

**REPORT FROM EXECUTIVE BOARD TO COUNCIL**

**17 JUNE 2013**

## **Newcastle University - Student Recruitment Strategy**

Council is asked to approve the attached Student Recruitment Strategy, which has been considered and endorsed by Executive Board (23 April) and Senate (7 May)

The Student Recruitment Strategy, which is an enabling strategy of *Vision 2021*, builds on the discussions held at the 2012 joint meeting of Senate and Council. It has been prepared by an Executive Board working group supported by the Director of Marketing and Student Recruitment. Consultation on earlier drafts has included the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Deans; the three Faculty Executive Boards; and relevant Service, Faculty and School colleagues.

An informal Special Interest Group of Council has also contributed to the Strategy. The members are Suzanne Cholerton (Chair), Ella Ritchie, Mark I'Anson, Bob Hull, Alan Boddy, Deborah Henderson and Lesley Braiden.

The Implementation Plan for delivery of the Student Recruitment Strategy, with an associated Risk Register, will be completed by September 2013.

Professor Suzanne Cholerton, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)

On behalf of Executive Board

5 June 2013

# Newcastle University - Student Recruitment Strategy

The **Student Recruitment Strategy** supports the University's core objectives as stated in *Vision 2021*. Successful recruitment of high-quality students is essential to the University's academic and financial success.

The Strategy sets out over-arching priorities, developments and direction of travel for student recruitment. It seeks to build on current strengths and improve on areas of weakness, in the context of the challenges and risks presented by the current environment of economic pressures and fierce competition in all markets. Our starting assumption is that the parameters within which recruitment currently takes place (eg the ABB threshold for unregulated home undergraduate recruitment) will not change over the next 12 months. The Student Recruitment Strategy will be reviewed annually and revised as appropriate.

A sound evidence base underpins the Strategy's priorities and approaches, based on national and institutional research and evaluation and drawing on the experience and expertise of staff across the University.

## A: The Student Life-Cycle

Student recruitment is a shared activity across the University, involving many key individuals and teams across the Professional Support Services, Faculty Teams and Academic Schools, who play a critical role in delivering a co-ordinated approach leading to successful recruitment outcomes. The principal focus of the Student Recruitment Strategy is on the specific activities which constitute the 'marketing and recruitment' phases of the Student Life-Cycle. For optimum impact, however, the Student Recruitment Strategy requires a more holistic approach which encompasses and informs all phases of the cycle.

The value proposition which we offer our students is that **we provide education for life** through a fully-rounded, enjoyable and formative student experience. For this to be realised, it needs to be reflected and reinforced through all aspects of our institutional culture and behaviours. The quality of the entire Student Life-Cycle experience, from initial marketing, promotion and awareness-raising to application, admissions, graduation and our lifelong relationship with our alumni, has a direct impact on student recruitment. Students who have a positive experience throughout their engagement with the University will become its most powerful ambassadors and advocates, influencing future generations of students, parents, teachers and employers in the University's favour. By joining up, in a coherent way, the key phases of the Student Life-

Cycle, and involving those responsible for delivery at each stage, we can maximise every opportunity to attract, inform, engage, admit and retain excellent students.

**Education for life** includes ensuring that our graduates are highly-employable, and also implies continued support for our alumni and their ongoing learning, development and career success, so that they become life-long members of our academic community.

Thus there must be close synergies between the Student Recruitment Strategy and other strategies (eg Learning, Teaching and the Student Experience; Research; Engagement, and Internationalisation), supported by a strong digital infrastructure. The Public Relations Strategy's focus on profiling student successes, the student experience, and employability is also important, as are efforts to raise the profile of the University to influence league table position and rankings.



In addition to those responsible for the formal delivery of the whole student experience, our Students' Union and current students and graduates also play a vital role in awareness-raising, recruitment and conversion, using face-to-face, social media and digital communications to engage potential students.

This virtuous circle of student engagement underpins the Student Recruitment Strategy. Further details of the success factors for optimum impact at each phase of the cycle are described in Appendix 1.

## **B: Vision and Strategic Objectives**

**Vision: Newcastle University as a destination of choice for high-ability students from diverse backgrounds and nationalities.**

Strategic Objectives:

- 1. To attract, engage and admit high-quality students from the UK and overseas**
- 2. To meet the University's recruitment targets**
- 3. To market and promote Newcastle University as a top student destination**
- 4. To meet the University's targets for fair access and diversity without compromising quality**
- 5. To promote our academic strengths and integrity through programme development and review in the context of market opportunity and demand**

Student recruitment priorities to support achievement of these objectives are described in the relevant sections that follow. More detailed tactical plans are provided in the Implementation Plan.

