REPORT FROM EXECUTIVE BOARD TO SENATE

June 2009

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR INTERNATIONALISATION

Background

In the context of the Strategic Overview process it became clear that while we have many activities that can be seen under the heading of internationalisation, we do not have a University-wide view or strategy.

Earlier this year the Vice-Chancellor wrote to each of the three faculties asking for a briefing on their respective international activities. From the responses it was clear that a wide range of very valuable initiatives are taking place.

A Think Tank on Internationalisation was held on 6 April 2009 that considered issues related to:

• An overview of international activities already taking place at the University.
• An understanding of how internationalisation is understood and managed within the faculties and the International Office.
• Our institutional objectives on internationalisation.
• What processes and actions are required to realise these objectives.

Following this meeting the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching & Learning) and Head of the International Office prepared a framework document that was considered by Executive Board on 26 May 2009.

The proposed framework is now presented to Senate for discussion, as part of the process of coming to an institutional view and strategy on internationalisation.

This document will also be discussed at the Heads of Unit Forum on 23 June 2009, when Senate’s comments will also be reported.

RUTH DRAPER
Secretary to Executive Board

4 June 2009
INTRODUCTION

This strategic framework for internationalisation is based on a series of institutional and faculty position papers and the Think Tank on Internationalisation, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor, on 6 April 2009. The framework covers both internationalisation at home – internationalisation of the curriculum, students as ‘global citizens’, cross-cultural understanding and skills development, exchanges, language training – and internationalisation abroad – strategic partners and networks, Trans-National Education and international recruitment. It is clear that faculties, schools, research groups and academics are already engaged in a broad and deep range of international activities that contribute to the international character of the University. Our strategy should build on and enhance these particular research, educational and discipline specific projects. There was agreement about the importance of articulating the University’s international brand and positioning, and the need to strengthen collaboration and develop partnerships in order to remain competitive.

VISION

Our vision is of Newcastle as a civic University with a global reputation for academic excellence.

PRINCIPLES

- **A deeper, more coherent and more visible international strategy** must be evolved. Pursuing internationalisation as a portfolio of activities will contribute to the enhancement, sustainability and quality of academic provision.

- **Internationalisation is a process** that should connect with institutional strategic objectives and values. It needs to draw from and inform our strategic positioning. Our international strategy should be incremental and ‘anchored in quality’. We need to:
  
  - Articulate our values and be clear about why we are doing things.
  - Focus and build on areas of strength.
  - Aim for greater co-ordination whilst not stifling organic development.
  - Recognise that internationalisation is about ‘making friends’ as well as the financial aspects of sustainability.
  - Take a longer term view but move on a number of small initiatives that will consolidate our position.

- **Our approach abroad** should be characterised by a significant presence in a few strategic locations around the world (a few large Newcastle ‘flags’). In parallel we should develop frameworks that bring structure to and enhance the large number of small initiatives that get established by individuals and groups. Activities should include:
- A tiered approach to partnership (operating the principle of subsidiarity where activity takes place at the lowest appropriate level).
- Developing Trans-National Education.
- International benchmarking.
- Corporate social responsibility.

- **Our approach at home** should be to foster an international perspective and ethos throughout our campus community, our activities and infrastructure. This will be a process of cultural change and will include:
  - Teaching: curricula, student experience.
  - Employability skills for global markets.
  - International students coming to Newcastle: marketing, recruitment, services.
  - Supporting and strengthening student and staff mobility.
  - Internationalisation of the curriculum, graduate attributes.
  - Appointing and supporting staff from abroad.
  - Cross-cultural and international ethos across the University.

- **Our overall approach should be one that co-ordinates activities** (DARO, recruitment, in-country delivery, partnerships, articulation agreements…….) in a way that is consistent with the University’s strengths.

