

Managing risk and assuring quality in international partnerships

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About David Cairns

- Historian, science policy researcher, cultural politics researcher (Ireland), academic lawyer, QAA Assistant Director and QAA Associate
- Independent higher education consultant since 2009 with clients in the Russell Group and independent providers
- Has led academic quality audits of university-university and university-private provider partnerships for more than 20 years in Europe and SE Asia
- A past institutional reviewer for SKVC and EKKA
- A past reviewer of quality agencies for ENQA and APQN
- More at <http://www.academicaudit.net/dr-david-cairns.html>

Outline

- What does internationalization mean to Lithuania in its present context?
- Why are you doing this?
 - Nationally
 - Institutionally?
- National and institutional quality strategies?
- Illustration: Lithuanian University of Health Sciences
- Due diligence
- Managing international partnerships
- Lessons from the experience of the UK, Australia and the USA
- Resources

What does internationalization mean for Lithuanian higher education in its present context?

- Does it mean bringing international students to Lithuania to study?
- Does it mean delivering Lithuanian higher education programmes outside Lithuania with partners in other countries?
- Does it mean being the Lithuanian partner of a higher education provider elsewhere?
- Does it mean internationalizing the Lithuanian curriculum
 - To attract members of the Lithuanian diaspora to return home?
 - To enable current Lithuanian students to get higher paid employment inside and outside Lithuania?

WHAT DOES INTERNATIONALIZATION MEAN FOR YOUR INSTITUTION?

Please share your thoughts [5 Minutes]

Why is Lithuania internationalizing HE?

What quality strategy follows?



- National
 - To improve global prospects for Lithuania?
 - To build the reputation of Lithuanian higher education and Lithuania?
 - To attract high achieving students to study and work in Lithuania?

National quality strategies to support internationalization and partnerships

- Government and collective* support for information gathering, sharing and transnational activities
- Government's support for marketing the quality of provision and the employability of graduates
 - Promotion of SKVC as a guarantor of students' education
- Government and collective* responses to supporting
 - Key language and cultural skills for incoming international students and exporters of HE, including English for academic purposes
 - Centres of excellence
- Scholarship and studentship schemes supported by third parties in the diaspora

*Through the Rectors'/Directors' Conferences & Study in Lithuania <http://www.studyinlithuania.lt/>

FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE WHAT IS THE GOVERNMENT'S STRATEGY FOR INTERNATIONALIZATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Please share your thoughts (5 minutes)

How and why are Lithuania's universities and colleges internationalizing?

What quality strategy follows (for each)?

- Institutional
 - To enhance your reputation?
 - To enhance your research?
 - To enhance your curriculum?
 - To fill a hole in your balance sheet



International partnerships

- Are costly to start up
- Take time to become self supporting
- Require consistent close management of
 - Inter-partner relations
 - Academic matters
 - Financial and regulatory matters
 - Student matters
- **Do not expect a quick financial return**
- When international partnerships go wrong
 - They do so very publicly and will affect your finances and reputation

Reality Check: where is your institution?

What strategy has it adopted?

Please share....

