GOING GLOBAL
Can we use higher education to develop knowledge, skills and power?

In association with
BRITISH COUNCIL | 80 YEARS OF CULTURAL RELATIONS
An alternative route to a business degree at a fraction of the cost?

For forty years, ABE (the Association of Business Executives) has been offering qualifications in business and management worldwide. It doesn’t exist to make a profit – any surplus earned is available for reinvestment in its core business, which is the opening up of educational and development opportunities for individuals, businesses and communities around the world, currently in more than 70 countries. At any one time, about 60,000 students are studying for its qualifications. ABE graduates are to be found in ministerial posts and as senior corporate executives in many African and Asian countries.

However, ABE is facing up to some tough challenges, and adapting and responding to a rapidly changing and globalising market. John Goldup recently joined ABE as its Chief Executive Officer, having previously worked as Deputy Chief Inspector in Ofsted, the English education inspectorate. He puts it like this: “The global demand for real business and management skills is growing all the time, but one of the problems with expanding markets is that they attract some very poor quality providers to fill the gaps. ABE is absolutely committed to delivering high quality at low cost. Our programmes are delivered by more than 300 approved colleges worldwide – global standards, locally delivered.”

ABE provides a quality route to a business degree at a tiny fraction of the cost of the traditional full time university route. It has more than 80 progression agreements with UK and other universities, which will admit students with an ABE Level 6 Diploma direct to the third year of an honours degree course, very often with the option of continuing to study in their own country. Many will also give ABE graduates advanced standing on their MBA programmes. Equally, ABE is meeting the needs of students who require the enhanced employability that an introductory business qualification will give them. As part of a comprehensive portfolio review, it will be introducing a Level 3 qualification in management later this year, and a new practically oriented Business Start-Up programme. The exponential expansion of small businesses is powering global growth, but too many of them fail because the enthusiasm of the entrepreneur is not matched by his or her business know-how.

ABE is also active in the UK, focusing its offer not only on international students, but also on home students who have a huge contribution to make to the business world and economic growth, but have been priced out of the university sector. Even with the costs of the top-up year, students can achieve a degree through ABE study at one of its approved colleges in the UK and progression to a top-up year with one of our university partners for around half the cost of a three-year university degree. Further education colleges can attract funding of almost £2,000 per student for all of ABE’s Level 4 courses in business, marketing, information systems, human resources and travel, tourism and hospitality management, and business start-up and entrepreneurship.

The unit structure of ABE qualifications makes them highly flexible. As one student in Kenya put it, “I didn’t get the chance for direct entry to university due to finances but with ABE whenever I get the money I pay and sit for exams. So it gives everyone an opportunity to become a professional in affordable ways”. Or another one in Trinidad and Tobago – “I have appreciated being able to take the modules at a pace that fits with my other life commitments. I have taken several years to achieve the qualifications but I have them now.”

John Goldup says that the future lies less with fragmented competition and more with the development of an increasingly wide range of partner ships. “We are continually talking with universities, with colleges, with employers, with providers who are developing whole new ways of online learning, with other awarding organisations where we can offer programmes that are complementary to each other, with training providers which want their learners to be able to access accredited units alongside their own training.”

If you want to know more about ABE, go to our website at abeuk.com.

And if you can’t find what you’re looking for, just email the Chief Executive direct at john@abeuk.com.

“Despite my various academic qualifications, I did not hesitate when an opportunity to pursue professional qualifications through ABE presented itself. They equipped me with relevant and practical skills that assisted greatly in the establishment of the first private university in Namibia, the International University of Management.”

Hon. Dr David Richard Namwandi, Minister of Education for Namibia
Innovation is the major engine of national economic prosperity and growth. Yet, as the British Council emphasises, nations aspiring to innovate must have strong talent pools to draw from. These are not necessarily going to comprise purely of its own citizens. Talented people with specialised knowledge and skills tend to be mobile, which presents governments with the challenge of providing high quality tertiary education to their citizens while at the same time being open to international collaboration.

Universities, colleges and other higher education institutions are at the heart of the innovation and inclusion agendas. Globalised institutions are ideally positioned to deliver national and international impact well beyond their traditional research and teaching roles. It is a route into the global innovation community and a way to advance civil society. The high importance attached to these themes is demonstrated by the programme of the forthcoming Going Global conference. Attended by the world’s leaders of international higher education, it takes place in Miami in April 2014 and is hosted by the UK’s British Council.

The British Council creates international education opportunities for the people of the UK and other countries and builds trust between them worldwide. Over the course of the three days of the Going Global conference it will draw upon its 80 years’ experience within 110 countries to explore the impact that internationalisation can have on the global education community.

