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International Recruiting in Higher Education



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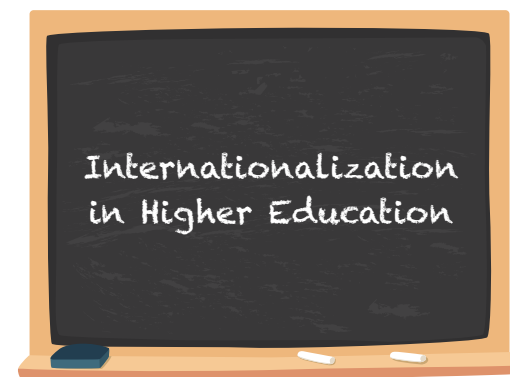
An Introduction to Internationalization in Higher Education

Through connections via technology, travel, and new industries, the world is becoming a smaller place. To prepare students for evolving careers, and for the longer-term sustainability of their institution, higher education leaders should understand the trends and opportunities globalization offers and how they plan to respond to globalization through their internationalization initiatives.

Today, colleges and universities are at a moment to think holistically about providing students with internationalized campus experiences. There are a variety of internationalization options available to campus leaders and faculty ranging from internationalizing the curriculum, learning about new cultures from study abroad experiences or interacting with foreign students on campus, to taking academic programs abroad and even physical campuses. Many, if not most, internationalization activities require recruiting international students for their ongoing success.

By reading this e-book, you'll learn about how to adapt to – and capitalize on – trends in internationalization in education.

We'll be covering globalization, internationalization of higher education, recruiting international students, trends in the knowledge economy, and some examples of institutions that are making the most of these trends and finding success.



1

Recruiting International Students: Higher Education Trends

Globalization, the Knowledge Economy, and Fourth Industrial Revolution

Globalization is a phenomenon that is viewed positively in some circles as it has enabled increased wealth across the world, the exchange of ideas, and a sense that world can be a smaller place as people can travel faster and further than at anytime in human history and instantaneously communicate with each other. Globalization brought about good and bad changes.

Today, a global knowledge economy has emerged as an outcome of globalization, which has also spurred the rise of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. [The World Economic Forum](#) foresees technologies such as, “[artificial intelligence](#), robotics, the Internet of Things, autonomous vehicles, 3D printing, nanotechnology, biotechnology, materials science, energy storage, and quantum computing” powering these changes. ([See here for thoughts from Salesforce.org CEO Rob Acker](#) about the Fourth Industrial Revolution).



Technology amplifies the effects of globalization, and throughout history there are examples of how technological advances better connected the world. During the Age of Exploration from the 15th to 17th centuries, technologies helped drive globalization through better forms of navigational instruments and maps to sail across the seas and the construction of ships that could sustain multi-month journeys. What makes this latest form of globalization similar to the past is that **technology powers the changes** for societies, economies, cultures, and individuals. The difference is that **technology is evolving at such a rapid pace that it acts as an accelerant for both the good and bad aspects of globalization.**

Digital technologies are powering this Fourth Industrial Revolution and the creativity of individuals in the global knowledge economy are imagining the use of these technologies for almost every aspect of the economy. Significant benefits are derived from the use of these digital technologies, but these technologies can also be used to harm society. Rob Acker, CEO of Salesforce.org, states: “We are using new digital technologies in ways they were never intended to be used. The same technology that makes the world more connected is being weaponized, from playground bullying to sowing seeds of hatred and intolerance more widely.”

Globalization and Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies currently impact higher education and will do so into the foreseeable future. Higher education institutions can respond to the pressures wrought by globalization through internationalization.

Higher education institutions operate within global systems and must address the opportunities and challenges offered by globalization.

Within the US higher education system, especially during the recent Great Recession, state funding for higher education shrunk. According to Janet Napolitano, president of the University of California, during the recession, the state of California reduced its appropriation to UC by 40% and it had to increase tuition in the double digits (Source: Event at Salesforce.org, March 28, 2018). Recently, funding has grown in some states, however, colleges and universities are still seeking revenue to offset reductions in public funding.

There are few levers university administrators can use to generate revenue. Some levers are politically untenable such as raising tuition, eliminating academic programs, and cutting faculty and staff positions. Unfortunately, given the financial situation of some universities, they have had to make these difficult decisions. Other levers are less controversial such as applying for grants, but grant processes are highly competitive and may be one-off funding that is not necessarily sustainable longer-term. Advancement and alumni relations can raise large sums of money through [capital campaigns](#), but these are often multi-year efforts.

A decade since the Great Recession, colleges and universities continue facing various challenges, both domestically and from abroad that its senior leaders, administrators, faculty, staff, and students must address. There are many voices today that question the value of higher education, its return on investment for students and society, and whether certain disciplines are relevant. Policymakers and the public want to ensure that public funding is used in a responsible manner, that students are graduating with work-ready degrees, and that students are ready to compete in the global knowledge economy.

One lever that university administrators can use to offset lost funding is to ramp up their international activities to raise new revenues. Internationalization is less politically controversial than raising tuition or cutting academic programs, and offers several benefits described in the next section.



