
Internationalization of U.K. University Business Schools: A Survey of Current Practice

Journal of Studies in International Education
15(4) 351–373
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DOI: 10.1177/1028315309348736
<http://jsie.sagepub.com>



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Abstract

A questionnaire was sent to the heads of internationalization in the business schools of all U.K. universities. Sixty-five replies were received. The document covered, *inter alia*, the internationalization activities undertaken by the respondents' schools, the intensities with which internationalization had been implemented, motives for internationalizing, approaches adopted (gradualistic vs. simultaneous), possible links with graduate employability, and the role of innate predilections toward internationalization held by senior business school managers. A schematic model intended to explain the speed, extent, and intensity of a business school's internationalization was developed and tested. It transpired that levels of internationalization activity within the sample institutions were substantial. The degree and/or speed of internationalization within a business school appeared to depend significantly on the financial situation of the host university, managerial inclinations favoring internationalization, financial dependence on foreign students, the desire to attract greater numbers of students from overseas, the size of the business school and the age of its host university, and the belief among senior managers that an internationalized curriculum improved the employment and career prospects of British born as well as foreign students.

Keywords

universities, internationalization, overseas students, curriculum design, employability

Introduction

Increasingly and throughout the world, business schools and departments are internationalizing their curricula, syllabuses, and activities; a process that parallels contemporary

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trends toward the internationalization of universities as a whole (see Allen & Ogilvie, 2004; Altbach & Knight, 2007; Ayoubi & Massoud, 2007; de Wit, 2002; Elkin et al., 2008; Kehm & Teichler, 2007). In Britain, the salience of the desire to internationalize has been dramatically illustrated perhaps by (a) the finding of Ayoubi and Massoud (2007) that, by 2006, only 15 of 117 of the published mission statements of British universities failed to include words or phrases that related to internationalization and (b) Foskett's (2008) observation that *every single* U.K. government policy document published within the 2 years prior to 2008 had referred explicitly to internationalization. Foskett (2008) noted moreover that, of the 22 job advertisements for university vice-chancellors that appeared in the British press during 2007, *all* had cited the requirement that applicants possess international perspectives. By 2007, Foskett (2008) continued, 43% of all U.K. universities already employed a deputy vice-chancellor with a specific brief to manage his or her institution's internationalization activities.

What Does University Internationalization Actually Mean?

Knight (2008) defined university internationalization as the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions, or delivery of higher education. It has resulted, according to Altbach and Knight (2007), from "globalization," that is, "an economic trend . . . that is part of the reality of the 21st century" (p. 290). Internationalization has included, Altbach and Knight (2007) continued, "policies and practices undertaken by institutions to cope with the globalised academic environment" (p. 290). However, these policies and practices have involved a plethora of choices; a fact that Kehm and Teichler (2007) claimed to have caused "an increasing fuzziness of the subject characterized by unclear demarcation of concepts" (p. 262). Governments have regarded internationalization as an important matter as, for financial reasons, they have wanted substantial surpluses of foreign students entering a country over domestic residents choosing to study abroad. Accordingly, governments have encouraged institutions to internationalize to attract more foreign students (Ayoubi & Massoud, 2007; Hayward, 2000; Knight, 2000). Yet at the institutional level there is allegedly much confusion regarding "what internationalization is." Elkin et al. (2008) in particular reported that whilst most U.K. business schools and departments offered numerous courses that incorporated the word "international," the contents, purposes, and directions of these courses varied enormously. In some cases, internationalization was interpreted to mean little more than a requirement to improve facilities for foreign students; in others it was associated with root and branch reform of syllabuses and teaching methods.

The definition of university internationalization applied within the present study broadly follows that of Knight (2008). It assumes that internationalization involves sets of activities, managerial inclinations, organizational and funding arrangements, and strategic decisions in the internationalization sphere. Internationalization activities include, for example, international franchising, curriculum internationalization, exchange programs, and the recruitment of foreign teaching staff. Managerial inclinations extend to

the desire to use internationalization to improve students' overall experiences and to enhance the quality of teaching within a business school. Organizational arrangements encompass the development of systems for monitoring and refining an institution's internationalization endeavors and for implementing strategic internationalization plans.