## **C: Current position and future direction**

Consideration of the University's current shape and profile, summarised below, provides a starting point for identification of the strategic priorities that guide this Strategy. (Unless otherwise stated, the data source below is the 1 December statistics for 2012-13):

Student population by Faculty	49.2% HaSS; 29.3% SAgE; 21.5% FMS
Undergraduate/Postgraduate	73% undergraduate; 27% postgraduate (18% taught, 9% research).
Part-time study	7.3% of total
Mature students	16% (undergraduate and postgraduate) aged 25 or above
2011 UK undergraduate entrants by region of domicile (top 6 regions)	24% North East; 17% Yorks and Humbs; 13% North West; 9% South East; 7% Eastern; 6% East Midlands
UK undergraduate diversity/Widening Participation (2011 entry)	69.2% from state schools/colleges (2010 HESA benchmark 81%); 19.5% from lower socio-economic groups (2010 benchmark 23.7%); 7.3% from Low Participation Neighbourhoods (2010 benchmark 7%)
International student numbers	20.6% of all students are from non-EU countries (11.4% of undergraduates; 45.3% of postgraduates)
International diversity (top 6 non-EU countries) (2011-12)	Percentage of all non-EU students: 40% China; 6.9% Malaysia; 5.6% India; 5.2% Nigeria; 4.2% Hong Kong; 3.8% USA
Students taught overseas	228 at NUMed, Malaysia and 490 at SIT, Singapore (in line with business plans)
Modes / places of delivery	Most programme delivery is on campus (in Newcastle or in our overseas campus locations); Work-place study, distance-learning, franchised or out-of-hours programmes are relatively few, having to date been developed in response to specific markets.

The Student Recruitment Strategy does not propose an immediate radical shift away from the University's current position, and consideration of this information confirms a number of key approaches:

**a) Evidence and evaluation**

- Our activities and developments should always be evidence-based and informed by market research and robust evaluation.

**b) Shape, size and growth of the University**

- To ensure that we are not over-dependent on any one market, we should seek to maintain a balanced profile, whilst exploiting opportunities for growth and entrepreneurial developments.
- We should give further strategic consideration to the optimum balance between undergraduate, postgraduate and international numbers
- Targets should be set and agreed to take account of the different strategic drivers, market contexts and capacity at Faculty / School or subject level.
- Whilst we should expect the balance between the Faculties to evolve with growth or decline in some areas, in an unregulated market, we should seek to manage this process and protect our commitment to a balanced overall portfolio. We should promote managed growth of areas of distinctiveness, academic excellence or strategic importance, but not at the expense of quality or diversity or through an over-dependence on particular markets.
- Growth should be sustainable and consistent with our academic values and the quality of the student experience.
- As student numbers in particular disciplines may fluctuate from year to year in an unregulated market, an integrated planning process is needed to enable us to consider how to deploy resources flexibly in order to protect staff:student ratios and the student experience.

**c) Programme development, innovation and review**

- We should maintain our core discipline base as the foundation for a broad portfolio of programmes that reflect and reinforce academic reputation, integrity and quality whilst also being market sensitive.
- We should aim to stimulate new markets, and be agile in response to market demand and potential.
- We should review programmes that consistently fail to meet agreed recruitment targets for three consecutive years, and rationalise, re-purpose or discontinue them if appropriate.

**d) Diversity**

- In general, we should aim to achieve diversity in our student population, but not at the expense of quality.
- Diversity of our UK undergraduate entrants is a core aim, in line with our Access Agreement commitments and targets.
- We should seek greater diversity in our international student population (in terms of nationality, level (UG/PG) and/or discipline), as appropriate to individual disciplines. Target numbers for recruitment should take account of factors such as the population size and income of particular countries. At programme level, we should avoid over-representation of any one country, which can have a detrimental impact on the student experience.
- We should encourage greater diversity of perspective and experience among all of our students by providing a range of study / visit abroad opportunities, including making the most of our in-country delivery and other partnerships.

**e) Modes and places of delivery**

- Our location in the city of Newcastle upon Tyne is one of our core selling points, particularly for the UK undergraduate market, and we should exploit this to the University's advantage.

- We should explore opportunities for new programme developments / alternative modes of delivery (eg part-time / evening / e-learning / blended / distance learning) especially at Master's / CPD level, but only where this aligns with our Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy and is supported by market research indicating a clear market opportunity.
- We should exploit the opportunities presented for programme delivery in our campuses overseas, and in collaboration with our international partners, as well as exploring other locations (for example: delivery options in London; developments at NUMed in conjunction with INTO; a measured approach to delivery in other strategic overseas locations).
- We should invest in an appropriate infrastructure and individuals who would champion, lead and project manage major new developments in delivery mode or location. Leadership of this development agenda should be recognised in promotion criteria.

