Chapter 3: Global markets, national challenges, local strategies: the strategic challenge of internationalisation

(A) Introduction

Higher education is an international business operating in a global market with some 100,000 institutions describing themselves as universities. Universities are not only a significant service sector in their own right (Bretton, 2003) however, but they are also an important contributor to the whole global economy as a primary engine of economic growth. Governments in almost every country are committed to increasing the proportion of their workforce with tertiary level qualifications and to using the research and enterprise ‘products’ of universities as key contributions to their nation’s economic and social well-being. Increasing the proportion of the workforce educated to tertiary level by 1% is estimated to produce a 6% growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (OECD, 2007). The recognition that higher education is a key driver in economic and social development is now central to national government perspectives on the role of universities, therefore (Stephens, 2009)

The three principal activities of universities (education, research and enterprise/knowledge transfer) all offer global prospects. An underpinning principle of research is that ‘knowledge’ is a consistent and global ‘good’, and that advancing knowledge is optimised by drawing together the expertise of academics from around the world. Journals, conferences, academic visits and research collaborations provide the mechanism for such an international perspective on research questions, and make the research community inherently international.

Such a pressure towards global collaboration, however, sits alongside strong pressures to global competition amongst universities. The demand for education at tertiary level in a different country has grown significantly in the last decade, and universities have sought to acquire an increasing share of this global market. Universities in all countries have responded to the increased trans-national mobility of students through strategies ranging from direct marketing to the provision of overseas campuses to the establishment of student mobility partnerships. While this is partly (even predominantly) driven by economic motives, there is an important element of this
mobility driven by the desire to share cultures and emphasise the global nature of the academic enterprise.

The third activity of universities, enterprise and knowledge transfer, is perhaps the least well developed characteristic of higher education (H.E.), but business and innovation opportunities are available to universities from the local to the global scale, and the success of H.E. innovations such as Google show the global potential for university enterprise.

The local, regional and national perspectives still feature large in the focus of all universities, of course, and for most institutions it is those scales of operation that will continue to dominate their activity. Increasingly, though, the international perspective has become an important focus of universities, and especially for those regarded as the leading institutions in their own country. This pressure to respond to global markets is also accelerating in challenge. As Neubauer and Ordonez (2008, p.51)) have indicated:

The challenge that rapid globalization presents to universities is whether they can continue to adapt, no longer slowly or organically but in the quantum leaps required by new realities. Knowledge…is now created, transmitted and stored through modalities, institutions and configurations that were previously unknown and at speeds once unimaginable

Universities are obliged to develop their strategies for the future, therefore, to include an international dimension to their profile, balanced with their commitments and engagement to the local and national context. Global markets raise challenges for universities and governments at national level and require local strategies by institutions to stake a place in those global arenas.

This chapter draws on research into the internationalisation strategies of a range of universities in different global settings. The universities studied are all based in Asia or in the United Kingdom, but represent a diverse set of operational contexts. The analysis identifies the key strategies being deployed to promote internationalisation, and considers the challenges for university leaders in developing and operationalising such strategies. It focuses particularly on the development of strategy by the senior
leadership of universities in response to the rapidly changing context within which they operate, and it offers, therefore, both a specific view of internationalisation in higher education and also a perspective on how university leaders ‘manage’ and ‘strategise’ in response to dynamic and often ambiguous and unclear external environments (Shiel and McKenzie, 2008). Internationalisation challenges the skills of leaders to scan, sense and respond to changing social, economic and political circumstances at an international scale, but then to plan and implement change at an institutional scale in the context of universities whose academic staff are still principally engaged in the conservative and monastic dialogue and discourse of research, scholarship and ‘the academy’. The chapter concludes that the most challenging management issues relate to a number of perceived ‘deficits’ in the skill sets of senior leaders in universities in relation specifically to the availability of effective marketing insights, the development of senior colleagues with appropriate externally-focused management skills, and the skills of university Presidents in adjusting their operational approaches to adapt to globalised H.E. markets.

