



The strategy of internationalization in universities

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A quantitative evaluation of the intent and implementation in UK universities

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this research is to examine the extent to which UK universities' actual international achievements match their strategic intent on internationalization.

Design/methodology/approach – Both factor analysis and cluster analysis were applied on data collected from HESA (2001), and on the data collected from the mission statements of 117 universities by the use of the content analysis technique.

Findings – The study shows that 74 per cent of UK universities' mission statements include international dimensions. In addition, 48 per cent of these universities are internationally active. Four groups of (international action – international mission) matrixes have been reached. These groups are "international winners group, international actors group, international speakers group, and international losers group".

Research limitations/implications – This analysis is limited to only four variables taken in a single year 2001. Therefore, future research in this area is encouraged to employ more variables related to internationalization and to apply the analysis on longitudinal bases in order to get results that cover larger range of international aspects and allow observing the matrix development overtime.

Practical implications – The study finishes with a location model which can be used as an important tool by university managers in conducting their international business. This model can also be employed in various sectors other than the higher education sector.

Originality/value – The paper is the first classification carried out amongst UK universities in terms of internationalization. It is also the first of its kind in the higher education management literature in terms of both; the comprehensiveness in dealing with all the three phases of the strategy of internationalization and the nature of data it uses for this purpose.

Keywords United Kingdom, Universities, Mission statements, Globalization

Paper type Research paper



The three phases of internationalization process (critical questions from UK higher education sector)

Internationalization process implies three major phases (see Ayoubi, 2006, p. 261). The first phase is to set up the design of internationalization (this would be mainly represented by the strategic intent, mission statement, strategic vision, corporate strategy and strategic plan). The second phase is to choose the best

ways to activate the design with real actions (this is represented by the organizational steps taken by management to implement the design). The third phase is to evaluate this process by comparing the design with the implementation (this could be done by comparing real internationalization achievements with the intended initial strategy design).

In fact, previous studies of the internationalization process in universities fell into three main categories that match with the previous three phases suggested by Ayoubi (2006). The first category represents studies that search onto what the strategy of internationalization should be (the design of the internationalization process). The second category represents studies which deal with the organizational steps of internationalization (the implementation of the internationalization process). The third category represents studies which investigate the obstacles, difficulties and advantages of internationalization (the evaluation of internationalization process).

In the first category, Ellingboe (1998), for example, defines some components which are important to understand the process applied in internationalizing the university (See Ellingboe in Bartell, 2003, p. 46). Kouijzer (1994) suggests some factors that should be included to develop an international strategy; such factors include international teaching programs, partnerships, students and staff exchanges, and research activities. In addition to these factors, Taylor (2004) suggests the development of new disciplines; recognition of the importance of customer care and marketing skills; the importance of centralized management and cost benefit analysis and risk management; and the application of modern technology. In the same context, the Summary Report of Business of UK Borderless Education (2000, p. 17) (CVCP and HEFCE, 2000) defines other important elements in borderless higher education such as questions of identity and regulation; specialization; and the increased use of branding in order to exploit reputational assets (see The Summary Report of Business of Borderless Education, 2000, p. 17 (CVCP and HEFCE, 2000)). Taylor *et al.* (1997) implied other matters of pedagogy and curriculum, certification, decision-making and governance, the student body itself and policy making arenas. In terms of international strategy making, Karran (1998) suggests four strategies and international options from which universities can select, these are to consolidate, collaborate, compete, or quit (See Karran, 1998, pp. 25-27). Belcher (1995) suggests some criteria for universities if they want to be more international (see Belcher, 1995, pp. 9-10), and Bartell (2003) refers to a variety of indicators in attempting to operationalize and measure the extent or level of the process of internationalization of universities (see Bartell, 2003, p. 57). This category of studies also examined the motivations, objectives and incentives for international activities in universities. For example, some studies view the main reason of internationalization as emerging at the faculty level (Brown, 1997; Chaston, 1994; Kouijzer, 1994; Dimmock and Walker, 2000; Brock, 1997; Peeke, 1992). Other studies view financial incentives as the main stimulus for internationalization (Gornitzka and Maassen, 2000; Rudzki, 1998; Hodson and Thomas, 2001; Poole, 2001), few studies refer to the international brand name and statutes as the main incentives for internationalization (Chan, 2004; Ayoubi, 2006). Different studies refer to the main objectives of internationalization, and what this strategy really includes. In this context, internationalization in universities may include, for example, developing joint educational projects, postgraduate levels, student exchange and staff exchange,

curriculum matters and administrative cooperation (Harper, 1995; Smith, 1985; Canto and Hannah, 2001; King, 1994; Poole, 2001; Saffu and Mamman, 2000; Ayoubi and El-Habiabeh, 2006; Ayoubi, 2006).