Aims of the Research

The research reported in the current article sought to establish the methods typically employed by U.K. business schools (or departments) to internationalize their activities, the benefits that the managements of business schools (hereafter business studies "departments" are for convenience referred to as "business schools") ascribed to internationalization, and the extents and "intensities" of the internationalization programs of specific institutions. An index of internationalization intensity was constructed and used as a dependent variable in a regression analysis intended to explore some possible antecedents of managerial decisions to engage extensively and intensively in internationalization. Institutional approaches to internationalization (gradualistic and in stages vs. rapid and simultaneous) were examined, together with managerial predictions to internationalize, possible links with the employability of a business school's graduates, and whether internationalization was regarded as benefiting British born as well as foreign students. Business schools rather than alternative academic faculties were surveyed because the business and management area (a) has been heavily affected by globalization (McGowan & Potter, 2008; Shetty & Rudell, 2000), (b) attracts many foreign students (Sangari & Foster, 1999), and (c) is quintessentially vocational in character so that the employability of graduates both domestically and internationally is a matter of primary concern for institutions (see below). Often, moreover, the success of a business school is fundamental to an entire university's financial well-being.

The article proceeds as follows: First the reasons for university internationalization discussed in the academic literature on the subject are presented together with details of how, in practical terms, internationalization might be achieved. This is followed by a section on curriculum internationalization (aims, method, etc.) and its potential links with graduate employability. Details of an index of the extent and intensity of a university's internationalization activities are then provided together with information on the survey method used in the study. The results of the study are given, followed by a conclusion, a statement of the limitations of the investigation, and suggestions for further research.

The Why and How of Business School Internationalization

Business schools internationalize to attract foreign students (Lipsett, 2009; McGowan & Potter, 2008), high caliber domestic students (Killick, 2008; Sharma & Roy, 1996), and top quality research staff (van der Wende, 2007). Internationalization supposedly improves an institution's capabilities in relation to both teaching (de Wit, 2002) and

research (Elkin et al., 2008). In addition, it enables a university to benchmark its courses against international norms (Ayoubi & Masoud, 2007). Graduates of internationalized programs should be better equipped for employment in contemporary businesses, and their long term career prospects should improve (see below for a discussion of this particular matter). Achieving these benefits requires an appropriate institutional infrastructure (Ellingboe, 1998; Shetty & Rudell, 2000), the presence of academic faculty who have been exposed to foreign cultures and who are interested in the international dimensions of their subjects (Lunde, 1995; Sangari & Foster, 1999), and the existence of systems for assessing the effectiveness of a university's internationalization efforts. (How, for example, can a student's level of "intercultural competence" be measured and graded?)

Internationalization Activities

Student-centered internationalization methods include study abroad programs, foreign language instruction, the international franchising of programs, and the provision of internationally relevant curricula and syllabuses. Internationalization methods that concern academic faculty extend to the recruitment of foreign staff and the employment of home country staff with international experience, cross-border research collaborations, staff exchange programs, faculty participation in international conferences and networks, and internationally orientated staff training and development. Examples of institutional level internationalization activities are the establishment of campuses in other countries, the creation of faculties within a university that bear international or cross-cultural titles, the funding of infrastructure development for internationalization projects, and the specification of internationalization as a top priority in strategic plans and university missions. Foreign direct investment in other countries is perhaps not only the highest level of internationalization but also the most risky. Foreign operations might be initiated in countries where the risk of payment default is substantial and where contracts are difficult to enforce.

Internationalizing the Business School Curriculum

Reasons for internationalizing a business school's curriculum include the rising levels of student demand for internationalized courses (Sangari & Foster, 1999), the growing influence of international and multinational businesses, and the large numbers of cross-border mergers, strategic alliances, company expansions, and so on, that have stimulated employers' needs for staff with international knowledge and perspectives (Sharma & Roy, 1996). Globalization, according to Leggott and Stapleford (2007), had changed the "contexts" wherein business graduates were likely to operate in the future. It followed that an internationalized curriculum was essential if business graduates were to succeed in this new environment. Another compelling motive for internationalizing a curriculum, Leggott and Stapleford (2007) continued, was to satisfy the requirements of the major business school accreditation bodies such as the

Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) and European Quality Improvement System (EQUIS), which demand evidence of curriculum internationalization as a prerequisite of recognition.