Although most leading universities have had a degree of international engagement since their foundation, internationalisation has emerged on to their strategic agenda in a significant way principally over the last decade, and has risen rapidly up that agenda in the last 3-5 years (Weber and Duderstadt, 2008). ‘Internationalisation’ is a complex and multi-faceted concept, which makes precise definition elusive. All definitions, however, share a common perspective that it is about universities increasing the international dimension in all aspects of their work. Knight( 2003, p.5) defines internationalisation as “the process of integrating international dimensions into teaching, research and service”. This is helpful as it emphasises that internationalisation is not simply about recruiting students from other countries but is about changing the nature, perspective and culture of all of the functions of a university. Internationalisation reaches to the heart of the very meaning of ‘university’ and into every facet of its operation, from teaching and education to research and scholarship, to enterprise and innovation and to the culture and ethos of the institution..

We have already touched on some of the high level reasons for the growth of an international perspective, but the motivation for universities to engage with
internationalisation is complex in detail. Its emergence can be seen as an inevitable consequence and component of globalisation (Deem, 2001). Waters’ (1995) analysis distinguishes distinct but strongly intertwined processes which he differentiates as political, economic and cultural globalisation. All three have a direct connection to the world of universities, for in most countries universities are at the heart of economic and cultural development, and are a key player in the political arena not only by influencing political thought and process but also in their roles as a mechanism used by governments to shape social and economic change.

From the perspective of governments the encouragement of universities to engage internationally may be seen as largely having an economic motive – in the UK for example, knowledge services contribute 25% of all exports and 6.3% of GDP. Governments have been strongly motivated to invest in the development of research in their universities. Zhang (2006) has described the investment in the ‘973 Project’ universities by the Chinese government (Ministry of Science and Technology, 1997), and Shin (2009) has considered the effect of the South Korean government’s Brain Korea21 (BK21) project. But most countries are also investing heavily in HE, however, so that although the BK21 Project has been successful in its aim of developing world class research universities, Shin concludes that the project did not lessen the gap between Korean universities and world-class research universities in the US, China or Japan as they too were strongly investing in similar developments.

At the same time governments have been investing in schemes to attract overseas students to their universities. International students bring £5.5billion per annum to the UK economy, for example, and the work of The British Council through its EducationUK programme and of the British government through the Prime Minister’s Initiatives (PMI1 and PMI2) has been focused on at least retaining market share.

For the universities themselves, though, the motives are more diverse and are underpinned by both economic and more altruistic perspectives. While globalization has stimulated a growing ‘economization of society and the erosion of all that is considered public’ (Wolin, 1981, p.23), universities strive to retain their wider social mission. Fielden (2006), for example, identifies three underpinning motivations for universities in internationalising:
1. Developing human resources for competitive global markets. This perspective recognises that most graduates will be employed in fields that have an international dimension to the work, whether they are working overseas, working for a TNC (transnational corporation) or simply in an organisation which engages with other countries or other cultures. Preparing students to be able to work in such a context is seen as an important educational priority by universities.

2. Researching and contributing to the resolution of global problems. Most of the major research challenges relate to global issues (health, climate change, food supply, global security, for example) which by definition require international collaboration with academics, universities, businesses and governments.

3. An educative role in promoting international values. This perspective recognises that a key priority for universities is in ensuring students are ‘global citizens’, understanding and valuing cultural diversity, promoting economic and social development and engaged with global issues such as poverty, health and environmental change.

Scott (2005) offers a different perspective on university motivations towards internationalisation by considering the strategic position that institutions might adopt, and identifies three specific stances:

1. An economic position in which universities regard themselves as ‘knowledge businesses battling for market share’
2. A cultural position in which universities act as ‘key cultural mediators in the encounter between world culture and national cultures’
3. A stewardship position in which they fulfil ‘guardian roles alerting societies to major emerging issues’

Whatever the motivation and perspective, though, it is clear that internationalisation is a central concern of universities. Foskett (2008a) has shown that in 2007 in the UK, for example, there were five national conferences on aspects of higher education internationalisation (ranging from student recruitment to developing international research partnerships) (for example, see CIHE, 2007), four reports for national organisations considering the development of internationalisation in universities (for
example, see Fielden, 2007), and every government higher education policy document referred to the importance of internationalisation. Of the 22 advertisements for University Vice Chancellors (Presidents) during 2007 every one stipulated that candidates should have an international perspective, and 43% of universities were identified as having a Deputy Vice Chancellor (or equivalent) with a brief for internationalisation.