In the second category, Poole (2001) found that universities manage and organize their international entrepreneurial activities in ways reflective of their individual contexts, circumstances and histories. In this category, most studies focused on two main scopes of internationalization, the process of selecting international partners, customers and markets, and the process of arranging the internationalization activities. The process of selecting international markets, customers and partners is based on different factors. However, most previous studies refer to the regional base in selecting international customers, partners and markets (CVCP, 1998; Kawaguchi and Lander, 1997; Chan, 2004; Chen and Barnett, 2000; Trim, 2003). Arranging international activities refers to the mechanisms carried out during and after the process of selecting the market, customer and partner. In this respect, previous studies refer to two main themes, the level of quality in managing the internationalization process (Kehm, 1999; Palmer, 1992), and in arranging the process by university organizers collectively and cooperatively (Brockington, 2002; Knight, 1997; Van der Wende, 1999).

The last category represents studies which focused on the main problems and advantages of internationalization, which determine the extent to which the design and the implementation of the process are properly done. In this category, obstacles to internationalization may include financial problems (King, 1994; Harper, 1995; Gahungu, 2001) cultural difficulties (Brook, 2000; Canto and Hannah, 2001; Saffu and Mamman, 1999; Dunn and Wallace, 2004; Olson and Kroeger, 2001) development problems (Audenhove, 1998) individual commitments (Brown, 1998). In student terms, obstacles are cultural identity, cultural shock and language barriers (Pritchard and Skinner, 2002; Thorstensson, 2001; Yen and Stevens, 2004; Bakalis and Joiner, 2004). In this category of studies, internationalization is a good strategy for increasing market profile, international image, diversification, and opportunities for new income (Mazzarol, 1998; Saffu and Mamman, 2000; Trim, 2001). In student terms, international linkages give overseas students an opportunity to gain professional knowledge and to experience other cultures and educational systems (Brown, 1997; Horie, 2002; Kawaguchi and Lander, 1997; Bakalis and Joiner, 2004; Poole, 2004). In terms of the benefits and gains of internationalization to the university staff, Warakaulle (2004) found that linkages could bring more opportunities for interdisciplinary research and enhancement of the staff experience (Gahungu, 2001).

In the UK higher education sector, the Education Reform Act, enacted by Margaret Thatcher's so called "New Right" Government in 1988, and the subsequent Further and Higher Education Act 1992, were legislations that brought UK higher education to the market (Johnson, 2001). On 18 June 1999, at the London School of Economics, the Prime Minister Tony Blair leader of the so called "New Labour" announced the start of a worldwide campaign to increase the number of overseas students in the UK. The targets were a significant increase in the UK's share of the fee-paying market from outside the European Union (Department for Education and Skills, 1999). On 22 January 2003, Charles Clarke (2003); the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, announced the publication of the White Paper "The Future of Higher Education" which set out the Government's plans for radical reform and investment in universities and HE colleges. The White Paper encouraged universities to achieve more freedom in

order to access more sources of funding. In addition to the government policy, internationalization in UK higher education sector can be seen as a result of other factors. Rudzki (2000) referred to the need to undertake collaborative research, and the introduction of the European Commission's ERASMUS mobility program. A Universities UK (2002) (formerly CVCP) survey shows that 73 per cent of UK universities reported that their institutional missions included an international strategy. The survey also found that for these strategies, the main priority over a five-year period was the recruitment of international students (CVCP, 1998). Accordingly, in 1999/2000, the Higher Education Statistics Agency in the UK (HESA, 1999/2000) reported that 23.4 per cent of the total income of UK universities came from overseas (non-EC) full time higher education tuition fees. This figure became 24.48 per cent in 2000/2001.