As a precursor to the event, the New Statesman has worked with the British Council to produce this special supplement. Providing data from previously unpublished research, expert opinion and insight from around the world, it considers how countries can meet the challenge of providing sufficient higher education opportunities to ensure widespread inclusion and participation.
Foreword

Staying connected

by Sir Martin Davidson

Making the most of links between other institutions, sectors and countries is essential if the UK is to retain its position as a leading higher education provider

Predicting the future is a dangerous game, but one thing is certain: whether focusing on the climate or technology, wider society or personal relationships, change will be a defining quality of this century.

This is as true for higher education as for anything else. Competition for the best minds, positions in rankings and for international students is increasing as new players and new models of transnational education emerge. You can almost feel the ground shifting beneath your feet.

The UK boasts higher education institutions going back 800 years and a world class higher education sector. Our institutions are disproportionately represented in global rankings and the UK is a leading research nation in terms of the number of articles published annually, and how often those articles are cited and used. Some 13 per cent of non-British Nobel prize-winners have been educated in the UK or have held a position at a British university.

Yet while these are all valid measures, the conditions that have given the UK its present ranking and reputation are rapidly changing and we must question whether this position is secure, particularly in the face of the growth and ambitions of China, India and other emerging education powers. If we wish to retain our place over the next 80 years – let alone the next 800 – we must rise to the challenges of the new landscape. And as higher education becomes increasingly international and open, central to this is ensuring that our institutions have the global connections they need, and an offer which is relevant to the needs of domestic and international students, business and the wider economy.

Connections have always been important in higher education. For centuries the great universities have been open systems attracting the best minds and where combined ideas drive a “ratchet effect” of exponential knowledge growth. Networks between other institutions and countries through faculty exchange, collaboration, joint research and student mobility are now more than ever the lifeblood of universities. In the new international landscape the most successful institutions will be those with the international links that enable them to become or remain influential points in this increasingly global network of knowledge, minds and ideas.

The UK, with its legacy of worldwide connections, is well positioned but must work to continue to nourish and expand its global links as new centres of excellence emerge around the world. Not doing so risks our institutions being sidelined by those with the international links that out of the emerging flows of talent and ideas that drive research, innovation and the knowledge economy, and losing the benefits which spill out into the national economy and enrich wider society. It risks a downward spiral of increasing detachment and retreat, of becoming peripheral to a sector which has a critical role to play in national and global prosperity.

These academic and institutional cross-border networks are necessary but not sufficient. This is not just about a self-referential, closed system. Higher education must also be tightly linked and relevant to the wider society and economy. As well as generating knowledge and ideas, universities must also prepare future generations of young people to compete, thrive and meet the challenges of the future. Universities must offer young people the skills for success in the 21st century and business must be happy with the results in terms of employee skills.

This means dialogue and connections between the sector and business, industry and government, and agility in responding to the shifting demands of the economy and student expectations and aspirations. Without this, the brightest students – both domestic and international – will move to the places which they feel offer them the best opportunities, business will go elsewhere for their human resources, and national economies will be constrained in their growth. The UK risks being bypassed by the international students that currently enrich the academic and cultural life of its universities incalculably.

Clearly this is all not only relevant to the UK. Other countries will have different strengths and challenges but two aspects of connectivity are equally central to other institutions and education systems around the world: on the one hand links to other institutions within the global education system, and on the other connections with the world outside that system.

There’s a difficult balance here, but getting this right means institutions and countries can be part of the critical international flow of talent and ideas, attracting the best and brightest to their universities to enrich the sector and country, and providing the next generation with skills needed for the future.

Has the UK still got what it takes? Predicting the future is a dangerous game but maintaining and growing these sorts of connections and engaging with the world is critical to ensuring the sustainability of a great national asset and enabling it to thrive into the future.

Sir Martin Davidson is chief executive of the British Council

Networks are now more than ever the lifeblood of universities
UK international education strategy

A global brand

by David Willetts

The UK’s higher education system makes a massive contribution both to our own nation and others around the world

International education is hugely important to the UK, benefiting our economy and relationships overseas. British education is known globally for its excellence. Many of our universities are household names across the world. The UK attracts more international students than any other country, apart from the US. Almost one in five students in our universities is from overseas. In 2011/12 they paid £3.3bn in tuition fees and living expenses. They also contribute to our cultural life and enrich the experience of the domestic students they study alongside. And when they return home they help to create a reservoir of goodwill towards the UK, enhancing our networks and trading relationships across the globe. It is because we value the massive contribution they make that there is no cap on the number of legitimate overseas students who can come to the UK, nor do we have plans to impose one.

The British Council plays an important role in promoting the excellence of UK education. Its annual Going Global conference brings together governments and academics from across the world to discuss key issues in higher and vocational education. This year’s event will see attendance of more than 1,000 delegates from across the world. This highlights the importance that all nations attach to education, as a vital driver for growth and prosperity.