The focus on internationalisation can also be seen in a range of characteristics of higher education globally. The number of students pursuing higher education globally has risen from 40 million in 1975 to 150 million in 2007, while those choosing to study abroad has been growing significantly, from 600,000 in 1975 to 1.3 million in 1995 and 2.8 million by 2005 (UNESCO, 2007), with an expectation that this will grow to 4.5 million by 2020. The United States (23%), the UK (12%), Germany (11%), France (10%) and Australia (7%) are the main global destinations, but, increasingly, traditional ‘source’ countries such as Singapore and China are seeking to become ‘destination’ countries for international students too (UNESCO, 2007). In addition, though, many universities have been pursuing international education strategies through other means – these include, for example:

a) the establishment of transnational programmes and/or campuses abroad. In 2006 there were 82 HE branch campuses globally, principally operated by US and Australian universities.

b) the establishment of distance learning programmes (for example the Indira Gandhi National Open University in India).

c) the increasing establishment of student exchange and ‘study abroad’ programmes.

d) the development of articulation agreements between universities, in which students spend an initial period at a university in their home country and then spend the final one, two or three years of the programme at a partner institution overseas.

The strategies are varied, therefore, but the competition is strong – and the growth of such significant international business for higher education has inevitably attracted the attention of private sector providers, ranging from private universities (e.g. the University of Phoenix) to private H.E. businesses (e.g. Kaplan)
In the arena of research and enterprise, too, the evidence of internationalisation is strong. Research is increasingly inter-disciplinary and international, focused on global issues, with large-scale corporate and charitable funding (for example, through The Gates Foundation or The Wellcome Trust). International collaborations and partnerships are essential to compete for such funding, and a number of high profile global partnerships of research-intensive universities have emerged (for example Universitas 21, and WUN (the Worldwide Universities Network)). While the direct benefits accruing from such international partnerships is difficult to determine, in that few educational or research activities have emerged from within these organisations, membership of such elite research groups identifies universities as being regarded by their peers as a leading global institution. Such an indicator of esteem enables strong leverage in relation to research funding, a presence at the table in the development of international and national policy, and a premium market value in the recruitment of both domestic and international students. Profile and reputation is everything in such arenas, and as a result the emergence of global league tables has been important to all universities with international aspirations. A high position in the Times Higher Education International League Tables or in the Shanghai Jiaotong tables is increasingly an institutional priority, being seen both as an indicator of international credibility and as an entrance ticket to the major global research, education and enterprise fora.

(A) Developing an International Strategy

So what might be the main elements of an internationalisation strategy for a university? Notwithstanding the inevitable reality gap between the published strategy documents of universities and the actual strategic emphasis as demonstrated by operational activities, it is nevertheless possible to gain a picture of such strategies from published documentation. Foskett (2008b) has summarised the aims of a sample of university internationalisation strategies, and shows that the common themes are:

1. Recognition that ‘being international’ has both geographical and quality dimensions, in that it involves both working with organisations and people from other countries and ensuring that the quality of research and education in the institution is of a standard that would be seen as ‘international’ in peer evaluation.
2. For universities with a strong research profile, a clear aim that the university should be engaged in leading research/academic debate at international levels in some or all of its disciplines.

3. A view that the university, through its leading academics, should be contributing to political, economic, social, and technological developments internationally.

4. An explicit aim that the institution should provide an education (curriculum) for all of its students (whether from the home country or overseas) that is international in quality and equips graduates to be both global citizens and employable in a globalised economy.

5. An aim to develop organisation, systems and culture within the university that promotes an international community, attractive to and meeting the needs of students and staff (both faculty and professional service staff) from both the home country and from overseas.

An important distinction of context is that identified by Knight (2003) as the difference between ‘internationalisation at home’ and ‘internationalisation abroad’. This distinguishes the location of the key focus activities. ‘Internationalisation at home’ describes those changes undertaken in the university’s home context. This might include a wide range of specific implementational activities, but frequently is expressed through:-

- redevelopment of the curriculum to ensure international coverage and focus, and relevance for international students as well as ‘home’ students.
- internationalising teaching and learning, by recognising different cultural perspectives on learning styles and employing a diverse international staff.
- providing student services that meet the practical and cultural needs of international students as well as ‘home’ students.
- benchmarking educational provision not just against national comparator institutions but also against comparators in other countries.

