

Internationalisation in the UK Higher Education Sector

A Competency-based Approach



GlobalPeople

Internationalisation in the UK Higher Education Sector: A Competency-based Approach

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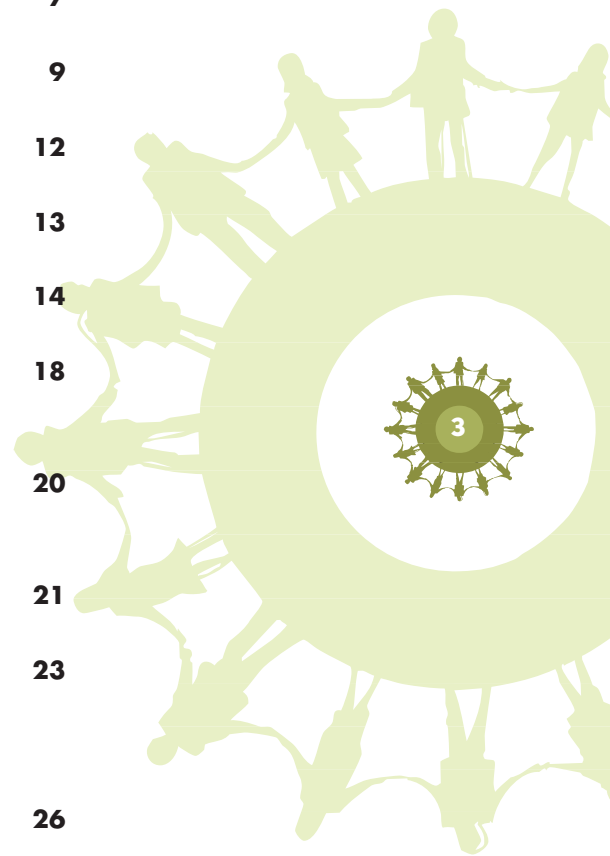
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Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. The project in its wider context	5
3. The debate on internationalisation	6
4. Common approaches to internationalisation	7
5. Current practice at the University of Warwick	9
6. Rationale and methodology of the current project	12
7. Logic of the competency approach	13
8. The competency framework	14
9. Applying the competency approach: identifying opportunities for intervention	18
10. Conclusion	20
References and other sources	21
Appendix 1: Examples of practice from UK national institutions for higher education initiatives and from selected international institutions	23
Appendix 2: Internationalisation at the University of Warwick: a list of sources	26
Appendix 3: Recommendations from the Centre for Applied Linguistics team to the Steering Group of 'The Graduate Pledge' following the feasibility phase of the project	29



1. Introduction

This paper has been produced as one of the outputs from the 'The Graduate Pledge', a research collaboration between King's College, London and the University of Warwick funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England. One of the five core themes in 'The Graduate Pledge' is that of "global connectedness" or "the creation of a globally-oriented curriculum". This is seen as an essential element in the education of students who will graduate equipped with skills that allow them to operate effectively in a world where technology, communications and business create a diverse, complex but 'globalised' working environment. Integrating the acquisition of such skills into the undergraduate curriculum is thus seen as part of the broader aspiration to internationalise the UK Higher Education (HE) sector and to make it fit for purpose in the world of the 21st Century. In Bourn's words:

"Enabling graduates to develop the appropriate knowledge, skills and values to be effective in a globalised world would seem to be a necessary component of being 'world-class', an aspiration of so many higher education institutions."

Bourn n.d.: 4

A team at each institution undertook independent work within this theme but shared information and insights through the mechanism of a joint Working Group for the theme. This paper reports on the independent work undertaken by the team from the Centre for Applied Linguistics at the University of Warwick but the authors acknowledge the value added by the opportunity to discuss their research with that Working Group and with other colleagues involved in 'The Graduate Pledge' project. An earlier version of this paper (entitled 'Summary Review') was circulated to colleagues and made available on the project website for comments.



2. The project in its wider context

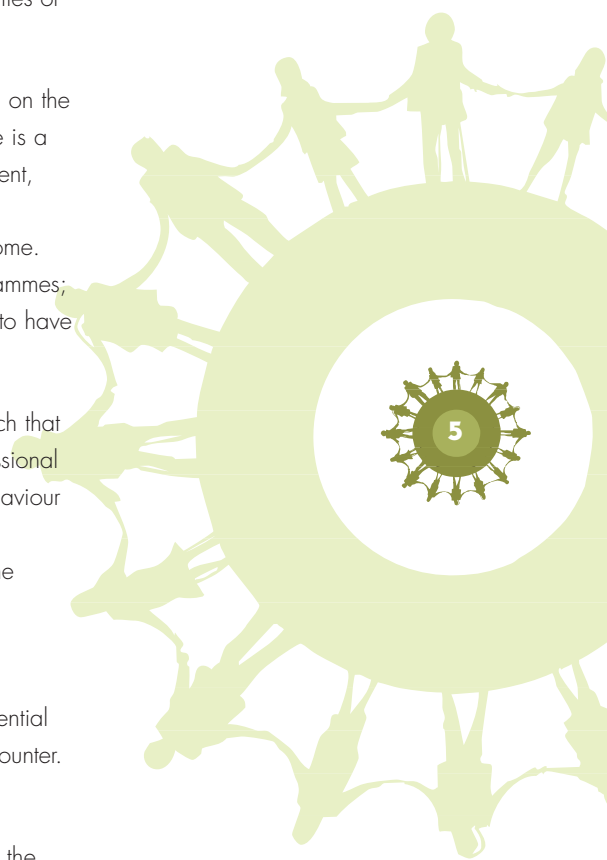
The link between greater internationalisation of UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the integration of new elements in the undergraduate curriculum has not always been easily made. The aspiration to internationalise has been defined in different ways and has been implemented to a radically varying degree in different institutions. There is no single – or simple – answer to how one develops students with a global perspective or the qualities of a global citizen.

One reason for this, we believe, is the conceptual gap that currently exists between, on the one hand, strategic aspirations and, on the other, activities at grass-roots level. There is a danger that Higher Education internationalisation initiatives introduce curriculum content, exchange schemes or extra-curricular activities that are assumed to promote greater intercultural awareness without any proven link between the aspiration and the outcome. Some activities regarded as culturally positive (e.g. foreign visits or exchange programmes; recruiting more overseas students) have been demonstrated, in some circumstances, to have the opposite effect (De Nooy and Hanna 2003; Greenholtz 2003).

To bridge this gap, the Centre for Applied Linguistics (CAL) team favours an approach that involves grounding any activities in a well-defined framework of personal and professional competencies. By identifying the competencies that support effective intercultural behaviour it is possible to define the broader aspiration to internationalise in terms of specific competencies and, in turn, demonstrate how those competencies will contribute to the development of more capable (and employable) students. Competencies specific to working and communicating in an intercultural context may be targeted through the introduction of new activities or through the provision of specialist support to existing activities. Students can thereby develop a greater awareness of their actual and potential competencies and extract more value from the intercultural experiences that they encounter. This competency-based approach is set out in greater detail in Section 7 below.

The intercultural competency approach has already been extensively developed by the Centre for Applied Linguistics in the context of international projects, through the eChina-UK project and the Global People Resource Bank (www.globalpeople.org.uk). Drawing on this work, the CAL team looked at how a framework of intercultural competencies might best be used to build appropriate 'global' knowledge, attitudes and skills in Warwick undergraduate students.

In this paper, we first review the intellectual and practical context within which the current research took place. This includes a brief review of recent academic debates on internationalisation and an overview of current practice at the University of Warwick. (Information gathered in the course of the research on some of the practical policies being pursued by other UK and international institutions is also provided in Appendix 1). We then go on to describe the methodology adopted in the current research and to present the competency framework developed for use with University of Warwick students. Finally, we describe the initial interventions made at Warwick as a result of this project and the potential for further practical implementation of a competency-based approach.



3. The debate on internationalisation

“Changes in government policies and the social and economic context within which universities operate have resulted in increasing pressure for them to [...] internationalise their curricula” (Leask 2000: 1). As a consequence, ‘internationalisation’ and ‘globalisation’ have become buzzwords in the HE sector and internationalisation has become a priority at the highest strategic level at most HEIs. This is not merely a local trend, but one that can be observed worldwide.

