

Lancaster University's European Policy Statement

Lancaster University's Strategic Plan 2009-2015 outlines its international strategy in key areas such as research, staff and student mobility, curriculum development and the development of strategic partnerships as follows:

'We will broaden the horizons of our students:

- by achieving a step change in the number of students taking up opportunities to study abroad
- by providing a stimulating mix of students from all backgrounds in all parts of the world

We will produce graduates whose skills and knowledge are sought after in the national and international job markets

- by working increasingly closely with employers and alumni to inform our activities and by providing opportunities for students to engage in placements, work experience and volunteering
- by enhancing enterprise skills and labour market awareness in our students

We will enhance the international intellectual environment of Lancaster:

- by seeking to increase our numbers of international students and developing more opportunities and support for our students to study overseas
- by enhancing the opportunities and facilities at Lancaster for visiting researchers from overseas

We will aim to be productive partners in research for other universities, research based institutions and business:

- by fully engaging in important regional, national and international research collaborations
- by developing sustainable research'

This Plan is currently being revised and will then guide the University's strategy to 2020, although the overarching strategic aims will remain the same.

Lancaster's teaching partners are a key aspect of its international strategy and are selected according to a range of criteria such as subject match and quality, being located in geo-politically important locations and where the University is currently active in recruiting international students.

This approach has led to teaching and research partnerships being established in the Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC) countries as well as Pakistan and Malaysia. Double degrees with leading institutions in France, Germany, Italy and Spain are well established in the Management School and a recent development has been the introduction of the European-American BBA degree. A China variant on these double degrees is currently being developed.

Current strategic developments are focused on identifying international research partners in the US and Europe. When established, these activities will include staff mobility eg joint workshops and publications, and student mobility, especially at PhD level. These partners will complement Lancaster University's centres of research excellence and build on the existing partnership model with the Chinese Academy of Science. Future plans include expanding collaboration in Europe and exploring Masters level student mobility.

A recent review of the University's Study Abroad Programme, partly prompted by the growth in students taking part in Erasmus mobility, has recommended the introduction of new models for study abroad to support the University's aim to increase the number of students taking part. The University is also exploring how to increase diversity and remove barriers such as finance. A review of exchange partners is currently taking place to ensure the best academic fit for students and to explore the potential for additional joint activities at institutional level.

The development of double degrees involves senior managers (Vice Chancellor, Deputy and Pro Vice Chancellors), academic and administrative staff from Faculties and Departments and administrative staff based centrally eg Secretariat, Student Registry, International Office. A strategic level visit to a country is undertaken by senior managers to identify suitable opportunities and to initiate exploratory discussions with potential institutions and also key funding and legislative bodies.

Following formal University approval to establish a partnership, reciprocal visits are made on a regular basis. Discussions lead to the establishment of curricula and Memoranda of Agreement, and agree monitoring arrangements (annual and periodic reviews) and overall partnership management. Formal approval is given at each stage of development through appropriate teaching committees at Departmental, Faculty and University level including the Collaborative Provision Oversight Committee (CPOC). It ensures that developments are in line with appropriate aspects of the University's Strategic Plan and ensures appropriate governance of formal institutional collaborative partnerships is in place. These processes are described in the University's 'Collaborative Provisions: approval, monitoring and management procedures'.