Fifty years ago the great Robbins Report set the terms for huge expansion of our universities, based on the principle that “courses of higher education should be available for all those who are qualified by ability and attainment to pursue them and who wish to do so”. That principle is just as important today as it was then. That is why the Chancellor has made the historic commitment to remove the artificial cap on student numbers by 2015-16.

But this is not some eccentric British experiment. Right now the world is having its Robbins moment. Many developing countries have extraordinary ambitions to expand the number of people entering higher education – and at a great pace. India wants 40 million extra higher-education students by 2020. Indonesia, which I recently visited, wants an additional quarter-of-a-million of its population to be university students each year. We have a wide range of options, including franchises, twinning and branch campuses to meet different needs.

Increasingly students want to study for a UK qualification in their own country. We have a wide range of options, including MOOCs (massive open online courses) and their global reach has opened up a new door to education. The UK’s new MOOC platform, FutureLearn, brings together free courses from 26 top UK and international universities. In the few months since the first course began, FutureLearn has had half a million course sign-ups from 250,000 registered users. Those users come from an astonishing 190 countries.

Education is changing fast, and we must be agile in our response. We start from a position of tremendous strength. Our new International Education Strategy sets out a determined plan for the government and the sector to build upon it.

The British Council’s Going Global conference provides an excellent forum to discuss how we can make these ambitions a reality, as well as showing our partners around the world what we have to offer.

David Willetts is Minister of State for Universities and Science

Almost one in five UK students is from overseas

We have a massive opportunity to meet the needs of emerging economies
Outward Mobility

Bright, young and mobile things

by Philip G. Altbach and David Engberg

Overseas students generate many financial returns for the host countries. But what are the benefits for those nations whose governments pay for their young adults to study abroad? Research by the British Council and DAAD aimed to find out.

Student mobility is at the heart of higher education globalisation. While massive open online courses (MOOCs), branch campuses and education hubs may be au courant, students who cross borders to study remain the single most important element of internationalisation. Over 4.3 million students studied abroad in 2011, more than double the number of mobile students a decade earlier.

Contrary to popular wisdom, the majority of these students are self-sponsored and shoulder the entire cost of their education, although some are supported by their governments. They often bring large amounts of money to the major host countries and their universities. Indeed, overseas study is now big business – earning the UK and the US alone around $24bn each per annum.

The reasons why students study abroad are manifold and include obtaining knowledge and credentials that are unavailable at home; the prestige of an international qualification; gaining access to opportunities abroad when the doors may be closed at home; and, in some cases, emigration. For example, about 80 percent of overseas students obtaining doctoral degrees in the US from both China and India do not return home immediately after graduation.

Also worthy of note is Europe, which stands out globally as a region where mobility is a high priority. Its newly launched Erasmus+ program, for example, has a budget of €14.7bn and aims to provide overseas opportunities for more than four million Europeans in the period 2014-2020. However, there are immense differences across Europe in terms of national-level policies, support mechanisms and practical outcomes of mobility initiatives. These discrepancies have been exacerbated by the economic crisis, which has made it difficult for many countries trying to expand, and even sustain, tertiary education mobility opportunities.

The expansion of undergraduate mobility is another trend. Postgraduate or professional students still constitute the large majority, but there is much growth among undergraduates. In the US, for example, international undergraduate enrolments outpaced postgraduate enrollments for the first time in 2011.

While the flow of students is mainly from South to North, more diverse geographical patterns are also having an impact. Several sending countries have become receiving nations as well. An example is Malaysia – host to 58,000 international students while at the same time 54,000 Malaysians study abroad.

Government-sponsored outward mobility scholarships constitute a significant source of funding but support only a small proportion of the world’s international students. Given their high costs, the British Council and DAAD (Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienst) have worked together on a piece of research that considers the impact of these scholarships in 11 countries: Brazil; China; Egypt; India; Indonesia; Kazakhstan; Mexico; Pakistan; Russia; Saudi Arabia; and Vietnam. Preliminary results reveal both similarities and differences in approaches.
In terms of scale, Brazil, Saudi Arabia, and China have made the largest commitments. For example, Brazil’s Ciência sem Fronteiras (Science Without Borders), launched in 2011, aims to send 100,000 post- and under-graduate students abroad by 2015, while Saudi Arabia’s ambitious King Abdullah Scholarship Program is providing funding until 2020 for more than 164,000 students. China has sent 11,000 students abroad each year since 2007.

In each of the remaining countries mobility scholarships total around 1,000 per year. India was the lone exception. Despite enrolling more than 20 million students and being the world’s third-largest tertiary education system, its government funds just 30 international students each year since 2007.

Motivations for the scholarships were similar across the board. They were touted as a way to support outstanding students, advance their career prospects, and improve their communication skills, especially in English. Equally common was a desire to develop expertise in key fields, mostly science and technology, that were either unavailable or of poor quality at the countries’ own universities. This was not surprising given that all of the countries are striving to improve economic growth and global competitiveness.