However, according to the most extensive recent review of the existing literature (Caruana and Spurling 2007), the policy arena of internationalisation is fraught with mixed messages, potential contradictions and inconsistencies. Aims are often unclear, interpreted in numerous different ways and there is a clear gap between the announcement of “loudly trumpeted schemes” and actual change in education practice. As a consequence the internationalisation of the curriculum is often more rhetoric than reality. Bourn et al. (2006: 38) also stress that current practice reveals a lack of initiative, stating that “a historical review of policy initiatives [...] reveals a history of emphasising the criticality of the issues, followed by periods of complete inaction, particularly on the part of Higher Education”. It seems evident from the literature that many institutions lack a clear direction in the implementation of meaningful and sustainable internationalisation strategies.

UK HEIs run the risk of competing fiercely for fee-paying overseas students without always guaranteeing a proper infrastructure to support those students or to integrate them into the local student culture in a way that is beneficial to them as well as to local students. Also, there may not be a clear strategy for reviewing the pedagogical approaches that are taken to instruct those students. In other words, the presence of international students is often seen as a key to internationalisation (as well as having obvious commercial benefits), but the actions taken to accommodate and integrate those students may be inadequate or inappropriate.

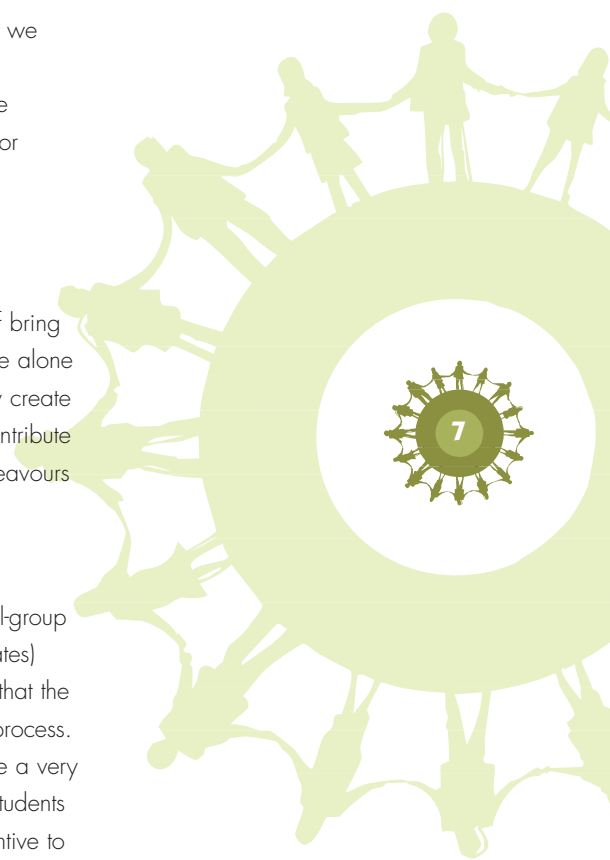
What appears to be required are concrete actions that meet the needs of both home and international students, enabling the latter to function better in the UK context and the former to develop the intercultural understanding necessary to interact with overseas students in the UK as well as to prepare to work in an intercultural setting for overseas sojourns or future employment.



4. Common approaches to internationalisation

Drawing on the research reviewed as part of this project, it is useful to categorise, and thus be able to distinguish conceptually, the different approaches taken to internationalisation in the UK HE sector. Following Caruana and Hanstock (2003), we would suggest seven main categories of internationalisation. These are neither comprehensive nor mutually exclusive: current practice varies considerably from one institution to another and many institutions show evidence of pursuing (deliberately or otherwise) a combination of these approaches.

- i) **Ethos.** This approach has a campus-culture orientation, which involves the recruitment of more international students and staff with the aim of naturally generating an international 'ethos' in the institution. While international staff bring international outlooks and distinct cultural perspectives to the university, these alone may be insufficient in terms of strategic internationalisation goals. They may create an environment with an international atmosphere, but do not necessarily contribute to students building intercultural skills that can serve them in their future endeavours and career paths.
- ii) **Infusion.** This approach is based on the notion that students and staff are encouraged to reflect critically on their own cultural values and biases. Small-group reflective practices for students and especially staff (as Leask, 2000, advocates) constitute good practice and a sound way of developing an understanding that the responsibility for internationalisation lies with all participants in the learning process. However, it is doubtful that unguided encouragement for self-reflection will be a very fruitful means of producing a more international perspective and outlook in students and staff. Carefully-designed professional development courses and an incentive to participate in such courses are thus vital for this approach to reach the staff and students who are less intrinsically inclined to address their intercultural competence.
- iii) **Mobility.** This approach is prevalent in Europe and assumes that mobility of students under exchange programmes is the key to internationalisation of the curriculum (Caruana and Hancock 2003). However, research has shown that without proper support systems in place, both pre-placement and during the sojourn, exchange programmes often achieve the reverse effect, with students building up negative stereotypes towards the host culture, thereby developing a more ethnocentric viewpoint (De Nooy and Hanna 2003; Greenholtz 2003). This conclusion is supported by research in the wider field of intercultural interaction showing that increased exposure to unfamiliar cultures may result in the adoption of defensive attitudes rather than greater openness (Bennett 1993). Hence, while student exchanges may sometimes achieve the desired effect, at other times they may do more harm than good (Marginson 2010). Even when student exchanges



achieve the desired effect, intercultural learning may be limited without a proper supportive learning framework to pinpoint areas of intercultural learning and areas for further improvement.

- iv) **Overseas campus.** More and more universities have started to open branch campuses in overseas locations as part of their internationalisation strategy. However, such ventures risk the accusation of intellectual colonialism - simply imposing the western pedagogical model into foreign locations without proper adaptation of pedagogical styles and curriculum content. While this approach sees universities opening their doors to yet more international students in their home environments, its effectiveness in equipping students with a more global outlook is strongly dependent on appropriate implementation strategies.
- v) **Internationalisation through content.** This approach aims to integrate a cultural element into the course content. This can be achieved in quite obvious ways in fields such as international business, which draws on examples of multinational companies or intercultural business mergers. However, other subjects – such as mathematics – may struggle to achieve such an objective. Even if academics are willing to alter their course content accordingly, there remains the problem that they would have to be interculturally skilled themselves in order to support their students' development. Without a culturally literate teacher, there is little hope of developing a culturally literate student, so in order to internationalise the course content, one would have to start by educating the educator. Knight (2003) also highlights the lack of qualified managers to lead the process as a key obstacle to meaningful changes to the policy. Hence, internationalisation at the student level alone is not sufficient: internationalisation at the level of academics and of institutional managers and leaders is a prerequisite to implementing internationalisation policies successfully.
- vi) **Internationalisation through social events.** This approach simply aims to create opportunities for 'home' students to mix with international students through organizing events that allow students to mingle. This approach may well improve the campus life for those students who select to engage in such activities, but it is hard to demonstrate that such activities achieve any building of intercultural skills that serve internationalisation on a strategic level.
- vii) **Competency.** The competency (or capability) approach constitutes a pragmatic approach to internationalisation, which emphasises the development of intercultural practices, knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. This approach has been championed by a number of writers as a significant step towards internationalisation, especially with regard to integrating internationalisation at home into the curriculum (Caruana and Hancock 2003; Caruana and Spurling 2007; Bourn n.d.; Leask 2000; Tan 2008). However, while many believe this to be the best approach as it is a more deeply embedding approach than 'ethos', 'mobility' or 'content', just as with internationalisation itself, very little concrete evidence exists of what this might involve and how it can be put into practice. The discussion around the competency approach involves a focus on developing intercultural awareness, language proficiency and intercultural skills, but few studies specify in detail how such awareness might be developed.



