

Vice Principal International's Report to Senate

For 2016/17, QMUL is now home to students from 163 different nationalities. This is up on 2015/6. International student recruitment enrolments for the 2016/17 intake have been positive in the context of competitor activity and reflect the challenges posed by the external market. By level of study, we welcomed our largest intake of new student enrolments across the following study levels: International UG – up 3.5% to 876; International PGT – up 4.5% to 1710; EU UG – up 4.3% to 459; and EU PGR – up 17.2% to 109. We had our largest ever intake of new students from over 30 countries both in the EU and outside including India and China. From the EU, France, Greece, Belgium, Spain, Poland and the Netherlands all increased to our largest ever new intakes. Given the external context of steep currency devaluation, falling oil and commodity prices, and an increasingly unfriendly student visa policy, this puts QMUL ahead of some of our RG competitors. The uncertainty around Brexit makes EU recruitment particularly satisfying.

The VP International Tour of India in November involved participation by a delegation of 10 academic Schools and Institutes to deliver a comprehensive schedule of in-country engagement. It tied in with the ministerial delegation to India attended by the Prime Minister; the Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation; and the Secretary of State for International Trade. An MoU was signed with Vellore Institute of Technology to offer three full PhD waivers per year to qualified students and staff from VIT University who apply for a PhD degree in Science and Engineering. This will help us further strengthen our many links with partners in India. The next tour will be to Middle East and Pakistan in April 2017.

The VP International has also visited China to meet with partner universities and review the operating processes within the QMUL subsidiary based in Beijing.

Initiatives to support increased participation in outward student mobility are underway. The appointment of an Academic Lead for Outward Student Mobility was secured in October which also saw the first Go Global Fair at QMUL. A successful first event with over 600 attendees, this new promotional initiative was designed to raise awareness of the range of opportunities open to current students. Work is also in progress to address financial barriers to participation, another key priority.

Since the last report, the International Partnerships team has hosted visits from: Minzu University (China); a delegation of Indonesian journalists organised by the British Council and the FCO; a delegation of Vice-Chancellors and Principals from the Philippines; Tec de Monterrey (Mexico); and Thammasat University (Thailand).

In October, the VP International also attended a roundtable for eight Vice-Chancellors and Pro-Vice-Chancellors International in the House of Lords, hosted by Lord Karan Bilimoria and organised by Sannam S4, our partner in India. This discussed the positive economic impact made by international students and the need for collective action in an external environment operating against a background of unparalleled change.