

**STUDENT MOBILITY IN THE UNIVERSITY
OF GLASGOW**

2007 – 2010

**Sharne Procter
Linda Buchan**

1. BACKGROUND

As part of its internationalisation strategy, the University has recognised the importance of offering students the opportunity to study or work abroad during their degree programme. This aim is also highlighted in the University's strategic vision document which states that "the University will aim to make more opportunities to study abroad available to students"¹ and is a key objective of the University's Employability Strategy.

The University recently developed a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) including an institutional target to increase the number of 'home' students having an international experience. In order that the institutional student mobility KPI is achieved, the numbers participating in mobility programmes must increase by approximately 30%, from 1100 to 1400 in the next 3 years.

This paper provides information on the current study abroad opportunities available to students and presents a number of actions required in order to increase these opportunities and to allow us to meet institutional performance indicators.

2. BENEFITS OF STUDENT MOBILITY

There are many benefits of student mobility both for the university and the individual student:

Benefits to the University

- Extending the profile and reach of the University in line with our international ambition to be in the top 50 Universities globally;
- Hosting incoming exchange students contributes to the internationalisation of the student body, the campus culture and the alumni network;
- Student mobility supports the commitment of the University to develop a multicultural diverse student learning community and the pledge to deliver an international education to all our students;
- Helps to build a presence in emerging student recruitment markets – such as Japan or Mexico;
- Plays a vital role in the decision-making process for many students when selecting a University (as indicated strongly at Open Day and Applicants' Visit Days);
- Attracts better and highly motivated students, and contributes to the non-academic life of the University;
- Increases the employability of students which has a positive impact on positioning in some league tables.

Benefits to the Student

- To live and study in another country for an extended period is a rare opportunity. Reports from returning Glasgow students frequently use the expression 'life-changing';
- New personal and intellectual maturity;
- Enhanced employability; employers recognise the skills implied by participation – flexibility, resilience, cross-cultural communication skills, the ability to adapt to new circumstances and deal constructively with differences;
- The opportunity to experience a different perspective on their academic subject, which they bring back to discussions in Departments in Glasgow;
- Academic horizons are widened and may lead students to reappraise their goals to include postgraduate study;
- Builds and develops interpersonal skills.

THE CURRENT POSITION

Student Numbers

Appendix A gives an estimate of the number of students participating in exchange programmes, internships and work placements, by Faculty, in 2006/2007. The figures include international mobility which takes place during a student's degree programme ranging from a full year abroad to a short study visit of a few weeks. Work placement opportunities overseas are also included.

It is quite likely that these figures are an under-estimate since, until now, there has been no systematic collection of data from Faculties. Ideally a student's time abroad would be flagged on the University's Student Record System and it is hoped that this will be possible during the next academic session. In the meantime, IPS will collect data from all Faculties on an annual basis in order that a truer picture of study and work placements is available.

The most recent statistics show that students in some Faculties are not participating in mobility programmes to the same extent as others. This may be due to the structure of academic programmes not lending themselves to a period abroad e.g. Education; a lack of support for mobility programmes by academic staff within the Faculty/Department; the reduction of exchange agreements by the Faculty for financial reasons.

Student Mobility Opportunities

A wide range of student mobility opportunities are currently available to students at Glasgow and these are listed in Appendix B. This table also includes information on the financial implications of the different types of mobility for the University and the student.

It is recommended that the following types of mobility are specifically targeted for further expansion between 2007-2010:

- Student exchange: the University has a large number of existing exchange agreements which operate out of balance, with more incoming students than outgoing. Increased promotion of mobility opportunities coupled with an increase in scholarship provision should increase the number of GU students studying overseas;
- Work placements: an increase in the number of work placement opportunities would take longer to achieve but would allow students to increase their employability and may also offer the opportunity to earn a salary to offset the costs involved in living overseas. This type of mobility does involve a greater administrative workload and must have the commitment of academic staff to ensure the experience is valuable.

Limiting Factors

In order to identify actions the University should take to increase participation in mobility programmes it is necessary to identify those factors most frequently quoted by 'home' students as likely to limit their participation in study overseas:

- concern over the additional costs of living overseas and lack of financial support from the university or external sources;
- foreign language skills which might be non-existent or, at best, insufficient to meet the needs of both study and residence abroad;
- disruption associated with relocating abroad, requiring changes in residence and/or employment;
- concern over credit transfer and the suitability and/or recognition of the overseas study element within the 'home' university degree;
- reluctance to leave their 'comfort zone' – many still live in the parental home and have a short-term attitude that it is safer to stay at home and avoid any risks or distractions in the move to senior honours. This view is sometimes echoed by academic staff unwilling to let their best students participate in case their marks suffer;

- not allowing enough time to plan a period abroad: planning overseas study should be started early in the 1st year which is earlier than many students will have considered the prospect;
- joint honours students face the extra task of obtaining approval from two departments;
- possible difficulties arising from the need to obtain the approval of a Professional body (for the overseas study) for students whose degree has a Professional accreditation.