5. Current practice at the University of Warwick

5.1 Internationalisation at Warwick

As part of the current project, the Centre for Applied Linguistics (CAL) team conducted a review of the current practice with regard to internationalisation at the University of Warwick. This research involved the following activities:

- a review of current data available through the University's central administration;
- a survey of the curriculum and policies of the University's schools and departments;
- a series of informal interviews with key informants (the International Office; the Centre for Student Careers and Skills; the Learning and Development Centre; the Warwick Students Union);
- informal interviews with academic colleagues in other departments with intercultural components in the curriculum;
- collaboration with colleagues in the 'Student-led Research' strand of 'The Graduate Pledge' who conducted an extensive survey of the degree curricula across the University;
- collaboration with colleagues in the 'Community Engagement' strand of 'The Graduate Pledge' to design and analyse a survey of student opinion administered to 220 undergraduates at University Careers Fairs in 2009/10 ¹

The University of Warwick, as an international university, boasts a comparatively large number of international students. As such, it has internationalisation listed as one of its top priorities both in its mission statement and in the Vision 2015 statement. Warwick has an established International Office, has implemented initiatives for internationalisation and is striving to implement further initiatives, such as the creation of an international quarter on campus.

While such future initiatives are promising, current Warwick internal practice shows that internationalisation is still largely conceptualised and implemented in a relatively conventional manner. Practices include the content approach, student exchange programmes, intake of overseas students and the inclusion of international staff (or staff with international experience) into the faculties. The university does not, at present, have

¹ Data from this survey, as they relate to the Centre for Applied Linguistics project, are presented in a separate report 'The impact of intercultural experience - a survey of undergraduates at the University of Warwick' available in the Resources Bank at www.globalpeople.org.uk/



an overarching strategy for internationalisation but this is not regarded as an omission. Rather, there is an assumption that the university does not need a separate international strategy, because its ambition is international and this needs to be reflected throughout its wide range of activities.

5.2 The student body

In terms of international students, Warwick is one of the most successful overseas recruiters in the UK, attracting around 7,000 undergraduate applications and almost 10,000 postgraduate applications every year from international students. Official University figures for 2008/09 show international students constituting 26% (4,348) of the total student population of 16,646. This consists of 1,615 undergraduate students (17% of a total of 9,637) and 2,733 of postgraduates (39%). Three-quarters of these international students come from outside the EU member states. If anything, these figures may be an underestimate as it is unclear whether they include non-UK students from the EU.

Warwick is a significant participant in the international Erasmus exchange scheme. Around 10% of those graduating at undergraduate level in 2008/09 (approximately 320 annually) will have participated in some sort of formal international exchange programme. 75% of these (around 240) will have done so through the Erasmus programme. For 2009/10, the University's International Office suggests these figures will be 430 and 330 respectively. Of 1,000 incoming international students attending Warwick's annual orientation programme 20% are on Erasmus and similar exchange programmes.

The university has had considerable success with its targeted orientation programme for international students, gaining positive feedback from those who have been through it and establishing a reputation as a destination for international study. The 4-day residential programme includes a coach pick-up from Heathrow airport as well as the local train and coach stations; information sessions; study skills sessions; tours of the campus and local area; practical help with issues such as opening a bank account and police registration; and a social programme of trips, sports and evening events. During the programme 80 student volunteers act as mentors to the new arrivals and offer advice on university life. Those international students unable to attend the orientation are offered induction sessions throughout the first academic year. However, the university has also recognised the danger of implementing policies that segregate international students from home students and is currently looking to develop a more integrative approach to undergraduate orientation, which avoids the segregation of international from home students.

Notable among initiatives for social integration on the Warwick campus is One World Week, a nine-day festival of arts, sports and entertainment which aims to bring "all nationalities on the Warwick campus together both through the organisation of and participation in the events, thus leading to greater integration and internationalisation of the student body..." (University of Warwick submission in response to the European Commission Green Paper on 'Promoting the learning mobility of young people,' 2009). Warwick promotes the One World Week as "the world's largest student-run international event" (op.cit).

In response to the perceived need to make UK students from UK HEIs more competitive in the international job market, the Centre for Student Careers and Skills has pioneered an



International Careers Fair, which offers students the opportunity to find out more about career options outside the UK.

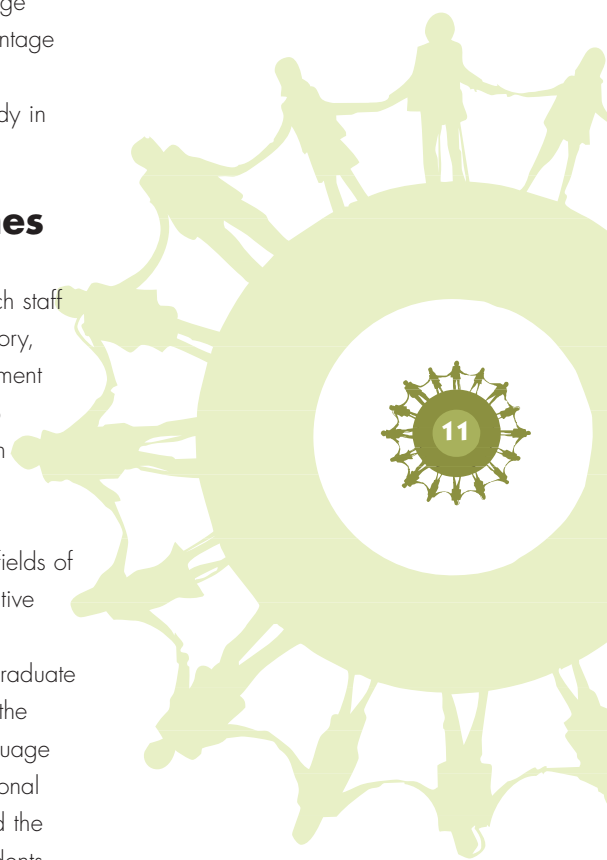
So, although there is high-quality support available to prospective and current international students through the International Office, the Careers Centre, the Students' Union and other central institutions, the support they provide to aid students adjusting to life in the UK is largely focused on practical and social matters. While these efforts are undoubtedly necessary (and appreciated by the student body) there is awareness that initiatives towards 'internationalisation at home' are not sufficiently developed. Warwick started to move towards a competency approach by creating the International Skills Set in 2009. This is a self-development tool available to students through their Warwick Advantage intranet. This has now been considerably extended into the Warwick Global Advantage programme, which is described in Section 9 below. At present there is still limited availability of materials that international students could benefit from through self-study in the university library.

5.3 Staff, curriculum and study programmes

Warwick has 5,168 members of staff, of whom 1,800 are academic and research staff spread across thirty departments and over fifty research centres. Of the latter category, almost one-third are from outside the UK. The university's Human Resources department has an information website for international staff. For non-academic staff wishing to improve their skills, the staff professional development programmes offer a course in 'Working with International Students.'

Warwick has a well-justified reputation as an international university in terms of its fields of study and the status of many of its departments. However, many of the most innovative courses are located at postgraduate level, including several international degree programmes funded under the Erasmus Mundus initiative. At the level of the undergraduate curriculum, internationalisation initiatives are less visible but include the decision of the History Department to require all undergraduates to study a modern European language for two years. The same department also hosts a dedicated website for its international students, as does the Institute of Education. Both the Centre for Legal Education and the Warwick Medical School offer professional development opportunities for their students which address communication or diversity issues. The Warwick Business School runs a number of courses with explicit international orientation, including the BSc International Business and BSc International Management which require a compulsory year abroad. The Centre for Applied Linguistics provides pre-sessional and in-sessional English language support for all international students, and runs a research interest group in Working and Communicating across Cultures.

A simple tabular presentation of current internationalisation activities at the University of Warwick (and details of who to contact for further information) is provided in Appendix 2: Internationalisation at the University of Warwick. The information in the table is organised into the categories used in Section 4 above to describe the different aspects of internationalisation.



6. Rationale and methodology of the current project

What the literature suggests is that there is no real consistency of direction in the quest for internationalisation. While constituting a top priority in the mission statements of many UK HEIs, there seems to be a lack of awareness and understanding of what constitutes an effective and sustainable way to internationalise. While there is a lot of discourse around the topics of 'internationalisation of the curriculum' and the 'global citizen' very little concrete action has been taken that allows international students to function better in UK HEIs and that allows UK nationals to develop intercultural awareness and skills to deal with international issues. What is required is what Caruana and Hanstock (2003: 2) refer to as 'concretizing' policy', that is, an understanding of how to internationalise the curriculum in practice. To achieve this, the UK HEI sector needs to reflect on existing practices and their respective effectiveness to enable institutions to put into practice effective policies for intercultural learning in all students. The Centre for Applied Linguistics team's contribution to 'The Graduate Pledge' project is an attempt to further this process through an examination of a competency-based approach to building intercultural effectiveness among the University of Warwick students.