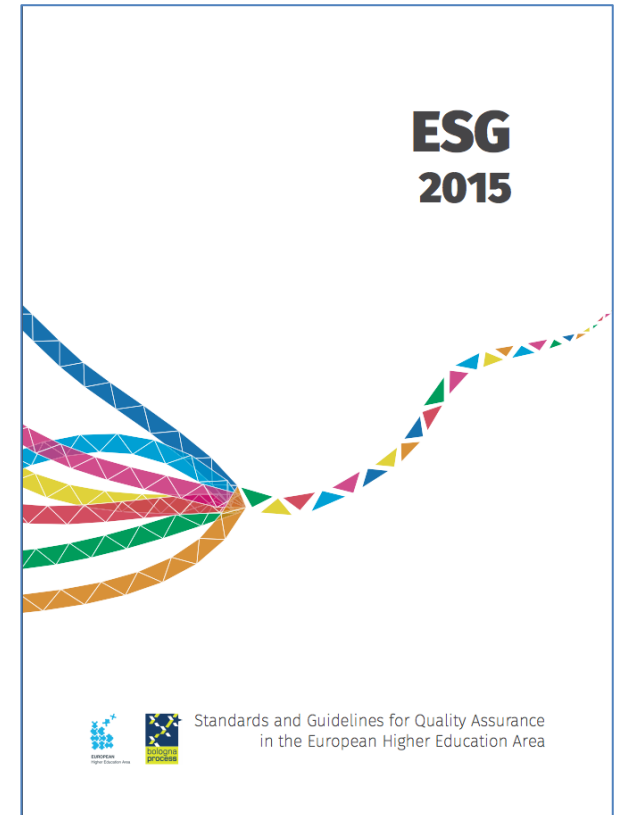
1. Don't partner;
don't recruit (EU
and/or
international
students)
2. Partner but don't
recruit
3. Recruit but don't
partner
4. Recruit & partner

		Don't Partner	Partner
Don't recruit		1	2
		3	4
Recruit			

Institutional quality strategies

to support internationalization and partnerships

- How does internationalization and collaboration feature in your institution's Quality Strategy (ESG 1.1)?
- Is yours a 'whole institution Quality Strategy'?
- How are you developing your staff to support your approach to internationalization and collaboration (ESG 1.5)



First steps in international partnerships:

Research! Research! Research!

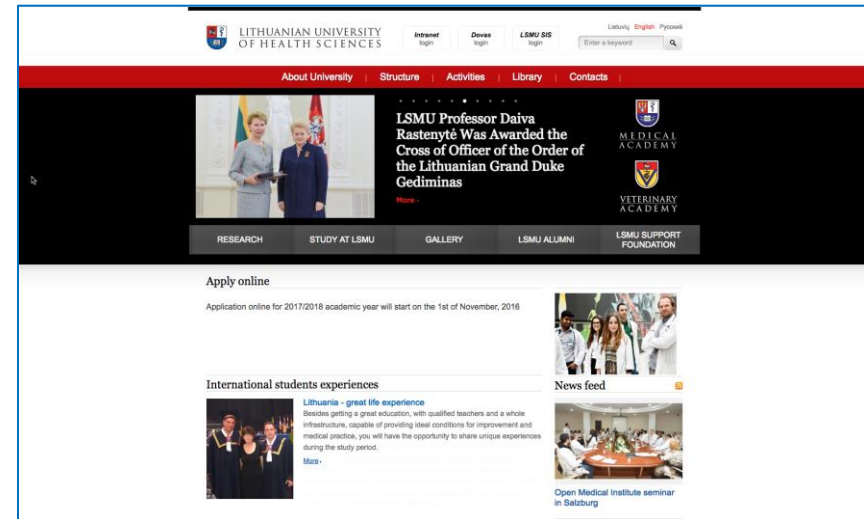
- Research

- Identify where there are researchers and learners who may want to work with your institution
 - Do you and your staff have the necessary language and cultural skills to work with them?
 - If you and your prospective partner are relying on a third language check
 - the expertise of your institution and theirs in learning, teaching, research, and assessment in that language
 - the level of oral and written communication skills that incoming students and researchers will have
 - you understand the regulatory framework that applies to your potential partner in their home country and will apply to your institution in Lithuania?
 - A useful resource
<http://www.academicaudit.net/uploads/2/6/1/5/26158328/outcomes-from-collaborative-provision-audit-approval-and-review-of-partnerships-and-programmes.pdf>

Illustration:

Lithuanian University of Health Sciences

- Research
 - Research contacts build confidence and help identify potential collaborators
 - Demand
 - Medicine is a high demand and tightly regulated subject area – successful graduates are well-paid
 - ‘Product’ extension
 - Veterinary Sciences; Pharmacy
 - Odontology
- But not
- ? Nursing
 - ? Paramedical training



Due diligence

- Is essential for **every** prospective partnership **and for agents**
 - Should be 360° - you should expect your prospective partner or agent to undertake DD on you, and if they don't...
 - Needs to cover finance (credit rating), the legal status, regulatory and academic standing of your prospective partner(s) or agent(s)
- Needs to be carried out by experts solely for you
- NOT by your prospective partner or agent



‘Trust but verify’

Old Russian proverb

Doveryai, no proveryai

Cited by Ronald Reagan 1987
And Glyn Shotwell 2016

Learning how to do due diligence: self-audit - are you ready for partnership?

