



# INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY

FOR MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY



**Manchester  
Metropolitan  
University**



# CONTENTS

<b>Ambitions</b>	7
<b>Leveraging strengths and rising to challenges</b>	8
<b>Strategic framework</b>	11
<b>Priority one</b> To increase international student recruitment both on and off campus	12
<b>Priority two</b> To increase the quality and quantity of our international partnerships	14
<b>Priority three</b> To increase student and staff mobility	16
<b>Priority four</b> To increase alumni engagement	18
<b>Conclusion</b>	20



Our Internationalisation Strategy embodies a wider ambition to become a globally connected university, with a new, robust framework for achieving these goals.

We have looked at every element of our existing strategy and looked for areas of the business where we see real opportunities to play to our strengths even more emphatically. This has meant a greater emphasis on leveraging academic achievement to help build quality partnerships, and attract the volume of international students we feel matches our aspirations.

This is all achievable thanks to a more robust framework that considers committee structures, effective marshalling of academic and professional assets and reinforced strategic and operational leadership through our new Pro-Vice-Chancellor (PVC) International and Director of External Relations. The Strategy outlines key opportunities and challenges, before looking at how our strengths can be leveraged to maximise these. This allows for our new approach to internationalisation to be truly driven by our academic, teaching and research strengths.

Our academic reputation determines the types of students and staff we attract, the quality of our international partners, and the extent to which our alumni are proud to identify with us. Our newly-focused Strategy is led by the PVC International, working closely with Faculties and their Heads of International, and is supported by high-quality professional staff who understand the importance of internationalisation. This ensures that at all points we remain consistent in our commitment to delivering a comprehensive Strategy informed and connected by a single Internationalisation Committee.





By being globally connected, universities build a reputation, grow their influence and create institutional sustainability. We recognise furthering our global standing in this way as key to our future success as a university, making a Strategy that sets clear objectives and is supported by a framework upon which to deliver upon them vital.

Our success will be measured by how internationalisation contributes to key strategic priorities in Education, Research and Knowledge Exchange, as well as Institutional Sustainability. We will build a global presence based on our distinctive strengths. Our outstanding performance in the Creative Industries, Education, Advanced Materials, Sport, Social Sciences, Health, and Business.

The following four principles have guided development of the Internationalisation Strategy.

Internationalisation at Manchester Met will:

- support our educational and research ambitions
- contribute to sustainability
- be focused on quality
- be embedded across all our activities.

The Strategy has been prepared in consultation with the broader University through engagement with Professional Services, Faculties, University Executive Group (UEG) and Academic Board. It recognises the work that has already commenced, but also provides an ambitious framework for driving internationalisation further. We also recognise the Strategy is a plan and requires ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure it delivers on our ambitions. This will be led by our PVC International, working in conjunction with Faculty Heads of International and Professional Services such as the International Office, Recruitment and Admissions and Strategic Planning.



# AMBITIOUS

We recognise internationalisation contributes significantly to global reputation through the impact it has on the student experience, research performance and our place in the world. It is also critical for our long-term sustainability.

With over 90% of our total fee income sourced from home/ EU students, there exists a real opportunity to diversify our income streams and commit to strengthening our focus on international applicants.

With an ambitious, but achievable, set of measurable objectives, our four key priorities for development and growth over the next five years will be:

- International students (on and off campus)
- International partnerships
- Student and staff mobility (inbound and outbound)
- Alumni engagement

These priorities form the basis of our strategic framework, with action plans developed to support each.





# LEVERAGING STRENGTHS AND RISING TO CHALLENGES

**We will leverage our many strengths to respond to the opportunities and challenges of our environment. These include:**

## **Our ability to fulfil global demand**

Growing numbers of young people, especially in developing and emerging economies, are increasing the demand for higher education globally. We are in a strong position to take advantage of this by offering high-quality programmes aligned with demand. An additional advantage is that, unlike many other UK HEIs, we still have capacity to increase international student numbers from all countries.