A business school can internationalize its curriculum through introducing stand-alone units to degree programs or through injecting international materials into all (or nearly all) of its preexisting modules (Avila, 2007). Adoption of the latter (all modules) approach could involve tutorial discussions and assignments based on foreign business problems, research projects that investigate cross-national practices and behavior, the consideration of global rather than country-specific business ethics (Robinson & Lee, 2007), international case studies and group work (Sharma & Roy, 1996), and the description of foreign business systems and cultures during classes (Ellingboe, 1998). Stand-alone units could comprise general introductory modules on international business or units that deal with the international aspects of specific business functions (international marketing or international human resources management, for example). Schools with large numbers of foreign students might tailor their curricula and syllabuses to take account of foreign students' characteristics, learning styles, language limitations, and cultural backgrounds. (In 2008 one in five U.K. graduates came from overseas [Lipsett, 2009].)

Curriculum Internationalization and Employability

However it is achieved, curriculum internationalization should result in graduates who think globally (Elkin et al., 2008), respect international diversity (Killick, 2008), are capable of communicating effectively across frontiers, understand foreign business standards and practices, and are aware of cultural differences and their causes. A number of writers have insisted that graduates of internationalized curricula are better prepared than others for employment in contemporary firms (see, for example, Bremer & van der Wende, 1995; Ellingboe, 1998; Goodman, 1999; Jones & Killick, 2007; Rudzki, 2000; Sangari & Foster, 1999). Avila (2007) went so far as to claim that the study of international and cross-cultural topics in a business degree was *essential* for "professional success" (p. 408). Research has established that employers' requirements of graduates are broadly consistent across countries (see Leggott & Stapleford, 2007), and it is known that many business graduates aspire to work abroad (de Wit, 2002). One interpretation of these realities is that nowadays *all* business graduates require international and cross-cultural knowledge and skills (Jones & Killick, 2007; Killick, 2008). *On the other hand*, an internationalized curriculum might not be useful for *domestic* students (who comprise about 80% of the total student body in most U.K. universities) given that the overwhelming majority of home students will not work abroad or in jobs that demand international competence. Internationalized curricula are delivered to domestic as well as foreign students and should in principle be equally relevant for both groups (Elkin et al., 2008).

Killick (2008) argued that domestic students benefited from internationalized curricula because globalization has changed the world of work "at home as well as abroad" (p. 2). Conversely, McGowan and Potter (2008) observed that business school

curricula were usually internationalized exclusively for the sake of foreign students and as a means for “developing a competitive export product” that could be marketed abroad (p. 183). If the latter situation typically prevails, then few links will exist between curriculum internationalization and home student employability, a proposition endorsed by Forsberg et al. (2003) who found no significant associations between graduate starting salaries and the internationalization of undergraduate science curricula. Hayward (2000) similarly observed that little hard information was available concerning the employment market’s demand for workers with international expertise and/or cross-cultural competencies. This was despite Hayward’s (2000) finding that most senior administrators in U.S. universities believed that knowledge and understanding of international topics was *very* or *fairly* important for undergraduates. Possibly therefore, the addition of international content to a business school’s curriculum merely crowds out other materials and activities that would be more relevant to domestic students’ employability. Do businesses *genuinely* prefer recruits with intercultural skills and attitudes, or are these qualities deemed to be valuable only for staff who work in international departments or functions (export/import for instance)?

Approaches to Internationalization

It is instructive to question the general approaches to internationalization adopted by British business schools, notably in relation to the speed of internationalization. Such issues have been the subject of substantial academic research in the commercial sphere, much of which has debated the issue of whether slow and gradual approaches to internationalization (see, for example, Bilkey & Tesar, 1977; Johanson & Vahlne, 1977) are superior to rapid, perhaps even simultaneous, internationalization of all activities. Gradual, progressive, and systematic internationalization might enable an organization to build on knowledge acquired through prior experience, and increasing knowledge and experience of foreign activities has been posited both to reduce perceived risk and to create a sound platform for further internationalization. Gradualism allows for deliberation and analysis and the integration of recently gained knowledge into an organization’s infrastructure (Maitland et al., 2005). Nevertheless, research has established that numerous organizations have not internationalized in this way (for reviews of relevant studies, see Malhotra et al., 2003 and Glaum & Oesterie, 2007). Competitive and other pressures may impel a business school to internationalize quickly and/or in a single major effort. Windows of opportunity may be so short that experiential learning is simply impossible (Axinn & Matthyssens, 2001). Moreover, economies of scale and scope (e.g., using the same management team) may be available from completing multiple internationalization initiatives simultaneously (Maitland et al., 2005).