The project was divided into three main stages: Review; Consultation; Development. In the Review stage, the project team reviewed published evidence relating to internationalisation strategies in the UK Higher Education sector and subsequently researched the range of current internationalisation activities at the University of Warwick. In the Consultation stage, the team worked with colleagues across the university to develop an intercultural competency framework that would reflect the needs of the undergraduate population. This was closely based on the competency material developed as part of the team's preceding Global People project. In the Development stage, the team identified a number of specific opportunities for the framework to be used to extend or support intercultural development activities at Warwick. Material from the Development stage has been presented in Sections 3 – 5 above (and Appendix 1); the work from the remaining two stages is presented in Sections 7 – 10 below.



7. Logic of the competency approach

The key to developing intercultural awareness and effectiveness among undergraduates is to be able to understand what this means in terms of actual behaviour. With this understanding, it might be possible to practise, support and develop those behaviours through the curriculum and through extra-curricular activities. The Centre for Applied Linguistics' (CAL's) competency framework for the University of Warwick identifies key competencies shown to be of value in underpinning intercultural performance and links these to activities that would exercise and develop those competencies. The aim of the current project was primarily to identify curriculum activities or content that could benefit by identifying competency outcomes more clearly. The creation, therefore, of a 'globally-oriented curriculum' would be based on an understanding of which elements in that curriculum might introduce or strengthen the intercultural competencies desired in the student and might be likely to make that individual more effective in personal and professional interaction across cultures.

Figure 1 below represents the logic of the competency approach. Starting with a strategic goal of "internationalisation", the logic flow shows the need first to identify the targets of that strategy and then to define those targets. This level of definition then permits a more detailed definition of the competencies and thus the personal behaviours desired in the student. With the behavioural outcomes identified, potential policies can be analysed far more rigorously in terms of their potential contribution to those outcomes. The CAL team's earlier work on managing international projects has provided additional support to the existing literature, showing the value of adopting a competency-based approach to intercultural learning (Reid et al. 2009; Spencer-Oatey and Stadler 2009).

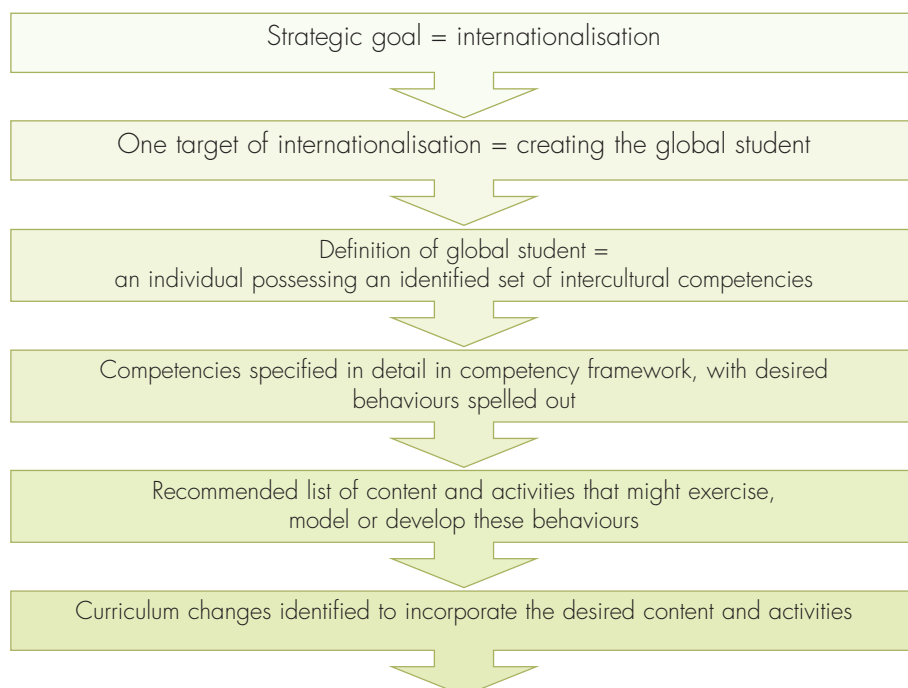
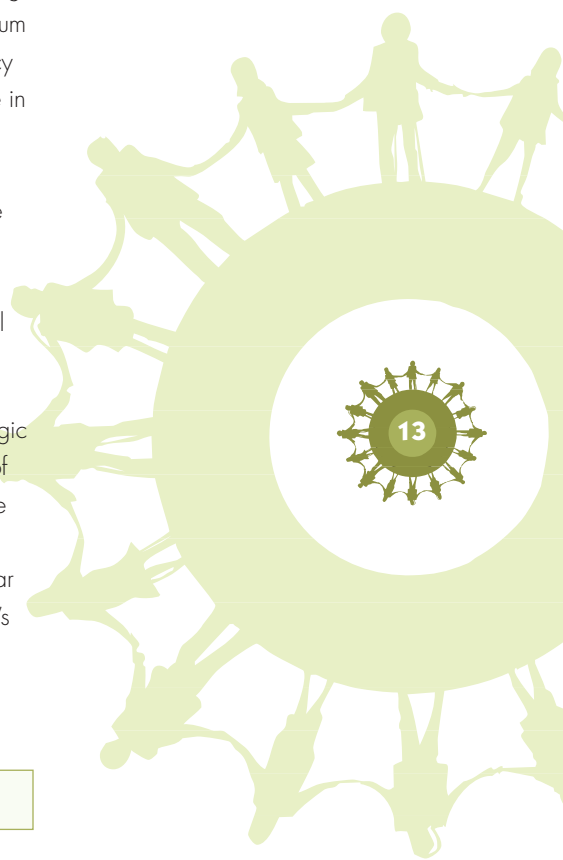


Figure 1: The logic of the competency approach



8. The Competency Framework

The set of competencies generated for this project were based on a much larger set of competencies developed for the Global People project (Spencer-Oatey and Stadler 2009; www.globalpeople.org.uk). The aim in the current research was to produce a set of competencies which would be manageable in number and able to be tailored for local activities, had observable behaviours, and could be related to stages in the undergraduate career.

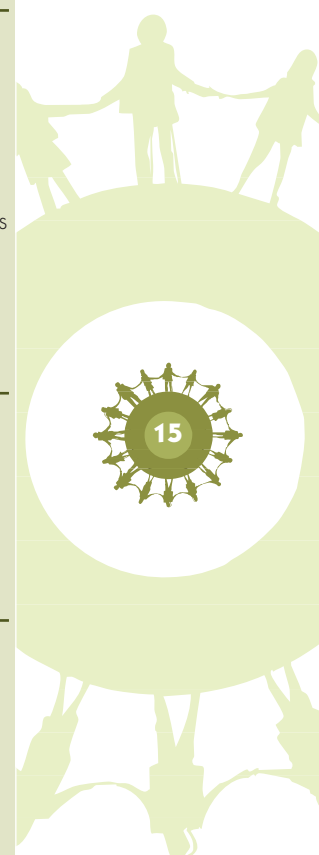
The selection of ten competencies was determined by the project team's understanding of which competencies would be most relevant and achievable for undergraduate students. The aim was also to offer a range of competencies incorporating both those which are more outward-facing (e.g. Flexible Behaviour; Rapport Building) and those which focus more on the individual's personal development (e.g. Self-Awareness; Personal Strength). These selected competencies (and their observable behaviours) are organised into a three-stage matrix, divided into Transition, Participation and Employability stages. Each stage is designed to emphasise the relevance of particular competencies to a particular part of the undergraduate 'journey' and to make it easier for users of the framework to select sections of the material to work with. To facilitate this further, each stage offers pointers on the relevance of the competencies and whom they might most benefit.