If most UK universities do report about international strategy in their institutional missions (as indicated previously), the question to be posed in this regard is concerning the strategy evaluation as suggested by Ayoubi (2006) and whether such strategic intents reflect international activities. In other words, to which extent do these universities' international strategic intent declarations (strategy design in Ayoubi, 2006) match with their real international achievements (strategy implementation in Ayoubi, 2006). The purpose of this paper is to investigate the three phases of international strategy (design, implementation and evaluation) of UK universities and the relation between these phases by considering the following related questions:

- What are the main available variables which could proxy the international achievements of UK universities?
- What are the rankings of UK universities according to the previous variables that measure the international achievements?
- What are the rankings of UK universities in terms of international strategic intent?
- How could UK universities be classified in terms of both their declared strategic intent on internationalization and their perceived results from doing so?
- To which extent do the declared strategic intent matches with the actual internationalization in these universities?

This paper is the first of its kind in the higher education management literature in terms of both; the comprehensiveness in dealing with all the three phases of the strategy of internationalization and the nature of data it uses for this purpose. In addition, it provides and analyses, for the first time, a classification of UK universities based on their strategies of internationalization. The paper also presents some implications for university management with regard to the design of strategic intent and mission of internationalization as well as recommendations for higher education agencies that provide statistics of the higher education sector in the UK.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. The next section explains the methods and variables employed by the study for the purpose of investigating the research questions. This is followed by a presentation of the main findings of the analysis. Finally, the paper provides a discussion of the findings and implications to managers and researchers in the area of higher education and internationalization.

Methods, definition of variables and measurements

With response to question (1) above, at the time of conducting this research, the authors found only three variables available from HESA which could proxy the real international achievements of a university and which are easily applicable and standardized measurements for the actual internationalization. These variables are defined as follows:

- (1) *Percentage of overseas student to the total number of students in each university.* According to HESA Student Definitions (HESA, 2000/2001) – Ref: 20547, overseas students include other EU students and other overseas students. Other EU students are those whose normal residence is in countries which were European Union (EU) members as at 1 December of the reporting period. Other overseas students are those whose normal residence prior to commencing their program of study was outside the EU. To ensure coherence and compatibility with the other measurements of internationalization used in this study, the authors excluded the domiciled in the European Union and “Other Europe” from this variable, as explained in column 3 in Table I.
- (2) *Percentage of overseas income to the total income of a university.* According to HESA “Resources of Higher Education Institutions 2000/2001, Definitions – ref: 20547, Finance Data”, Overseas (non-EC) Income comes from three sources: overseas domicile fees, other overseas research sources, and other overseas non-research sources. Overseas (non-EC) domicile fees include fees for all degree, diploma and similar award-bearing courses for non-home and non-EC domiciled students. Other Overseas research sources include all research grants and contracts income from overseas bodies operating outside the EU. Similarly, other overseas non-research sources include all non-research income from bodies operating outside the EU. The author considered only the income that came from overseas domicile fees (see column 4 in Table I).
- (3) *Percentage of market share of overseas first year students to the total overseas market share.* According to HESA “Higher Education Management Statistics, Institutional Level 2000/2001, Student Population Profiles, Statistics B”, Market Share of Overseas First Year Students is the number of overseas first year students by level of study, divided by the total number of overseas first year students by level of study in UK higher education institutions (see column 5 in Table I).

In order to rank UK universities based on the previous variables that measure the international achievements, the authors used the factor analysis technique to obtain one factor or variable – called “international student factor” – that replaces the three variables. This is based on a priori criterion to answer question 2 of the study, and to use the results of this step of analysis in subsequent analysis. The method used to extract the factor is the Principal Components method (see Bryman and Cramer, 1999, p. 274; Hair *et al.*, 1998, p. 100). As this analysis aimed only at one factor, no rotation techniques were needed. The international student factor is estimated through the above three variables with factor scores (new values). These scores were calculated using the Regression method to count factor scores. The numerical values of the new extracted variable are presented in column 6 in Table I. The previous steps of this analysis were conducted by using the SPSS statistical package.