## **D: Home Undergraduate Recruitment and Widening Participation**

### **a) Context and current position**

- In the new context of deregulation of the English HE home undergraduate market and the introduction of £9,000 fees, current evidence suggests that the University's strategy of setting appropriately demanding entry requirements, maximising the number of offers made, and emphasising conversion and retention, is appropriate.
- There is little indication, to date, of a shift away from demand for traditional, full-time study on-campus, though ongoing scrutiny of trends and competitor developments is essential to ensure that the University can respond to change (eg increased demand for part-time or distance learning, or a change in student demographics).
- UK application figures show strong growth, significantly better than our key competitors and the national position. However, variation at subject level is masked by the overall picture, with a small number of subjects experiencing a decline in popularity and applications over two or more years.
- We recruit UK undergraduates from all parts of the UK, although more than half of our entrants are from the three northernmost regions of England: North East, Yorkshire and Humberside and the North West. The potential to recruit Scottish students has declined because of Scotland's different fee arrangements. Higher fees may deter some local applicants (especially those from lower-income backgrounds) or may encourage those from more distant regions to study closer to home. These factors, combined with demographic changes and the relatively sparse North East population, mean that it is important to maintain our emphasis on UK-wide recruitment.
- The University's Widening Participation record in the North East, where most WP activity is delivered, is excellent, with performance far better than the sector WP benchmarks. Just 19% of our young entrants were from this region in 2012. In order to have an impact on our overall WP profile, therefore, our strategy is to extend the geographical reach of our face-to-face WP activity, supported by a significant investment in digital outreach. This also raises the profile of the University and supports overall recruitment. Annual approval of our Access Agreement is necessary if we wish to maintain fees above £6,000. Our Access Agreement commitments include annual expenditure of ca. 32% of fee income above £6,000 per student (approximately £12 million p.a. in steady state).
- Market research into the factors affecting the choices of new entrants and those who decline our offers emphasises the importance of: University and subject reputation (as perceived through league tables and general reputational factors such as our research strengths and profile as a civic university); high-quality (print and web) marketing and information; subject availability; the city; sport, culture and social life; facilities (eg accommodation); professional Visit /Open Days; excellent, timely communication; quick application decisions; and contact with current and former students.

## b) Key Markets

- Well-qualified students from **all schools and FE colleges UK-wide** (including **top-performing state schools and independent schools**, especially those with potential WP or international students);
- All students and WP applicants (including **mature students**) from: **PARTNERS schools and colleges**, with which the University has a formal partnership; schools and colleges in **regions targeted by the Graduate Ambassadors**; and participants in the national **Realising Opportunities** programme;
- **Students from FE Colleges**, in particular those where the University can develop a productive progression route into priority subject areas;
- Key influencers, including **parents, teachers, governors and advisers**;
- **EU students** (an important target market for some subjects, though constrained by the government's core quota restrictions);
- **Younger-age pupils**, targeted by generic or subject-specific outreach and aspiration-raising activity.

## c) Priorities

The University's main priorities for strong UK Home UG recruitment and effective WP are:

### 1. To understand and respond to market changes and competitor developments

Including:

- Undertaking market research on programme trends and demand (to inform new programme development), student choice and new entrant / decliner decisions;
- Agreeing appropriate targets for growing numbers and market share;
- Protecting subject areas which recruit a high proportion of EU or other well-qualified students whose qualifications are outside the criteria for unregulated recruitment.

### 2. To position the University as a premium destination.

Including:

- Promoting and consolidating the University's reputation at overall and subject levels (including delivery of the University's overall Public Relations Strategy and emphasis on strong NSS scores);
- Maintaining fees at the maximum level;
- Setting demanding entrance requirements;
- Delivering, maintaining and promoting an excellent student experience and employability record, with a focus on added value and distinctiveness of the student offer.

### 3. To encourage strong conversion and enrolment by engaging positively and effectively with potential students throughout the recruitment cycle:

Including:

- Delivering excellent, high-quality visit opportunities for students (UK-wide) and 'influencers' (Visit Days and other pre-application visits; Post Application Open Days);
- Improving the quality, flexibility, suitability and availability of accommodation;
- Making the most of the marketing and student engagement opportunities provided by the web, social media, CRM, video, 'virtual' technologies and other digital platforms;
- Minimising attrition between acceptance (August) and the 1 December HESA census date;
- Developing a strategy for engaging our alumni as advocates and ambassadors.