Scholarship Provision

Scholarships have been made available to students participating in non-EU exchanges for a number of years. Funding has been provided by both the Stevenson General Purposes Fund (annual allocation of £15,000) and more recently the Pirie Fund (allocation of £16,250 in 2006-7). This fund is now depleted and alternative sources of funding must be identified.

The University has recently committed to providing scholarships to support Universitas 21 exchanges and a request for funding from the Chancellor's Fund for support for the next two years was successful – £17,500 for 2007-08, and £20,000 for 2008-09. The DAO has also been tasked with raising funds for scholarships, and student travel scholarships has been identified as one area which should be targeted in the strategy.

As part of the internationalisation of the University, as well as honouring our U21 commitment, it is recommended that scholarship funding for student exchanges is increased significantly. In 2006-2007, 20 students who applied for the programme subsequently withdrew, 10 of whom indicated that this was due to the additional finance required to participate in the exchange.

In order to encourage more students, it is recommended that a fixed scholarship be created so that they can be assured of receiving a certain level of support and so that the scholarship can be used as a promotional tool to encourage more students to participate.

Employability

With employers routinely operating in an international market place, the wider benefits of interculturalism and multilingualism which these programmes confer cannot be overemphasised. Recent research conducted by *i-graduate* concluded that:

- “around 60% of the country's top employers indicate that experience of international study enhances employability;
- the majority commented that studying overseas makes an applicant well-rounded in terms of skills, experience and personal development.¹

The University has not emphasised the advantages of study abroad to a student's future employment prospects as vigorously as it should and it is recommended that this is addressed immediately through promotional materials and in talks to students.

Even more likely to increase a student's employability is the experience of a work placement overseas. The University sends a small number of students on work placements in Europe, primarily in the Sciences and Engineering. It is recommended that a working group be set up to look at whether this number could be expanded and extended to other Faculties.

¹ Global Horizons for UK students: A Guide for Universities. CIHE 2007

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS

The following actions are recommended in order to increase the participation of 'Home' students in study abroad and work placement programmes:

Faculty/Department Actions:

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a member of staff in each Department with responsibility for promoting and supporting student mobility: a champion. 	Deans	October 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold regular meetings at Faculty level to analyse and develop current good practice. 	IPS	Beginning in November 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty strategies to include statement on support available for study abroad. 	Faculty Secretaries/Deans	In next planning round
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the development of mandatory mobility into some degree programmes. 	Departments/VP Teaching, Learning and Internationalisation	By September 2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of joint degrees with international partners which involve students in study in two countries. 	Faculties/VP TL&I	By September 2008

Central Service Actions:

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve and increase marketing and promotional activity to meet agreed student mobility KPI. The newly appointed Student Mobility Marketing Officer to develop an action plan for marketing mobility opportunities. 	IPS	Action plan by end of November 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify funding for exchange scholarships for all students participating in non-EU exchange. 	DAO/IPS/VP TL&I	December 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review existing agreements and develop a strategy to reduce the overall number of ERASMUS partner institutions whilst increasing the number of departmental agreements with a smaller number of institutions (preferred partners) to increase awareness of partner institutions and ease credit transfer. 	IPS	April 2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop method of flagging a student's record to indicate a study or work placement abroad and include on transcript. 	Registry and IPS	December 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an on-line application form to allow easier application processing of both incoming and outgoing students. 	IPS and MIS as part of CRM system development	Depends on timetable for CRM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey students on an annual basis on reasons for non-participation. 	IPS	Annually in April
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the development of a cross-Faculty credit-bearing module in intercultural studies for those students intending to study abroad. 	Faculties/VP TL&I	For September 2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider development of Summer Schools with partner universities in order to act as a 'taster' for a longer period of study abroad. 	IPS/Faculties	Begin discussions in October 2007; aim for summer 2008

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider whether all Exchange students – including those paying the full overseas fee - should continue to be charged a 50% fee while studying overseas. 	VP TL&I/VP Strategy and Resources	October 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the system of internal finance to ensure compensation from another source for any decrease of fee income. 	VP TL&I/VP Strategy and Resources	October 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a strategy to increase the number of work placements available to students. 	VP TL&I/ Careers/IPS	December 2007
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve information on enhanced employability following a period of study abroad. 	Careers	February 2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a web-based study abroad toolkit to prepare students for study abroad and support them while overseas. 	IPS	January 2008

Sept 2007

Appendix A

Percentage of 'Home' students having an international experience per annum

* Full figures for Veterinary Medicine will not be available until September 2007
 International experience covers all study in the field or in an institution outside the UK and pertinent to the student's programme, whether credit-bearing or not, and whether voluntary or compulsory.

Faculty	BASELINE	INTERIM INDICATOR	TARGET
	Draft 2006-07	2008-09	Target 2010-11
Arts	270		
Clinical Medicine	358		
Education	26		
Engineering	24		
LBSS - Law, Business and Social Sciences	196		
FBLs	49		
FIMS	4		
Physical Sciences	16		
Sciences	88		
Total 3 Science Faculties	157		
Veterinary Medicine (partial) *	>39		
Total	>1070	1200	1400

Current or Previous Indicators	
Suggested Interim Indicators	
Targets for 2010-11	

Note

The target for future years has been set at institution level, but achievement of this will be monitored through continued collection of data at Faculty level.