The competency framework developed for 'The Graduate Pledge' project is set out in full in Figure 2 below. The framework was circulated to colleagues at Warwick and at King's College, London for comments and then used as the basis for discussion with key stakeholders at Warwick when identifying potential areas for intervention. The outcome of these latter discussions are summarised in Section 9 below.



Competency	Transition	Participation	Employability
Relevance for...	Sojourns in another country: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Preparing ✓ Entering & coping ✓ Returning 	Integration in an academic community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Collaborating in multicultural learning groups ✓ Sharing social & leisure activities with peers ✓ Managing administrative transactions 	Future employment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Preparing CV ✓ Interacting with careers advisors ✓ Job seeking ✓ Undertaking interviews
Of benefit to...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International students and staff entering Warwick • Warwick students and staff preparing for periods of time abroad for one term or longer • International staff and students interacting with service providers and support staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students participating in mixed ethnicity classes and group work • Teachers working with students of mixed ethnicity • Staff engaging in international collaborations • Students engaging with diversity in local communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students wanting to enhance their employability by demonstrating intercultural awareness • Students preparing for jobs that require any form of interaction with people from other cultures
Information Gathering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify sources of cultural data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about unfamiliar cultures, using a range of strategies to gather relevant information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to show evidence of independent research activity to gather information for practical and academic purposes
Flexible Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster a sense of curiosity • Be open to new ideas • Be willing to challenge stereotypes & modify assumptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively seek to understand unfamiliar behaviour • Avoid judging people from other cultures on the basis of stereotypes • Acknowledge that different practices are sensible and meaningful in their cultural context and can add value to your own way of thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to show evidence of drawing on diverse thinking and actively modifying assumptions in the face of unfamiliar thinking and behaviour
Flexible Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be prepared to adjust your behaviour when sharing facilities • Flex your behaviour not to offend • Be ready to adopt the behaviour of locals, and experiment with different ways of behaving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn how and when to adapt by observing other people's behaviour • Build a repertoire of behaviour to suit different purposes, contexts and audiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to show evidence of increased effectiveness through adaptive behaviour

Figure 2:
Intercultural Competency Framework for the Centre for Applied Linguistics 'The Graduate Pledge' project



Competency	Transition	Participation	Employability
Rapport Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate contact and show interest in people from unfamiliar cultures • Develop connections with locals on a personal level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibit warmth & friendliness • Maintain and extend working relationships • Be willing to focus on long-term trust-building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to show evidence of establishing sustainable relationships across cultures
Language Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in learning words and phrases in other languages • Try out expressions and words when communicating with locals • Practise your language skills with native speakers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not rely on the others' language skills • Do not feel too self-conscious about your language proficiency • Do not let your language proficiency hold you back from contributing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to show evidence of acquisition and use of (new) language skills for performance
Making Yourself Understood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapt use of language to the proficiency level of the recipient(s) to maximise comprehensibility • Explain clearly to local people what you need and why you need it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively clarify your own contribution • Be prepared to share the thought process behind your intentions • Adjust speed, complexity and selection of language to suit needs of interlocutor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to show evidence of successful modification of communication to achieve understanding in a challenging context
Attentive Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen actively to what the other is trying to say • Double-check that you have understood what local people want you to do • Pay attention to non-verbal signals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check and clarify rather than assuming understanding • Pay close attention to how people from other cultures differ in their body language • Develop ability to anticipate and handle potential misunderstanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to show evidence of active listening and to provide examples of successful and more challenging interactions
Self-Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise that others may see you and treat you as a foreigner • Be aware of how you come across to others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use diversity as a mirror to explore your own cultural identity • Observe how your style impacts on group dynamics • Reflect on how you may be perceived by people from other backgrounds when you are behaving 'normally' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to show evidence of what you have learnt about yourself from working internationally



Competency	Transition	Participation	Employability
Personal Strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strategies to cope with difficult situations and the stress that comes with living in a foreign environment • Remember the benefits and opportunities for personal growth that come with overcoming adversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remain positive even when you encounter problems or failure • Retain a sense of inner purpose – try to be flexible, but ‘stand your ground’ when it is necessary • Adhere to your values and provide a sense of direction for yourself and others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to show evidence of resilience in adversity • Able to maintain a balance between flexibility and personal values
Spirit of Adventure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a positive attitude to new experiences • Be adventurous and try something new on a regular basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be ready to deal with ambiguous situations • Develop tolerance of ambiguity • Enjoy the opportunity to work in diverse groups with different perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to show evidence of successful risk-taking in uncertain, unpredictable or challenging situations



9. Applying the competency approach: identifying opportunities for intervention

Using the competency framework presented above, the Centre for Applied Linguistics (CAL) project team worked with colleagues across the Warwick campus to identify opportunities to use the framework to improve the intercultural competence of students and staff. As the remit and resources of this phase of 'The Graduate Pledge' project extended only to conducting a feasibility study, the aim of the team was to identify a number of areas where potential for the use of the competency framework could be agreed with colleagues. In practice, one opportunity led to immediate implementation (see 9. i) below) and three other opportunities for future intervention were identified. These were as follows:

i) *Undergraduate personal development.*

In collaboration with the Student Careers and Skills Centre, the project team produced a tailored version of the competency framework aimed at students keen to develop their intercultural performance and to have this achievement recognised. The modified framework has been used in the creation of a new award for Warwick undergraduates - the Warwick Global Advantage Award – available through the University intranet (www.warwick.ac.uk/globaladvantage). Competencies from the CAL model constitute the criteria against which achievement is to be judged. The award was launched by the Careers Centre in February 2010, has been sponsored by Deloitte and has already attracted considerable student interest.

ii) *Support for study abroad schemes.*

Material from the CAL's Global People Resource Bank (www.globalpeople.org.uk) is already being made available by the International Office both to overseas students taking foundation courses prior to UK study and to current undergraduates preparing for study abroad. Colleagues in the International Office see further potential for using competency-based material both in preparing students for participation in the Erasmus programme and in producing questionnaire surveys for incoming international students.

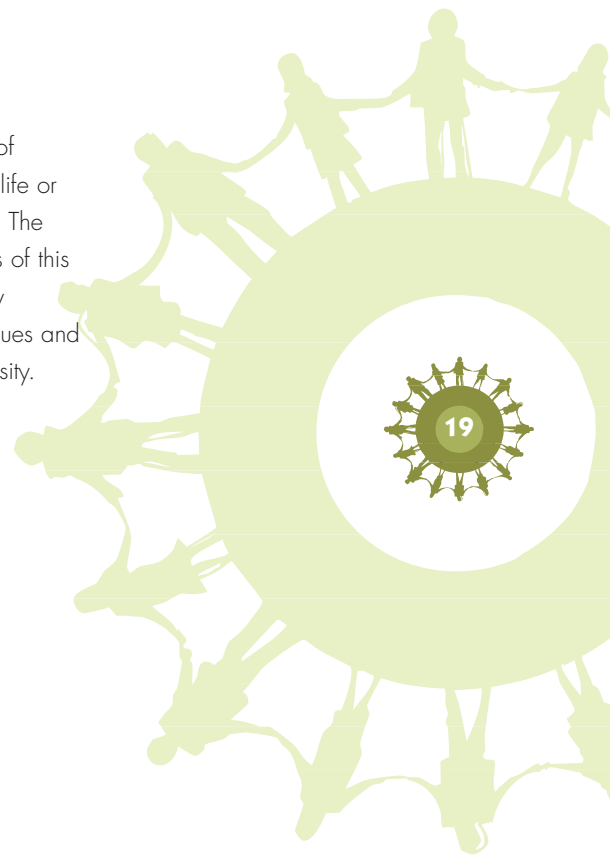


iii) *Contribution to the international curriculum.*

The CAL project team, in consultation with the Warwick Business School, has targeted an undergraduate module in International Business where the competency framework could be used to extend the current teaching of intercultural awareness. At present the approach is limited to exploring the cultural challenges in particular countries: the proposal is that the competency framework is used as a teaching tool to introduce the concept of generic intercultural competencies that can enhance business performance in all situations of cultural diversity. This was used for the first time with a group in the third term of 2009/10 and offers potential for further integration.

iv) *Development of intercultural training for staff and students*

The University's Learning and Development Centre has run a small number of courses aimed at helping international students to integrate into UK cultural life or to support Warwick staff in dealing with students from less familiar cultures. The CAL project team has discussed the potential for offering additional courses of this kind – aimed at staff and/or students – which would utilise the competency framework to help participants to develop a better awareness of cultural issues and to build skills that would help them be effective in situations of cultural diversity.