Possible Antecedents of the Speed and Extent of Internationalization

A review of literature in the commercial internationalization and the higher education (HE) internationalization fields indicated that the speed and/or extent of internationalization might depend on the following:

Age and size of the business school. Larger business schools might have the financial resources and staff with the skills and backgrounds necessary to engage in internationalization activities and also to be better able to absorb the associated risks (Javalgi et al., 2003). Smaller schools may therefore be anticipated to internationalize more slowly and cautiously than big schools. On the other hand, the managements of smaller schools might be more rather than less inclined to internationalize quickly and extensively to secure a competitive advantage over their larger rivals.

The older a university business school the more time its management will have had to obtain knowledge and experience of internationalization, implying perhaps a more gradualistic approach. It is relevant to note however that because university managements consist of *people*, a school's current internationalization activities will depend substantially on the characters, knowledge, experience, and *predilections* of the particular set of individuals who run a business school at a *particular moment in time*, rather than the period for which a school has been in existence (Wickramasekera & Oczkowski, 2007). The inclinations of currently employed senior managers could exert important influences on the pace and extent of internationalization, as discussed below.

Managerial inclinations. The senior managements of some business schools may be more inclined than others to internationalize their schools' curricula and activities according to their personal backgrounds, perspectives, and orientations. There exists, moreover, research evidence to suggest that the personal orientations of top managers critically influence an organization's core identity and character (see Dowling, 1993; Hatch & Schultz, 1997). Senior management controls resources; hires, fires, and promotes members of staff; specifies an organization's mission, vision, and priorities; and hence largely determines the organization's "central idea," where it is headed, and "what the organization is" (Hatch & Schultz, 1997, p. 360). A business school management's predilections vis-à-vis internationalization are likely to generate expectations regarding internationalization and about the internationalization targets the school will pursue (Suchman, 1995). Thus the speed and extent of internationalization might depend on the proclivities of a school's senior managers, their personal experiences of HE internationalization and their motives and capacities in relation to internationalization programs (compare Wickramasekera & Oczkowski, 2007).

Resource availability and financial situation. A university in substantial financial surplus will have more money to spend on internationalization, whereas an institution that is financially indigent might be compelled to reduce the scope of its internationalization activities, even if its resource availability situation in terms of staff, infrastructure, and so on is currently satisfactory. Moreover, and irrespective of an institution's overall financial situation, a management with strong internationalization inclinations may be anticipated to fund internationalization activities more generously than a management without such inclinations and to invest in internationalization projects that then become highly conspicuous within a school (Aldrich & Fiol, 1994). Thus a management with such a predilection might reasonably be expected to recruit lecturers and academic support staff with the requisite qualifications and experience and thereafter to provide them with the time and other resources necessary to complete internationalization projects (compare Fletcher et al., 1996).

Employability issues. Each year, the British government's Higher Education Statistics Agency publishes data on the percentage of each U.K. university's graduates who remain unemployed 6 months after graduating. This data is converted into "league tables" by British newspapers, with institutions that perform badly in this respect receiving much adverse publicity. It seems reasonable to assume that an institution with a very high rate of graduate unemployment six months following students leaving the university will want to improve its students' employment prospects via a wider range of measures, including curriculum internationalization, given that the improvement of graduates' employability is frequently cited as a major reason for internationalization. Concomitantly, greater managerial demands for employability initiatives might be expected.

To the extent that a management believes that the employability of *domestic* as well as foreign students improves in consequence of their completing internationalized programs, more rather than less internationalization of a school's activities may be anticipated. Senior business school managers who are convinced that home country employers want graduates who possess international skills and perspectives will presumably introduce and expedite measures designed to equip students with international competencies.

Reliance on foreign students. Presumably a business school that depends heavily on foreign students for its financial survival will be more eager than others to support internationalization activities. Thus a direct relationship might be expected between the proportion of a school's student intake that comes from overseas and the degree of enthusiasm for internationalization activities exhibited by the school's management.

A Suggested Model

A model encapsulating the above mentioned considerations is presented in Figure 1. This posits that various dimensions of internationalization (extent, speed, degree of curriculum internationalization, "intensity" [see below]) are substantially explained by a university's general financial situation; the size, age, and employability record of its business school; the university's financial reliance on foreign students; the strength of the school's motivation to recruit more students from abroad; managerial predilections in favor of internationalization; and the belief that the employability of domestic as well as foreign students improves through their following an internationalized curriculum. Managerial predilections toward internationalization are hypothesized to result in part from this last belief. It is proposed that a university's financial dependence on foreign students, as well as affecting internationalization activities directly, will contribute to the strength of a school's motivation to internationalize to attract more students from abroad. The latter variable is not hypothesized to depend on managerial predictions to internationalize, however, because such predilections involve innate traits and tendencies (independent of other considerations) pertaining to all aspects of internationalization.