Table I.
The results of factor and cluster analysis

Institution ^a	% of overseas (non-European) students ^b	% of overseas income to the total income ^c	% of market share of overseas first year students ^d	International student factor	Estimation of university mission statement	Cluster membership	Group membership ^e
1 The University of Aberdeen	7.1	4.81	0.4	-0.37383	0	1	L
2 University of Abertay Dundee	3.9	5.56	0.2	-0.61613	0	1	L
3 University of Wales, Aberystwyth	2.8	2.15	0.1	-1.08963	1	2	S
4 Anglia Polytechnic University	5.1	2.97	0.9	-0.42002	1	2	S
5 Aston University	7.3	5.69	0.4	-0.27118	1	2	S
6 University of Wales, Bangor	2.6	1.94	0.2	-1.06969	1	2	S
7 The University of Bath	12.7	7.71	0.8	0.50604	1	3	W
8 The Queen's University of Belfast	3.1	2.40	0.6	-0.7724	1	2	S
9 Birkbeck College	1.2	2.48	0.2	-1.10651	1	2	S
10 The University of Birmingham	10.5	5.40	2.0	0.77989	1	3	W
11 Bolton Institute of Higher Education	3.2	4.86	0.2	-0.73324	0	1	L
12 Bournemouth University	3.9	6.38	0.6	-0.31498	2	2	S
13 The University of Bradford	9.8	7.39	0.8	0.28338	1	3	W
14 The University of Brighton	3.9	4.94	0.7	-0.40708	0	1	L
15 The University of Bristol	7.3	5.27	1.1	0.06707	2	2	W
16 Brunel University	5.6	5.44	0.5	-0.35362	2	2	S
17 The University of Cambridge	12.4	5.11	2.0	0.87493	1	3	W

(continued)

Institution ^a	% of overseas (non-European) students ^b	% of overseas income to the total income ^c	% of overseas year students ^d	International student factor	Estimation of university mission statement	Cluster membership	Group membership ^e
18 Cardiff University	8.1	7.59	1.5	0.57328	1	3	W
19 University of Wales Institute, Cardiff	3.1	3.35	0.2	-0.89344	0	1	L
20 The University of Central England in Birmingham	3.5	4.82	0.7	-0.44551	1	2	S
21 The University of Central Lancashire	7.2	3.48	1.8	0.25936	1	3	W
22 City University	7.8	12.17	1.1	0.80194	1	3	W
23 Coventry University	6.2	7.22	1.1	0.19338	1	3	W
24 Cranfield University	10.5	3.85	0.4	-0.24864	1	2	S
25 De Montfort University	4.2	3.64	0.8	-0.46527	0	1	L
26 University of Derby	1.8	5.22	0.3	-0.73395	1	2	S
27 The University of Dundee	8.7	3.56	0.8	-0.17843	1	2	S
28 University of Durham	6.0	5.22	0.6	-0.29536	1	2	S
29 The University of East Anglia	5.6	6.59	0.6	-0.18218	1	2	S
30 The University of East London	8.8	6.51	0.8	0.12829	0	4	A
31 The University of Edinburgh	6.6	5.05	1.3	0.10765	1	3	W
32 The University of Essex	14.4	12.43	1.2	1.31545	1	3	W
33 The University of Exeter	8.8	6.25	0.8	0.10184	1	3	W
34 University of Glamorgan	2.6	3.10	0.5	-0.78837	1	2	S
35 Glasgow Caledonian University	2.1	1.23	0.2	-1.1747	1	2	S
36 The University of Glasgow	3.7	3.51	0.7	-0.5657	1	2	S

(continued)

Table I.

Table I.

Institution ^a	% of overseas (non-European) students ^b	% of overseas income to the total income ^c	% of market share of overseas first year students ^d	International student factor	Estimation of university mission statement	Cluster membership	Group membership ^e
37 University of Gloucestershire	1.5	2.55	0.2	-1.07972	1	2	S
38 Goldsmiths College	7.6	12.83	0.5	0.52943	0	4	A
39 The University of Greenwich	5.4	6.75	0.9	-0.01573	2	2	S
40 Heriot-Watt University	8.7	8.44	0.6	0.20927	1	3	W
41 University of Hertfordshire	6.4	8.18	1.2	0.3586	1	3	W
42 The University of Huddersfield	2.2	2.07	0.3	-1.02825	0	1	L
43 The University of Hull	7.9	7.09	1.4	0.45487	2	3	W
44 Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine	19.4	5.78	1.5	1.12983	2	3	W
45 Institute of Education	9.3	4.37	0.4	-0.27439	1	2	S
46 The University of Keele	6.1	3.33	0.5	-0.53555	0	1	L
47 The University of Kent at Canterbury	7.5	9.78	0.7	0.32138	2	3	W
48 King's College London	8.8	4.65	1.4	0.26559	1	3	W
49 Kingston University	3.4	5.81	0.6	-0.40576	0	1	L
50 The University of Wales, Lampeter	5.5	3.65	0.1	-0.76002	2	2	S
51 The University of Lancaster	7.8	6.85	1.0	0.20619	1	3	W
52 Leeds Metropolitan University	5.2	3.55	1.5	-0.02789	0	4	A
53 The University of Leeds	10.2	6.56	1.9	0.82384	1	3	W

