

Enhancing support for international students in Scotland

THEME:

Enhancement of the quality of the educational experience for international students in Scotland through guidance and support services.

This initiative is to be developed in consultation with partner institutions.

OUTLINE:

The International Student Barometer is a risk management tool, currently running at 11 institutions in Scotland, enabling institutions to track expectations against the experiences of international students (including satisfaction with the learning/living experience and support service provision within their institution). Enhanced partnership for Scottish institutions would specifically include:

- **Best Practice Exchange Scotland** - designed to facilitate discussions on issues that are impacting on the international student experience within Scotland and to develop practical actions that participants can implement. The event will encompass a wide range of aspects of life for international students studying in Scotland, from the academic to the practicalities of everyday life. The **Best Practice Exchange Scotland** would bring together practitioners from across Scotland's higher education sector to 'raise the bar' for the international student experience in Scotland. (In 2008, the University of Edinburgh hosted the **Best Practice Exchange UK** attracting international educators from across the sector).
- **Support Services Scotland report** – The International Student Barometer instrument encompasses in-depth questions relating to students' awareness, usage and satisfaction with the support services provided by their institution. Aggregated data from participating Scottish institutions will enable i-graduate to produce the **Support Services Scotland report**, highlighting key strengths and areas requiring further investment and research. A range of areas of student life and support services will be covered including guidance and support from careers services, meeting and making friends with local people and integration within the university. The report will analyse students' opinions of support by age, gender, level of study and nationality, to provide a wealth of in-depth trend analysis as to how international students are supported throughout their study experience in Scotland.
- **Inclusion of Scotland-specific questions within the International Student Barometer** – there is scope for the development and implementation of questions relating specifically to Scotland and the Scottish learning experience within the ISB survey instrument. Data will provide information for Scotland as whole as well as individual institutions. We would work with partners to develop the structure and content for inclusion; possible themes include experience of part-time employment during studies and work experience/placements.

FEASIBILITY:

First piloted in 2005 with Heriot-Watt University as a founding partner, the International Student Barometer process now runs in over 150 universities and colleges across five continents. To date, i-graduate has taken feedback from over 300,000 students through the Barometer initiative.

CENTRAL (GOVT) COST:

£25,000

MATCHED FUNDING REQUIREMENT:

Matched funding already in place

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