10. Conclusion

The purpose of the project 'Using an intercultural competency framework to develop students' ability to work and communicate across cultures' was to explore the feasibility of developing and using a framework of intercultural competencies within a leading Russell Group university. Background research yielded valuable insights both into the poorly-defined nature of current internationalisation strategies in the UK HE sector and, more positively, into the range of practical activities currently being undertaken at the University of Warwick. The authors of this paper would argue for the value of universities – especially those with a claim to be leading international institutions – establishing a clearer link between their international aspirations and the policies being implemented to deliver those aspirations. Greater awareness of the range of strategies available and the likely impact of those strategies on the intercultural education of students should help institutions to focus their resources more effectively. The full set of the project team's recommendations to 'The Graduate Pledge' project are included in Appendix 3.

Based on previous research, the team at the Centre for Applied Linguistics is committed to using well-defined intercultural competencies as a key tool in supporting those seeking to become more effective in working across cultures. This paper has set out both the rationale for this approach in the context of undergraduate learning and the logic of how competencies can provide a bridge between high-level aspirations and grass-roots action. To investigate the potential value of a competency-based approach within the University of Warwick, the team developed a competency framework tailored to the needs of the undergraduate. This was then used, in consultation with colleagues across the campus, to identify opportunities for such an implementation. Four areas were successfully identified and the overall response to the competency framework was extremely positive. In one case, the research team was able to work with a team from the Careers Centre to develop a new award programme for undergraduate students, based around the intercultural competency framework. The conclusion from this work is that there is both enthusiasm and real practical opportunity for a competency-based approach to supplement and extend work being done to develop intercultural awareness and skills in students and staff at Warwick.

It is hoped that the contents of this paper, and the other outputs from the CAL project will be of value both to colleagues at the University of Warwick and to the wider UK HE community in delivering effective strategies for internationalisation through the development of more interculturally competent staff and students.



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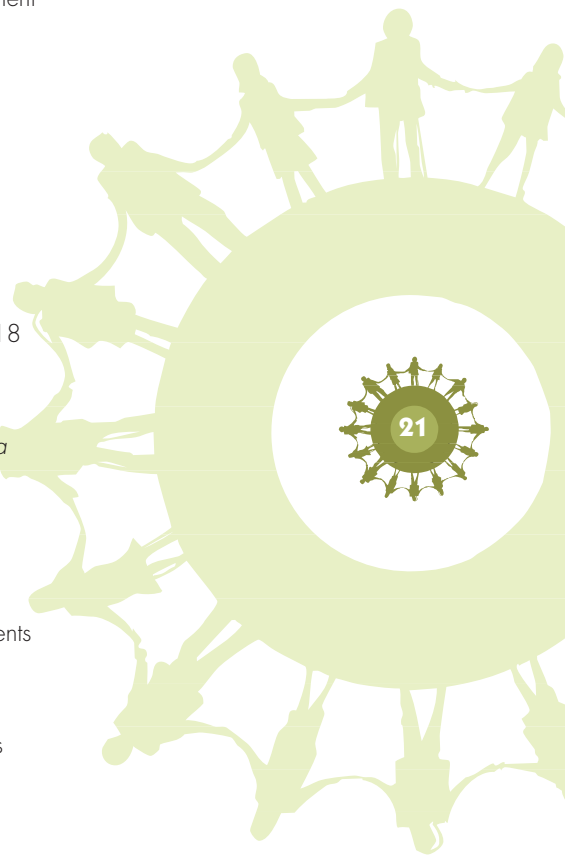
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Other research sources contributing to this project

- i) Meetings with representatives at the University of Warwick from the International Office; the Student Skills and Careers Centre; Learning and Development Centre; and the Warwick Business School.
- ii) Consultation with project leaders and representatives from the other projects within 'The Graduate Pledge' collaborative project.
- iii) Participation in the Higher Education Academy seminar, University of Bristol, 22 September 2009;
- iv) Access to internal strategy documents
 - *University of Warwick Institutional Audit Briefing Paper* (2008);
 - University of Warwick submission to Green Paper on 'Promoting the learning mobility of young people' 2009
- v) Access to preliminary outputs from other research teams at University of Warwick and King's College, London.



Appendix 1:

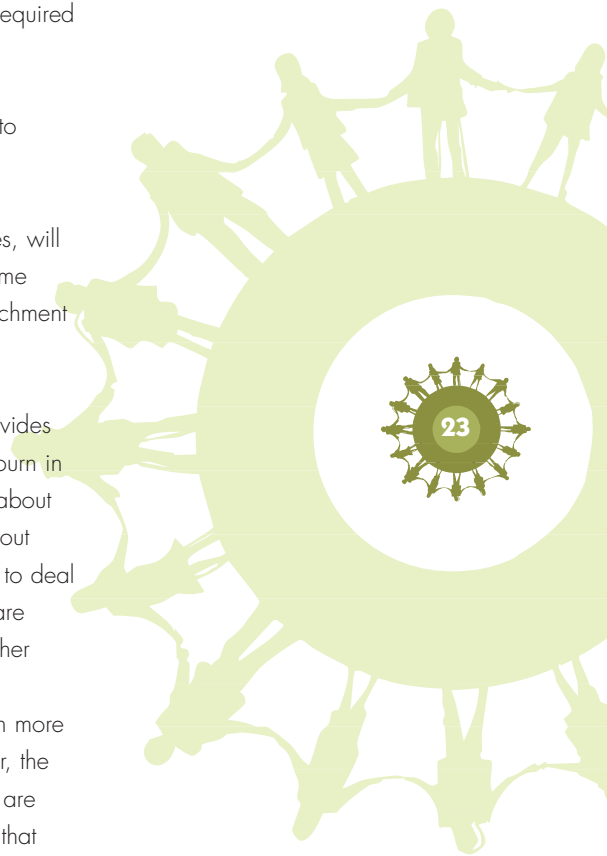
Examples of practice from UK national institutions for higher education initiatives and from selected international institutions

- i) **CILT.** The National Centre for Languages (<http://www.cilt.org.uk/home.aspx>) has developed The National Occupational Standards for Intercultural Working, which consists of 6 units describing skills, knowledge and understanding required for working with people from different countries or diverse cultures. This framework, however, is not exclusively aimed at the HE sector, but more generally at developing skills for employment. In addition to its approach to encouraging the development of intercultural competencies and personal qualities, CILT also aims to advance the accreditation of courses as an encouragement to both staff and students in the HE sector. This, CILT hopes, will avoid a prescriptive approach, which invariably leads to resentment in some people and will, instead, provide an incentive for participation as an enrichment to an individual's existing skill set.
- ii) **UK Council for International Student Affairs.** This institution provides useful material for international students to prepare themselves for their sojourn in the UK (<http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/>). In addition to practical information about living and studying in the UK, it also provides deeper level knowledge about cultural differences and values, a culture-shock model and advice on how to deal with issues of culture shock and adaptation to a new environment. There are useful links to external sources, so that students have the opportunity to further their understanding of cultural issues. An additional resource consists of information on study methods in the UK, which helps students not only with more generic cultural concerns, but also with pedagogical differences. However, the UKCISA website does not go beyond providing information. No attempts are made to help equip students with more generic intercultural competencies that will help them deal with a wider range of cultural issues independently.
- iii) **Higher Education Academy.**

TALIS

The Higher Education Academy's TALIS initiative is aimed at broadening students' 'international horizons'. Although the TALIS material claims that this will also be of benefit to UK nationals, the initiative is clearly aimed at improving the study experience for international students.

(<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/learning/international/talis>)



ESCalate

This Higher Education Academy subject centre has links to a range of publications on the topic of internationalisation, including some reviews of current perceptions, practices and attitudes to internationalization, as well as links to conference and seminar presentations on the topic. This site is helpful to stimulate discussions on the topic, but does not propose solutions or offer self-help materials.