Understanding Internationalization for Higher Education

Coming out of the global Great Recession, many universities began ramping up their internationalization activities to seek out new revenue sources by recruiting new cohorts of international students, creating partnerships with universities abroad, and to raise the stature of their brands to global audiences. Internationalization of higher education is a response to and an outgrowth of globalization.

Within the realm of internationalization, there are many options senior leaders can use to benefit their students and university. Jane Knight, a leading scholar of internationalization, created a typology of international activities that details differing forms of internationalization that higher education institutions can use. [Knight's \(2006\) typology](#) includes:

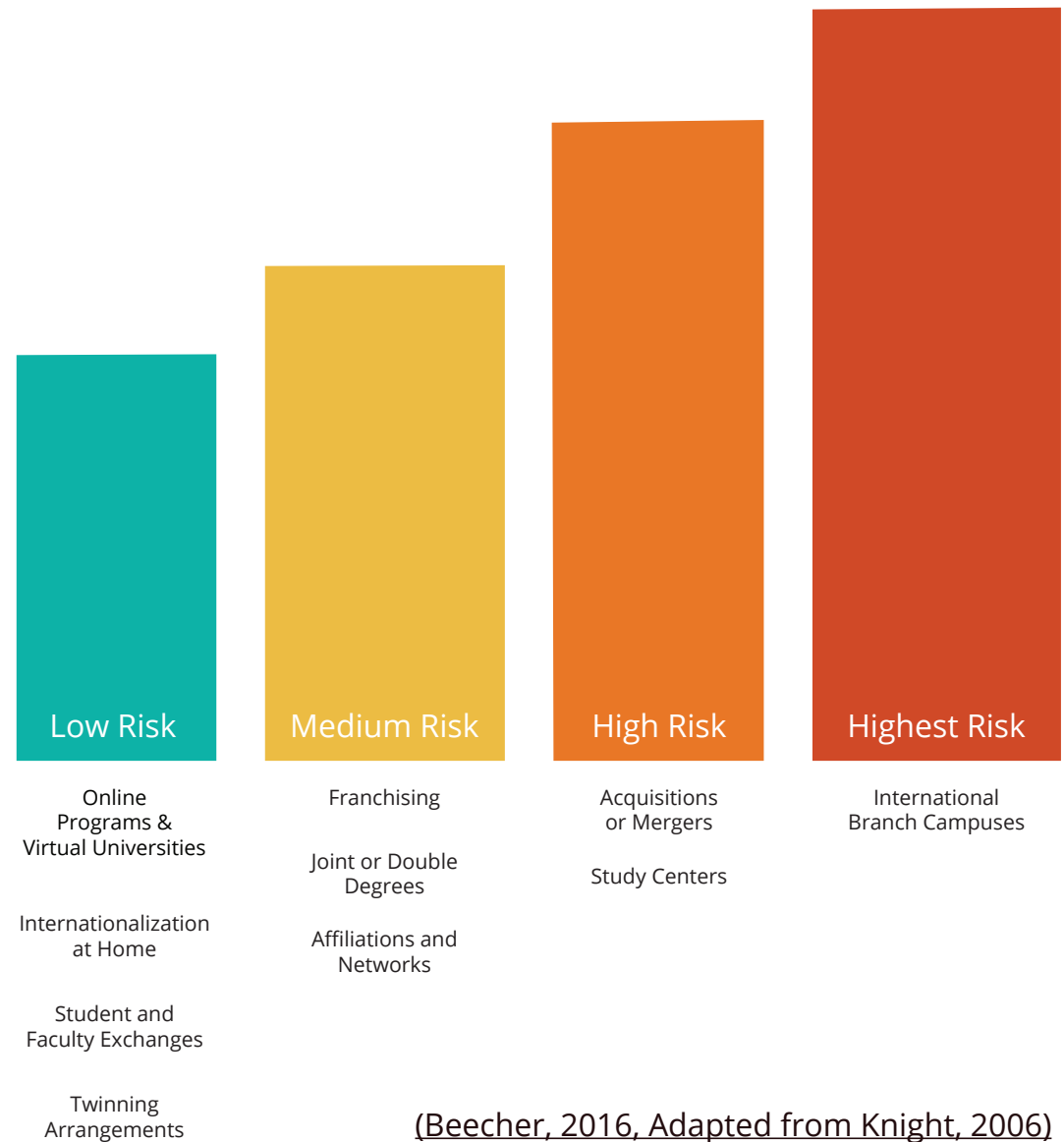
- Internationalization at home
- Online programs marketed to international audiences
- Student & faculty mobility
- Twinning arrangements
- Partnerships
- Franchising
- Joint or double degree programs
- Study centers
- Affiliations and networks
- Acquisitions or mergers
- Research collaborations
- International branch campuses



Why It's Important for Higher Education Leaders to Understand Internationalization Options

Every college or university has a different history, culture, and management approach, and within the realm of internationalization there are many options to “go international.” It’s important to select the right mix of options that address an individual institution’s needs, but do not provide a level of risk its leaders are not comfortable pursuing. Bad press around an international endeavor not only can harm an institution’s brand, but it may also set back internationalization efforts within a university for years to come.

International branch campuses are the most resource-intensive and riskiest form of internationalization and it is an option that a few universities around the world have used. Significant planning and institutional resources are needed to plan for and maintain an international branch campus. The Cross-Border Education Research Team (CBERT.org) tracks the openings and closings of international branch campuses, and their database currently indicates 247 are in operation and 42 are known to have closed.