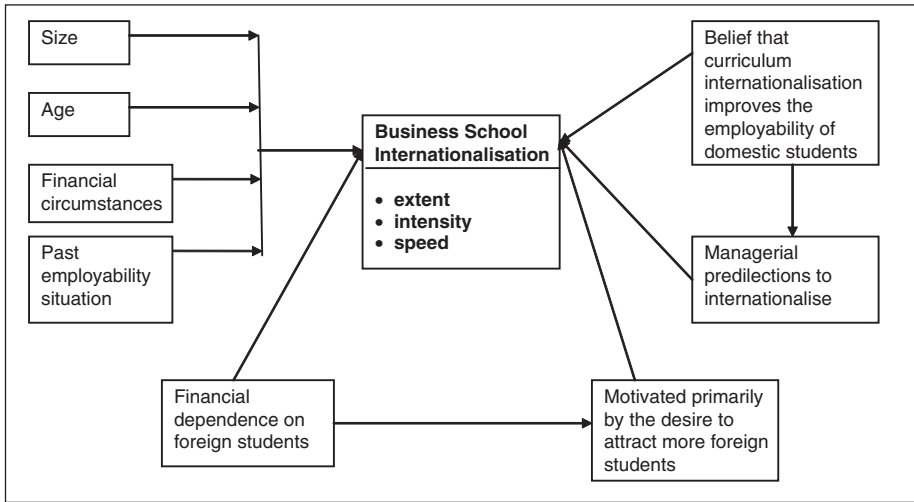


Figure 1. A suggested model

The Study

Data for the investigation was collected via email and hard copy mail surveys and was then used in a statistical analysis intended to identify the main determinants of the speed, extent, and intensity of a business school’s internationalization efforts. Following a literature review a questionnaire was drafted and discussed with four senior managers concerned with the internationalization activities of two U.K. universities (two individuals in each institution). Consequent to these discussions, a refined version of the document was mailed to the “Head of Internationalization” in the business schools of all 142 of Britain’s universities. In 49 cases it was possible to identify a relevant individual from the university’s Web site so that the questionnaire could be emailed to the person as well as sent by post. Furthermore, named contacts were obtained from the attendance lists of the growing number of academic conferences, conference tracks, and training events devoted to university internationalization. After three follow-ups, responses were obtained from individuals in 65 institutions (42% of the population). The questionnaire itself (see the appendix) contained sections covering the age and size of an institution, details of its internationalization activities (section 1[d]), aims and methods of curriculum internationalization (section 2), motives for internationalization (section 3), and perceived connections with graduate employability (section 4). Respondents were asked to complete sections 3(b) and 4 of the questionnaire from the perspective of how they believed senior managers of their business schools saw relevant issues.

The physical extent of a school’s internationalization activities was measured by the items listed in section 1(d) of the questionnaire. As well as exploring the physical

extent of internationalization, the study also assessed (see section 5) the “intensity” of a school’s internationalization efforts in terms of the strength of its enthusiasm for internationalization, the level of priority afforded to internationalization in the school’s mission, the school’s willingness to support and nurture internationalization, and its desire to be proactive in pursuit of internationalization goals. The items in section 5 were developed consequent to the examination of two previously published inventories designed to assess the degrees to which universities have internationalized their programs, namely, those embodied in the studies of Forsberg et al. (2003), which focused on the barriers to and perceived value of internationalization; and Elkin et al. (2008), which concentrated on international exchanges and the attraction of foreign students. Items adapted from these studies were supplemented by further items based on discussions with university internationalization managers and on the previously cited literature in the internationalization field. From the pool of items formed from this exercise the eleven items shown in section 5 were selected following further consultations with academics at the authors’ home university. (It was not possible to undertake additional purification of the scale items via a pretest mail out consequent to the small size of the sample.)