Data from KPIs for L&T, September 2007

<i>Type of Mobility Programme</i>	<i>Administered By</i>	Financial Implications for University	Financial implications for student
<p>ERASMUS</p> <p>Currently the University has 360 Agreements with 235 Universities in Europe though there is a move to concentrate Agreements with a smaller number of institutions and build on successful links.</p>	<p>International and Postgraduate Service (IPS)</p>	<p>The University continues to receive a tuition fee (from SFC) for students who study abroad for a year through the ERASMUS Programme. No fee is received for incoming students.</p> <p>Freemover ERASMUS students (those who apply independently of an exchange Agreement) pay the normal UK/EU tuition fee. The University currently only accepts such students in the Faculties of Sciences and Engineering. (They are included in target numbers for those Faculties.)</p> <p>High quality students may return to Glasgow for postgraduate study after completing their first degree (14 in 2004-2005).</p>	<p>Outgoing ERASMUS students all receive an ERASMUS grant - 400 Euros per month in 2007-08. This is not sufficient to cover living costs, especially in a major European capital city, and almost all participating students report that they need to draw on their own savings or parental support. The grant in 2008-09 is expected to be considerably lower.</p>

Type of Mobility Programme	Administered By	Financial Implications for University	Financial implications for student
<p>INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE (INCLUDING U21 MEMBERS)</p> <p>The University has Exchange Agreements with 37 institutions out-with Europe, whereby Undergraduates students are sent and received for a year or semester, although many agreements include the possibility of postgraduate exchange.</p>	<p>IPS</p>	<p>50% of normal tuition fee is paid during the year abroad, either by the student directly or by SAAS. Incoming students do not pay a fee here. No T grant applies to these students. The aim is to achieve a balance of incoming and outgoing students over a 2-3 year period, and in most areas this is easily achieved. In others the demand for places at Glasgow far exceeds the number of Glasgow students wishing to study abroad, and in those circumstances arrangements have been made to accept additional students, on payment of a reduced tuition fee (20% reduction).</p>	<p><i>In recent years the University Court has allocated a sum of money to provide scholarships to students attending Universitas 21 institutions and non-Universitas 21 Institutions. In 2005-2006, the total allocation for Universitas 21 institutions was £16,250 which allowed studentship awards of £900. The total allocation for non-Universitas 21 was £15,000 which allowed studentship awards of £350. The same sum for non-Universitas 21 institutions is available for 2007-08, allowing awards of £322. Funding for Universitas 21 exchanges has been secured from the Chancellor's Fund for the next two years, allowing awards in 2007-08 of £547.</i></p> <p>A few of our Exchange partners, such as Boston College, offer scholarships to Glasgow students to study there.</p> <p>To spend a year at a US University, students must provide evidence of funding of between \$13,000 and \$19,000</p>

<i>Type of Mobility Programme</i>	<i>Administered By</i>	Financial Implications for University	Financial implications for student
<p>LANGUAGE YEAR</p> <p>Compulsory for all Honours language students. In addition to Europe, students may study in Canada, Mexico or South America.</p>	<p>Modern Language Departments and British Council.</p> <p>IPS</p>	<p>The University receives half the normal tuition fee from SAAS.</p>	<p>Students who opt to teach as Language Assistants are paid by the relevant school. From 2008-09 they may also be eligible to receive an Erasmus Placement Grant.</p>
<p>WORK PLACEMENTS</p> <p>These are an integral part of the MSci and MEng degrees (and may be paid or unpaid).</p>	<p>Relevant Departments</p>	<p>The University receives half the normal tuition fee from SAAS.</p>	<p>Students are normally paid a salary by the relevant employer. Those undertaking a placement at an establishment in Europe may also be eligible to receive an Erasmus Placement Grant.</p>
<p>INTERNSHIPS</p> <p>An annual Internship Fair advises students of different types of structured opportunities which complement the work placement opportunities already available within particular courses.</p>	<p>Careers Service and relevant Departments</p>	<p>The University receives half the normal tuition fee from SAAS.</p>	<p>Students are normally paid a salary by the relevant employer.</p>

<i>Type of Mobility Programme</i>	<i>Administered By</i>	Financial Implications for University	Financial implications for student
<p>ELECTIVES</p> <p>Students of Medicine and Dentistry may complete their Electives anywhere in the world. Students of Veterinary Medicine have the opportunity to complete the period of compulsory extra-mural studies overseas. (Administered by relevant Faculty).</p>	Faculty	N/A	Students are responsible for their own costs.
<p>SHORT-TERM PLACEMENTS/ SUMMER SCHOOLS</p> <p>Students in some Faculties spend short periods abroad either as part of a student society e.g. Exploration Society or as a participant in a summer school/conference e.g. U21 research conference.</p>	Faculty IPS	Some University funding is provided for participation in U21 events.	Students generally fund their own travel and subsistence.