(continued)

Institution ^a	% of overseas (non-European) students ^b	% of overseas income to the total income ^c	% of market share of overseas first year students ^d	International student factor	Estimation of university mission statement	Cluster membership	Group membership ^e
54 The University of Leicester	10.3	8.82	0.9	0.51609	0	4	A
55 The University of Lincoln	9.8	6.26	0.4	-0.0493	2	2	S
56 Liverpool John Moores University	3.2	3.67	0.6	-0.63662	0	1	L
57 The University of Liverpool	8.5	4.80	1.3	0.20676	1	3	W
58 London Business School	37.8	16.02	0.6	2.88806	0	3	W
59 London Guildhall University	4.5	6.18	0.7	-0.24158	1	2	S
60 London School of Economics and Political Science	34.3	29.14	2.4	4.9733	1	5	W
61 London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine	38.7	6.05	0.3	1.7693	1	3	W
62 Loughborough University	7.2	4.41	0.7	-0.2447	0	4	A
63 University of Luton	14.5	8.59	1.5	1.09455	0	4	A
64 University of Manchester	9.2	6.04	2.0	0.7598	2	3	W
65 The University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology	17.8	11.19	1.1	1.35772	0	4	A
66 The Manchester Metropolitan University	2.2	2.65	0.6	-0.80596	0	1	L
67 University of Wales College of Medicine	5.4	2.87	0.1	-0.84594	0	1	L
68 Middlesex University	11.1	10.24	2.7	1.69269	1	3	W
69 Napier University	2.2	3.02	0.3	-0.93159	1	2	S

(continued)

Table I.

Table I.

	Institution ^a	% of overseas (non-European) students ^b	% of overseas income to the total income ^c	% of market share of overseas first year students ^d	International student factor	Estimation of university mission statement	Cluster membership	Group membership ^e
70	The University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne	7.9	4.59	1.1	0.03721	1	3	W
71	University of Wales College, Newport	1.4	1.73	0.1	-1.22414	0	1	L
72	The North-East Wales Institute of Higher Education	0.6	0.40	0.0	-1.46634	1	2	S
73	The University of Northumbria at Newcastle	4.5	7.03	1.2	0.11704	1	3	W
74	The Nottingham Trent University	2.9	1.32	0.6	-0.8954	1	2	S
75	The University of Nottingham	11.5	8.98	2.3	1.373	1	3	W
76	Oxford Brookes University	9.1	10.83	1.4	0.91408	2	3	W
77	The University of Oxford	11.9	3.80	1.7	0.54558	1	3	W
78	The University of Paisley	1.5	0.96	0.2	-1.24151	0	1	L
79	The University of Plymouth	2.3	4.08	0.6	-0.6539	1	2	S
80	The University of Portsmouth	6.0	8.24	0.9	0.17521	0	4	A
81	Queen Margaret University College, Edinburgh	9.2	8.45	0.5	0.18863	0	4	A
82	Queen Mary and Westfield College	7.9	5.16	0.6	-0.17692	0	4	A
83	The University of Reading	9.0	7.08	1.3	0.47153	1	3	W

(continued)