(Beecher, 2016, Adapted from Knight, 2006)

Creating the Right Balance for an Internationalization Plan

The [graphic](#) on the previous page adapts Knight's (2006) internationalization typology and compares the risks associated with an international activity versus other activities. Creating the right mix of internationalization is a difficult process. The challenge is: within an institution, internationalization could be a top-down initiative from a strategic plan where individual schools and colleges within a university respond to the initiative. But internationalization could also be a bottom-up activity driven by an individual school or department, and its activities are not coordinated with the rest of the university. Managing internationalization holistically, or at least having an understanding of a university's activities, allows an institution's senior leaders to understand the benefits and risks of their internationalization activities.

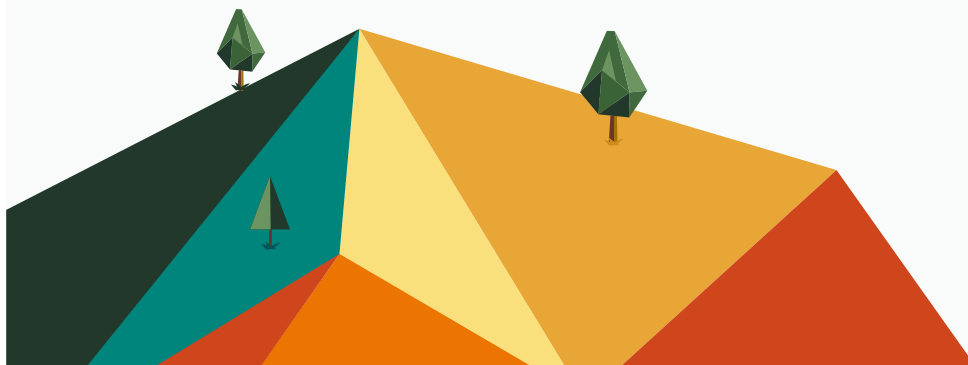
Higher education institutions can realize the benefits of internationalization through:

- Diversifying the student body
- Offering new cultural contexts within the curriculum to prepare your students to work in a globalized world
- Expanding your university's brand
- New revenue opportunities for a university

It's important to manage or mitigate the risks associated with internationalization, and we'll go more into this later on. Risks associated with the international activities listed above, especially as universities engage in more high profile or riskier projects, can lead to:

- Students unable to achieve their academic goals
- Damage to a university's brand
- Loss of revenues
- An unwillingness by university leaders to take on future international projects

In summation, it is extremely important to identify and mitigate or eliminate these kinds of risks, but higher education leaders have a few [tools](#) available to assess, manage, and minimize risks associated with internationalization. Part of mitigating or eliminating these risks involves finding the right mix of internationalization options that align with an institutional mission, its short and longer-term goals, culture, and risk tolerance. To do this effectively, the process of internationalization should be an inclusive conversation that includes senior leaders, deans, heads of academic programs, faculty, students, and alumni so that multiple voices are heard during the planning process.



Why Internationalize?

“Why internationalize?” is a complex question with many possible reasons for expanding an institution’s academic operations. Internationalization may be a top-down directive as part of a strategic plan where an institution’s senior leaders want to position their university within the ranks of other global universities. Or internationalization may be an effort that begins organically by a professor who understands the importance of thinking globally and infuses her curriculum with international themes. With such a range of internationalization options, university stakeholders have important decisions to make around how internationalizing will impact their students, curriculum, culture, and their university.





2

Addressing the Challenges of Recruiting International Students

Addressing the Challenges of Recruiting International Students

Internationalizing benefits students, faculty, and researchers by providing new perspectives and discourse inside and outside the classroom, and it may influence curriculum by infusing international themes into the readings, videos, or assignments that students complete.

Study abroad and student exchange programs are a well-known example of internationalization.

As a [National Geographic](#) article notes:

Programs for international students tend to emphasize community service, and many require volunteer hours for participants. Since volunteering isn't a custom everywhere, many international students tend to do their first service in the U.S., often alongside Americans. They see civic responsibility models in action, which inspires them to do something when they go home.

As adults later, those same kids who came to the U.S. often start nonprofits or foundations, or become leaders of companies or in government—and remain friendly to America. The peacebuilding work these people learned on exchange programs can make the difference on critical issues that affect their home communities or conflict with other countries.

In addition to study abroad programs, higher education leaders can also expand their reach across the globe through study centers and international branch campuses.

While internationalization has benefits, it is also risky. Internationalization efforts can place a university's brand, reputation, and resources at risk. Universities and community colleges can find the right mix of internationalization options that align with their institutional mission, culture, and tolerance for risk. What many internationalization options have in common from a risk perspective is being able to fulfill recruiting goals with qualified students. This section will address some thoughts around the current state of international student recruiting. While this section will take more of a U.S. perspective on student recruiting, it will also address common themes that higher education institutions from around the globe are facing.



Globalization Impacts Recruiting

Competition for recruiting qualified students, faculty, and researchers is a global phenomenon, as this article about [recruiting international students with “in-state tuition” notes](#). It is easier than at any time in history for students to traverse the globe to find a high-quality academic program at a university that aligns with their career aspirations. Likewise for faculty and researchers, there is a global competition for their skills to work at a university that aligns with their disciplinary and research goals.