## **Our place within the UK**

The UK maintains a very high reputation globally and is the 2nd most popular destination for international students in the world. The UK also attracts high-quality academic staff from around the world, who contribute significantly to our research and teaching. While Brexit and UK government immigration policies cannot be ignored, there is an increasing acknowledgement from the government of the importance of universities to economic growth, through the delivery of innovation, skills, and international trade. Some benefits also arise from the devaluation of the pound.

## **Our place in Manchester**

Manchester is a major UK city that is known around the world for its innovative spirit, sporting prowess and strengths in many industries. It has ambitions to be a top 20 global city by 2035, and is a key player in the UK Government's Northern Powerhouse initiative. The city has recently developed an Internationalisation Strategy that has identified International Students, and Research and Knowledge Exchange as two of its priorities. We are clearly in a strong position to work with the city as it develops its ambitions in these two areas, and to leverage our position in Manchester as an attractor for high-quality staff and students.

## **Our growing ambition**

The University has a number of existing strengths from which to build reputation and attract international students and staff. Our teaching portfolio and research centres provide a strong academic base, which will be augmented by ambitious new initiatives such as the Manchester Institute of Sport, the International Screen School Manchester, and the Greater Manchester Medical School (a joint project with the Universities of Salford and Manchester). In addition, we have excellent estates with very high-quality facilities for teaching and research, which will be further augmented by £400m of investment over the next five years.

## **Our agility and innovation**

Competition from other countries and UK HEIs is not a new challenge, but it does represent one that needs an innovative response as it grows. By developing a clear Internationalisation Strategy driven academically, and focused on quality, we can proactively influence our position in the market and develop our global offer. This approach also allows us to ensure the importance of internationalisation is understood across the entire institution, and is supported by systems and processes nimble enough to enable a swift and robust response when the right opportunities arise.

## **Our reputation**

In 2016, we were ranked in the top 150 of the Times Higher Education's global ranking of universities under 50 years old, and in the top 3% of all universities in the THE World University Rankings. The 2014 REF ranked 85% of our research impact as world-leading or internationally excellent, and this year our teaching quality was recognised with a Teaching Excellence Framework Silver award. The time has come to make the most of this reputation with proactive, effective marketing material that enhances our international profile. This can then be bolstered by our Education and Research, and Knowledge Exchange strategies.

## **Our existing frameworks**

Professional services that directly impact on student recruitment such as marketing and admissions will continue to focus on being as effective and proactive in identifying challenges as they are responding to them. We are looking at the various ways we can adapt and improve our internal systems and processes to ensure we maximise the opportunities to engage internationally with prospective students, staff, partners and alumni.

## **Our attitude to the future**

We are well equipped to anticipate many of the challenges that are inevitable in the face of Brexit and changes to immigration policy. We will adapt and remain agile enough to ensure attracting and retaining high-quality staff and students stays at the forefront of everything we do, while establishing and creating relationships with partners and other institutions both in and outside the EU.





# STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The Internationalisation Strategy provides a framework for achieving our ambitions by identifying four key priorities on which to focus our activity. For each priority, we have identified ambitious, but achievable, goals. These will be supported through the development of action plans that leverage strengths and respond to the challenges we face.

The achievement of Manchester Metropolitan's global ambitions through this strategic framework will require effective leadership both across the institution and from within Faculties. A key component of this is the appointment of the Faculty Heads of International to drive the Strategy both within and across Faculties. Another key part of delivering the Strategy is the redesign of the University's Internationalisation Committee to reflect the academic focus of internationalisation at Manchester Metropolitan and to provide a clear mechanism for oversight of the Strategy.

The Internationalisation Strategy will be implemented through the Faculty Heads of International, overseen by the Internationalisation Committee. Where appropriate, the KPIs and targets will be cascaded to Faculties and Departments and regular monitoring of progress against targets will be undertaken as part of the University's planning process. This planning process is led by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor working with the three thematic PVCs and Faculties to agree targets against each thematic area.



