Preparing 21st Century Graduates to live in and contribute responsibly to a globally interconnected society.
Introduction

Internationalisation is of growing importance to higher education (HE) within the United Kingdom (UK) and across the world, driven by political, economic, educational, social and technological advances. This is evident in the diversification of academic communities and the provision on offer, as well as the content, mode, pace and place of learning. In this changing context, it is timely that the Higher Education Academy (HEA), the leading national body for learning and teaching in the UK, has developed this strategic framework with the purpose of inspiring and assisting the sector in a key aspect of internationalising HE: Preparing 21st century graduates to live in and contribute responsibly to a globally interconnected society. The framework has been developed for the UK sector but may also have relevance for HE systems throughout the world.

From the outset, this framework has been driven by the vision of promoting a high quality, equitable and global learning experience for all students studying UK programmes, irrespective of their geographical location or background, on which the preparedness of 21st century graduates will be contingent. Its focus on the impact and contribution of learning, teaching and research on internationalising HE complements yet distinguishes this framework from other related developments. It has been developed in partnership with the UK HE sector; a collaborative venture intended to maximise relevance and future impact.

The process of internationalising HE within the context of learning, teaching and research is a sector-wide concern with far-reaching implications. The framework thus intends to stimulate reflection and debate; to be a prompt to action. It is designed for multiple audiences and beneficiaries who play a role in graduate preparedness in a global and inclusive context, including organisations across the HE sector, all those engaged in learning, teaching and research, as well as the formal and informal curriculum. Its content and style is deliberately aspirational as well as practical and concise in order to incite ownership and application within different HE contexts.

Aims and objectives

The framework aims to inspire and assist in the process of internationalising HE: preparing 21st century graduates to live in and contribute responsibly to a globally interconnected society. It is driven by a vision to promote a high quality, equitable and global learning experience for all students studying UK HE programmes, irrespective of their geographical location or background.

Designed as an enhancement tool for HE, the framework strives to achieve the following objectives:

• to recognise, build on, and enhance the quality and variety of internationalisation policy and practice in HE;
• to foster collegial approaches to education, research, and partnership that transcend national and international boundaries;
• to acknowledge the on-going institutional and individual roles and responsibilities required to realise the internationalising of HE.

Aspirations

In recognising learning as socially situated, the framework aspires to having regard for:

• HE as an international community;
• the impact of cultural, individual and linguistic diversities in any given context;
• the continual enhancement of the activity, knowledge and values required for internationalising HE;
• a shared responsibility for internationalising HE between organisations, people and curriculum;
• collegial and collaborative ways of working;
• the whole academic lifecycle;
• variations in interpretation and application, which are relevant to different contexts.
The framework is intended for multiple audiences, within HE and beyond, who play a role in, and can benefit from, the process of internationalising HE in relation to learning, teaching and research. It can be used by individuals, associates, or teams (as representative of the organisation or a particular service, function, department or faculty). It is designed to be used flexibly, with different applications in mind, as deemed relevant or appropriate for any given context. The framework invites critical engagement with a range of concepts, actions and connections that are encompassed in the process of internationalising HE. It provides a shared point of reference and common language to discuss and shape policy, practice and partnerships.

The core elements of the framework are modelled on the familiar, sector-owned UK Professional Standards Framework (HEA, 2011), to identify separate, although interrelated, strands of activity, as well as the underpinning and connected sets of knowledge and values required to implement them effectively. Putting these into practice is recognised to be complex, with wide-reaching and long-term implications. Vignette exemplars are highlighted, from a range of providers, to illustrate each of the activity strands. To recognise different entry points and the necessary engagement of different levels of input and perspectives, the information is grouped into three principal audiences:

**ORGANISATIONS**

The collective level – including HE providers (or their particular functions, services, faculties or departments), sector agencies, professional, statutory and regulatory bodies, unions, and employers, amongst others, that influence HE. The framework can prompt mutual enquiry and development of the communal aspects of design and delivery including policies, systems and procedures to enhance the contribution and impact of organisations in internationalising HE.

**PEOPLE**

The individual level – including all staff, students, employees, and associates (as appropriate). The framework can be used to reflect upon, and modify as necessary, attitudes, knowledge, values and practice to enhance the contribution and the impact of individuals in internationalising HE.

**CURRICULUM**

The content, design and delivery of learning and teaching – including the formal (whole programmes or individual units of study) and informal curriculum. The framework can be used to review and enhance the contribution and impact of the curriculum in internationalising HE.

For each of these key audiences, there is a proposed set of related responsibilities and potential levels of engaging with internationalising HE; the latter being related to each of the activity strands. This is followed by an operational implications section, posing a set of key questions that need to be considered. The statements and questions contained within the framework are inter-connected, prompting a holistic consideration of the interrelated role of organisations, its people, and the HE curriculum as well as between and across activity, knowledge and values.

Using and applying the framework

- **Self-reflective audit tool:** to review, benchmark or evidence current and then future progress.
- **Communication tool:** to help categorise and convey ways of working or information to others.
- **Professional development tool:** to help in the continual review or development of individuals, to define and maximise their contribution to the process.
- **Curriculum review tool:** to appraise, evaluate and enhance the extent to which a module, programme, or co-curriculum is internationalising or contributing to the process.
- **Planning tool:** to inform and enhance future policy, strategy or curriculum.