Another shared goal is the improvement of government and education infrastructure. Indonesia and Vietnam, for example, send current and prospective university educators abroad for doctoral degree training – in both countries, few academics hold doctorates.

Who is receiving these government scholarships? Our data did not allow for a refined examination. However, in general, participation closely correlates with a programme’s goals. In Indonesia, for example, only current government workers may apply for scholarships geared toward promoting civic reform. Otherwise, admissions criteria were found to be clear, nondiscriminatory, and merit-based.

How scholarship programmes are administered differs between countries. In some cases, they are managed by the ministry of education. In others, they are co-organised between a government office and university or an organisation that is affiliated with a foreign government, such as the British Council. A more recent and popular model is oversight by a government-affiliated non-profit organisation. Kazakhstan for example uses a joint-stock company, the Center for International Programs, to conduct the operations of Bolashak, its flagship scholarship.

Funding for these schemes tends to come from governments, with the exception of Egypt and Pakistan. Both countries sponsor a number of small-scale awards, but often in partnership with foreign governments or organisations that underwrite some or all of the costs.

Brain drain is a key threat to the countries that invest in these scholarships, and in an attempt to limit this, many countries now require recipients to return home to work following their studies, with sizeable penalties for breaching a contract.

A complex set of factors, unique to each country, must be considered in developing a programme that is successful in meeting its intended goals. However, our research indicates that, in general, outward mobility schemes do produce positive benefits at multiple levels: individual, institutional and national.

Assessing their value is hard to gauge, in part because few countries have established formal procedures for measuring results. Nevertheless, the increasing number of these programmes suggests that countries believe their benefits exceed their cost. If nothing else, they represent an expedient way for countries with poor or limited domestic educational opportunities to invest in areas of critical knowledge need; promote institutional reform; improve communications and connections with people and organisations abroad; and support their best and brightest. They may also be symbolically important, representing a country’s overt (publicly funded) effort to engage with the global higher education and knowledge communities. This may be seen as a small-scale yet crucial aspect of national development strategies today.

Outward mobility scholarships are an increasingly common aspect of the complex and expanding globalization landscape. While the benefits of overseas study scholarships accrue directly to individuals, an increase in the number of nations deploying them implies they are also understood to be a worthy investment in the public good.

Philip G. Altbach is director of the Center for International Higher Education at Boston College; David Engberg is executive director of the Global Opportunities Group.
Inclusion, innovation and impact at Regent’s

Dr Judith Lamie talks to the New Statesman about internationalisation at Regent’s University London

NS What can universities do to limit the impact of immigration rules on student recruitment?

JL There are clearly many challenges that face us as we try to progress our international agenda. Obviously one of the main things in the UK is the challenges in terms of immigration rules.

To be honest, we have been operating in an increasingly internationalised competitive environment for some time. We know the UK is seemingly closing doors while other countries, not least the US, are opening theirs more freely. We need to communicate the fact that this actually isn’t the case. The country is open to international students, international visitors, and international talent.

It really is a challenge dealing with that perception of the UK. It means you have to be willing to get out there yourself, to talk to students, parents and partner organisations internationally to let them know that what sometimes is perceived is not actually a reality.

NS So in terms of actually going out there and speaking to people does this mean that there are Regent’s University London representatives that are speaking to schools around the world?

JL Absolutely, although we have been doing that for some time. Our new inter-
The nationalisation strategy is driven through partnerships with other academic institutions, partnerships with business and industry, partnerships with our alumni and that means working with them to communicate what Regent’s has to offer.

NS What impact do you see the internationalisation strategy having on the university and its students?

JL It’s the first time we have developed an internationalisation strategy and to set it in its context, internationalism is one of Regent’s central values. We’re quite a small institution but we have 138 nationalities here. You won’t have more than two or three people from the same country in the same classroom.

There are various strands to the international recruitment strategy, which we describe as holistic with five core areas. The first area is the student, the student experience, recruitment support and mobility. The second is learning, teaching and program development; the third area is staff and their recruitment and support, the fourth is research and innovation while the fifth is partnerships.

What we are trying to do with the strategy is bring together the strands. This lets us see what we need to work on, helps us make sure we’re protecting the things we want to keep and do well and that strategically we are going in the direction we want to go in. Ultimately it’s about trying to put something in place that’s of benefit to all of our students and therefore society in general.

NS What are the barriers to that?

JL You need engagement. When we were developing the strategy we took three months to have a consultation period that allowed everyone’s input. Internationalism can be in your strategy document and your institutional plan but people need to know what it means for them individually. Challenges remain but the consultation period accelerated the initiative.

NS On a slightly different note, how do we encourage inclusivity in our institutions and what do we really mean by this term?