**ACTIONS**

1) Establish ‘internationalisation’ as an institutional portfolio, build our internal networks and ensure a consistent message:

   - Assign the internationalisation portfolio as a responsibility to a member of University Executive Board – a ‘co-ordination portfolio’ to begin with, rather than a management portfolio.
   - Ask each member of Executive Board to articulate the internationalisation dimension of their portfolio.
   - Ask each faculty to assign responsibility for internationalisation to a member of the Faculty Executive Board.
   - Consider regional, country and project champions building on the expertise of schools and faculties.
   - Incrementally strengthen the International Office to take on a wider range of responsibilities.
   - Ask key services (eg Union Society, BDD, DARO, Careers, Student Progress, HR, SDU, Estates and Accommodation) to assign a responsibility for internationalisation and to identify how to internationalise our processes.
   - Communicate the strategy clearly, internally and externally.

2) Establish a University-wide structure for the development, approval, management and monitoring of international activities and agreements:

   - Set up an ‘International Executive Group’ (IEG) with responsibility for the development and implementation of the University’s international strategy. The group will be chaired by the Executive Board member responsible for internationalisation and will bring together the faculty
representatives and the Head of the International Office. When necessary the group will have the ability to co-opt staff to work on projects for a limited period.
- Each faculty will be expected to have an international strategy and suitable arrangements for encouraging, facilitating and monitoring international activities and agreements across the faculty.
- The IEG will monitor and maintain a register of all significant international activities and agreements. Final approval for all significant new activities will reside with the University Executive Board (UEB) following a recommendation from the IEG.
- The IEG will publish guidelines for faculties and schools as to what constitutes a significant activity that must have formal approval of the UEB. Such activities, which carry with them a high degree of risk (financial and/or reputational), will be distinguished from low risk and informal activities that may be approved at the school level.
- The IEG will distinguish between and classify international activities and agreements based on their purpose (eg market access, overseas delivery, co-production networks) and location (countries and regions) to assist in developing a strong and balanced portfolio of activities that is both financially rewarding and reputation enhancing.
- The IEG will report to UEB and will receive reports and information from Faculty Executive Boards and the International Office.

3) Position the University strategically in a way that builds synergy with existing activities:
- Undertake research into where ‘big flags’ should be placed regionally.
- Research, develop and maintain a small number of significant strategic partnerships which engage in a full range of activity.
- Increase number of programmes delivered ‘in country’, building on existing strengths.
- Promote and communicate existing research networks and centres that contribute to the international and developmental agenda.
- Clearly position European opportunities (such as the Framework Programme) and the Bologna process within our internationalisation strategy.
- Engage with the shaping of UK HE international positioning.

4) Underpin internationalisation with a dedicated operational budget including funding for strategic pump priming. We need to recognise that establishing a higher profile internationally is resource intensive but is vital for the University’s sustainability.

5) Maintain a high level of market orientated recruitment activity and continue to develop the relationship with INTO and other pipelines into our programmes.

6) Identify KPIs with detailed measurable targets.
INITIAL ACTIONS TO MAXIMISE QUICK WINS

- Audit and gather in details of our current international links (including research) institution wide:
  - Where possible categorise these and identify how, through internal/external communication, we can achieve greater profile.
  - Ensure our data remains up-to-date eg establish insurance linked tracking of all travellers with automatic population of a database.
  - Run a series of ‘country’ seminars to identify how we get greater leverage from different activities.
  - Effectively use the expertise/experience links and networks of our International staff.

- Map out our vision of an international campus and work towards closing gaps:
  - Optimise/diversify the international component of our student body.
  - Articulate our meaning of ‘educating global citizens’. Ensure that we provide our students with the skills to meet the needs of employers looking for global awareness and experience.
  - Extend activities around the ‘international curriculum’.
  - Address weaknesses as highlighted by the International Student Barometer (ISB).
  - Develop the scholarships’ profile.
  - Union Society to focus on internationalising its activities.

- Develop Trans-National Education and Continuing Professional Development strategies and portfolios:
  - Develop themed (eg energy) packages for sponsors to include flexible programmes, accommodation, English training and student support.
  - Establish an expert services group (including the International Office, Human Resources, Finance, legal expertise, Business Development Directorate, Quality Assurance, DARO) which can act as a ‘one shop stop’ to support collaborative and offshore provision. This will ensure that we can respond quickly to new opportunities and to help to minimise risk.

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4 June 2009