### 4. To make further progress towards Widening Participation Targets

Including:

- Extending the geographical reach and impact of WP activities (see Access Agreement);
- Using social media to engage with hard-to-reach students UK-wide;
- Agreeing our approach to relationships with academies, trust schools and FE colleges;
- Being strategic in the provision of financial support, scholarships and other incentives.

## E: Postgraduate Recruitment

### a) Context and current position

- Ca. 27% of Newcastle's students are postgraduate. The distribution of postgraduates between Home, International, Postgraduate Taught (PGT) and Research (PGR) varies considerably by Faculty.
- The recruitment of postgraduate (especially PGR) students is important not only financially, but consolidates and gives credibility to our academic reputation as a Russell Group university.
- Doctoral Training Centres (DTCs) are an important vehicle for attracting and recruiting high-quality PGR students in line with our Research Strategy. DTCs provide many benefits, including investment in facilities and studentships, an elite research environment which focuses on advanced research training, employability, industry and community engagement and early career researcher trajectories. We are currently involved in eight DTCs (of different sizes and collaborative complexity) and are bidding for four more.
- Almost half of our postgraduate population is non-EU, and recruitment (especially PGT) is heavily affected by international trends, and the dominance of certain nationalities in some subjects.
- Overall, postgraduate applications have grown significantly in the past few years, though patterns have varied across the different disciplines and segments of the market.
- The impact of £9,000 undergraduate fees on the Home PGT market remains to be seen and there is a strong risk that the Home PGT market will decline sharply, or at best remain static.
- The number of alumni who stay or return for PG study is declining, despite generous fee discounts.
- Typically just one in ten applications leads to registration. There are many speculative applications from students who have no real likelihood of coming to Newcastle. The decreasing pool of scholarships also affects conversion.
- International postgraduate recruitment has been adversely affected by United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA) legislation and increasing global competition.

### b) Key Markets

- **Well-qualified graduates and undergraduates expecting to achieve appropriate qualifications** from all markets (Home / international); This includes our own **current undergraduates and alumni** and students on **INTO Newcastle University** programmes (with a view to maximising progression);
- **Cohorts supported by key businesses and sponsors;**
- Students at our **overseas campuses;** and **students from partner institutions**
- Potential **distance-learner cohorts** (including CPD provision in partnership with employers) and **'return-to-learn'** students (often our own alumni) who wish to resume study for career purposes.

Target markets vary enormously between Faculties and individual disciplines.

### c) Priorities

The University's main priorities for postgraduate recruitment are:

#### 1. To understand and respond to the postgraduate recruitment market

Including:

- Acquiring credible market intelligence and data to inform a strategic and holistic approach to postgraduate recruitment, conversion, fee-setting and the resources to support PG recruitment; and horizon-scanning to support monitoring and response to trends in demand. This includes acquiring market intelligence from sponsors and our network of international agents.
- Achieving greater responsiveness and agility in the timely development and approval of market-driven new programmes;

- Exploring relevant opportunities to develop new modes of delivery (eg evening / distance learning), supported by an appropriate digital infrastructure;
  - Working more closely with employers in order to understand the market and employer needs and expectations of PGT graduates.
- 2. To strengthen our strategy to achieve a sustainable future for PGT recruitment**  
Including:
- Attracting high quality applicants by setting appropriate fees and entrance requirements;
  - Mitigating the impact on the home PGT market of £9,000 undergraduate fees and the lack of funding for postgraduate study, through flexible pricing and a strategic approach to the provision of scholarships (eg piloting and evaluating scholarship schemes in identified areas);
  - Encouraging more of our own undergraduates to remain at (or return to) Newcastle for PGT study, where they are motivated to do so;
  - Addressing how we articulate our messages about employability and careers for PGT graduates; Further developing our careers support for PGT students;
  - Focussing marketing resources on high-impact activities, especially the web, social media, CRM and digital marketing, in order to provide high-quality, accessible and up-to-date information.
- 3. To achieve better PG conversion rates**  
Including:
- Clarifying and supporting the critical role of Faculties and Schools in postgraduate conversion and Customer Relationship Management (CRM);
  - Incentivising conversion of applicants (eg through agent rewards; scholarships; discounts; greater flexibility on start dates);
  - Confirming, promoting and delivering the PGT student offer and ensuring a positive PG student experience in a challenging and inclusive academic environment.
- 4. To facilitate the recruitment of strong PGR students in line with our Research Strategy**  
Including:
- Promoting the University's research reputation through our Public Relations Strategy
  - Bidding for and /or renewing Doctoral Training Centres;
  - Achieving parity of experience and support for PGR students not recruited as a DTC cohort;
  - Ensuring synergy between the Student Recruitment Strategy and the Research Strategy, recognising the important contribution that PGR students make to the University's research reputation and portfolio, and the importance of research reputation in attracting PGR students;
  - Taking advantage of opportunities to bid for scholarships, including research project scholarships to support PGR students.