JL I think for me it harks back to what we used to term education for all. We have a target for all our students to have the opportunity to have some sort of experience abroad. It’s quite a challenge but we have broadened the portfolio of subjects we offer. Students can study abroad as part of their programme but also access shorter study programmes. We are trying to start hubs for student mobility overseas. We give scholarships to study abroad as well. If you’re saying that mobility is important it has to be important for everyone and that is inclusivity.

NS What about the way in which Regent’s works to promote innovation and impact?

JL I suppose we focus on our students. What we have here is a very strong network of international, intercultural students and the way we facilitate those networks internally and externally means our individual students make so much more impact on the global stage. One of the most important things with impact and innovation is you need to have talent management around it as well. Part of our strategy is the recruitment and support of students but also of staff – having people with the mindset to make a global difference and then giving them the support to help them achieve their goals.

NS Finally, you have worked at two Russell Group universities. How does Regent’s compare given that it is a not-for-profit independent university?

JL One of the things that struck me from the first day was the international culture. The second I arrived I heard so many different languages around me. There was a group of students next to me chatting away in English and then all of a sudden one of them started talking in Spanish and they all switched to Spanish. If you walk through this institution you really get a feel for a melting pot of people from different cultures, languages and backgrounds. I think that the way internationalism manifests here, both physically and culturally is what really makes Regent’s distinctive.

Dr Judith Lamie is Director of External Relations at Regent’s University London

FACTS & FIGURES

- 138 student nationalities on campus
- 5,000 students on campus over the course of a year
- Alumni live in 145 countries worldwide

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GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

What does the future hold for higher education?

In today’s globalised world, what happens within the educational system of one country impacts upon us all. The *New Statesman* and British Council were keen to see what trends were occurring, so invited a number of higher education experts to provide insight into the challenges and opportunities facing their country’s sector.

“We ignore higher education and its link to development at our peril”

**Professor Judith Bahemuka**

Recognition, finally, of the critical role of higher education within the post-2015 development agenda, is music to the ears of many African countries, including my own. As captured in a recent World Bank report, more than half of Sub-Saharan Africa’s population is aged under 25 and as many as 11 million young Africans are expected to join the labour market every year for the next decade. With huge strides made in widening access to higher education across Africa, a significant portion of those entering the job market will be graduates. This is focusing our minds on the vexed issue of graduate employability.

*Kenya* offers a case in point. By 2015, 50 per cent of our population will be aged under 18. Young people will make up 60 per cent of our workforce. **Vision 2030** is the Kenyan government’s development programme. Its objective is to turn Kenya into an industrialised, middle-income country that provides a high quality of life to all its citizens by 2030. A key component of this is the delivery of double-digit economic growth – with higher education highlighted as a key enabler. Alongside increasing access and equity in higher education, the importance of quality and relevance now looms large. No country will prosper by churning out large numbers of unemployable graduates who do not possess the skills, knowledge and attributes demanded by an increasingly interdependent global economy.

A lot rests, therefore, on the shoulders of higher education if Africa is to harness the full potential of its young populations. In Kenya, our president has promised that “the march to progress will be driven by young energy and young thinking” – much of this young energy, new skills and innovation will come out of our universities. We ignore higher education and its inextricable link to development at our peril.

*Professor Judith Bahemuka is Chancellor of Eldoret University in Kenya*

“Internationalisation is one of the most powerful tools for improving quality in our universities”

**Professor Gökhan Çetinsaya**

**Turkey**’s higher education sector has doubled in size over the last ten years. Today we have 175 universities, around five million students and more than 130,000 faculty members. Our vision is to match this quantitative growth with qualitative devel-
The Turkish Council of Higher Education is responsible for overseeing the country’s university sector. Our primary objective is to create a quality assurance system that focuses on the outputs of our education institutions, and not just the setting of quality standards and controlling the inputs.

We believe internationalisation is one of the most powerful tools there is available for improving quality in our universities. It is therefore a critical dimension of our vision for the future. For example, while Turkey is currently in the top 20 countries for international research and publications, we aim to also join the top 10 countries in international publication and citation indexes. In addition, at present Turkey welcomes just one per cent of the four million international students globally; it is our goal to increase both this figure and the number of international faculty members fivefold.

In addition, to sustain the growth and development of the higher education sector and to reach our international research ambitions our research capacity needs to be further enhanced. Therefore, it is with this in mind that we are investing considerable resources in doctoral studies and aim to quadruple the number of teaching staff who hold doctorates over the next ten years.

Professor Gökhan Çetinsaya is president of the Higher Education Council in Turkey.

“Our country has taken the first step towards global education”
Gani Nygymetov

Kazakhstan has chosen a path of development that includes the building of a knowledge-based economy. By signing up to the Bologna Process—a series of initiatives designed to ensure international comparability in the standards and quality of higher education qualifications—our country has taken the first steps towards global education. Through such measures as launching the Bolashak Scholarships (an outward mobility programme that has enabled more than 6,000 young Kazakhs to obtain undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in other countries); the implementation of an academic mobility programme for students and faculty staff; and the introduction of a dual education system, we have sought to improve our education system and eliminate its shortcomings. These included the limitations inherited from the Soviet education system, such as a mismatch between market demand and university curricula, and a lack of faculty staff and scientists with competitive knowledge.