Institution ^a	% of overseas (non-European) students ^b	% of overseas income to the total income ^c	% of market share of overseas first year students ^d	International student factor	Estimation of university mission statement	Cluster membership	Group membership ^e
84 The Robert Gordon University	6.3	3.41	0.6	-0.45987	0	1	L
85 University of Surrey, Roehampton	4.9	5.45	0.4	-0.45292	1	2	S
86 Royal Academy of Music	23.7	16.70	0.1	1.76086	1	3	W
87 Royal College of Art	8.0	7.03	0.1	-0.25222	1	2	S
88 Royal College of Music	14.9	12.49	0.1	0.75564	1	3	W
89 Royal Holloway and Bedford New College	10.9	8.44	0.5	0.29905	1	3	W
90 The Royal Veterinary College	15.5	6.00	0.1	0.1346	0	4	A
91 The University of St Andrews	13.1	7.77	0.8	0.53836	0	4	A
92 St George's Hospital Medical School	3.9	1.75	0.1	-1.05823	1	2	S
93 The University of Salford	7.7	5.79	1.4	0.30948	1	3	W
94 The School of Oriental and African Studies	30.4	31.15	1.1	4.21463	1	5	W
95 Sheffield Hallam University	4.4	4.34	1.2	-0.16323	0	4	A
96 The University of Sheffield	8.8	6.74	1.5	0.53268	1	3	W
97 South Bank University	4.4	6.84	0.5	-0.28983	1	2	S
98 The University of Southampton	4.9	4.04	0.8	-0.37868	1	2	S
99 Staffordshire University	2.6	2.54	0.5	-0.84536	2	2	S
100 The University of Stirling	3.1	3.80	0.3	-0.79322	1	2	S

(continued)

Table I.

Table I.

Institution ^a	% of overseas (non-European) students ^b	% of overseas income to the total income ^c	% of market share of overseas first year students ^d	International student factor	Estimation of university mission statement	Cluster membership	Group membership ^e
101 The University of Strathclyde	5.8	6.99	0.7	-0.07394	1	2	S
102 The University of Sunderland	3.5	5.26	0.5	-0.50959	1	2	S
103 The University of Surrey	10.4	8.78	1.2	0.68185	1	3	W
104 The University of Sussex	6.7	7.98	0.7	0.08579	1	3	W
105 Swansea Institute of Higher Education	0.4	0.76	0.0	-1.44282	1	2	S
106 University of Wales, Swansea	4.3	3.11	0.3	-0.78477	1	2	S
107 The University of Teesside	1.6	2.02	0.2	-1.1271	0	1	L
108 Thames Valley University	1.9	2.86	0.4	-0.91311	2	2	S
109 Trinity College, Carmarthen	0.1	1.03	0.0	-1.43501	0	1	L
110 University of Ulster	2.0	1.34	0.5	-1.00679	2	2	S
111 University College London	12.3	5.66	1.7	0.76106	1	3	W
112 The University of Warwick	11.5	6.78	2.4	1.20357	2	3	W
113 Welsh College of Music and Drama	3.1	2.35	0.0	-1.10404	1	2	S
114 University of the West of England, Bristol	2.3	2.39	0.5	-0.88028	0	1	L

(continued)

Institution ^a	% of overseas (non-European) students ^b	% of overseas income to the total income ^c	% of market share of overseas first year students ^d	International student factor	Estimation of university mission statement	Cluster membership	Group membership ^e
115 The University of Westminster	8.8	12.11	2.2	1.46007	1	3	W
116 The University of Wolverhampton	5.0	2.19	0.9	-0.50594	1	2	S
117 The University of York	6.4	4.34	0.6	-0.35868	1	2	S

Notes: ^a Universities UK Autumn 2002; ^b HESA Student Record July 2001; ^c The percentage has been counted by the authors for each University; ^d HESA Institutional level 2000/2001 Student Population profiles: Statistics B; Column 6; ^e International winners group (W), International actors group (A), International speakers group (S), International losers group (L)

Table I.

Regarding the measurement of declared strategic intent, this could be shaped by a combination of three dimensions ‘missions, visions and strategies’. In terms of university management, the first can be represented by the mission statement of the university which sets out the organization’s ground rules to its approach in doing business. The second can be represented by the university Vice-Chancellor or university President’s statement which sets out the hopes and possibilities for a better future for the university as an organization. The third could be proxy by the content of the international strategy itself if it existed. In this section, the author takes into consideration the mission statement variable of the listed UK universities as they appeared for each university in 2001 as a proxy for the strategic intent on internationalization. The mission statements were mainly collected from the web site of Higher Education Research Opportunities in the United Kingdom “HERO”, also from some universities’ annual reports and web sites. The total list of UK Universities, taken from Universities UK membership statistics, stands at 121 after dropping off four institutions (two are federal institutions, one is private, and the last one is the Open University). Therefore, the final list of UK universities stands at 117 institutions. The Vice-Chancellor’s statements have not been taken into consideration as some of them are not available, some are old, and some are very general. So using content analysis, the researcher evaluates only the universities’ mission statements. The international strategy of each university was not taken into consideration as most universities, for commercial sensitivity reasons, do not declare their detailed international strategy.