Thinking about recruiting as a competition may not be a mindset that university administrators or recruiters prefer to be in, but attempting to find academically qualified individuals to attend or work at your university is important and increasingly challenging.

Globalization drives the workforce needs for countries and in this [Fourth Industrial Revolution](#), universities play an important role in conducting the research and training needed to create the technologies and innovations powering this revolution. Finding researchers and the next generation of students is a global endeavor that is highly competitive.

Government policies become an important aspect in the global search for talented individuals to create these next-generation innovations.

At the end of the last century and the turn of this century, some countries' political leaders who believed that their country was not ready to compete in the global knowledge economy took deliberate policy action to develop their country's research capabilities by changing their education and immigration policies to import expertise.

These policy actions equated to making it easier for professors and researchers to immigrate into their country. Some countries developed ambitious plans to import expertise by establishing themselves as education hubs, a destination for education and research. These education hubs hosted international branch campuses, and their purpose was to develop the host country's expertise to compete in the global knowledge economy. Global education hubs exist in the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Singapore, and South Korea.



Another policy approach was to sponsor students to study abroad and earn a degree. Governments would help pay for students to study abroad and earn degrees in hopes that they would return home to help build out their country's higher education sector and work in national companies to compete in the global knowledge economy. The potential downside for the sponsoring government is that the student who earns a degree would not return home to use their newly earned degree and expertise – a phenomenon known as the brain drain effect.

Western universities in the U.S., United Kingdom, Europe, and Australia welcomed high achieving students to their home campuses. Foreign students studying in these Western countries often paid full list price tuition, or two to three times more than their domestic counterparts. For many universities, recruiting international students was lucrative and these students helped offset budget reductions from state or national governments.

The tuition paid by foreign students offset costs for domestic students, helped to fund academic programs at universities, and provided vital funding for facilities maintenance. Overall, international students provide many benefits to universities and colleges, but what emerged with governments providing less public funding for universities was the important financial benefit realized by recruiting more international students.

A university's brand and its recognition globally is a strategic advantage. If international students know and respect your brand, it can give you an edge in recruiting them. A strong brand and reputation is

especially meaningful in certain countries to help students land a job after graduation. But the complexity of international student recruiting goes well beyond an institution's academic reputation, and is heavily influenced by public policy and opinion.

Recruiting international students is complex for a multitude of reasons. [Marguerite J Dennis notes](#) that “it is no longer possible to create international strategic plans and recruit future international students without taking into consideration the political, economic, technological and societal changes taking place.”

There are currently [one million international students](#) in the United States providing revenues of about \$39B to universities. Students are having to think harder about making the investment to come to the U.S., because the message from universities is often counter to what prospective students see in the news. American universities need to make a stronger case for “why study in the U.S.?” rather than stay in one's home country or choose to study in Canada, Australia, or European countries.

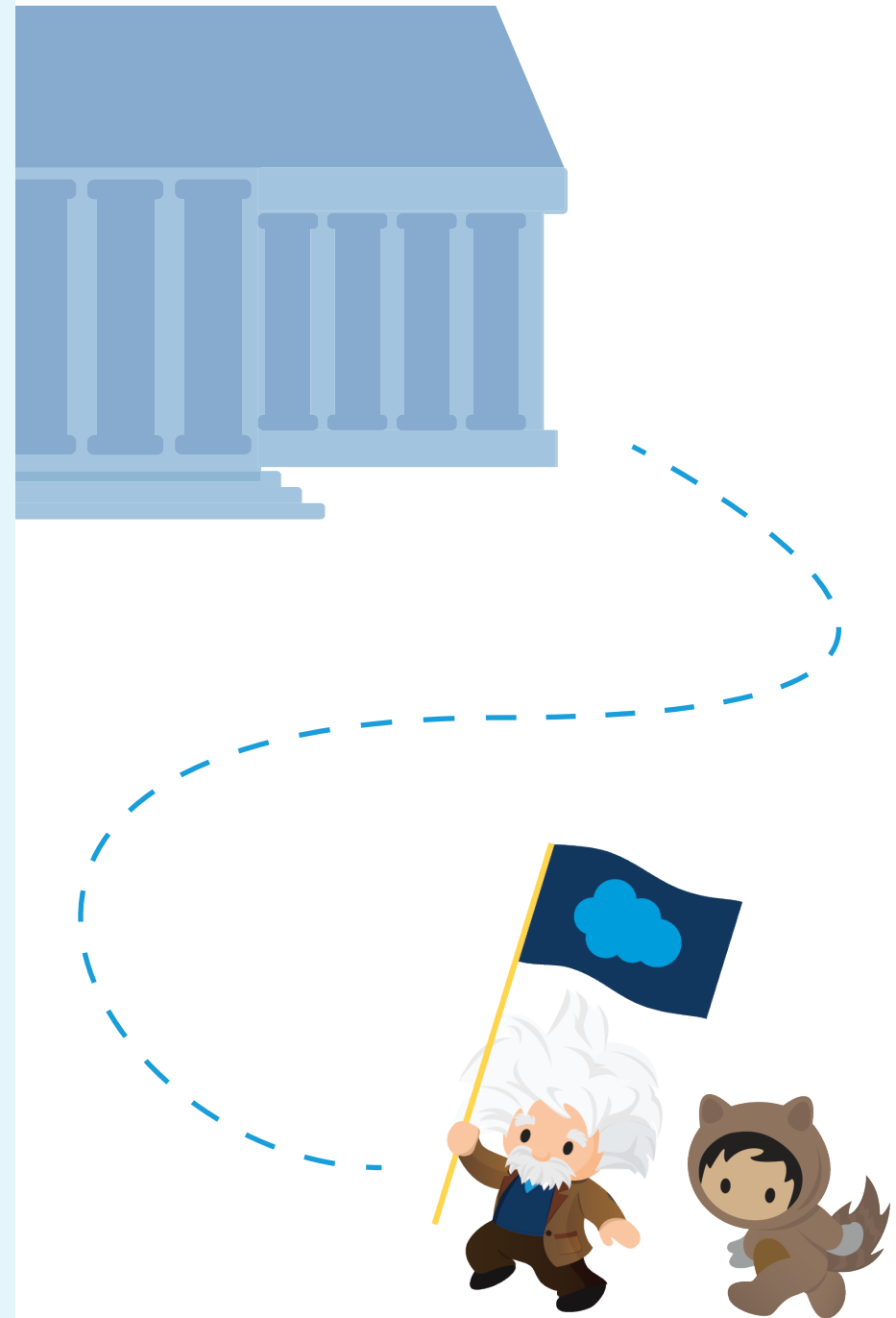
The Institute of International Education is projecting a 7% decline of international student enrollments, and this would be the first decline in about 12 years. Combined with what is happening in the United States, large sending countries such as [China, India, Brazil, and Saudi Arabia](#) are providing less financial support through scholarships for their citizens to study abroad or experiencing currency crises, and at the same time are building out their higher education sector so more students can stay at home to study.