Used in such ways, the framework can build on complement and enhance the efficacy and variety of existing strategies and approaches to internationalisation within the sector.
**Activity**

- **Fostering an inclusive ethos**: Understanding the role of HE in contributing to and shaping global society, and exploring strategies to embed the principles of diversity and inclusion into all aspects of the institution.
- **Promoting intercultural engagement**: Enhancing cultural awareness and understanding, and encouraging students to engage with different cultures and perspectives.
- **Enabling a global learning experience**: Facilitating international collaborations, hosting exchange programs, and offering opportunities for students to study abroad.
- **Facilitating a global academic community**: Building partnerships with universities around the world, promoting the sharing of knowledge and best practices.
- **Embedding social responsibility**: Developing projects that address global issues and contribute to the betterment of society.

**Knowledge**

- **Global society**: Understanding the role of HE in contributing to, and shaping, global society and addressing the challenges it faces.
- **International contexts of higher education**: Understanding the relevance and impact of different cultural contexts on education.
- **Diverse cultures and practices**: Embracing diverse or divergent pedagogical approaches and cultural and social capital within the global academic community.
- **Effective intercultural relations**: Understanding cultural, linguistic, professional and personal ways of interacting, communicating and working with others.
- **Knowledge creation and exchange**: Understanding various means of creating, contesting and exchanging knowledge within and across global academic communities, including the function and impact of technology.

**Values**

- **Respect**: Showing consideration for individual, cultural and linguistic diversities.
- **Equity**: Ensuring parity and fairness in approaches to, and opportunities for participation and success.
- **Ethical**: Acting with integrity and transparency with regard to moral, social and legal considerations.
- **Openness**: Being receptive to different ideas and ways of working across cultures and learning contexts.
- **Reciprocity**: Mutually generating and exchanging knowledge, ideas and innovative solutions and artistic and cultural traditions.
To contribute towards internationalising HE organisations (including HE providers, agencies and professional and regulatory bodies and employers) can make a responsible contribution to global society, drawing on core values and diversity, to inform practice, helping to influence future prospects; providing the opportunity to:

• evidence the impact of activity associated with the process and associated units of study and the informal or co-curriculum, to enhance practice, informing the design and delivery, using the process and evidence to contribute towards internationalising HE to inform practice.

Benefits for the curriculum

Engaging in the process of internationalising HE can benefit the curriculum (including all HE programmes, associated units of study and the informal or co-curriculum), helping contribute to an inclusive culture; provide the opportunity to:

• incorporate relevant global trends and developments;

• surface and confront a range of inherent and complex products of international connections, to enhance practice, enrich and learn from the collective wealth of experience, providing the opportunity to:

• enrich its design and delivery, using the process and evidence to contribute towards internationalising HE to inform practice.

Benefits for the organisation

Engaging in the process of internationalising HE can benefit the organisation and (globally) serving student satisfaction, producing outcomes.

To contribute towards internationalising HE, all people (including staff, students, senior managers, and employees) can make a responsible contribution to global society, drawing on core values and diversity, to inform practice, helping to influence future prospects; providing the opportunity to:

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• evidence the impact of activity associated with the process and associated units of study and the informal or co-curriculum, to enhance practice, informing the design and delivery, using the process and evidence to contribute towards internationalising HE to inform practice.
As an organisation, to what extent...

- are clear roles and responsibilities provided across all services and functions to clarify their contribution towards internationalising HE?

- are cultural diversity and international experiences or knowledge regarded and used as a learning resource within the academic community?

- are discrimination and barriers (internal or external) to participation and success eliminated within all policies, processes, systems and the design of curriculum?

- are operational systems and procedures sufficiently resourced to facilitate internationalising HE?

- are international and intercultural experiences, partnerships and collaborations encouraged within relevant institutional policy and curriculum structures?

- are a diverse range of developmental opportunities provided and promoted throughout and beyond HE, so as to develop and encourage individual and institutional contributions to internationalising HE?

- are international and intercultural experiences, partnerships and collaborations sufficiently valued and promoted in terms of their contributions to research and innovation?

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- are a range of accessible opportunities for international and intercultural learning provided and promoted?

- are global exemplars and perspectives embedded and debated?

- are on-going intercultural and international dialogue and partnerships facilitated?

- are inclusive learning outcomes, practices, skills, and/or attitudes appropriate for diverse societies, cultures, and individuals being proactively developed?

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Facilitating a global academic
Enabling a global learning
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Promoting
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and practices
of higher
contexts
Global
existing academic community.
the characteristic spirit of the
Ethos:

another (such as between programmes).
of particular tasks or activity, as well
of parity or fairness in the execution
Equitable:

status, age, disability, religion, politics,
sexual orientation, socio-economic
individual identities, encompassing
Diversity:

Copyrights:
Theoretical or
principles or standards
Values:

from internationalising HE.

contribute to as well as benefit from
agencies, unions, and employers, who
and regulatory bodies, sector
departments), professional, statutory
and regulatory bodies, campus
groups). We would like to formally thank the working group of summit representatives, including Janette Ryan, Sue Robson and Gavin Bunting, who were commissioned work on the development of this framework. Their written contributions, comments, and suggestions have been invaluable to the process.

Thank you to those who devoted a significant amount of time and energy on the framework during the consultation phase – through emails, meetings, attendance at our organised events (pre-consultation event; the internationalisation research and practice network consultation workshop; the health and social care consultation workshop, and the session at the HEA’s Network of Deputy Heads event in March). We would like to formally thank the working group of summit representatives, including Janette Ryan, Sue Robson and Gavin Bunting, who were commissioned work on the development of this framework. Their written contributions, comments, and suggestions have been invaluable to the process.

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