Content analysis is applied to the analysis of data in documents and refers to the systematic description of the contents of documents; it involves counting concepts, words or occurrence in documents and reporting them in tabular form to be available for statistical analysis (Bryman and Bell, 2003; Smith, 2003; Anderson, 1998). In a study of strategic planning in the new UK universities, Conway *et al.* (1994) used content analysis of 83 mission statements of institutions in this sector of higher education.

In terms of strategic intent on internationalization, the most representative words and concepts in the mission statement could be “international, global, partnerships, overseas, and other related concepts”. However, in order to conduct the strategy analysis, the researcher pre-specifies a numerical standard for counting the previous concepts and words for the university mission statement. Table II explains the numerical estimation scores the researcher adopts in analyzing the mission statements.

For more details about estimation of mission statement in terms of internationalization of the 117 UK universities see column 7 in Table I.

Score	Score interpretation
0	No words or concepts mentioned about international, global, . . .
1	The following words “international, global, overseas, worldwide . . .” or words which have the same meaning are mentioned
2	Either one of the following concepts mentioned: international partnership agreement with overseas universities, overseas student recruitment, overseas staff exchange, overseas academic cooperation, joint degrees
4	Where two or more of the previous two concepts are mentioned

Table II.
Numerical estimation
scores for mission
statements

One of the main limitations of the data collected in this study is that it was taken only for a single year which is 2001. Where it could be argued that internationalization strategies may take several years to develop and implement and may have a gradual impact over time on student recruitment. To overcome this limitation, the author conducted a pilot comparison of mission statements for 10 randomly selected universities. The mission statements of these universities in 1993 (eight years before the current mission statement in 2001) were compared with the mission statements as they appeared in 2001. The authors found no significant content difference in terms of internationalization, thus year 2001 was considered as a proxy for the strategic intent on internationalization, and all mission statements of UK universities were available for that year. In addition, as the main purpose of this study is to evaluate internationalization in UK universities by comparing the design of internationalization (mission statements), with the implementation of such internationalization (the first three variables taken from HESA), the authors did not propose which variable should come first (in this respect no proposition is made by the author if strategic intent is the reason for achievements on internationalization). This is because the achievements on internationalization may come before the strategic intent, which in turn may change to match the real achievements.

International speakers or international actors

In response to question 4 earlier, on how UK universities could be categorized in terms of both their declared strategic intent on internationalization and their perceived results from going international, the authors applied cluster analysis for the 117 universities. Cluster analysis has been operated according to two variables; the first one is a combination of the three variables collected from HESA, it represents the international student factor dimension. The second variable represents the international strategy intent. This variable is obtained from UK universities' "mission statements" using the content analysis technique (more details regarding the two variables used in the cluster analysis are provided in the previous section). The cluster analysis mainly aims to estimate what has been really achieved for each university internationally, and what has been said about international achievements for each university. On the first hand, as explained earlier, what has been really achieved in the previous period for each university internationally can be represented by real numbers taken from HESA. These numbers, as indicated before, are: percentage of overseas student to the total number, percentage of overseas income to the total income, market share of overseas first year students. On the other hand, what has been said about international achievements for each university is represented by what the university corporate strategy and mission statements declare.

In forming homogeneous groups, three objectives can be achieved, taxonomy description, data simplification, and relationship identification (Hair *et al.*, 1998, p. 481). The primary goal of cluster analysis in this research is to partition the set of 117 universities into four predetermined targeted groups (four solutions), based on the similarity of the universities for the two factors mentioned before – "the international student factor, and the international strategy intent factor". The authors applied hierarchical cluster procedure using the agglomerative method of clustering (see Saunders in Hooley and Hussey, 1995, p. 19). A predetermined solution of a range of four and five clusters was stated by the authors. The agglomerative method of

clustering used in this research is the single linkage procedure based on minimum distance. According to Hair *et al.* (1998, pp. 494), this method of clustering finds the two objects separated by the shortest distance and places them in the first cluster. Then the next-shortest distance is found, and either a third object joins the first two to form a cluster, or a new two-member cluster is formed. The process continues until all objects are in one cluster. The measurement used in this study to estimate the distance is Squared Euclidian Distance Method (see Hair *et al.*, 1998, p. 484). The data for the two above variables had not been standardized, as both variables have the same scale of measurement (both of them measure internationalization in terms of scores representing each dimension).