What can universities do to recruit international students?

Two trends pertaining to recruiting international students are: 1. the changing landscape of policy and competition, and 2) how to market to prospective students with purposeful plans. These plans should include recruiting and marketing strategies that will acclimate, support, and welcome international students to campus.

Universities are recruiting students who are more digitally savvy than any previous cohort of students. Targeted digital marketing to prospective students has become important today because students do not have to rely on a university or program website to provide information about an academic program; these students have other avenues to research a prospective university they are interested in attending. [Social media](#) has become a powerful tool for students to learn more about a prospective institution, almost as important as a university's website or print brochures. Recruiters and admissions officers need to become comfortable communicating with prospective and admitted students on these digital channels. For more on this, watch a demo of Salesforce.org Education Cloud for [higher ed social media management](#) or [Marketing Cloud Social Studio for higher ed](#).



Georgetown McDonough School of Business: A Leader in Higher Ed Recruiting

One example of a university that is leading the way in international recruiting – with great success – is the [Georgetown McDonough School of Business](#). Georgetown McDonough recruits for their full-time and part-time MBA programs in the US and internationally with an omni-channel, community-based approach that leverages technology to achieve scale and a personal touch all over the world.



“With [Salesforce.org Education Cloud](#), we are able to target communications throughout the candidate lifecycle. This way, we can make sure we are engaging them in the right way rather than just a blanket communication. We use technology to figure out where someone is in the process and what information they need at that point. The Education Cloud helps us figure out how to allocate our marketing dollars, too.”

– 'Iolani Lightbourne, Acting Director, MBA Admissions, Georgetown McDonough School of Business

Georgetown also collaborates with their international students and alumni for international recruiting: when students go abroad for consulting projects, and when alumni go to conferences, the university empowers them by sharing recruiting materials. “Relationships are very important,” added Lightbourne. “Our biggest success in recruiting lately has been in communicating the value of our collaborative culture and our program in Washington, D.C. by utilizing our networks.”



Keyur Pental, Director of Applications and Database Development at Georgetown McDonough, also noted:

“Salesforce.org Education Cloud is helpful for managing the student lifecycle end to end, as well as providing flexibility to integrate different technologies as we need them for specific uses.”

Georgetown has found great results by combining people, processes and the Salesforce platform: “Between events, communications, and technology, the Full-time MBA program has achieved very strong yield,” added Lightbourne.

Likewise, as a student begins their journey with a university, they need support services early on in their lifecycle to support their success. Moving from a recruiting process to admissions and then to matriculation requires seamless handoffs between various departments within a university.



Helping Students Get Acclimated and Accelerate their Careers

Once a university has a student who has accepted their offer of admissions, another best practice is to ensure student success with a dedicated care team. International students require services that some institutions may not be ready to provide such as [English labs](#), [housing and dining services](#) during holidays, and orientation that helps acculturate students to the United States, the state and/or city they will be living in, and the university.

At Georgetown McDonough, international students get a separate orientation in addition to the regular orientation that all students get, to make sure that international students are aware of specific resources. Additionally, Georgetown MBA students are able to access MBA Career Center resources, including a specific coach for international students, even before they set foot on campus. “This helps put international students at ease, and helps them think ahead about how to position themselves for a career transition,” said Lightbourne.