## TO INCREASE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT RECRUITMENT BOTH ON AND OFF CAMPUS

International students currently make up around 4% of the **on-campus** student population at Manchester Metropolitan, and their numbers have been static over the past five years. The national average is 14% and there is rising demand globally for HE places. Notwithstanding the significant competition from other UK providers and countries, there are still opportunities for us to increase our numbers of on-campus international students. A particular area for attention are our Postgraduate Taught (PGT) programmes, where there is a significant opportunity to attract more international students. In the 2015/16 academic year we had around 450 international PGT students, compared with 1,000-2,000 at many other HEI institutions. Ensuring that we have an attractive suite of PGT programmes is a major requirement if we are to capture this market.

Increasing our numbers of international students, both on and off-campus, will support the University's strategic goals around sustainability. Increasing numbers of on-campus students will also enhance the diversity of the student population and, thus, improve the student experience for home/EU students as well. As well as on-campus students, Manchester Metropolitan also has around 750 **offshore international students** enrolled on our programmes (also known as Transnational Education; TNE). HESA data indicates that there were over 300,000 students enrolled in UK TNE courses in 2015/16, and that this was a 6% increase on 2014/15. This represents an average of around 2,400 TNE students per HEI in the UK.

At a time when the UK sector is experiencing concerns about the impact of the UK's departure from the EU and the Government's narrative around student visa issuance and options for post-study work, TNE is an increasingly attractive way of mitigating the impact of negative external factors by taking the course to the student.

### AMBITIONS

- To increase the proportion of international on-campus students to 10% by 2021.
- To increase numbers of TNE students to over 2,000 by 2021.
- To increase international student fee income to at least £31m by 2021. This represents a 125% increase on 2015/16 figures, and is in line with the ambition to increase on-campus numbers to 10% of the total.

Delivering these ambitions will require:

- Attractive programmes and courses at UG and PG levels.
- A strong identity that is distinctive and has global reach.
- An effective network of agents who actively promote us to their clients.
- Energetic, pro-active and targeted international recruitment effort.
- Rapid and responsive application systems and processes.
- Effective agreements with partners that deliver international students into our programmes, both on and off shore.
- A fee structure, including discounts/scholarships, that is aligned with our competitors, attractive to students, and encourages progression from UG to PG study with Manchester Metropolitan.

### DEVELOPING ACTION PLAN

Activities already commenced:

- Better articulation of our Pre-session English programme with other Manchester Metropolitan programmes to facilitate easier transition for international students to study.
- Review of University's fee structure to ensure it is competitively aligned with the sector.
- Agreed international student recruitment targets for Faculties and Departments.
- Improvement of application systems and processes to increase conversion rates (enrolments/applications).
- Development of three new PGT masters courses for delivery from September 2017 through the University's Digital TNE agreement with Pearson.
- Development of articulation and progression agreements with two new partners in Hong Kong and China.
- Expansion of a TNE agreement with our existing Hong Kong partner from three PGT programmes to five for delivery from September 2017.

- Implementation of an agent management plan to better support agents and improve recruitment through this pathway.

Initiatives for the coming year:

- Clear identification and pro-active monitoring of the University's priority recruitment markets based on demand and alignment with our strengths in teaching and research. This will enable us to identify the specific regions and countries that we should target. Initial work has indicated that the following countries/regions are likely to be included: China, India, the USA, the Middle East, West Africa. We will also investigate a range of other developing and emerging economies such as Colombia, Vietnam and the Philippines.
- Portfolio review of PGT programmes to align with key international markets.
- Ongoing review of our recruitment and marketing activities to find further efficiencies.
- Ongoing monitoring of the quality of the experience we provide for international students, and identifying areas for improvement.
- Development of further agreements with new and existing partners that deliver on and off-campus international students.
- Development of further masters programmes for delivery through the Pearson digital TNE agreement (at least eight in operation by 2021).
- Further development of the University's global brand and distinctive identity.

