interaction, both in the classroom and beyond. Items added to i-Graduate’s SB/ISB surveys by staff at the University of Warwick have yielded valuable new insights into the interactional and community aspects of a university’s internationalisation agenda. Such measures²⁰ now need to be refined and taken up by a wider audience so that more comprehensive insights can be gained into internationalisation from a personal and professional development perspective.

While the structural context of HEIs impacts on students’ experiences, this is not what graduating students are most likely to remember when they look back on their successful careers. We would hope that alumni of internationalised universities will remember those people they engaged with during their studies who were from different cultural backgrounds and that they will have established social bonds with at least some of these peers that continue to exist long after graduation. Therefore, the truly internationalised HEI of the future will have to measure its success not only in terms of structural factors or the number/proportion of international students, staff and partnerships, but also by its ability to facilitate friendship-making and the development of those communicative skills that employers are seeking in their new employees.

Professor Helen Spencer-Oatey
Dr Daniel Dauber
Centre for Applied Linguistics, University of Warwick

The University of Warwick

Since 2012, The University of Warwick, Warwick Students' Union and UKCISA have organised an annual Integration Summit with the aim of bringing universities and their students' unions together to collaborate around the common theme of how best to encourage integration between international and domestic students and how to measure the internationalised student experience. At Warwick, we take an innovative research-led approach to integration by focusing on the "collaborative triangle" of Students' Unions, Academic Departments and Administrative Services including the International Office.

We recognise that whilst the motivation to engage in intercultural contact has to come from within the individual student, universities and students' unions do have a role to play in creating the social conditions to facilitate that intercultural contact. Go Global is Warwick's initiative to encourage all our students to have an international experience whilst they are studying and it is delivered in partnership with the SU. This might be through outbound activities: study abroad, overseas volunteering opportunities such as Warwick in Africa and Warwick Laksh, overseas internships, international undergraduate research projects, working on Reinvention and ICUR, our undergraduate academic journal and annual international undergraduate research conference that is co-produced by students at Warwick and at our strategic partner, Monash.

We also recognise the great potential for intercultural learning that our diverse campus offers and we promote the ways in which one can become internationalised at home, by learning a new language on campus, participating in student leadership, becoming a student mentor, volunteer, orientation helper or Go Global Ambassador. For students participating in any of these international opportunities, we also offer a three-stage (before, during and after) intercultural training because we believe that in order to achieve optimal personal and professional learning and growth from one's international experiences, students need to be equipped with observational, analytical and reflective skills about themselves in relation to culture and cultural difference.

At Warwick, the research being carried out by our Centre for Applied Linguistics into intercultural communicative competence has been fundamental in informing how we evaluate and develop the "bottom up" internationalisation activities run by our International Office and our Students' Union.

We have then tried to embed these within our top level University strategy under the strategic objective to "Develop every student's international perspective, preparing them for an increasingly globalised society through intercultural learning and opportunities to study overseas". The idea here is that if all of our students are prepared to change and become more interculturally competent and the institution is seen to fully endorse this transformation, we will be much better placed to promote meaningful and sustained dialogue between nationalities on our campuses.

We know that our graduates will be competing in a global job market and we know that above all, employers are all looking for excellent communicators and the ability to work in multicultural teams (source CIHE 2011 'Global Graduates into Global Leaders'). We also know that employers themselves don't know how to assess or to evaluate intercultural competence (source: British Council - Culture at Work report 2013) so we need to equip our students with not just the opportunities to develop their global perspectives and intercultural communication skills, but also the vocabulary to demonstrate to employers how all of these skills and experiences are relevant in an employment context.

Claire O'Leary

Assistant Director (Student Experience), International Office, University of Warwick





Claire O'Leary

As Head of Student Experience in the International Office at the University of Warwick, Claire is responsible for monitoring and enhancing the international student experience as well as internationalising the home student body. Claire also leads on Tier 4 compliance strategy and policy for the institution. She has worked in international student support at three universities over the last 18 years. Claire has served two terms of office on the board of the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA). She has recently joined the European Association for International Education's expert community leadership group, Study Abroad and Foreign Student Advisers (SAFSA). Claire is studying part-time for a Master's in Intercultural Communication at the University of Warwick.

Going Global Volunteers

Name	Nationality
Anna Donovan	American
Carolin Debray	German
Emma Jordan	British
Essi Jussila	Finnish
Hai Ngo	Chinese
Joelle Loew	Swiss
Kyong-Mi Kim	South Korean
Lisa Bertacchini	Italian
Natasha Lee	Malaysian
Priscila Alves Niso	Brazilian
Qian Yu (Chrystal)	Chinese
Qianqian Wei (Betty)	Chinese
Qiongjun Li (Lexie)	Chinese
Thomas Greenaway	British
Tinnie Chan	Hong Kong Chinese
Xiaobin Zhu (Demi)	Chinese
Xiaozhe Cai (Sherry)	Chinese
Yohei Ito	Japanese
Polly Galis	British

UK Council for International Student Affairs



The UK Council for International Student Affairs is the UK's national advisory body serving the interests of international students and those who work with them.

It does so through research, print and web-based publications, a national training programme, dedicated advice lines for students and advisors, and liaison and advocacy with institutions, agencies and government.

Its aims are to:

- increase support for international education and raise awareness of its values and benefits
- promote opportunities for, and identify and work to reduce obstacles and barriers to, greater student mobility
- encourage best practice, professional development and the highest quality of institutional support for international students throughout the education sector

UKCISA's membership includes:

- every university in the UK
- a number of Students' Unions
- the majority of publicly funded higher and further education colleges which are active internationally
- a number of independent schools and private colleges and
- a range of specialist and representative bodies

UKCISA