The cluster analysis showed only two institutions in cluster 5, because of similarities in the characteristics between cluster 5 and cluster 3, both clusters had been merged into one cluster “cluster 3”. Also, one institution from cluster 2 has been added to cluster 3 as it has the same attributes of institutions in cluster 3. For more details about clustering variables and results see columns 6 to 9 in Table I.

Thus, according to the international student factor and the international strategy intent factor, the 117 UK universities were classified within four groups as follows:

- (1) Cluster 1 *International losers group*, which includes 18 institutions.
- (2) Cluster 2 *International speakers group*, which includes 43 institutions.
- (3) Cluster 3 *International winners group*, which includes 43 institutions.
- (4) Cluster 4 *International actors group*, which includes 13 institutions.

According to the following diagram (Figure 1), the previous groups can be drawn up.

International losers

This group represents universities that are less concerned with international strategy and activities in comparison with the other universities. In terms of internationalization, universities in this category tend not to say and not to do. They match between mission and their actions. The cluster analysis shows that 15 per cent of UK universities fall within this category.

		International Strategy Intent Factor	
		High	Low
International Student Factor	High	Cluster 3: International winners	Cluster 4: International actors
	Low	Cluster 2: International speakers	Cluster 1: International losers

Figure 1.
The international strategy factor-international student factor matrix

International speakers

This group represents universities that have a high loading of internationalization in their mission, but are less concerned with international student activities. This group represents universities that do say, but do not do. The cluster analysis shows that 37 per cent of UK universities fall in this category.

International winners

This group represents universities that have a high loading of internationalization in their missions, and are very active in doing international student business. In terms of internationalization, universities in this group tend to say and to do. These universities match between their strategic intent of internationalization and their perceived results of doing so – 37 per cent of UK universities fall in this category.

International actors

This group represents universities that do have international student activities, but who do not declare so in their strategic intents and missions. Universities in this group have a low loading of internationalization in their mission, but are active in international student activities. The cluster analysis shows that 11 per cent of UK universities fall in this category.

Discussions and implications for research and practice

The paper is the first classification carried out amongst UK universities in terms of internationalization. The paper showed that 52 per cent (in the above categories this includes universities in the international losers group and the international winners group) of UK universities match between their declared strategic intents and their actual efforts towards internationalization. The study showed also that 74 per cent of UK universities' mission statements include intents on internationalization. In addition, the analysis showed that 48 per cent of these universities are internationally student active. One of the interesting results this study referred to is that both the old civic universities and post-1992 universities are randomly distributed in the four groups. Thus international winners group, for example, includes old and new universities. The study is based on survey data which provided very macro views of internationalization. More research is needed to discover the in depth aspects of each international group. Based on the above model, times series studies could be relevant in the future to see the fluctuations in internationalization amongst UK universities. In this context, other variables should be considered in the future to reach realistic and reliable results. Such variables may include: the Vice-Chancellors' statements, the real international strategy, the number of international partnerships' agreements, collaborative research, international contacts, the number of international staff in the university, international based curriculums, number of visits from UK and overseas researchers and scholars and many other variables. In terms of the data employed in this paper, some recommendations are implied for higher education agensis which, from now on, needs to be more active in collecting and extracting statistics related to internationalization from UK universities and the higher education sector.

For research implications, the above model could be applied in different sectors other than higher education. For example, multinational companies could use this

model to evaluate whether their international activities go with their initial strategic intents on internationalization or not. In this respect, analysis of annual reports, international stock exchange listings, number of countries of operation, and other variables can all serve this kind of research. This model provides university directors with an indicator of their universities' location within one of the four categories. Based on longitudinal and sustainable evaluation of their international strategy, university directors could use this model as a benchmark and indicator of doing the best in their international business. Also, the model may be of use to international managers as it reveals their key competitors and their potential indirect competitors in the international market of higher education.

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