Formation of Variables

The 65 sets of responses to the 11 section 5 items were subjected to a principal components factor analysis (as there were just over five items per field, thus satisfying minimum requirement for a factor analysis) using SPSS 16. Two significant factors emerged, the first explaining 44% of total variation and involving items (all with factor loadings exceeding .4) connected in some way with staff development (items 5[f] to [k]); the second explaining 36% of variation and containing items (again with factor loadings above .4 in value) to do with a school’s internationalization mission and its operational implementation (5[a] to [e]). An Oblimin rotation of the factors revealed that they were substantially correlated ($R = .67$), so all 11 items were composited into a single scale to reflect “intensity of internationalization.” Factor analyses were also undertaken on section 6 items (a) to (d) concerning the degree of “gradualism” applied to the internationalization process and items 6(e) to (g) that examined managerial predilections to internationalize. Single factor solutions occurred in both instances. The leading eigenvalue for “gradualism” accounted for 70% of total variation within the data (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .81$), whereas that for “managerial predilections” explained 72% of variation ($\alpha = .85$). Hence composite variables were created to measure each of the constructs. Financial circumstances were assessed through a single item (3[e]). The past employment situation pertaining to business graduates was measured by items 4(i) and (j), which were highly correlated ($R = -.8$) and thus were combined.

The physical *extent* of a business school’s internationalization was evaluated by counting the number of activities a respondent had ticked in section 1 of the questionnaire. This was a meaningful measure because nearly *all* the universities in the sample

undertook the basic internationalization activities listed in items 1(d)[iii] to (v) (e.g., staff and student-exchange programs) and only two operated campuses in other countries (1[d][ii]). Hence the number of *other* activities over and above the basic activities that were completed represented a fair indication of an institution's relative level of internationalization. Weighted indices were employed on an experimental basis in the analyses (see below), with higher weights being attached to the more substantial activities, for example, the international franchising of courses and the inclusion of international content in all syllabuses. However the patterns of the results obtained were much the same as for the application of the straightforward unweighted measure.

The items in section 2 on curriculum internationalization loaded onto the same factor (with loadings greater than .4), with a leading eigenvalue explaining 68% of total variance and a Cronbach's alpha value of .84. Hence the items were composed into a single "degree of curriculum internationalization" scale. A university's financial reliance on foreign students was measured by appendix item 3(d), and its motivation to internationalize to attract more foreign students by 3(a). Questionnaire sections 1 and 7 contained items on the sizes and ages of institutions and their business schools. The belief that the employability of domestic as well as overseas students benefited from attending an internationalized program was evaluated by a composite formed from items 4 (a) to (h). A factor analysis generated a univariate outcome for the eight items (explaining 71% of total variation in the data; Cronbach's $\alpha = .86$).

Results

Descriptive Results

The business schools in the sample had a median of 2,500 students (range 650-10,000; mean = 5,972) and were located in universities with a median size of 23,000 students. Foreign undergraduates in the sample universities accounted for a median of 22% of the total (range 18%-53%; mean = 26%). For postgraduates the median was 52% (range 20%-80%; mean = 72%). The respondents had worked for their institutions for a median of 14 years (range 7-22 years) suggesting that it was reasonable to assume that the participants possessed sufficient experience of their universities to be able to answer the questionnaire correctly.

Forty percent of the respondents worked in post-1992 universities, 30% in universities that had been established between 1950 and 1991, and 12% in universities founded before 1900. In 52% of the cases the institution's business school or department had been constituted after 1900. *All* the business schools in the sample had international staff and student exchanges and research collaborations. Forty-five percent franchised their courses to foreign institutions; 57% intentionally recruited foreign teaching staff; 33% deliberately hired home country staff who possessed international experience. Only a minority (22%) of the schools had *compulsory* units on international business in mainstream degree programs; 30% compulsorily incorporated international elements into the syllabuses of individual units.

Sixty-nine percent of the responses fell in the top two categories of the composite formed to reflect the “degree of curriculum internationalization,” indicating a considerable level of effort devoted to this matter among the sample members. Two outliers were observed within the composite, however: just 36% of the schools covered a *wide range* of foreign cultures (Eastern as well as Western) in their courses, and only a minority (42%) attempted to assess and grade students’ intercultural competence. A clear majority (57%) of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that the primary motivation for internationalizing a curriculum was to attract more foreign students. The respondents were asked (see the Appendix 3 [b][i] to [iii]) to assess the beliefs of the senior managers of their business schools concerning the impact of a school’s internationalization on *British born* students. An overwhelming majority (80%) agreed or strongly agreed that their managements believed that the student experience of British born people improved as a consequence of internationalization. Majorities agreed or strongly agreed with the propositions that internationalization enhanced a school’s ability to attract both high caliber staff (3[b][v]; 53%) and high caliber British born students (3 [b][ii])(55%) and that it improved the quality of teaching within a school (3(b)[iii]; 57%). Seventy-two percent agreed or strongly agreed that their managements thought that internationalization made a university’s environment more “friendly” toward foreign students (3[b][iv]). Two thirds agreed or strongly agreed that their universities’ financial survival depended substantially on the ability to recruit more foreign students (3[d]). Responses were relatively evenly divided for items 3(e), regarding an institution’s financial situation, and 3(c), regarding the role of AACSB (and other) accreditation as a motive for internationalization.

