Our Internationalisation Strategy

We Are BREAKING BOUNDARIES

#WeAreInternational
Our University mission is to educate ourselves and others and to learn through doing so, thereby improving the world. Internationalism is a core element of our outlook and we seek to have impact on the world through the excellence of our research and the global citizenship of our staff, students and alumni.

Our Internationalisation Strategy must help us fulfil our mission to be a globally leading university that connects knowledge and cultures across national borders.

We will engage in research and innovation that offers solutions to global issues, we will educate students from around the world and we will employ and collaborate with the best international minds.

We will create and promote a globally minded culture in Sheffield. This will be evidenced through culturally agile staff and students and an internationalised curriculum.

As an enabler for the Strategic Plan, our Internationalisation Strategy will focus on the following themes:

- International Research
- International Students in Sheffield
- Global Citizenship
- International Talent Attraction
- Staff Engagement
- Working in Partnership

Our objectives in these areas will be supported by alumni relations, reputational value and governance.
Our research is already internationally orientated. In 2014, 50 per cent of our papers were internationally co-authored and this has been a rising trend for more than a decade.

We will continue to develop international research partnerships which add depth to our research agenda by adding quality, relevant context and scale. These partnerships may be peer-to-peer links with institutions that demonstrate complementary excellence. They will also be characterised by large-scale work with other public and private bodies where this is particularly relevant to our research and innovation themes and the challenges of a particular country or region.

We will grow our international research community through attracting the best global researchers and nurturing relationships with bodies or individuals that support doctoral studentships. Through presence in Brussels, we will improve our access to and influence on the EU research agenda.

Key Priorities:
- Develop significant international academic and industrial research partnerships;
- Develop our capacity to access international research funding streams.

International Research

International Students in Sheffield

International students contribute cultural richness to the campus, classroom and city, enhancing the educational and social experience of our University. They make up a significant proportion of the student body, and this contributes to the University’s ability to provide a wide academic offering, particularly at postgraduate level.

During the period of the Strategic Plan we will maintain or increase our market share of international students among the Russell Group. We will develop EU recruitment activities and increase our numbers of EU students as part of a wider effort to increase diversity on campus, contributing to a truly global community. We will continue to work in partnership with our pathway provider, agents and sponsors to safeguard existing, and develop new, recruitment streams. Our programmes will be relevant to international needs and requirements.

We will continue to work with our students to promote the benefit of our international students and alumni to the UK in cultural, academic and economic terms at local, national and international levels, thereby countering any messages that harm the perception of the UK as a welcoming destination.

Key Priorities:
- Increase diversity of the student population;
- Attract academically excellent students.

International student Abhimon Paul Kongari

Professor Sheila MacNeil is working with colleagues in India to develop a better way of treating corneal blindness.
All of our students should benefit from the opportunities provided by the global engagement of the University and develop skills that make them culturally agile and internationally employable. Our international staff and students give us a global outlook and offer us the opportunity to enhance the curriculum through gaining experience from other perspectives, helping us to provide teaching and learning in a global context. We will work with our Students’ Union to promote integration of students at all levels and to develop a lifelong global outlook for our graduates which will contribute to society.

To enable our students to take advantage of international opportunities, we will continue to embed these in an internationalised curriculum. We will increase student mobility at all levels such as via the European-Union funded Erasmus+ scheme and will be offering intra- and extra-curricular periods of study, work or volunteering abroad and promote this as a coherent package. We will recognise and promote the value of internationalisation at home activities such as language learning and intercultural academic and social experiences. We will enhance the international employability of our students by increasing work experience opportunities, both overseas and in internationally facing companies in the UK, and engage with our international alumni to mentor and advise students on employability in a global context. We will celebrate the International achievements of our students during their time at Sheffield.

Key Priorities:
- Make sure all students can access activities that develop their global citizenship;
- Facilitate integration of students both academically and socially.

Global Citizenship

International Talent Attraction

We seek to attract the best staff from around the world so that our research and teaching reflects and celebrates a global sensibility. These staff in turn will create research, professional and employment networks that will deliver international scale and impact. To facilitate this, we will develop mechanisms to promote the attractiveness of Sheffield as a destination and facilitate the transfer and integration of international staff and their families. Through our international partnerships and promotion of our global reputation for excellence in academic research, we will articulate the benefits of a career at Sheffield. We will work with the city and regional bodies to leverage their own international positioning and engagement and make sure international staff members and their families have confidence in coming to a welcoming environment.

Key Priority:
- Develop and articulate the benefits of working in Sheffield that help us to attract outstanding international staff.
Our academic staff should be able to demonstrate to the student body their engagement in global research and teaching activities. To this end, we will encourage and support staff to spend periods of time researching and teaching internationally and to internationalise the curriculum. We will support staff to develop their pedagogical style in an international context. Internal processes will be streamlined to facilitate the transfer of outgoing and incoming visiting staff, particularly in support of identified strategic partnerships. Academic staff will be encouraged to be part of international academic networks, both within their own subject specialisms and at University level. External funding sources will be sought where available to allow academic and professional staff to increase their international experiences through sharing of good practice with peer institutions.

Key Priority:
• Encourage and facilitate staff to develop their own international engagement by spending time at international institutions, particularly where this supports strategic partnerships.

Staff Engagement

Working in Partnership

Identifying and collaborating with the right international partners and networks will extend the depth and impact of our world-class research. We will continue to develop research networks in the European Research Area and we will also develop collaborations outside the EU that diversify the support base for our research. In addition to academic institutions, we will work with industry, business and governments internationally where we have common goals and can develop activities together that have clear benefits for both parties and the communities they serve.

The connections between our academics and international institutions are already extensive. However, only a few select academic, commercial or industrial partnerships will be of sufficient scale or potential to be strategic to the University as a whole. They will be with partners that are recognised as excellent in their regions, and who recognise educational values and systems operating in those regions without compromising the values of our guiding principles. The expertise of our partners will complement our own knowledge, creating increased value and strength in our collaboration.

Key Priorities:
• Identify 3–5 key international partnerships at University level and plan and resource their development to increase scale and impact;
• Maximise the University’s engagement with the EU through presence in Brussels.

These strategic partnerships will help us to develop teaching and research activities at a scale that could not happen otherwise, by adding value to our own knowledge through the collaboration and thereby extending our global reach and reputation. They will have a range of identifiable benefits, such as advancing leading research, increasing recruitment, diversifying our student population or providing opportunities for student and staff mobility, with one or more of these factors being of sufficient scale to warrant strategic University-level support.
1. Alumni
We will engage with our alumni to assist in the delivery of our strategic priorities. We will support the development of alumni associations in selected countries where we have or can develop significant numbers of engaged alumni and where these alumni are able to support student recruitment, experience and employability; advance commercial, institutional or government links or show willingness to engage in other philanthropic activity.

2. Reputation
We will communicate our academic excellence and our relevance internationally through our external communications. We will highlight our partnerships and develop new ways to reach our international audiences. We will be known for our commitment to promoting the value of international staff and students in the UK. Where appropriate, we will engage with the city and region to enhance their global profiles.

3. Governance
The Global Engagement team will coordinate activity across the University. The team will monitor the progress of the Internationalisation Strategy and report to the University Executive Board (UEB). UEB will take responsibility for monitoring the success and progress of this strategy and will agree appropriate governance mechanisms to oversee its delivery. We will set up cross-University groups to develop strategies for regions of critical importance to the University, for example China, North America, the EU and India.

Enablers

Alumni Susanna Chiu (BA Economics, 1982) is a dedicated role model promoting our University and alumni activities in Hong Kong and throughout the world.