These first endeavours have enabled Kazakhstan’s higher education system to improve and meet the requirements of today’s global education market. Indeed, currently some 2,000 Bolashak graduates are occupied in the education sector—more than 1,000 of them work in universities, 440 are employed in schools or technical and vocational education colleges, while nearly 70 are pursuing scientific careers.

Looking forward, the introduction of university autonomy will be a key element for achieving the desired changes and shifts within higher education in Kazakhstan. The recently-established University of Nazarbayev, with its new governance structures, has given our education system the opportunity to move forward from the inherited Soviet-based system and towards the global market. Today the University of Nazarbayev provides an example of best practice for all higher education institutions in Kazakhstan to learn from. The transfer of Nazarbayev University’s unique experience to Kazakhstan’s 119 other universities will enable our higher education system to take the next giant leap into becoming a world-class system.

Gani Nygymetov is director of the Centre for International Programmes in Kazakhstan.

“Society can strive to be an incubator for opportunity”
Dr. Eduardo J. Padrón

In the United States and other countries around the world enrolling in college has been a marker of maturity, a step toward fulfilling the dreams of possibility in each life. The opportunity of attending college is also central to the spirit of democracy, a birthright that ensures an educated and engaged citizenry. Democracy’s cornerstone remains opportunity, and while society cannot guarantee prosperity, it can strive to be an incubator for this opportunity.

The community college model of higher education is providing a shining example to other universities in Kazakhstan. These first endeavours have enabled Kazakhstan’s higher education system to improve and meet the requirements of today’s global education market. Indeed, currently some 2,000 Bolashak graduates are occupied in the education sector. The Turkish Council of Higher Education is responsible for overseeing the country’s university sector. Our primary objective is to create a quality assurance system that focuses on the outputs of our education institutions, and not just the setting of quality standards and controlling the inputs.

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Gani Nygymetov

Kazakhstan has chosen a path of development that includes the building of a knowledge-based economy. By signing up to the Bologna Process—a series of initiatives designed to ensure international comparability in the standards and quality of higher education qualifications—our country has taken the first steps towards global education. Through such measures as launching the Bolashak Scholarships (an outward mobility programme that has enabled more than 6,000 young Kazakhs to obtain undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in other countries); the implementation of an academic mobility programme for students and faculty staff; and the introduction of a dual education system, we have sought to improve our education system and eliminate its shortcomings. These included the limitations inherited from the Soviet education system, such as a mismatch between market demand and university curricula, and a lack of faculty staff and scientists with competitive knowledge.

These first endeavours have enabled Kazakhstan’s higher education system to improve and meet the requirements of today’s global education market. Indeed, currently some 2,000 Bolashak graduates are occupied in the education sector. The Turkish Council of Higher Education is responsible for overseeing the country’s university sector. Our primary objective is to create a quality assurance system that focuses on the outputs of our education institutions, and not just the setting of quality standards and controlling the inputs.

We believe internationalisation is one of the most powerful tools there is available for improving quality in our universities. It is therefore a critical dimension of our vision for the future. For example, while Turkey is currently in the top 20 countries for international research and publications, we aim to also join the top 10 countries in international publication and citation indexes. In addition, at present Turkey welcomes just one per cent of the four million international students globally; it is our goal to increase both this figure and the number of international faculty members fivefold.

In addition, to sustain the growth and development of the higher education sector and to reach our international research ambitions our research capacity needs to be further enhanced. Therefore, it is with this in mind that we are investing considerable resources in doctoral studies and aim to quadruple the number of teaching staff who hold doctorates over the next ten years.

Professor Gökhan Çetinsaya is president of the Higher Education Council in Turkey.

“Our country has taken the first step towards global education”
Gani Nygymetov
education in the US has proven uniquely capable of fulfilling that democratic mandate. Many low-income students who otherwise would never have crossed the threshold of a college classroom have found an avenue to fulfilling lives because of community colleges. But sustaining this model of open access and ensuring equitable opportunity remains a central challenge. These are the questions we need to consider if we are to address the constraints of poverty, rebuild a battered middle class and meet the challenges of economic and workforce transformation.

From an educational standpoint, meeting the demands of an evolving workforce is a complex challenge. The effects of technology on teaching and learning are already taking shape and promise even greater innovations in reaching people and providing learning opportunity. But just as important will be our collaboration with the world of work, ensuring that what we teach is relevant and up to date. These are partnerships with immense potential that can ensure both economic strength and opportunity across our entire socio-economic strata.

Dr. Eduardo J. Padrón is president of Miami Dade College in America, the largest and most diverse community college in the USA, with more than 175,000 students.