‘Internationalisation abroad’ refers to ‘offshore’ activities, and often has a higher profile in internationalisation strategies in their early phases of development. Its most obvious expression is in substantial marketing activities seeking to recruit students to join academic programmes in the home university, a function characterised by
recruitment fairs, promotional materials and engagement with student recruitment agents and agencies. However, it also includes, *inter alia*:

- increasing student and staff mobility between universities in different countries, encouraging students to spend time in overseas universities as part of their programmes and encouraging faculty to spend research time working with partner institutions abroad.

- the formal inclusion of an ‘overseas’ element to projects, programmes and research, for example in including international field study opportunities

- the establishment of joint teaching programmes with overseas institutions. This may include, for example, articulation agreements, joint degree programmes or split-site PhD programmes

- setting up overseas branch campuses, often in partnership with other private or public sector organisations

- building research partnerships with overseas universities

This initial picture of international strategy in universities therefore raises a number of key research questions related to HE leadership: –

- What internationalisation strategies are being adopted by universities?
- How are strategies being developed?
- What are the organisational arrangements being made to develop and deliver internationalisation?
- What different leadership skills are needed for such developments and how are these being developed?

It is these questions which are the focus of the research reported here.

(A) Methodology

The research evidence in this chapter was gathered over a two year period from July 2006 to June 2008. It was drawn from an initial analysis of the changing strategies of a number of universities as they consider and respond to the challenges they perceive coming from ‘internationalisation’.
The sample comprises two groups of universities. The first, the UK universities, consists of 7 institutions, differentiated in terms of their location within the UK, their standing within UK university rankings, and by their mission – three describe themselves as strongly research-led, two present a strategic profile which emphasises a mixed mission with a clear balance and interplay between research and teaching, and two highlight the teaching-led dimension of their mission, while still indicating an engagement with scholarship, research and knowledge transfer. The second group comprises 16 universities from Asia, distributed geographically as indicated in Figure 1. The pattern of missions of the universities is diverse, as with the UK universities, and the spread across the main ‘mission’ types is also shown in Figure 1.

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<th>Country</th>
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**Figure 1  Location and Mission of the Asian Universities within the study**

The sample was an opportunity sample where the author was able to undertake an enquiry into the university’s internationalisation strategy and strategy processes through visits or existing professional contacts. In that sense the sample cannot be regarded as representative of any specific set of universities. However, the universities within the UK represent a cross-section of British institutions, and the Asian universities are all engaging to some extent in a strategy of internationalisation. The picture they present might therefore be regarded as within the boundaries of common strategic behaviours of universities either in the UK or globally. The individual universities, of course, remain anonymous within this analysis.

The data collection process consisted of:
a) A semi-structured interview with a senior leader within the university holding a post at Vice Chancellor (President), or Deputy Vice Chancellor level
b) A semi-structured interview with a senior officer with responsibility for the institution’s international relationships (for example, the Director of the International Office)
c) A review of a range of documentation relating to internationalisation. This varied in detail, but included, typically, public domain policy documents and prospectuses. In some cases the researcher was given access to confidential policy documents.

(A) Analysis and Key Themes

The interpretation of the interviews and the documentary analysis is presented here in relation to the four key research questions

(B) 1. What internationalisation strategies are being adopted by universities?

The pattern of strategies in relation to internationalisation, and hence the pattern of strategic behaviours, varied between the universities within the study. Two examples illustrate the contrasting strategic positions observed. One of the UK universities has an institutional mission which prioritises its relationship with its local region in terms of providing programmes and knowledge transfer that support economic and social growth and development in that region. While not eschewing international engagement, it is clear that it is not a high priority for resource allocation, and its international engagement is therefore seen in terms of:-
a) accepting (enthusiastically) international students on to its programmes, despite not investing substantially in an international student recruitment activity.
b) ensuring its teaching programmes contain curriculum elements that will support business and other sectors in their international engagement, illustrated by its undergraduate programme in ‘International Business and Marketing’, for example.
c) providing consultancy and research to regional organisations which engage in international markets or arenas.