## **F: International Recruitment**

### **a) Context and current position**

- Strong recruitment of a diverse cohort of high-quality international students is a key priority. If we claim to be a world-class university we should be able to demonstrate this in part by attracting some of the brightest students from the rest of the world to study here.
- International student fees constitute a significant (and growing) proportion of the University's annual income, increasing from £22.9 million (6.7%) in 2007-08 to £52.5 million (13.5%) by 2011-12. There has been strong growth in applications over the same period, leading to an 86% increase in the number of registered non-EU students (from 2,280 in 2007-08 to 4,248 by 2012-13). The majority (ca. 84%) of international applications are for postgraduate study.
- Some of this growth is attributable to the highly-successful joint venture with INTO Newcastle University, coupled with strong efforts to maximise progression from INTO programmes onto Newcastle University degrees.



- Although there is no upper limit, other than physical capacity, for the recruitment of international students, qualifications on entry and English language ability are key factors determining growth opportunities and targets, which are subject- and market-specific.
- Traditionally, international recruitment has involved attendance at recruitment events and visits to target countries (eg by International Office and academic staff). We also use ca. 100 recruitment agents in 40 countries, and benefit from access to the large INTO network of over 700 agents. At least 45% of our international students are recruited through agents working to a Newcastle University contract (and many more may be routed to Newcastle via INTO's broader agent network).
- A recent feature has been the strong growth in applications and entrants from China, particularly for PGT programmes, and especially into the Business School. Growth from international markets other than China has been strong (39% growth from 2007-08 to 2011-12) but the number of students from China increased by 253% over the same period. Whilst greater diversity is a priority, it takes time to cultivate new markets, so the financial risk of capping numbers from some regions needs to be mitigated by carefully planned and sustainable growth from others.
- International recruitment benefits from the development and nurturing of relationships with partners and sponsors (eg overseas universities, oil companies and ministries, often with the involvement of London-based embassies), which provide significant student cohorts, contribute to diversity and bring stability to our international recruitment. These relationships, and associated public relations activity, also help to raise the University's global profile, which in turn helps to promote recruitment. There is potential to increase our market share in this sector.
- Working with international partners provides a strategic platform for taking forward many initiatives that can benefit recruitment. The University currently maintains more than 400 partnerships, including major in-country campus developments (NUMed; Singapore), burgeoning strategic partnerships (eg Xiamen), initiatives such as Science without Borders (with Brazil), exchange and study abroad partnerships and a range of other institutional or subject-specific collaborations. In the context of this Strategy, the University would benefit from greater focus by the International Office on productive partnerships that support recruitment as well as raising the University's reputation.

## b) Key Markets

- **Students from priority regions**, linked closely with the University's strategies for international profiling, are targeted directly through remote and face-to-face marketing (by International Office and other colleagues, including staff based in-country), working with a powerful agent network.
- International students in **UK Feeder Schools** (including independent schools) offer scope for country diversity; and **international schools overseas** are a potential growth market.
- **INTO Newcastle University** provides access to a range of target UG and PG markets.
- **Organisations that sponsor international students** contribute large student cohorts and promote country diversity and high conversion rates.
- Many countries are not the focus of direct recruitment activity, but provide a consistent flow of small numbers of applicants each year. **Digital and online targeting** methods, including CRM and social media, are crucial for these countries.
- A new market is emerging (often through sponsorship schemes) as **international institutions develop their own academic staff** who require UK training to develop their own HE provision. Indonesia is a very good example of this.

### c) Priorities

The University's main priorities to strengthen international recruitment are:

#### 1. To focus on target countries in line with University and Faculty priorities

Including:

- Determining a clear and sustainable strategic focus on priority target regions, taking account of both institutional drivers and the differing needs and markets of the Faculties;
- Achieving improved dialogue, transparency, join-up and collaboration between the International Office, Faculties and Schools, in order to make the most of the resources available, including academic staff who have an important role in international recruitment;
- Optimising web, digital marketing, social media and CRM for international recruitment, particularly for remote markets that cannot be reached face-to-face;
- Setting entrance requirements appropriate for the target markets.

