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## Internationalisation Supporting Strategy Document

### Introduction

In preparing our students for an increasingly globalised world, we will achieve an increase in our international student numbers and build sustainable international partnerships.

The overall strategy focuses on the student experience and working with our students to prepare them for a future in an increasingly global society. A core element of this will be building skills, knowledge and competencies of an international nature in order to achieve the best possible student outcomes in employability. We know from employers that such experience is highly valued in graduates.

Many industries and sectors are now globalised or international in nature and this trend continues. Even for UK graduates who will work in the immediate Southampton area, the rise of the internet/world wide web as information and transaction tools means that their employment will be impacted by global corporations and businesses offshore. The growth of the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) and MINT (Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria and Turkey) markets means that some knowledge of these or other cultures is a vital aid to competitive advantage in the 'global village'.

Our vision is ambitious, over time: 'To Globalise the reputation of the University.'

### Objectives

1. The strategy will see annual growth in numbers of international students and fee income, student mobility and partnerships.
2. The aim will be to make outward student mobility as attractive and easy as possible for first generation students who may not have considered this option before starting at Solent University. This is part of our commitment to social justice. A wide offer of international options will be available from virtual projects with international partners, through short visits/field trips and projects overseas to semester or years abroad, or full progression to our partners. For those students unable to study abroad, there will be greater exposure to students from different backgrounds and cultures as a result of increased recruitment and therefore opportunities for group work with international students will also be available in the UK.
3. The curriculum portfolio will need to be reviewed in order to reduce current barriers to student mobility, such as long-thin units/assessment, and to introduce further units on international topics. Language and cultural elements, already available to mobility programme students, will be expanded with the aid of the School of Business and Law to underpin this internationalisation drive. This may mean adding intermediate-level language tuition to basic in some languages or giving external opportunities to progress.

4. The means to our expansion in these areas will be ambitious strategic partnerships with international institutions and employers. These will provide a more secure and sustainable route, in addition to the current one-way recruitment through agents, which will still be used judiciously to supplement partnerships, together with expansion of our international recruitment and progression activities from organisations already hosting international students in the UK. Partnerships will routinely involve exchange of students and staff and also include research and innovation, where those in emerging markets can learn from our methodologies and creativity. Enterprise models, such as Solent Creatives and social enterprise will be used as part of our intellectual capital in developing such partnerships.
5. We will work with international employers to provide a range of projects, group work and placements in the UK and abroad that help develop the right employment skills and expose students and graduates to different working cultures. Targets in the UK will include companies that export and/or want to build export markets, thus helping the economy. We will continue to work with the Solent LEP, Business South and the Chamber of Commerce on these aspects.
6. We will use contacts with international Alumni, as the CRM project develops, to help to facilitate the above aims. These will also provide a pool of talent to consider for staff appointments to resource the strategy.
7. A matrix of niche and key subjects; strategic partners and key markets will be agreed and prioritised.
8. In support of this strategy, we will continue to develop improved working relationships, systems, infrastructure and processes across the University that support the exchange of information, knowledge and the development of competencies of staff working on international matters.

## Implementation 2015-2020

- i) To increase opportunities for students and staff to actively engage with the internationalisation process and the international community through curriculum opportunities, external events, measurement and targets to be developed. The ultimate goal is to globalise our people.

- 2015	:	Seminar series using internal and external experts on internationalisation; include SU.
- 2015	:	Develop standard criteria for partnerships and a handbook with over-riding commercial criteria.
- 2015	:	Review curriculum through Academic Portfolio Plan and APC with schools.
- 2016	:	Refine targets and align with personal objectives, especially for PGIs and Cis.
- 2016	:	Work with SU to develop cultural awareness in UK and international students in support of this strategy.
- 2016	:	Implement Higher Education Academy internationalisation project.
- 2016	:	Develop improved working relationships supporting exchange of information, knowledge and the development of competencies for staff.

- ii) To develop an international aspect to the Research and Innovation Strategy, including opportunities for people to undertake joint research and knowledge transfer with international companies and organisations.

- 2015	:	Open China Centre (Maritime).
- 2015	:	Promote links to Chinese (and other) universities for our key research programmes.
- 2015	:	Discuss international R&I with local companies and business organisations.

- iii) To increase the number of international students both on- and off- campus through partnerships; the China and Malaysia strategies and Recruitment Strategy will be key here; as will better management information through Tableau and CRM.

- 2015	:	Define baseline levels for EU and overseas/islands.
	:	Extrapolate to annual targets out to 2020.
- 2015	:	Cascade into targets/objectives of International Recruitment Office.
	:	Tier 4 aligning of English language entry requirements with academic requirements.
- 2016	:	Develop CRM to capture pre-enquiries through strategic partners.