By way of contrast, one of the universities in China has internationalisation as a key strategic priority, emphasised strongly within all of its strategic documentation and
seen as an important arena for resource allocation. The university is one of the leading universities in China and within the world’s top 100 institutions according to the Times Higher Education World Rankings. Its strategy is characterised by:
a) the recruitment of overseas students to its programmes (principally from other East Asian countries)
b) the development of articulation agreements with British, US and Australian institutions to enable its students to spend time overseas within their programmes or to undertake ‘2+2’ programmes, with the final two years of their undergraduate studies completed overseas
c) ensuring every student experiences an international engagement as part of their programme (whether a placement abroad, or an ‘internationally-focused’ taught unit, or a language programme)
d) building a small number of multi-faceted research partnerships with global leading research-led universities
e) investing in overseas research time for its academic staff and in bringing researchers from world-leading universities to spend time in the institution.

These two examples represent extreme positions within the analysis, of course, and other universities demonstrated a pattern of strategy between these extremes. From the analysis of the stance of each of the universities in the study it has been possible to construct an initial model of internationalisation strategies. The model is shown in Figure 2 below. The model is constructed on a 2 x 2 matrix which relates the orientation of the institution towards ‘internationalisation at home’ and ‘internationalisation abroad’. Each dimension of the model indicates a range from ‘low engagement’ to ‘high engagement’, and in this way four broad categories of institutional strategic position can be defined. In addition, detailed analysis suggests that one of the broad categories should itself be divided into two sub-categories. The categories identified in this model are:

**C) 1. Domestic Universities.** Institutions in this category are focused on their own national and regional context. While content to recruit international students who
apply, they invest little in active recruitment. Their mission, too, is to support regional and national business and communities, and while this may contain international dimensions these are not the priority for the university. One of the UK universities fitted this category, together with two of the Asian universities.

(C) 2. Imperialist Universities. These are universities who have strong international recruitment activities to draw students from overseas, but have done relatively little to change their organisation, facilities or services ‘at home’. International students are expected largely to experience exactly the same as home national students, the curriculum is a ‘domestic national’ curriculum, and facilities for overseas students (for example, cultural facilities) are poorly developed. Few of the staff are from overseas. Such a perspective largely sees internationalisation as a financial strategy, by enhancing ‘home’ income with overseas student income. Two of the UK universities and two of the Asian universities were categorised in this group.

(C) 3. Internationally-Aware Universities. These are universities which are changing their organisation and culture to have a profile that is international, but who have not yet really engaged with overseas recruitment or overseas partner universities. Typically they recognise the global nature of economy and society and even of higher education, but have not yet engaged ‘overseas’. None of the UK universities was seen as within this category, whereas four of the Asian universities were interpreted as being ‘internationally aware’.

(C) 4. Internationally-Engaged Universities. Internationally-engaged universities are those which are operating in international arenas, for example through institutional partnerships and student recruitment, but are also driving an internationalisation agenda ‘at home’. This typically includes curriculum review to make the teaching programmes global in perspective and to provide an international experience (such as a placement abroad); ensuring that services and cultural facilities on the home campus support international and ethnic diversity; recruiting international staff; and encouraging staff to seek research and education partnerships overseas. Three UK universities and four Asian universities were identified as being within this category.
(C) 5. Internationally-Focused Universities. Amongst the internationally-engaged universities are a small number where the level of progress and achievement in internationalisation is strong in many dimensions, and where the cultural change within the institution has been transformational. These have been identified, therefore as Internationally-focused universities, as they are strong in terms of both internationalisation at home and internationalisation abroad. One university in the UK, and two in Asia (both in China) were identified as falling into this category.