Known knowns,
Known unknowns,
Unknown unknowns
The unknown known

- What are your institution's strengths?
 - financial resources?
 - human resources??
- What experience of partnership working do you have -- or have access to?
- What are the gaps in your knowledge?
- What do you know that you do not want to admit to yourselves or others?

Managing (international) partnerships with other higher education providers

- Is a demanding and detailed technical task
- Requires academics and managers with many skills, much knowledge and great integrity
- Can require those academics and managers to have
 - excellent language skills
 - authority to act to assert the interests of the institution over those of individuals and safeguard its reputation
 - access to the Rector/Director and the institution's other senior authorities in order to get agreements
 - spend extended periods travelling and away from their families
- Cherish those staff who are effective and successful!

You don't need...

to leave Lithuania to internationalize

- Internationalizing the curriculum and academe in Lithuania for Lithuanian students
 - will make it more attractive and relevant for your Lithuanian students
 - enhance their employability in Lithuania and internationally
 - attract new academic staff with new ideas from outside Lithuania and to return from the Lithuanian diaspora
- Internationalizing the student body by attracting international students
 - Some useful lessons from a successful period in UK internationalization
<http://www.academicaudit.net/uploads/2/6/1/5/26158328/internationalstudents.pdf>

Good practice

in supporting international students – UK experience



- Pre-sessional courses and special induction and orientation programmes for international students
- Sensitivity to differences in learning cultures when dealing with plagiarism and collaborations between students; the need to teach international students about plagiarism etc.
- Dedicated
 - Student welfare and pastoral support for international students, staffed by individuals with good languages skills
 - Language support for international students throughout their studies
- Harnessing the willingness of home students to befriend international students (the 'Aston Aunties')
<http://www.aston.ac.uk/birmingham-old/student-life/welcome-2015/help-and-advice/>
- Working closely with students' organisations nationally and in each institution to support international students and provide social and other activities

Lessons of experience

the UK; Australia and the USA

- National brands and their coherence matter
 - The English language, the reputation of UK higher education awards and of its quality agency QAA, have helped to make UK HE globally successful – until now
 - In the UK, Governments, the British Council, UK higher education and state and other agencies such as QAA have worked together since the 1990s years to promote confidence in UK higher education – until now
 - ‘Brexit’ and anti-immigrant rhetoric and violence
- Australia
 - The higher education ‘brand’ of Australia was soiled by racist outbreaks of violence in Sydney in 2009. Australia is still working to dispel negative effects
- USA
 - The nativist and racist overtones of the Trump movement are discouraging international students from studying in the US

A last word to you as leaders



- Keep things formal
- If it looks too good to be true it probably is

- Based on UK experience globetrotting Rectors & Directors are an attractive target for investigative journalists



AND NOW TO CLOSE

Useful reminders

Internationalization in higher education - requires

- Knowledge
 - Of your institution's strengths and what you want to achieve
 - Of the economic legal and cultural characteristics of likely target areas
- Language skills
 - Staff who know the leading international languages of higher education and commerce
 - English; Mandarin; Portuguese; Spanish; French; German; Russian
 - What limits does that set on where your institution can work outside Lithuania?
- What Government and EU support is available to you?
 - Political support – in the EU and further afield?
 - Financial support for pump-priming and exploration?
 - Cultural support from the Lithuanian diaspora?

Resources

- ENQA

- <http://www.enqa.eu/>



- UKCISA

- <http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/>



- University World News

- <http://www.universityworldnews.com/>



- QAA

- <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en>



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