“Only through cooperation can we hope to build a better future”

Ma Tao

The rapid economic growth experienced in China since the turn of the century has resulted in the country’s education sector being able to offer many more young people higher education opportunities. Fundamental changes to the way in which higher education institutions operate have come as a result of many external influences including government policy, market forces, and societal development.

Improving quality is the key to the continuing development of China’s higher education sector, not only in attracting the most talented people to study and work within it, but in scientific and technological innovation, social services and cultural inheritance.

Higher education institutions must be able to respond and adapt to changes in market demands in order to stay competitive. Adopting a wider range of educational models will give universities and colleges a competitive advantage. Forming research partnerships with private sector organisations will also bring long-term benefits for the whole society.

The trend for internationalisation of higher education is unstoppable. Rather than regarding it only as a tool for economic growth, we should recognise the opportunities it provides for us to work within our international counterparts. Only through such co-operation can we hope to build a better future for all mankind.

Ma Tao is deputy director general of the National Centre for Education Development and Research, Ministry of Education in China.

“Only through cooperation can we hope to build a better future”

Kherieh Rassas

“It is only through recognition of the restrictive environment in which higher education in Palestine exists that one can begin to understand the complicated but unique nature of its evolution. As it stands, it borders on the “developed” and “underdeveloped”, borrowing regulations and curricula from myriad sources such as Jordan, the United States, and Europe via the Bologna Process, as if the education policymakers were ordering from an a la carte menu.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that universities were only officially accredited in the 1970s, highlighting the embryonic character of the higher education system and its need to develop accordingly. Despite this, however, there are internal concerns that Palestinian higher education institutions are struggling to compete with international equivalents to the detriment of their students, further emphasising the obstacles and the manner of their obstruction.

For example, within the ever-changing global landscape, higher education institutions are encouraged to adapt in order to promote their own survival and of course for their students, who should be prepared for the highly competitive job market. Innovation, entrepreneurialism and knowledge economies that link academia to industrial growth have therefore been promoted. However, the lack of local industry or the necessary freedom to interact and forge diverse links within the global landscape make such a development appear unrealistic.

The future of Palestinian higher education therefore rests on its ability to adapt to global changes, and while restrictions are evident, there are steps institutions can take to encourage transformation. First, ingraining scientific research within institutions in support of local needs and services will stimulate interaction. Second, while knowledge remains integral, the curriculum should be made more applicable to employability. These are small but significant steps.

Kherieh Rassas is vice-president of An-Najah National University and personal adviser to the prime minister in Palestine.

“Only through cooperation can we hope to build a better future”

Ma Tao
Inglés como medio de instrucción

by John Bramwell and Sophie Hollows

Not since Latin dominated medieval Europe has one language been so important in the development of the world’s knowledge economy. Yet the adoption of English within higher education is fraught with challenges – not least within Latin America.

Of global experience is any indication, for a knowledge economy to grow it needs to draw international expertise into its country directly, feeding and developing its capability from within. Increasingly, this requires countries to develop strong English capabilities – UNESCO has described the emergence of English as the “lingua franca” of academia as “unprecedented since Latin dominated the academy in medieval Europe”.

As a result, English has increasingly been incorporated into curricula around the world: Maastricht University introduced English Medium Instruction (EMI) in the 1990s, and the Chinese government issued a directive in 2007 prompting universities to introduce more bilingual lectures. Some Latin American universities have followed this trend, such as the Universidad San Francisco de Quito in Ecuador and Tec Monterrey in Mexico. In general, however, the rapidly developing economies of Latin America have found it not possible to simply flick a switch and join the international English-speaking community: English is only sporadically embedded in schools and is significantly absent within most universities.

Universities may be at the forefront of the Latin American knowledge economy, but the sector faces many difficulties. It is a complex and divergent group of institutions, growing at an alarming rate (more than five new universities open per month in Brazil alone), potentially outstripping the capability of quality assurance agencies to oversee that growth and the capacity of the region’s population to afford it. To date, the focus of English has been to equip elite students for international mobility into more renowned higher education institutions. There is a concern that a partial integration of EMI will only emphasise this pattern, leading to those who learn in Portuguese or Spanish being left behind.

Nor is it clear whose responsibility it is to ensure English is fully integrated into higher education. In several Latin American countries, such as Mexico, universities are entirely autonomous and governments cannot impose any EMI policies on them. Even when governments encourage EMI, progress risks being thwarted by a lack of English language ability. In one instance, a Latin American agency attempting to send experienced English language teachers to the UK for further training found a significant number did not have sufficient English competence to understand the travel instructions. In Colombia, meanwhile, 90 per cent of its student population are entirely autonomous and governments cannot impose any EMI policies on them. When governments encourage EMI, progress risks being thwarted by a lack of English language ability. In one instance, a Latin American agency attempting to send experienced English language teachers to the UK for further training found a significant number did not have sufficient English competence to understand the travel instructions. In Colombia, meanwhile, 90 per cent of its student population are currently failing to meet the goals of the National Bilingual Programme (NBP).