This analysis shows the broad picture of internationalisation strategies amongst the universities within the study. It reflects, of course, an external perspective on the reality of strategy rather than an account of internationalisation strategy as the institutions themselves see it. It is helpful, therefore, to distinguish between strategic aspiration and strategic reality and to recognise that for some of the institutions there is a ‘gap’ between the two. It has not been possible to present to all of the participating universities the analysis of their strategic position, but from the evidence of those institutions where this has happened it is possible to offer some observations on this ‘gap’. For those universities identified as strategically positioned as ‘Internationally-engaged’ there is no reality gap, as this reflects the position they aspire too – and while there may be differences in view of how far they have progressed towards the ‘internationally-focused’ position, there is a close match between aspiration and reality. Amongst some of the institutions in the ‘domestic’ category there was a similar match between aspiration and reality, for here there was a good understanding of the institution’s strategic position. This position may have been achieved by default or strategic action, but there is recognition that this is the position these institutions are at.

More problematic are those universities in the ‘imperialist’ category. This is not a position which any of the universities in the study explicitly aspired to be in, for although they confirmed the economic value of recruiting international students they perceived that their strategy was placing them as an internationally-engaged university. There is an ethical dimension in this observation of course, in that there may be a view that such an ‘imperialist’ position is simply a ‘quick win’ exploitation of a market position – yet, even if this is a key motivation, it is unlikely that institutions will be open that this is their position. This reality gap, however, is of
significance within this study as it suggests that it may be in this group of universities where there is the least well developed managerial understanding of the processes and strategies of internationalisation. We shall consider this below.

(B) 2. How are strategies being developed?

Having identified the strategic positions of the institutions, the study considered the ways in which internationalisation strategies were being developed. While some universities are adopting their strategies in a deliberate way, others are adopting the strategic position they find themselves in by default. Those universities within the ‘domestic’ group may be positioned there from either of these two directions. One of the UK universities, a medium-sized regional institution, had a clearly articulated internationalisation strategy which recognised the university’s regional and national focus. This reflected a careful market analysis of its own position and a recognition that it did not have the resource base to become a significant player in any of the existing international markets. Its choice to remain as a ‘domestic’ institution was a well-articulated strategic decision, and its internationalisation strategy was clearly defined. In contrast, one of the universities in Pakistan which had a similar regional focus was in that position because it had not yet given much consideration to an international role. There had been little or no debate about how the university might engage with international perspectives, and so its lack of an internationalisation strategy was in effect a default position.

The ‘imperialist’ universities seem to have adopted their position because of an absence of well developed strategy. In most cases they have simply set up an international recruitment programme to raise income, rather than looking at the way forward in a strategic way. In each of these universities the initial impetus to engaging internationally appears to be finance driven, as a way of growing income to support the university’s wider mission. Questions of wider engagement, of cultural change and curriculum change seem to emerge as a product of the growth of international student numbers rather than being part of the initial conceptualisation of such a growth strategy. In such institutions, while the President/Vice Chancellor had a strong commitment to the concept of internationalisation, the strategic and operational dimensions were delegated to a functional area such as the International Office or the
Marketing Office, and most international visits by senior staff were to attend recruitment events or marketing conferences. Hence the internationalisation strategy seems to be the result of operational practices rather than the determinant of them.

In those universities identified as ‘internationally-engaged’ strategy in this domain has emerged through a developmental process but with strong leadership from one of the senior team in conjunction with the President/Vice Chancellor. In each case, a number of key organisational and operational features could be identified:

a) the President had a well-articulated vision of what it means to be an international university
b) a further member of the senior leadership within the university shared this vision and had responsibility for operationalising it. Typically this was a Vice President (Pro Vice Chancellor) with a brief for international activities.
c) the President and the senior colleague actively discussed the strategy, and engaged colleagues in institutional governance, academic leadership and administrative functions in discussion about strategy and operations.
d) each of the key functional areas (research, teaching, administration, enterprise) incorporated an international dimension into its key strategic documents.
e) identifiable resource (including finance) is channelled to international activities other than student recruitment, for example into supporting staff international exchanges or academic conference attendance.

What emerges from this analysis is that carefully articulated and developed strategy for internationalisation appears to characterise the two extreme positions within the model. For all the universities within the internationally engaged sector and for some of those in the ‘domestic’ sector their position is the product of strategy. For those in the ‘imperialist’ sector and for some of those in the ‘domestic’ sector the position is either a default position or has emerged as a product of recruitment activity, driven by financial goals, rather than as the outcome of a strategic analytical process.