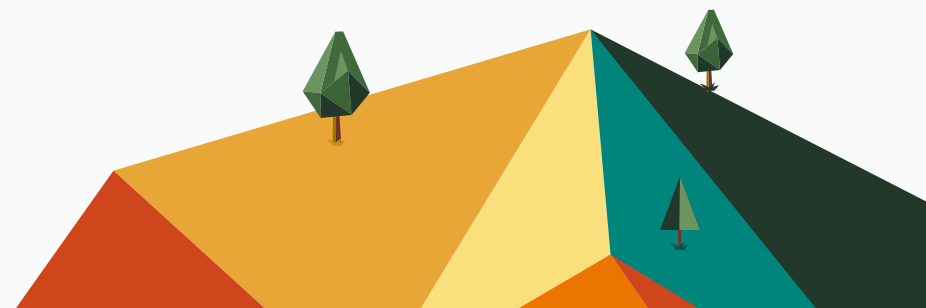
Challenges and Opportunities

Recruiting is difficult because of global competition and different policies from both sending and receiving countries that universities must address. As economic conditions change or global competition becomes more intense, U.S. universities may have larger or smaller recruiting pools. When large sending countries change policies to keep students at home, it makes recruiting qualified students more challenging.

One example of a recent policy change is Europe’s new General Data Protection Regulation. As U.S. universities continue to recruit students from Europe, it’s important to remember the new policy environment that universities must operate within to ensure compliance with GDPR. GDPR applies to data about people in Europe. Salesforce.org provides information for higher ed and nonprofit customers on [GDPR here](#).

“The global graduate management education landscape has become more complex and sophisticated. Thus, traditional ways to recruit students don’t always work. With so many schools and programmes, candidates have more choices than ever,” said Sara Strafino, Market Development, Senior Manager, Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC). In the past, attending student recruiting fairs and doing one follow up action was the standard. Now, students expect schools to know who they are and what they want. In response, as noted in a recent [webinar](#) with GMAC (the creators of the GMAT) and [ESSEC](#) about [business school recruiting trends](#), schools are using data and technology in more sophisticated ways to deliver a more personalized experience.

“We are seeing a more diverse candidate pipeline. Different groups of candidates have different needs and expectations,” added Sara Strafino. “Candidates are very versatile in their use of technology, and schools need to advance as well.”



What Universities Can Do to Better Recruit International Students

Here are some thoughts on what universities can do to be more welcoming to international students and continue to advance their brands:

1. Offer a dedicated advisor for international students and pair students up with peer mentor.
2. Give international graduate students access to career services even before they arrive on campus. Georgetown McDonough School of Business does this, for example, and students find it quite helpful.
3. Provide additional services such as [English labs, housing and dining services](#) during holidays.
4. Provide additional orientation that helps acculturate students to the country, province/state and/or city they will be living in, as well as the university.
5. Make programs flexible: Create programs online, joint or dual degree programs, creating partnerships with other universities, or franchising programs.
6. Research whether it makes sense to open an international branch campus.

Looking past the financial aspects, universities can advance their missions by bringing in more international students. By being on campus, international students help bring new ideas and conversations into the curriculum. As international students acclimate to campus life and make connections and friendships with domestic students, they will help shape campus culture with international perspectives. They will also expose domestic students to new cultures.



Policy, Politics, and International Student Recruiting: A U.K. Perspective

Social Changes, Evolving Opinions, and Their Impact on Universities

Let's step back for a moment to revisit an issue that has come to the forefront of political discourse recently and caused a great amount of anxiety that ties to the movement of people, ideas, and technology that all power the Fourth Industrial Revolution: immigration. Globally, immigration has emerged as a focal point and political issue for many Western countries as they are addressing the changes wrought by this current industrial revolution. An outgrowth and response to these changes are the elections of more nationalistic leaders who are focused on slowing or reversing the growth of immigration. For developed countries with slowing or declining birth rates, these immigration policies will impact social safety nets and the growth of their economies longer-term.

[On June 23, 2016](#), British voters went to the polls to vote on the European Union (EU) referendum, commonly known as Brexit, to decide whether or not to stay within the EU. The close results ended with a vote to leave the EU and proceed with negotiations to determine how that would be done. One of the major underlying themes of Brexit is a policy discussion around [immigration](#) and the desire for the U.K. government to control its borders and determine its own immigration policy. The implications for this policy will affect the U.K.'s world renowned and vibrant higher education sector. How universities proactively respond to this policy, recruit foreign students, and maintain their global reputation for quality will affect not only the higher education sector, but also the broader U.K. economy.

What Does Brexit Mean for U.K. Universities?

Diplomacy and humanitarian goodwill towards other nations helps to build a country's positive global brand. However, immigration policies or rancorous rhetoric about immigration can create the perception that foreign students are not welcomed. Fortunately, U.K. universities are currently popular and highly regarded, and universities can do a lot to collaborate internationally and maintain their brand of being welcoming.

U.K. universities have strong brand recognition for the quality of their research and teaching, and the U.K. is home to some of the top ranked and most prestigious universities globally. [Aline Courtois](#) of the Centre for Global Higher Education, Institute of Education at University College London, summarizes the relationship of U.K. higher ed with the rest of Europe as:

- The U.K. is the 2nd largest recipient of competitive research funding from the EU
- 6% of students and 17% of staff come from EU countries
- Almost half of the academic papers produced by U.K. academics are in collaboration with international partners.