Goverments must also tread lightly for fear of being accused of compromising national integrity. For example, the Colombian government was criticised for allowing the British Council to play a significant role in the introduction of the NBP and for using the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages – a framework clearly developed for “a different set of countries”. Similarly, in Brazil, concerns have been expressed about English compromising the country’s academic community. However, Leandro Tessler from the State University of Campinas in Brazil dismisses such concerns, stating: “There is no evidence of any non-English-speaking country in which there is higher education in English that has renounced its nationalit”. To truly extend the boundaries of its institutions, a region requires engagement in administration, management, quality, award and faculty development, and research. To achieve these goals, it is essential to connect through a common language. That suggests not only that English is a medium of academic instruction but that it pervades and penetrates every corner of a region’s institutions, offering seamless connectivity to the full range of global higher education expertise and experience.

Integrating EMI into Latin America may be vital and inevitable but it remains to be seen how its countries can adopt the necessary policies. Neither institutions nor government are sufficient by themselves. The global community must help embed high quality English teaching within Latin American education. The world is ready to engage; it requires only a strength of will in partnership to make it happen. 

John Bramwell is director of education and Sophie Hollows is international education analyst at the British Council – Americas. 

13 John Bramwell EMI.indd   3
Why the world needs the humanities

by Shearer West

Instead of seeing the humanities as peripheral, we should ask how the global challenges of our time can do without them.

The global challenges we now face, such as an ageing population and the impact of climate change, food and water shortages, are difficult to solve. As such we often resort to simply anesthetising the circumstances that gave rise to them. We live in a technological, even a technocratic, age, and our first port of call when we seek to deal with the complexities of the 21st century tends to be science and technology. There is no doubt we require well-trained scientists to provide us with some of the tools to tackle these challenges. However, while progress within medical research, science, technology and engineering have provided us with advances, they have also often exacerbated the very problems we need to solve.

What is lacking is a body of policy makers, diplomats, police, military personnel and citizens who understand the beliefs and practices of the different ethnic, religious and social groups past and present, have a global perspective on language, communication and culture, and have a nuanced engagement with values such as trust, responsibility and civility. It is these invaluable yet less tangible tools, provided by the humanities, that are needed to deal effectively with natural disasters, social inequality, lawlessness and brutality.

The humanities make up a seemingly miscellaneous set of academic disciplines: history, philosophy, ancient and modern languages and literature, theology, musicology and art history. It is often said they are luxuries society can no longer afford. The relative irrelevance of the humanities compared to the sciences has been a recurrent hand-wringing theme since at least C.P. Snow’s 1959 Two Cultures lecture. A related economic argument that prioritises science for government investment has gained impetus since the 2008 recession.

However, the humanities are more than a set of disciplines: they provide us with a way of understanding the world that takes as its basis the languages, values, beliefs, histories, narratives and cultures of individuals. There is nothing more important when tackling global challenges in a complex and multicultural environment than a deep knowledge of what matters to people and what makes them behave as they do.

So while policymakers continue to seek scientific or economic answers to the world’s problems, there is a growing recognition that tackling global challenges in a complex and multicultural environment than a deep knowledge of what matters to people and what makes them behave as they do.

The humanities provide much more than that. An education in any humanities discipline develops critical thinking, problem-solving, initiative, innovation, analysis, communication skills, and a deep understanding of language, culture and the human condition. The intellectual processes of debate, questioning and self-reflection that are fostered by humanities education are fundamental to a successfully functioning democracy, and can contribute to building capacity in developing countries seeking to improve their situation. Instead of seeing the humanities as peripheral, we should ask how the global challenges of our time can do without them.
The international higher education (HE) sector is big business

Home and Away

164.5m
Total number of
students worldwide (2011)

10,887
Total number of
universities worldwide

Top five senders of internationally mobile HE students* (2011)
1. CHINA 722,915
2. INDIA 222,912
3. SOUTH KOREA 138,601
4. GERMANY 131,781
5. TURKEY 82,981

*Including exchange, language and non-credit bearing students

Top five hosts of internationally mobile HE students* (2012)
1. US 819,644
2. UK 488,380
3. CHINA 328,330
4. FRANCE 289,274
5. GERMANY 265,292

*Including exchange, language and non-credit bearing students

Destination UK

1 in 9
Proportion of mobile students worldwide who choose to study in the UK

Top five countries of domicile for UK based international students (2012-2013)
1. CHINA 98,595
2. USA 25,565
3. INDIA 23,780
4. GERMANY 18,980
5. NIGERIA 18,305

SOURCES: HESA, PROJECT ATLAS, OECD. GRAPHICS BY LEON PARKS & EMILY FOSTER
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