#### 2. To strengthen sponsor relationships and partnerships that support recruitment

Including:

- Investing in resources to strengthen sponsor liaison and engagement;
- Ensuring synergy with INTO's strategy; Sharing and joining up INTO and International Office 'market intelligence'; Increasing efforts to promote progression from INTO programmes;
- Being strategic in the growth and support of partnerships, with a clear focus of International Office effort on productive partnerships which support international recruitment. This will include: setting clear priorities and criteria for new developments; developing more efficient approval processes; communicating partnership arrangements in order to maximise recruitment benefits; and optimising the public relations and media opportunities arising from partnerships, visits, alumni events, in-country congregations and other international engagements;
- Exploiting for recruitment purposes existing partnerships and developments arising from the Internationalisation Strategy.

#### 3. To improve conversion of international applications

Including:

- Promoting and delivering an excellent, integrated international student experience;
- Being co-ordinated and strategic in our approach to fee-setting, scholarships, discounts, commission and other financial incentives so that their impact and importance can be measured;
- Clarifying and supporting the critical role of Faculties and Schools in international conversion and CRM, including personal contact and high-quality communications;
- Increasing the involvement of our international alumni to support recruitment;
- Using our international students as advocates for Newcastle University (eg via social media);
- Minimising the possible negative effects of UKBA regulations and attendance monitoring by developing user-friendly arrangements and communicating them clearly.

#### 4. To achieve greater country / subject diversity

Including:

- Developing targeted recruitment activities that reflect the diversity priorities of different disciplines;
- Strategically managing and incentivising our agent networks to deliver diversity;
- Prioritising initiatives and partnerships that will promote diversity;
- Delivering a UK student experience for our international students, by maintaining a balanced student population at programme level (especially PGT);
- Promoting student mobility through marketing, PR and advocacy; considering mobility options in programme design.

## **G: Leadership, Governance, Responsibility and Resources**

### **a) Leadership, Responsibility and Resources**

- Although overall responsibility for strategy, policy and delivery rests with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) and Director of Marketing and Student Recruitment, student recruitment is a shared activity across the University, involving key members of the Executive Team, Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellors and individuals and teams across the Services, Faculties and Academic Schools.
- Faculty Undergraduate and Postgraduate Deans' remits include student recruitment. Heads of Schools delegate operational responsibility to School colleagues, working with central and Faculty teams. Admissions Tutors and other academic and support staff in Schools play a vital role in engaging applicants and establishing the personal contacts that help to secure effective conversion and retention.
- The resources to support recruitment include current students (for example through ambassador schemes and the Students' Union) and alumni (as Graduate Ambassadors, and as advocates and influencers in many spheres world-wide).

### **b) Governance**

- Student recruitment is currently within the remit of University Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee (ULTSEC).
- A number of other central sub-groups and committees consider specific markets or aspects of recruitment, admissions or WP, and there are various arrangements within Faculties and Schools.
- Coherence and join-up with other relevant strategies and associated groups (eg the PR and Marketing Strategy Committee; the Internationalisation Executive Group; INTO Academic Group; UKBA Working Group; Web and Digital Strategy Group) are necessary for optimum impact.

### **c) Priorities**

In view of the strategic importance of student recruitment, the following priorities have been identified:

- 1. To establish a University Recruitment and Admissions Committee** to oversee and further develop the Strategy and monitor its implementation and impact. This will be achieved by broadening the remit of the current Student Finance Committee, to ensure that the Student Recruitment Strategy is aligned with discussion of fees, planning expectations and resource considerations;
- 2. To rationalise and simplify existing groups and committees** in order to achieve join-up, coherence and a single sense of purpose across the University;
- 3. To clarify ownership and responsibility at central, Faculty and subject levels, in order to make the most effective and co-ordinated use of the resources available.** This includes achieving an appropriate balance of local effort and central direction, and making optimum use of academic colleagues to support student recruitment, particularly for international recruitment;
- 4. To promote throughout the University high-quality delivery, professionalism, attention to detail and an outstanding student experience** throughout the Student Life-Cycle.

### **d) Resources**

Optimum delivery of the Student Recruitment Strategy may necessitate further investment in operational and staffing resources. In particular, the University's infrastructure and capacity to support postgraduate and international marketing and recruitment are being considered in the context of development of the Implementation Plan.

## H: Implementation, Monitoring and Review

The key actions in implementation of the Student Recruitment Strategy are described in the underpinning Implementation Plan, which is being developed in collaboration with subject, Faculty and central colleagues.