Over the longer-term:

- Ongoing development and monitoring of the teaching portfolio, particularly PGT.
- Evaluation of strategies for attracting high-quality, international research students.
- Further development of our campus to provide state of the art teaching and research facilities.
- Improvement in national and international league table rankings (see also RKE and Education Strategies).



## TO INCREASE THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF OUR INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are a key component of our Internationalisation Strategy because they support a number of our other priorities. Partnerships can deliver research collaborations, staff and student exchange, and increasing international student numbers through agreements of various kinds. We currently have a small portfolio of international partnerships that are based mainly on TNE agreements. These often arose opportunistically rather than through a strategic process of targeted relationship building. They have also tended to emerge around a single School or Department, and have not always brought broader benefits to the institution.

Ideally, our partnerships should bring multiple benefits across more than one Faculty; although this does not preclude building partnerships that deliver quality at volume, to a single Faculty.

We will review our current partnership agreements and commence a process of targeted relationship building with international partners based on alignment of interests, research strengths, market demand and quality.

### AMBITIONS

- To develop **at least** four new high-quality partnerships that bring multiple benefits by 2021.
- To leverage further activity from our existing partnerships through effective relationship management.

Delivering these ambitions will require:

- Identification of potential partners based on academic alignment and quality.
- Effective relationship management and leadership at a senior level.
- Robust processes for evaluating prospective partners and approving agreements, including monitoring of existing partnerships and termination of poorly performing partnerships.

### DEVELOPING ACTION PLAN

Activities already commenced:

- Work with PVC RKE and Faculties to identify research strengths and existing partnerships that could be leveraged to deliver additional benefits.
- Schedule of visits to targeted international institutions in key regions as identified by market information and potential research synergies.
- Established two new partners in China and Hong Kong, with agreements currently under development.
- Reviewing performance of existing partnerships, including visits to these partners.
- Leveraging the opportunities presented by our local partnerships, and their international connections.
- Review and rationalisation of our processes for approving international partnership agreements to ensure they are streamlined and focused on delivering quality.

Initiatives for the coming year:

- Protect existing EU partnerships, and develop new ones, to counter potential impact of Brexit on student exchange and research opportunities.
- Further work to cement relationships with potential partners in Wuhan, the sister city of Manchester and one of the largest student cities in the world, with a number of high-quality universities.
- Ongoing review of partnerships and effective relationship management to deliver broader benefits across the University.

Over the longer term:

- Development of a CRM system for more effective and efficient management of external partnerships.
- Explore options for developing multi-institution partnerships across more than one region.



## TO INCREASE STUDENT AND STAFF MOBILITY

Opportunities for students and staff to travel abroad are critical to our success because they facilitate research collaboration, enhance the student experience, and improve graduate employability.

Increasingly, students recognise the value that international experience brings to their career prospects, and expect that universities will provide a range of student mobility options to them. Many universities are now making such programmes a key part of their recruitment strategies. To provide these opportunities to our students we need well-established relationships with international partners, and effective systems for ensuring that the student experience is of the highest quality. An additional challenge is to ensure that all students have access to international experiences, regardless of their background. In 2015/16, around 1% of Manchester Metropolitan students had an international study or work experience; the national average is 6.6%.

Staff mobility has many positive outcomes, including, but not limited to, enhanced research performance, improved international networks, greater involvement in international professional bodies, sharing of good practice and generally raising the institution's international profile. A number of mechanisms exist for facilitating staff mobility, such as sabbaticals, support to attend conferences, and allocation of research/scholarship time in workload models.

## AMBITIONS

- To increase the proportion of Manchester Metropolitan students engaging in international mobility programmes from 1% to 5% by 2021.
- To ensure that numbers of widening participation students engaging in international mobility programmes at least matches their proportions in the total student body.
- To increase the opportunities for staff mobility.