Greater Global Competition on the Continent

With greater options for student mobility and increased choice within the global higher education sector, U.K. universities will experience pressure to innovate to recruit students. [Simon Marginson](#), a leading scholar on higher education internationalization, predicts that possibly by 2019, the U.K. will lose its hold on the #2 position as a destination for international students to Australia. While the [U.K. higher education sector](#) has strongly held its #2 position for many years, since 2012, the growth of its international student population has remained in the low single digits to stagnant, while Australia has experienced rapid growth.

What is the Current Policy State in the U.K.?

Many U.K. universities operate as global organizations, which makes recruiting students a complex affair. These universities need to recruit domestic students, international students, and for universities with branch campuses or operations abroad such as joint degree programs, they must recruit students for these global programs to remain viable. The [U.K. government](#) reports that some form of British higher education is delivered in all but 5 countries across the globe, hence, recruiting students remains critical for the long-term success of these programs.

There is movement from a policy perspective to explore accommodations for student mobility into the U.K. to attend their world-class universities. A summer 2018 [Brexit White Paper](#), while still focused on limiting the “free movement” of people into the U.K., does provide for further aims to streamline the visa process for student mobility into the U.K.. In [June 2018](#), the Home Office added 11 countries, including China, to its streamlined student visa process, bringing the total number of countries whose students are eligible for this process to 28; it also removes students from the U.K. immigration targets. This streamlined process allows students from the 28 countries to provide less documentation to the U.K. government when applying for their visa. Strikingly, India was not on the list for this streamlined visa process, despite a large population of students who would be academically eligible to U.K. universities.

What Can Universities Do to Recruit Students?

While the welcome mat has not been removed, the perception that foreign students are not welcome to study in the U.K. can become a harsh reality for its universities if universities do not take action and if visas continue to be limited. U.K. universities have prestigious brands and there is demand for their academic programs.

Traditionally, internationalization has offered three types of mobility: student, program, and institutional. Student mobility is the exchange of students across borders for either short or long-term study. This type of mobility may be more difficult for students, especially students who are not eligible for the streamlined visa process. Restricting student mobility will have economic, cultural, and pedagogical impacts on the U.K. higher education sector.

Program mobility encompasses offering online program, joint or dual degree programs, creating partnerships with other universities, or franchising programs. Institutional mobility includes establishing study centers abroad or opening international branch campuses. Program and institutional mobility crosses borders to bring education to students rather than students having to come to a university. While these types of mobilities can be beneficial for students, they are more costly options for universities and senior leaders at universities must determine if the return on investing in these option will be worth the risks they offer.

The Cross-Border Education Research Team (C-BERT), hosted at the State University of New York at Albany and Pennsylvania State University, keeps detailed records of international branch campuses that have opened and in some cases closed. U.K. universities have traditionally been leaders in cross-border education and specifically in

opening international branch campuses. [C-BERT](#) has tracked 38 U.K. international branch campuses, [including campuses](#) that University College London, University of Nottingham, Manchester Business School, University of Kent, London Business School, University of Warwick, and many others have opened.

U.K. universities and their leaders may choose program and institutional mobility as policy responses to overcome the loss of students due to Brexit. One example is the University of Oxford. The French government has said that any U.K. university opening a campus in France would receive French legal status, which ensure they continued to have access to European funding for research. [During 2017](#), the University of Oxford was in discussions about opening a satellite campus and relocating courses and establishing joint degree programs. Additionally, the University of [Oxford](#) signed a memorandum of understanding to establish a collaboration with four German universities and it plans to establish a research center in Germany; this is part of the University's desire to stay connected to Europe.

There is still a good deal of uncertainty from a policy perspective within the U.K. higher education sector. University leaders will need to make sense of and create strategies to address the changing policy environment in the U.K.. Due to the global nature of higher education and the choices students have to earn a degree, counteracting a perceived environment that is unwelcoming will make recruiting international students all the more difficult. But, university leaders have tools at their disposal to take their programs and institutions into markets rather than being dependent upon student mobility.



3

Practical Tips for International Recruiting in Higher Ed

Beginning with reviewing trends, we have discussed strategies for universities to recruit international students through various means of student, program, and institutional mobility. Student mobility would encapsulate study abroad or student exchanges; program mobility includes offering online programs, dual or joint degree programs, and twinning arrangements; and institutional mobility is defined by a home campus opening a study center or international branch campus. Regardless of the type of mobility universities utilize as part of their internationalization plans, recruiting students is essential for the success of these academic programs.

As university leaders plan their recruiting efforts and how they will utilize their scarce marketing and recruiting resources to focus on particular countries or regions, they must also take into account local, regional, and national political, economic, and financial factors. Countries that have traditionally sent students abroad in hopes that they return to use their education to benefit their society and economy—may now be investing in capacity building within their higher education sector, giving students options at home to earn a postsecondary degree. Two countries building or importing capacity include [China](#), which is rapidly expanding its higher education sector by building new universities, and South Korea, which is importing highly ranked US and European universities to its [Incheon Global Campus](#).

