

INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY 2015-2020



FOREWORD

This document defines key terms and identifies the main objectives which the University seeks to achieve through its next phase of internationalisation. The Internationalisation Strategy is also linked to other documents which contain aims, interventions and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the achievement of its goals. Whilst the Strategy seeks to mobilise a globally positioned institutional vision, it also recognises that its success will be directly influenced by more local engagement at Faculty, School and Departmental levels. The key to the Strategy's implementation will be separate action plans that will attribute actions across the University and which will be monitored regularly.



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VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES



The University defines its approach to internationalisation in line with the European Parliament's (2015) revision of Knight's (2003) definition, which states that Internationalisation in Higher Education should be:

'The intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society.'

At the heart of this strategy is an understanding of the importance of actively embedding and infusing international, or globally-focused values, into the development and realisation of all aspects of Kent's activity. In achieving this, it is believed that educational strategy will be better connected with the global context and intercultural competences. These ambitions also respond to the pervasive nature of internationalisation, as it is embedded across each of the three main strands of Research, Education and Engagement, in the University's Institutional Plan.

The aim of the University of Kent's Internationalisation Strategy is to embrace and drive forward Kent's Internationalisation in a

dynamic and meaningful manner. The Internationalisation Strategy will further advance the work of its previous iteration in order to enhance and promote Kent's credentials as an internationally-focused and world-class institution for higher education and research. It will also seek to ensure that Kent continues to serve the needs of its increasingly globally-minded and -positioned stakeholders.

The Strategy is predicated on the understanding that internationalisation represents a virtuous circle for universities. Internationally minded and mobile academics have increased opportunities to create internationally co-authored and globally impactful research, with a greater propensity for high citation impact. Internationally

experienced, skilled and aware students are likely to be considered highly employable. Internationally engaged staff and students will raise the profile of the University, attract additional staff and students and yield local, national and international benefits.

In order to launch and implement the Strategy in a manner which emphasises its pervasive and institution-wide importance, the key features of the strategy will be disseminated through the '**All International**' campaign. The '**All International**' campaign will emphasise the wide and varied opportunities for internationalisation for all staff and students at Kent. This campaign will also be used to present an external-facing version of the Internationalisation Strategy through the Kent Global website.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

Kent's Internationalisation Strategy is informed by the University Plan 2015-2020, which describes the importance of internationalisation to Kent through its vision statement:

“By 2020, the University of Kent will have firmly secured its position as a UK top 20 university and become a recognised world-class research institution. We will build on our distinctive position as the UK's European university to extend our reach and impact across the world and become a beacon of excellence in education and research in our region, the UK and internationally. Our global reputation will be built on the application of our knowledge and expertise to find solutions to some of the world's major challenges.”

A distinguishing feature of the University Plan is the embedded nature of the emphasis on internationalisation within each of the three main strands of Research, Education and Engagement.

Given the different ways in which the word 'International' is used to describe groups in the context of Higher Education, it is important

to note that this strategy includes European within the term 'International' and does not rely on a restricted definition based on differing levels of student fee income.

A key characteristic of the Internationalisation Strategy is to review, enhance and develop international activity which links to each of the three key strands in the University Plan.

In making the most of this opportunity and achieving more internationalised outcomes for all staff and students, it will be important to continue with existing good practice, such as mobility and exchange. It will also be necessary to increase activity focused on internationalisation at home, which offers further scope to widen international impact and participation.



SECTOR CONTEXT



Over the last 20 years, internationally-focused activity within universities has moved from the fringes to the forefront of educational strategy. The reasons for this can be linked to matters such as:

- the perceived value brought by international students and global academic perspectives to higher education and research outputs and communities
- increases in international student and staff mobility and the need for global employability skills
- competition and drivers for home and international student recruitment, including recent and frequent changes to UK policy and immigration.
- internationally relevant metrics for student satisfaction, research evaluation and institutional rankings

The Internationalisation Strategy has been developed with reference to the *Internationalising Higher Education Framework* (HEA, 2014) and with consideration to the phases of internationalisation (De Wit, 2014) which the

sector as a whole has experienced in recent years. The Strategy recognises that, in order to be effective and meaningful, Kent's approach to internationalisation needs to take additional steps in order to more fully integrate clear and internationally-focused values, practices and

target-outcomes at the core of the University's many and diverse interfaces and areas of academic provision.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2015-2020

In brief, the Internationalisation Strategy's objectives are to:

- 1 Raise the profile and increase international esteem of the University of Kent and its research
- 2 Embrace, learn from and respond to cultural diversity and embed cross-institutional internationalisation
- 3 Champion and extend the University's unique position as the UK's European university
- 4 Further develop and enhance partnerships and networks in the wider international world
- 5 Continue to increase and support international student recruitment

Despite the specific focus of each of the five strategic objectives noted above, cross reference will be required across the set in order to address matters of overlapping significance.

AIMS LEADING FROM STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

For each of the main strategic objectives, a series of aims have been identified for action:

These objectives and aims are listed within a separate document and will inform both the Strategy's main Action Plan and a template for local strategies at School and Department level.

In addition to local strategies and the implementation of the main action plan,

separate strategies will need to be developed within the Academic Division linked to international partnerships, international student recruitment and student integration. For the purposes of matters affecting Europe, close liaison will be required between the Deans for Europe and Internationalisation and with EMS, in which European recruitment is

embedded. During its lifecycle, the main Internationalisation Strategy will also need to maintain ongoing linkage with other upper-level University strategies in order remain relevant and to continue to operate in context.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

During the Strategy's life-cycle a regular SWOT analysis will be undertaken:

In addition to the series of five main objectives and related aims, changing or emerging Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities or

Threats should be closely observed during implementation and monitoring of the Strategy. This will allow developments to be

taken into account, harnessed or mitigated as necessary.



REFERENCES

- De Wit, H (2014) The Different Faces and Phases of Internationalisation of Higher Education. *The Internationalization of the Academy* pp.119-143
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