Section 4 of the questionnaire asked the respondents to state their opinions of how the managers of their business schools viewed possible links between internationalization and employability. Large majorities reported that the managers of their schools believed that internationalization improved the employment and career prospects of British born students (item 4[a]; 82%), that employers in general wanted staff who possessed international perspectives and skills (4[b]; 78%), and that employers valued British born graduates of an internationalized curriculum (4[c]; 78%). Business school managers were assumed mostly to believe that British born graduates needed to be able to work anywhere in the world (4[d] (72%), that British born graduates of an internationalized curriculum were better prepared to work in *domestic* businesses (4[e]; 70%), and that the study of international topics was essential for professional success (4[f]; 68%). Three-quarters of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that the managers of their business schools considered that there was little point in teaching an international curriculum to students who were unlikely ever to work abroad (item 4[g]) or that teaching international topics “crowded out” other topics more useful for the employability of domestic students (4[h]). Section 5 of the questionnaire concerned the “intensity” of a school’s internationalization, as previously described. Sixty-four percent of the responses fell in the top two categories of the composite formed to reflect this construct, implying significant attempts to implement internationalization programs.

Table 1. Direct Influences on Internationalization: Standardized Regression Coefficients

	Extent	Intensity	Degree of curriculum internationalization	Degree of gradualism
Financial difficulties	-.49 (5.55)	-.44 (5.51)	-.32 (4.32)	-.29 (2.99)
Managerial predilections favoring internationalization	.52 (7.07)	.5 (6.68)	.39 (5.06)	
Belief that internationalization improves home student employability	.41 (5.64)	.4 (5.55)	.61 (8.88)	.38 (4.73)
Financial dependence on foreign students	.37 (4.74)	.36 (5.02)	.29 (2.47)	.29 (2.55)
Motivated primarily by the desire to attract foreign students	.29 (3.11)	.55 (8.77)	.25 (2.88)	-.31 (4.25)
Size of the business school	.28 (3.46)			.24 (2.96)
Age of the university	.33 (4.01)	.36 (4.09)		.22 (2.81)

Note: *t*-values in parentheses.

Section 6 questioned the general approaches to internationalization adopted by the sample universities; Most (67%) had internationalized gradually (see item 6[a]), learning from experience along the way (6[b]; 71%) and through a progressive series of stages (6[c]; 71%). Only 11% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their schools had internationalized in a “single major effort” (6[d]). Section 6 also queried the international orientations of business school managers. Responses were relatively evenly divided across the five categories of the composite created to measure managerial predilections to internationalize. This was also the case for replies concerning overall satisfaction with a school’s internationalization efforts (6[h]), lack of financial resources for internationalization (6[j]), and other difficulties (6[i] and [k]).

Analysis

In view of the modest size of the sample and the nonnormality of several of the variables in the model portrayed in Figure 1, the hypothesized model was estimated using the method of partial least squares, specifically PLS Graph version 3 (Chin, 2001). Table 1 gives the result for direct influences of the statistically significant ($p < .05$) independent variables on the four aspects of a business school’s internationalization.

As regards the subsidiary pathways shown in Figure 1, financial dependence on foreign students did indeed affect the likelihood that the primary reason for internationalizing was the desire to attract more students from overseas ($\beta = .7$, $T = 9.96$, $p = .000$). Moreover, the belief that curriculum internationalization benefited domestic students impacted significantly ($p = .001$) on managerial predilections ($\beta = .32$, $T = 3.87$). It can be seen from Table 1 that financial difficulties reduced the extent and

intensity of internationalization and the degree of curriculum internationalization. Concomitantly, financial difficulties apparently induced institutions to adopt gradual approaches to implementation. Managerial predilections significantly affected extent, intensity, and the amount of curriculum internationalization but not the degree of gradualism. It seems therefore that managements that were innately inclined toward internationalization were just as likely to proceed gradually and in stages as were managements that lacked such proclivities. Managerial belief that the employability of domestic students benefited from internationalization exerted positive and significant impacts on all four of the dependent variables, likewise for an institution's level of dependence on foreign students. Schools that had been motivated to internationalize primarily to attract more foreign students were more prone to internationalize quickly and simultaneously than were others. The influence of this variable was significantly positive, in respect of all three of the other dependent variables.