Due to numerous factors regarding international student recruiting, universities seeking international students operate in an internationally competitive environment. Today, the tuition international students pay plays a significant role in US universities' operating budgets. It's no secret that a globally known brand will help to attract students. But for universities with regionally known brands, or brands that are lesser known in general, there are a variety of solutions to scale the impact of your marketing efforts to ensure that you are realizing a high return on investment for your marketing efforts.

Brand building starts on the ground, building relationships with various stakeholders within a country or region. Establishing partnerships with ministries of education, local education authorities, companies, non-profit organizations, schools, and principals will help create brand recognition within sought-after countries to recruit student from and to establish relationships with prospective students and parents. These relationships can be expensive, time-intensive, and complex to establish. Hence, managing the engagement with these organizations and individuals becomes critical for the success of academic programs that rely on international students. The same can be said for global executive education programs, such as [Columbia Business School](#), which uses Sales Cloud to track student information and help build relationships with executives and the companies that sponsor their continuing education.



Technology Makes a Difference to Support Recruiters

Often, higher education institutions have attempted to build their global marketing strategy using only email. Email campaigns, while an important part of a marketing strategy, will only go so far to recruit today's prospective students. Students communicate with family and friends across many different communication channels such as social networks, SMS/MMS/text, within the apps they download, and email. Recruiting students on just one of these channels is not likely to catch their attention. With so many communications options available today, universities can utilize technology that communicates with students across all of these channels. If the prospective student is unresponsive on one channel, then we communicate across another channel. For instance, [the University of Oxford Saïd Business School uses Marketing Cloud](#) to communicate with prospects globally based on the prospect's preferences.

Here is an example of how this works. A university is starting a new online business analytics program taught in Spanish, and the target markets are in Latin America. A communication plan can be built with lists of prospective students who may meet the academic requirements of this program. The communication to these prospective student could begin with a tailored email. If after a couple of days, a segment of the students who received the email do not respond, you could then place advertisements in these students' social networks, like Facebook and Twitter. If they are still unresponsive to these outreach efforts, text messages could then be sent to them, and if they are still unresponsive, someone on the recruiting staff could call them. If anywhere within this communication plan the student responds positively, then we have accomplished our goal. Automating the communication and outreach plan truly scales the impact of a university's international recruiting team to [get a targeted message out to prospective students on the channels they use](#).



Moving Beyond Spreadsheets

While marketing and outreach to prospective students is important, so is managing the engagement and interactions with the organizations and individuals recruiters encounter while at home and in-country. Often, recruiters do not have the modern tools they need to be productive. Some customers are managing these relationships with spreadsheets on a shared drive. After traveling long distances to meet with prospective students during the day, recruiters then have to go back to their hotel rooms to spend hours updating these spreadsheets so that their colleagues on campus know the status of the recruiting efforts during these trips. This process becomes problematic for various reasons, as it is difficult to update and maintain these spreadsheets, and it is difficult to ascertain the effectiveness of these recruiting efforts as metrics have to be calculated through manual processes.

There are alternatives to the scenario above. Customers describe moving off spreadsheets and onto a centralized platform as an ideal evolution from spreadsheets. But so much more can be done to help recruiters beyond establishing a centralized database. Constituent relationship management solutions like [Salesforce.org Education Cloud](https://www.salesforce.com/education) not only creates such a centralized platform, but they also provide recruiters with the ability to document their engagement with their prospective students, report on their activities, inform the recruiting staff of the status of an applicant and align resources at the right time to support students applying and accepting offers of admission. In addition to having the latest information on a recruit and all of the engagement activities that the recruiting staff has had, leadership within the university can have real-time reporting (such as [Einstein Analytics](#)) to understand the ROI of their international recruiting efforts. It is even possible, given a set of student characteristics, to predict their likelihood

to enroll if given an offer of admissions. (For more on predictions, see the [Einstein Prediction Builder](#) Trailhead Trail).

Mobility is also key for recruiters, especially when they are thousands of miles from home and need access to the latest information on a prospective student or partnership with a local organization. Having a mobile version of the constituent relationship management system can be extremely beneficial for recruiters where they have the latest information at their fingertips. When they meet with a prospective student, they can immediately update their team on campus with the details of their meeting. Providing your recruiters with mobile solutions like [Salesforce Inbox](#) to make them more productive while on recruiting trips and engaging with their constituents can provide your university with a competitive advantage in a highly competitive market.

There are a myriad of technology solutions enhance your international student recruiting efforts and to help your institution communicate with prospective students.



Conclusion

Gone are the days when recruiters could rely on on-campus visits, a few direct mail pieces and maybe an alumni interview in order to draw students. Today's higher ed institutions are facing increased competition from many sources, from changing demographics to a changing world. To lead – and not just keep up – higher ed institutions need to modernize their recruiting to be more personalized, and improve student success technology to support the needs of both domestic and international students.

Recruiters are the first introduction for prospective students into a university, and they gather important information that not only benefits the recruitment process, but also the student's journey at the university and post-graduation. Having a full view of a student's engagement with their institution from first contact to graduation and beyond not only benefits students, but everyone at your institution.

Questions? Comments? Feel free to [contact us](#) anytime, or read the [Recruiting and Admissions Technology Buyer's Guide](#).