(http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/EvidenceNet/Summaries/a_c_hanging_world_internationalisation_experiences_of_staff_and_students_summary)

- iv) **Leadership Foundation.** The Leadership Foundation website contains a very insightful report on internationalisation, international activities and their implications for internationalisation at UK HEIs (<http://www.lfhe.ac.uk/>). This report is strongly focused on issues of student and staff mobility, international research collaborations, revision of course contents and extracurricular activities.
- v) **University of Princeton.** Princeton claims to do a lot to integrate a global perspective into their curriculum, but fails to state explicitly what this entails. Hence, it is not immediately obvious what Princeton does to develop the 'global literacy' that is commended so strongly (<http://www.princeton.edu/main/>). The discourse seems to evolve around large 'C' culture (i.e. food, customs, festivals, language etc.) and the main efforts seem to consist of encouraging 'flows', i.e. student exchanges and the recruitment of international students and staff. Princeton's approach is very much in line with the internationalisation initiatives taken in many other international and UK HEIs which stand out through their lack of evidence of concrete action and through a lack of analysis of the available approaches.
- vi) **Harvard University.** While Harvard also emphasises the integration of a discussion of issues of global importance into the curriculum, its aims seem more progressive (<http://www.harvard.edu/>). The material states that the university emphasises the importance of teaching tolerance and global values to students and promoting attitudes that reflect openness, interest and positive attitudes towards cultural difference. However, like most HEIs, Harvard fails to state explicitly how this will be achieved and what concrete actions are being taken.
- vii) **University of California, Santa Barbara.** UCSB initiated the Global and International Studies Program, a pioneering global studies major, offering interdisciplinary courses on international issues with predominant focus on socioeconomic, political, cultural and ideological aspects of globalization (<http://www.ucsb.edu/>). While such a programme constitutes an intriguing initiative, its benefits are likely to be limited to those enrolled in the degree programme.

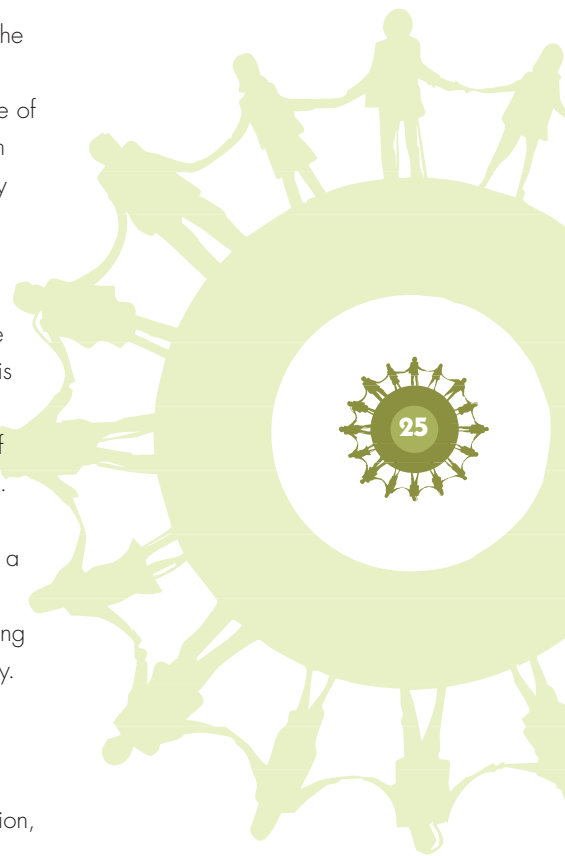


viii) **King's College, University of London.** our partner university in the current project – 'The Graduate Pledge' - has undertaken a review of activities as part of its contribution to the 'Globally-oriented curriculum' strand of research (Lygo-Baker 2009). A survey of internationalisation activities, based on 37 interviews across the King's departments, reveals a fairly conventional mix of initiatives including exchange and study abroad schemes; facilities for international students and an institutional orientation to recruiting international students and staff. In common with many UK HEIs, however, there is no overall strategy on internationalisation or a conceptualisation of what internationalisation might mean for the institution and for its undergraduate curriculum.

Notable among new initiatives being developed at KCL - in conjunction with the current project - is the development of a Virtual Learning Environment for Language Communication Skills which will support the adoption by the college of a requirement for all undergraduates to study a modern language module from 2011/12. In the department of Biomedical and Health Sciences, an explicitly intercultural communication project aims to improve the ability of trainee healthcare professionals in their interactions across cultural boundaries.

ix) **Universitas 21 Global Issues Programme.** This international initiative offers a more progressive solution to internationalisation of the curriculum and is one of the few that actually meet the literature's call for 'concretization' (<http://www.universitas21.com/>). Universitas 21 is a network of a number of universities worldwide, of which 7 participate in the Global Issues Programme. This programme offers 70 subjects, 15 of which are also offered online and open to students in other countries. The programme is designed to supplement a degree by adding 4 courses on international issues (1 core, 3 elective) to another degree. The subjects offered comprise a wide range of topics, including business, communication, human rights and politics, anthropology and ecology. This initiative offers students of all subject areas the opportunity to develop a global outlook on issues which complement their major.

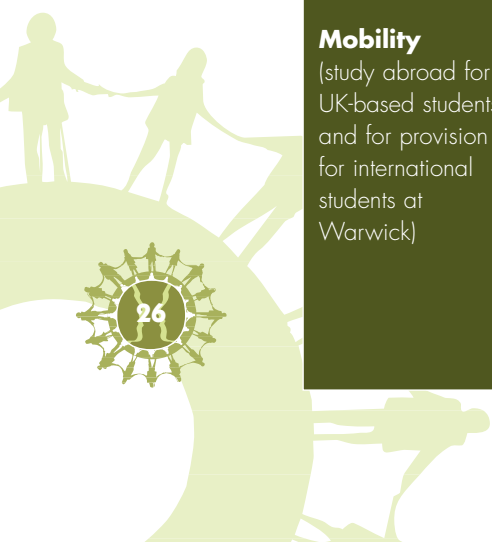
x) **European Association for International Education.** This organization, based in the Netherlands, is concerned with Internationalisation at Home (<http://www.eaie.org/>). Their goal is to help advance the development of internationalisation to the 90% of students who do not go abroad and thus bring intercultural training and skills to all students. However, their training is not aimed at students, but at their educators. The EAIE provides training and professional development modules for professionals at senior management level in the form of an executive forum. With this approach the EAIE offers a solution to one of the predominant problems of internationalisation: the fact that internationalisation needs to start at the senior management level in order for meaningful initiatives to be implemented.



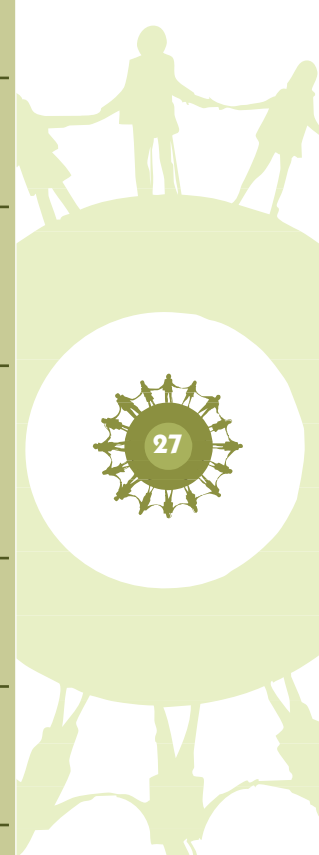
Appendix 2:

Internationalisation at the University of Warwick: a list of sources

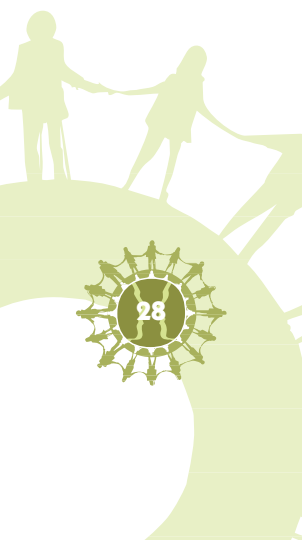
Approach	Activities	Contact for more information
Ethos (evidence of an international culture on campus)	Warwick has a high percentage of international students	International Office http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/international
	Warwick has a large number of international staff	Human Resources http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/humanresources
	Dedicated information website for international staff	Human Resources http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/humanresources/induction/prearrival/internationalstaff/
	Some departments – offer an extra site for their international students	Education Dept http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/wie History Dept http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/history
	Planned creation of international quarter on campus	International Office http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/international/staff/relations/world/stategy/vision_2015
	Student culture embraces multiculturalism	International Office http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/international Students Union http://www.warwicksu.com/ Chaplaincy http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/chaplaincy
Overseas Campus	No overseas campus but Warwick has a range of academic partnerships with leading overseas universities	Registrary http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/international/staff/relations/partners
Mobility (study abroad for UK-based students and for provision for international students at Warwick)	Student exchange programmes for UK-based students	Helen Johnson - International Office H.J.Johnson@warwick.ac.uk
	Erasmus scholar network	Amanda Ashby – Erasmus Programme Manager http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/international/prospective/visiting-exchange/socrates Hester Lockley – President http://www.sunion.warwick.ac.uk/erasmus/Main_pages/about_us.html



Approach	Activities	Contact for more information
Mobility (study abroad for UK-based students and for provision for international students at Warwick)	Study abroad opportunities including study as part of a degree curriculum	Careers http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/careers/hub/weblinks/experience/work_study_abroad/
	Working abroad: pages on relevant information, including links to other sites	Careers http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/careers/findingajob/abroad
	International Careers' Fair – to find out about career opportunities outside the UK	Careers http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/careers/events/fairs/international
	iTunesU – enables prospective students to get a flavour of the university	Warwick website – link http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/itunesu
	Dedicated orientation week for international students	Orientation Team – International Office http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/international/offerholders/orientation/orientation@warwick.ac.uk
	Academic Coaching - personalized advice for international students to cope with the academic system	Stephen Williams – International Office Mihai Balanescu http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/skills/rssp/activities/ac
	Research Student Skills Programme	Han-na Cha http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/skills/rssp HN.Cha@warwick.ac.uk
	Workshop – 'Living in the UK: getting the most out of UK experience'	Han-na Cha HN.Cha@warwick.ac.uk
Social Events	Orientation week social activities	Orientation Team – International Office http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/international/offerholders/orientation/programme/
	One-World-Week	Student Union http://www.warwicksu.com/societies/oneworldweek/
	Cultural clubs and societies	Student Union http://www.warwicksu.com/societies/cultural/
Content (departments offering courses with explicitly international or intercultural content)	Centre for Globalization and Regionalization	http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/csg/
	Warwick Business School	http://www.wbs.ac.uk/
	Cultural Policy Studies	http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/theatre_s/cp



Approach	Activities	Contact for more information
Content (departments offering courses with explicitly international or intercultural content)	Department of Political and International Studies	http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/pais
	Centre for Ethnic Relations	http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/crer
	Languages departments	http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/french http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/german http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/italian
	Centre for Applied Linguistics	http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/al
Competency (opportunities to build intercultural competencies)	Undergraduate skills programme	Mary Sage/Celine Moore http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/skills/usp Mary.Sage@warwick.ac.uk C.R.Moore@warwick.ac.uk
	Workshop – ‘Cultural awareness’	Han-na Cha – Research Student Skills Programme H.N.Cha@warwick.ac.uk
	Workshop – ‘Working with international students’ (for non-academic staff)	Esther Meininger – Learning and Development Centre http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/ldc/development/intstudents/ e.l.meininger@warwick.ac.uk
	Forthcoming workshop – ‘working with international students’ (for academic staff)	Manus Conaghan – Learning and Development Centre m.conaghan@warwick.ac.uk Sharon Neal – Learning and Development Centre s.f.neal@warwick.ac.uk
	Warwick Advantage - Intercultural Skills Set	Anne Wilson – Warwick Advantage http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/advantage a.e.wilson@warwick.ac.uk
	Global People intercultural competency framework	Helen Spencer-Oatey, Applied Linguistics http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/cross_fac/globalpeople Helen.spencer-oatey@warwick.ac.uk
	Infusion (critical reflection on intercultural competency)	Recipes for success – self access study support for both national and international students
Warwick Advantage – self access development tools		Anne Wilson – Warwick Advantage http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/advantage a.e.wilson@warwick.ac.uk
Centre for Applied Linguistics - WACC research interest group		Stephanie Schnurr – Applied Linguistics http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/al s.schnurr@warwick.ac.uk

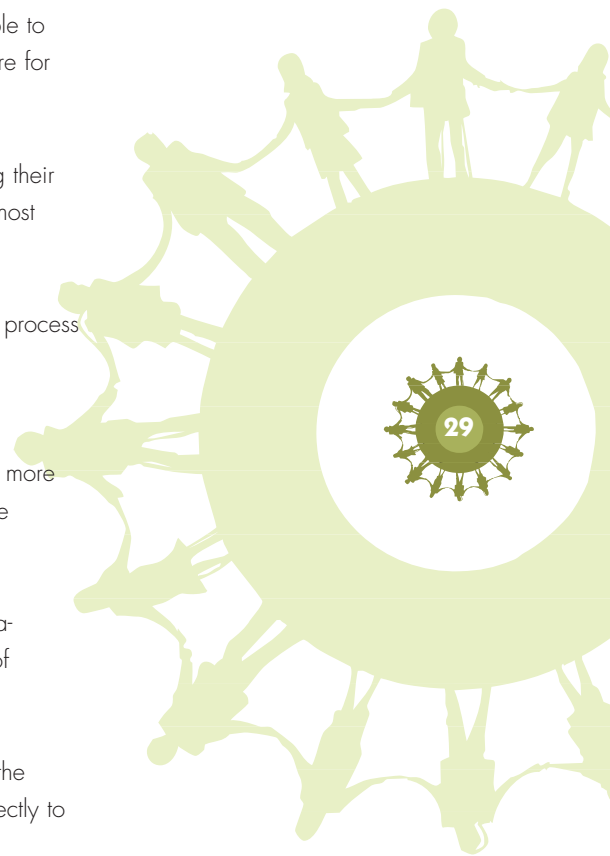


Appendix 3:

Recommendations from the Centre for Applied Linguistics team to the Steering Group of 'The Graduate Pledge' following the feasibility phase of the project.

One of the requirements of the current project was to produce a set of recommendations to 'The Graduate Pledge' project as a whole, with a view to these being applicable to other UK Russell Group universities. The recommendations put forward by the Centre for Applied Linguistics project team are summarised below:

- 1 At a strategic level, Russell Group universities would benefit from clarifying their commitment to internationalisation by identifying which objectives are of most importance and agreeing policies to achieve those objectives;
- 2 Co-ordination of activities through an International Office can support this process and can facilitate high-profile, campus-wide, student-led activities such as Warwick's 'One World Week';
- 3 A range of strategies are available for developing undergraduates with a more 'global perspective' but these need to be evaluated to ensure that they are achieving their objectives;
- 4 Internationalisation activities need to embrace both the curricular and extra-curricular elements of student life. They need to include the development of appropriate knowledge and competencies in staff members;
- 5 Adopting a competency-based approach offers the opportunity to define the competencies required in the 'global' undergraduate and to link these directly to the capabilities or attributes associated with greater employability;
- 6 Employing a competency framework provides a common body of knowledge for those involved in internationalisation activities and offers clear goals for students to achieve in developing their own awareness and skills;
- 7 A competency framework can be used both for active interventions (e.g. training events for staff or students) and for individual self-development (e.g. web-based self-assessment tools).



Notes:



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- #2 **The Global People Toolbook: Managing the Life Cycle of Intercultural Partnerships**
- #3 **The Global People Competency Framework: Competencies for Effective Intercultural Interaction**
- #4 **The Learning Process Model for Intercultural Partnerships**
- #5 **The Learning Process in Intercultural Collaboration: Evidence from the eChina-UK Programme**
- #6 **Sino-British Interaction in Professional Contexts**
- #7 **Internationalisation in the UK Higher Education Sector: A Competency-based Approach**

Available at <http://www.globalpeople.org.uk/>

or

<http://www.warwick.ac.uk/al/>