The University's progress and impact in achieving its Student Recruitment Strategy objectives will be reported to EB, Senate and annually to Council. Progress will be reviewed annually against the following performance indicators and associated targets:

Performance Indicator	Target	Current performance
<b>SO1: To attract, engage and admit high-quality students from the UK and overseas</b>		
1. Percentage of <b>Home UG</b> students admitted with AAB+ or equivalent	• At least 60% by 2016 entry	• 56% admitted with AAB+ or equivalent in 2012
2. Appropriate quality metrics for PGT and PGR entrants to be determined by the PGR sub-committee of ULTSEC	• Metrics proposed and agreed by December 2013. Targets specified from 2014 entry.	• N/A
<b>SO2: To meet the University's recruitment targets</b>		
3. <b>Home UG</b> new entrants (Mid-October Registration figures) against target	• Meet or exceed target each year	• 2012: 3,725 Home UG (original target 4,294)
4. <b>Postgraduate</b> new entrants against target (1 December figures)	• Meet or exceed targets for PGT and PGR each year	• 2,785 PGT (target 3,155)
5. Percentage of students who are <b>international</b> (non-EU) based on 1 December statistics	• 25% by 2016 [Internationalisation Strategy target]	• 555 PGR (target 681) • 20.6% non-EU students in 2012-13
<b>SO3: To market and promote Newcastle University as a top student destination</b>		
6. Percentage of <b>new entrants</b> surveyed who are satisfied or very satisfied with their arrival experience	• At least 95% of new entrants satisfied or very satisfied with their arrival experience [New Entrants' Survey(s); International Student Barometer]	• 2012 entry: 99% of UK undergraduate entrants; • 91.8% of 1 <sup>st</sup> Year international entrants
<b>SO4: To meet the University's targets for fair access and diversity without compromising quality</b>		
7. Percentage of young UK undergraduate entrants from <b>Low Participation Neighbourhoods</b> (LPNs)	• 12.2% by 2016 entry [Access Agreement target- subject to review].	• 7.3% from LPNs for 2012 entry
8. Number of <b>countries</b> represented by at least 20 students	• At least 40 countries to be represented by at least 20 students by 2016 [Internationalisation Strategy target]	• 28 countries in 2011-12
9. <b>Percentage of total non-EU students</b> from any individual country	• No nationality to exceed 35% of the total non-EU population by 2016	• 40% from China in 2011-12
<b>SO5: To promote our academic strengths and integrity through programme development and review in the context of market opportunity and demand</b>		
10. Achievement of agreed <b>Home UG quota group targets</b> (Eve of Registration Admissions figures)	• All UG quota groups to achieve at least 90% of intake target	• 22 out of 44 Home UG Quota groups achieved at least 90% of target intake in 2012
11. Process for programme review in light of recruitment performance to be established. Appropriate metrics for PGT performance to be agreed.	• Process and metrics determined by December 2013	• N/A
12. Student Finance Committee reconfigured as <b>University Recruitment and Admissions Committee</b>	• Committee and Implementation Plan established by September 2013	N/A
13. <b>Implementation Plan</b> developed/agreed	• First report to Council December 2013.	
14. <b>Annual review</b> procedures determined		

**Suzanne Cholerton, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching); Lesley Braiden, Director of Marketing and Student Recruitment; 5 June 2013.**

Appendix 1: Key Success Factors for effective student recruitment throughout the student life-cycle;  
Appendix 2: Links to key documents and analysis

## **Appendix 1: Key Success Factors for effective student recruitment throughout the Student Life-Cycle**

Each phase of the Student Life-Cycle, described on page 1 of the Strategy, has a direct impact on student recruitment (for all markets). The key success factors for each phase are summarised here.