- iv) To promote Solent University as an international brand by consistently applying the principles of the brand refresh and thereby improve reputation, improving international web pages and materials.

- 2015	:	Develop wider range of physical and virtual marketing collateral, including web pages.
- 2016	:	Implement final web layout and design with radically improved content, including key languages such as Chinese and video clips, aimed also at parents and teachers.

- v) To ensure that all Solent University UG (Home) students have the opportunity to learn a language and/or study abroad/have an international experience in the UK.

- 2015	:	Develop outgoing mobility offer and targets.
	:	Move language centre to School of Business & Law.
	:	Review portfolio of languages, including progression to intermediate levels.
- 2016	:	Review how this fits with curriculum plus/options.
	:	Develop range of international experiences in the UK.
- 2017	:	Every course to be twinned with an international partner, e.g. student exchange, underpinning research, staff exchange, globalising the curriculum as appropriate.

- vi) To internationalise the curriculum to enable the above, including reducing barriers to mobility, such as long-thin units/assessment. Semesterisation will become the norm. Languages and cultural orientation, currently available on a limited basis to students engaging in outward mobility, to be made more widely accessible. This will also involve working on progression opportunities including, but not limited to, foundation programmes (on- and off-shore), English language testing, top-ups, taught Masters and (eventually with RDAP) Professorial Doctorates. This cross-references the Teaching and Learning Strategy. Co-delivery will begin with niche products.

- 2015	:	Establish “Passport” for English language testing.
	:	Target offshore foundation programme with key Chinese partner.
- 2016	:	Schools to rationalise long-thin units and assessment.
	:	Develop wider range of top-ups via Schools/APC.
	:	Widen range of Masters via Schools/APC.
	:	Develop distance learning support systems that are cost-effective.

- vii) The new International Development Team will be key to implementation of this strategy. The new Director will be tasked with fleshing out the plan and particularly the Implementation and Targets and Milestones sections. The position of Solent in league tables can be overcome only through excellent partnership working with attention to detail, prioritisation, cultural sensitivity, focus on the student experience and operational effectiveness. The new Director will work with all schools and professional services to catalyse this and monitor delivery. This will include creating a flexible and cohesive infrastructure from ‘cradle to grave’, encapsulating all facets of the delivery of a course to (international) students.

- 2015	:	Appoint Director of International Development.
	:	Build small International Development Team (IDT).
	:	Operationalise strategy, targets and milestones.
- 2016	:	Ensure targets are rolled into personal objectives.

- viii) The People Experience will be vital in successful implementation. Alignment of priorities, objectives and delivery is vital to this ambitious plan, which will also require more flexible working. This will need the adjustment over time of certain working practices which militate against the items in section vii) above and lead, in some cases, to a higher cost base than is competitive.

- 2015	:	Determine people factors which inhibit implementation of this plan.
	:	Seminar series using internal and external experts on internationalisation.
	:	Portal to feature travel, expenses, risk assessment, other guidelines to facilitate easier working and training sessions, e.g. for course leaders.
- 2016	:	Revise policy areas as necessary to cover overtime, TOIL and other practices.

- ix) Excellent support for students throughout the whole lifecycle is a key to success. We will develop an international supporting system and embed it across the whole University leading to employability and an excellent reputation with alumni.

- 2015	:	IDT to start work on support.
- 2016	:	Implement revised strategy for this with LIS.

- x) Develop our infrastructure, systems and processes to support this strategy. Improve our internal operations and communications, sharing best practice, and co-ordinate activities across Schools and Services through IDT.

- 2015	:	IDT to join relevant networks and establish external contacts.
- 2016	:	Audit systems and processes and improve as needed.

## Targets and Milestones

- i) Annual increase in the number of international students (EU, island and overseas) on our campuses benefitting from an excellent transnational student experience. The proportion will increase from 15% to 20% of total by 2020, at one percentage point per annum.
- ii) Annual increase in the number of students enrolled offshore on Solent University programmes, including distance learning and blended learning.
- iii) Annual increase in the income from tuition fees paid by international students.
- iv) Annual increase in the numbers of UK students experiencing a period of study or work overseas or engaging with international students in the UK.
- v) Measure numbers of students and staff engaged in international activities. These targets will require better management information and measurement than before and, crucially, one set of numbers. This is needed in some cases before realistic and achievable targets can be set.
- vi) Measure number of staff engaged in international R&I and cross reference R&I strategy.
- vii) Initial set up of working guidelines on staff portal by August 2015 and central monitoring and co-ordination of authorisation to travel.
- viii) Annual increase in the number, geographical breadth and quality of strategic partnerships.