



BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY

Document Administration

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Recruitment

Scope

This Strategy focusses upon the overarching strategic direction supporting the Five Year Strategy 2014 – 2019. There are several documents that underpin this work as well as the Business Plans and an operational component is outlined in the appendix.

The strategy focuses upon home and international student recruitment and retention until 2017. It is recognised that applicant behaviour is changing regularly and this strategy is required to keep abreast of developments and adapt accordingly. This will allow the University to strive towards the targets outlined in BGU Five Year Strategy, in particular, increasing student numbers to 4,500 by 2019.

For home recruitment, the strategy recognises the national demographic demise of 18 year olds until 2020 which will in turn affect recruitment in 18-25 year olds. There is recognition that the local market is saturated with higher education, however, this is our natural market which cannot be ignored. Our market challenges are reinforced by the HEFCE cold spot data in relation to widening participation initiatives and insight data into characteristics of our population.

Academic colleagues and student ambassadors will continue to play a key role in recruitment initiatives. Following the restructure into three schools, the Heads of School regularly meet with the Student Recruitment team. The School of Teacher Development has appointed a designated Admissions Tutor with a job description entirely focused on the remit of admissions, recruitment and marketing. There is a developing approach focussing on internal progression to postgraduate programmes from undergraduate study.

BGU will establish a bespoke recruitment campaign for International students. Using data from external partners such as The British Council, Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI), the International office will be responsible for identifying at least three target markets. These will be defined by countries and evaluated in terms of their significance as a possible source of students and any potential barriers for entry to the market.

This Strategy is related to:

Widening Participation Strategic Assessment
Access Agreement
International Strategy

This Strategy aims to:

1. Increase good quality application rates for both home and international students;
2. Retain above sector conversion rates from offer through to enrolment;
3. Continue to raise aspirations and widening participation to higher education;
4. Continue to integrate and improve the Student Ambassador influence to the University's recruitment activity.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This Recruitment element of this strategy will be monitored under the new committee structure, primarily in the Heads of Admissions, Marketing and Schools meeting.

Retention

Scope

This strategy encompasses retention measures for all students of the University. It acknowledges a particular focus on outcomes for UK domiciled first degree entrants, as the successful retention and progression of these students is subject to external scrutiny via HEFCE performance indicators (in terms of transfers (both internal and external) and those students remaining in HE). A further area for consideration is BGU's approach to providing appropriate support around intercalation procedures to ensure the effective facilitation of students' return to study (and systematic use of such procedures in order to safeguard retention of students who may otherwise be lost to the institution).

Overall, the retention agenda is taken in the context of BGU as an institution committed to widening participation, and responding to protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act.

The strategy aims to:

1. Maintain or improve retention of students at rates equivalent to or better than sector benchmarks
2. Maintain a diverse student population at all levels of progression within the University, including final award classifications
3. Ensure effective monitoring and reporting of outcomes for students with protected characteristics, or other priorities strategic to the widening participation agenda, where such measures are practicable

Recruitment - Strategy in Practice

The Strategic aims will be realised through the following objectives:

1. Increase good quality application rates;
 - To enhance the enquirer relationship from the first point of contact giving useful and timely information, aiding conversion from enquirer to application.
 - Develop innovative materials and activities to expand upon the relationship of enquirers to encourage them to make an application to BGU.
 - Integrate and/or further develop a CRM system to manage the enquirers' communications centrally within the University to ensure the interventions are innovative, creative and timely.
 - Enhance targeting initiatives year on year to increase good quality applications.
 - Enhance national recruitment, maximising opportunities around the UCAS Fair exhibition areas visiting schools and FECs whilst in the region.
 - Review annual trend analysis of feeder schools to inform future outreach activities and targeting.
 - Review and analyse school data annually (eg, tariff point score, curriculum areas, etc) to inform targeting.
 - Review and support national initiatives to under-represented groups by focusing our marketing and targeting to specific areas, eg males into teaching.
 - Implement regular Customer Service and Sales Training for Student Recruitment and Admissions Team.
 - Implement training on Open Days for Competition Markets Authority for Academic Staff and Ambassadors
 - Integrate activities for parents to inform and promote BGU to subsequently influence conversion.
 - Continue to develop key relationships in schools and colleges.
 - Undertake Open Day Communication and Enhancement initiatives involving competitor research and evaluations.
 - Gather market research to ascertain a competitive advantage in promoting BGU.
 - Increase collaboration with Academic staff in the three schools for outreach activities and recruitment initiatives.
2. Retain strong conversion rates from offer through to enrolment;
 - Introduce QTS Skills Test Workshops with more numeracy and literacy practice tests
 - Continue to enhance our Applicant Communication Strategy ensuring the communication is meaningful, innovative and adheres to Consumer Protection legislation.
3. Continue to raise aspirations and widening participation to higher education
 - Develop support and aspiration activities to those potential applicants aged over 25
 - Continue to provide activities to individuals to raise aspirations by bringing them on campus
 - Carry out effective analysis of widening participation activities to inform the future Access Agreements and future widening participation initiatives.
4. Continue to integrate and enhance the Student Ambassador influence to the University's recruitment activity.

APPENDIX A (cont'd)

- Enhance the integration of Student Ambassador interventions with widening participation activities.
- Enhance the Applicant Communication Strategy by integrating current students' points of view to provide emotional marketing.
- Integrate the student perspective dimension to the Enquirer communications strand of activity.
- Assist with regular research and evaluation of competition in the higher education market place to ensure BGU aim above sector norms.

Retention - Strategy in Practice

The Strategic aims will be realised through the following objectives:

1. Maintain or improve retention of students at rates equivalent to or better than sector benchmarks:
 - Monitor non-continuation rates as measured by HEFCE performance indicators
 - Provide systematic and effective signposting/promotion of support services to students where risk of non-continuation arises
 - Ensure procedures for the transfer of students are reviewed annually in order to ensure they are in keeping with best practice within the sector

2. Maintain a diverse student population at all levels of progression within the University, including final award classifications
 - To maintain/improve retention of disabled students
 - To maintain/improve retention of students from Black and Minority Ethnic groups
 - Retention of students from Black and Minority Ethnic groups to exceed local demographic at each level of study
 - Ensure effective oversight and administration of procedures relating to intercalation of study
 - Maintenance and development (where required) of appropriate reasonable adjustments for students with protected characteristics
 - Engage with regional/national networks to inform best practice and policy development for further improvement of retention rates

3. Ensure effective monitoring and reporting of outcomes for students with protected characteristics, or other priorities strategic to the widening participation agenda, where such measures are practicable
 - Comparable or better performance outcomes when compared to the whole student population for:
 - Students from NS-SEC classes 4-7
 - Disabled students
 - Black and Minority Ethnic groups
 - Students from care
 - Students in receipt of additional financial support

 - Comparable or better performance outcomes when compared to sector benchmarks for all students with protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation) where such measures are available (using available sector data e.g. Equality Challenge Unit statistical report).