<b>Marketing and promotion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strong University and subject reputation; Evidence of student satisfaction and employability outcomes</li><li>• High quality targeted marketing campaigns and information with strong key reputational and student experience messages</li><li>• Excellent pre-application Visit Days, Postgraduate Open Days and other visit opportunities (all markets); High quality estate, facilities and spaces.</li><li>• Effective targeting and communication (web / digital, social media; CRM; face-to-face; HE fairs and recruitment events; virtual technologies; campaigns)</li><li>• Use of current students and student / graduate ambassadors for peer promotion</li></ul>
<b>Enquiry to Application</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prompt, welcoming and expert responses to enquiries</li><li>• Demanding entry requirements to position University as a premium destination</li><li>• Fees appropriate to reputation and market</li><li>• Accessible, efficient application systems</li><li>• Strong reputation with influencers: eg teachers, agents, sponsors, advisers, parents</li><li>• Effective and responsive communication (CRM, social media)</li></ul>
<b>Offers to Enrolment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strategy and management of process</li><li>• Prompt decisions; maximum offers; clear communication; Appropriate entry conditions</li><li>• Excellent Post Application Open Days/ visit opportunities.</li><li>• Effective communications (CRM, social media). Personal contact with applicants to strengthen emotional ties, promote conversion and minimise attrition after acceptance</li><li>• Influence of current students (including ambassadors and the Students' Union) and alumni</li><li>• Targeted financial support, scholarships, discounts and incentives</li><li>• Effective clearing &amp; adjustment campaigns/systems (UG)</li><li>• Efficient and timely allocation of accommodation</li><li>• Clear and timely pre-entry information</li><li>• Pre-travel support and information (international)</li></ul>
<b>Registration, induction and transition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clear registration information and instructions</li><li>• Excellent, well organised Freshers' Week / International Welcome / PG orientation events / Students' Union events; Strong social programme for new international students</li><li>• Welcoming reception by academic Schools</li><li>• Supportive induction and transition period including familiarisation with academic and support services</li><li>• Effective student engagement and integration: eg Peer mentoring schemes; social media communities</li><li>• Information for parents and families</li></ul>
<b>Education for Life: Retention, student experience and successful graduation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Early identification of problems; clear signposting to integrated support services</li><li>• Delivery of the University Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Strategy: excellent, challenging programmes and all aspects of the student offer</li><li>• Financial support for lower-income students</li><li>• Strong personal tutor systems</li><li>• Involvement of students in the academic community and effective integration of international students</li><li>• Opportunities for students to gain 'education for life' and professional skills</li><li>• Effective internal communication with students</li><li>• Involvement of students in promotion of the University to future applicants</li></ul>
<b>Employment, further study, lifelong alumni relationships, advocacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ongoing support for alumni (lifelong learning, development, career success)</li><li>• Alumni giving time (as advocates, ambassadors, case studies) as part of 'Giving to Newcastle' portfolio</li><li>• Strong, ongoing engagement with alumni (through DARO and subject links; events; communication)</li><li>• Involvement of alumni as employees (eg Graduate Ambassadors), advocates and case studies</li><li>• Effective engagement with alumni who are governors, teachers, agents, business contacts, employers, academics, parents and other influencers</li><li>• Engagement with parents / families of current students and alumni.</li></ul>
<b>Programme Development, Review, Delivery and Quality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Market research, competitor benchmarking and horizon scanning to inform programme development;</li><li>• Development of programmes that reflect and reinforce academic reputation, integrity and quality whilst also being market sensitive.</li><li>• Liaison with business and employers to ensure appropriate alignment</li><li>• Smooth, effective and timely programme approval processes</li><li>• Delivery of the (UG / PGT) student offer</li></ul>

## **Appendix 2: Links to key documents and analysis**

The following links provide further information and context for the Student Recruitment Strategy:

a) **Market research: Undergraduate**

This link to the Marketing and Student Recruitment Directorate [Undergraduate Market Research](#) website provides access to the latest market research commissioned to support undergraduate recruitment, including the 2012 Decliners' and New Entrants' survey.

b) **Market research: Postgraduate**

[Postgraduate Market Research](#) reports may be accessed through this link.

c) **International Student Barometer**

The most recent International Student Barometer reports are available here:

[International Student Barometer 2011 - Executive Summary](#) (PDF: 697KB)

[International Student Barometer 2010 - Executive Summary](#) (Word: 6.1MB)

The International Student Barometer (ISB) surveys the satisfaction of all International students (including EU) at the University and compares their satisfaction with other institutions participating in the ISB.

The 2012 ISB results tables have recently been made available through the QuILT website: [ISB 2012](#).

An executive summary is currently being produced and this will be added to the page once it is available.

d) **Newcastle University Access Agreement (2013 entry)**

The most recent published [Access Agreement \(for 2013 entry\)](#) is available online (published on the OFFA website). The 2014 Access Agreement has recently been submitted to OFFA for consideration. A decision will be published in late July, following which the Access Agreement will be made available on the website.

e) **Public reports and analyses**

The following external reports are of relevance:

- **Have bursaries influenced choices between universities?** (HEFCE report to OFFA, September 2010, available from the OFFA website: <http://www.offa.org.uk/publications/>)
- **What more can be done to widen access to highly selective universities?** (A Report from Sir Martin Harris, Director of Fair Access, April 2010, available from the OFFA website: <http://www.offa.org.uk/publications/>)
- **[The Milburn report](#) (University Challenge: How Higher Education Can Advance Social Mobility)** (independent reviewer's report for the Cabinet Office, October 2012):
- A range of recent HEFCE reports of more general interest can be accessed here: HEFCE [Publications](#), and the website includes links to [external reports](#)
- The Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) has published a range of relevant reports, [available here](#)

f) **University student data**

A variety of different documents and statistics relating to student data, including undergraduate (NSS) and Postgraduate (PRES and PTES) student satisfaction reports can be accessed through the [Planning Office](#) website.