(B) 3. What are the organisational arrangements being made to develop and deliver internationalisation?
Organisational structures, systems and processes vary in form and detail between universities in relation to most aspects of the institutions’ functions, and reflect the complex interaction of cultures, histories, resources, strategies and power relations within each university. In detail this is as true of internationalisation processes as any other professional function, yet the key elements of organisational arrangements show some clear similarities across the universities within this study. Those commonalities lie in a number of features:

a) The President/Vice Chancellor has the overall strategic leadership role for internationalisation vested in her/him.
b) A senior member of the institution’s leadership has a delegated responsibility for international activities
c) The university has an International Office or Office of International Affairs

Within and beyond these elements diversity characterises the sector. The scope of the role of the senior leadership for internationalisation varies from strong, formal, line management leadership for all dimensions of international activity, to a nominal reporting role, to a role in which the international function is but a small part of a much wider portfolio. International offices, similarly, may take a broad-ranging strategic lead or simply be responsible for student recruitment or arranging incoming and outgoing international visits. The role of individual academic departments or schools in internationalisation also varies, from a position of total devolution of all international activities to departments to one where there is a strongly centralised function.

From the evidence of this study there is no simple relationship between strategic position and organisational arrangements for internationalisation. The key distinguishing feature, rather, relates to the location of strategic development, for in those institutions within the ‘internationally engaged’ sector this function is retained at the most senior levels of the university, with strong leadership from a Vice President / Pro Vice Chancellor and active engagement by the President/Vice Chancellor.
(B) 4. What different leadership skills are needed for such developments and how are these being developed?

The growing importance of internationalisation within institutional strategies has brought with it the requirement for strategic and operational skills hitherto not well developed in the sector. At the strategic level this may be seen simply as extending the operational environment to a global rather than national scale, but this brings with it the need to read and assess much more complex scopes of knowledge and activities set in a diverse cultural setting. The growth of internal markets (i.e. within their own country) for the universities within the study as a consequence of growing participation rates, has brought with it the need for a broad swathe of partnership, external relations and marketing skills. Internationalisation requires that those skills now operate in global arenas rather than national ones.

Although universities have sought to professionalise their internationalisation activities, there is still a large degree of learning by experience. Within this study, while those with leadership roles in this field expressed an interest and enthusiasm for international activities, few had any form of professionally recognised expertise or training. Some of the Directors of the International Offices had a background in marketing in the commercial sector or educational sector, but at institutional leadership level none of the Presidents or Vice Presidents had any formal background in the field. Some had leadership experience in other sectors, some had undertaken senior leadership development or training, but in most cases their knowledge of internationalisation in higher education was rooted simply in their own experience as academics, teachers, researchers and managers.

Despite the lack of formal training and development for managing and leading internationalisation, those universities which had a strategic position within the ‘internationally engaged’ sector of the model had senior leadership teams that had significant international experience from their own academic or other professional background. The Presidents and Vice Presidents of all of the universities in this category had a personal track record of working internationally with their research or teaching. Most had been actively part of global academic networks with a long experience of attending events overseas, spending time on academic placements in
other countries, and hosting international students and faculty. This experience may have provided them with an international perspective on universities which enables them to understand better the arena of international HE, and hence a good conceptualisation of the needs and challenges of developing an internationalisation strategy for their institution. So, although there is only limited formal training experience, those who are most actively leading and promoting internationalisation have considerable experience of working in the international higher education arena.

There is therefore a clear picture of a priority for appropriate international leadership development, and also for training at all levels for those engaged in the operational dimensions of internationalisation. It is clear, though that, at the most senior level, of key importance is a personal history of international engagement that enables the strategic process for the institution to have a well-informed perspective on the reality of working in international arenas.

(A) In Conclusion

This chapter has provided the background and some early and initial findings about the strategic management of internationalisation in a range of universities in the UK and Asia. The research shows some diversity of approach to internationalisation, together with some common challenges that university leaders are facing. The model that emerges may provide an interesting first benchmark for institutions to consider their strategic approach and to identify a range of aims that go beyond economic objectives and help to re-assert the role of universities as a social as well as an economic good.

(A) References

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![Figure 2 A Model of University Internationalisation Strategies](image-url)