Delivering these ambitions will require:

- More partnerships with high-quality international institutions for student exchange.
- Funding streams to support student and staff mobility.
- Effective systems for managing student mobility (in and out) that ensure a high-quality student experience.
- Internal schemes that support staff mobility (eg sabbaticals, conference support, visiting researcher scheme).

## DEVELOPING ACTION PLAN

Activities already commenced:

- Review and rationalisation of student exchange partnerships to ensure they are active and delivering benefits to our students.
- Ongoing work to establish new partnerships that can deliver student exchange opportunities.
- High-quality support and monitoring systems for out-bound and in-bound student mobility.
- Effective mechanisms for acquiring external funding to support student/staff mobility (eg Erasmus+, Newton).
- RKE Strategy developed with plans for how to support staff mobility through sabbaticals and other schemes that promote research exchange.
- Better promotion of mobility opportunities to all students.

Initiatives for the coming year:

- Explore alternatives to Erasmus+ funding to support student and staff mobility post-Brexit.
- Review of Faculty sabbatical plans to establish best practice and roll out more broadly across all Faculties.
- Establish travel schemes to support conference attendance and visiting researchers.



## TO INCREASE ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

Manchester Metropolitan University has 270,000 alumni and many of these are either international, or UK students now living abroad. They represent an enormously valuable resource to us because of their international connections, experience and ability to promote Manchester Metropolitan to a much wider audience.

At present we are in contact with around 50% of our international alumni, and fewer than 20% are signed up to our alumni community network, which represents a tremendous opportunity. Our most active alumni group is in Hong Kong, but we have significant numbers of alumni in China, Malaysia, Europe and the USA.

Our international network of alumni is large and growing. This global family of Manchester Met graduates extends the University's capacity to influence, both here in the UK and abroad. They demonstrate in many ways our ability to touch the lives of people in Manchester and beyond, and to play an active role in building a better future for all. They can be, and are, powerful role models, mentors, leaders, influencers and shapers in their chosen fields. They work in business, industry, academia, government, and society more broadly and we are hugely proud of what they have achieved. They are our legacy to the world.

## AMBITIONS

- To increase the number of actively engaged international alumni in strategic locations by 20% annually.
- To develop new alumni chapters and networks in strategic locations.

Delivering these ambitions will require:

- Engagement of senior staff across the University.
- A well-resourced Alumni and Development office.
- An effective CRM system for alumni.

## DEVELOPING ACTION PLAN

Current activities already underway:

- Held the first alumni reception in Hong Kong in October 2016 with the Vice-Chancellor and PVC International.
- Launched a HK alumni Facebook group to coincide with the event and now send quarterly emails to HK alumni.
- Actively promoted the British Council Alumni Awards for 2016 and 2017 to international alumni with three finalists to date.
- Recruitment of International Alumni Ambassadors (with stewardship, web pages) is on-going with currently 45 IAAs.

Initiatives for the coming year:

- Ongoing work with the Hong Kong chapter to support their initiatives and to plan a second alumni reception in Autumn 2017.
- Devise and implement a USA Alumni Engagement Strategy.
- Identify new alumni who can be approached to apply for the British Council Alumni Awards 2018 and aim to have at least one finalist annually.
- Identify and recruit International Alumni Ambassadors in other strategic locations.

Over the longer-term:

- Involve alumni networks in supporting research and knowledge exchange, education, partnerships and student/graduate employability and mobility opportunities.
- To build solid foundations for future philanthropic income generation.





# CONCLUSION

This Strategy identifies a clear direction of travel for Manchester Metropolitan University over the coming five years, and provides a framework to deliver our international ambitions. To succeed it will require effective leadership and support from all parts of the University. As outlined in the introduction, being globally connected is an essential characteristic of any university that aspires to excellence, whether that be in its research outputs or the education it provides to its students. Thus, internationalisation is not an option, rather it is mandatory for our future success.