The size of a *university* did not exert significant effects on any of the dependent variables: the business schools of smaller institutions were as likely to internationalize extensively and intensively as were schools in large universities. However, the size of a *business school* affected (positively) the extent of its internationalization activities, and larger schools were more inclined to internationalize gradually than smaller schools. It emerged that the age of a business school was insignificant in all cases, but the age of an *institution* positively influenced extent, intensity, and the degree of gradualism. This outcome reflects perhaps the longer *university-wide* experience and greater knowledge of international activities of older universities. Although accreditation requirements (3[c]) were not included in Figure 1, the variable was used in the estimation on an experimental basis but did not exert a significant influence on any of the dependent variables. A business school's past graduate employability situation did not appear to have significantly affected any of the dependent variables. An examination of the data revealed, however, that the two items measuring this matter (4[h] and [i]) were closely associated ($R = .84$ and $R = -.82$ respectively) with the age of a university. Older institutions had far better graduate employability records than more recently established universities so that, statistically, the age factor dominated outcomes to the estimation. Thus the connection between the extent and intensity of internationalization and past employability situations could not be dissected in meaningful ways.

The questionnaire contained ad hoc items querying a respondent's views on whether a school's management was satisfied with its internationalization efforts (6[h]) and whether internationalization had been "more difficult than expected" (6[i]). Satisfaction correlated significantly ($p < .05$) and substantially with the absence of financial difficulties (item 3[e]; $R = .71$). Respondents in schools that lacked experience and skills in internationalization (6[k]) reported lower satisfaction ($R = -.6$). The older the university the more probable that a participant would indicate high satisfaction ($R = .59$). Item 6(i) concerning whether internationalization had been more difficult than anticipated correlated significantly ($p < .05$) with the absence of administrative infrastructure (5[c]; $R = -.68$) and with lack of funding for internationalization (5[d]; $R = .75$).

Conclusion

This study sought to assess the extents, intensities, and natures of U.K. business schools' internationalization programs, to explore the motives underlying business school internationalization, and to examine the influence of managerial inclinations toward internationalization on internationalization activities. Engagement in internationalization was substantial. For instance, nearly half the respondent institutions franchised their courses overseas, and the majority deliberately recruited foreign teaching staff. Attempts at curriculum internationalization were widespread although they appeared to have proceeded on a voluntary rather than a compulsory basis. Less than a third of the schools in the sample *compulsorily* required degree courses and individual units to incorporate international content. Two thirds of the participants reported high levels of intensity vis-à-vis the operationalization of their schools' internationalization efforts. There was evidence of faculty recruitment and staff development policies to facilitate internationalization, the provision of funding for internationalization projects, the development of systems for monitoring and improving internationalization, and the prioritization of internationalization in business schools' missions and strategic plans. The respondents also confirmed the existence of considerable amounts of curriculum internationalization (albeit introduced voluntarily) among their schools. However, curriculum internationalization did not appear to extend to the inclusion of non-Western cultural issues and topics within courses. Only a minority of the schools (42%) attempted to assess and grade students' intercultural competence. Overall, internationalization was more prevalent in large business schools and in old universities.

Gradual, step-by-step internationalization (rather than internationalizing in a single "big bang") was the most common approach adopted. It appeared that the managements of the majority of the sample institutions had been keen to learn from experience and to avoid risk. Two primary motives for wanting to internationalize became apparent from the study: the desire to attract more foreign students (especially among universities that depended heavily on students from overseas for their financial survival) and beliefs held by a business school's managers that British born students benefited from completing an internationalized curriculum. Eighty-two percent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the managements of their schools presumed that internationalization improved the employment and career prospects of domestic students: 75% of managements were deemed to believe that an internationalized curriculum did not crowd out subject matter that might be useful to British born graduates.

Universities' financial circumstances exerted powerful influences on the extents, intensities, and speeds with which their business schools internationalized. The more problematic an institution's financial situation the lower the level of internationalization and the more gradualistic the business school's approach. Senior managers' innate inclinations and orientations toward internationalization impacted heavily on internationalization extent, intensity, and the degree of curriculum internationalization. Given

the previously mentioned tendency for job advertisements for senior positions in U.K. universities to demand that candidates possess international outlooks, this finding suggests that the pace and volume of business school internationalization will accelerate sharply in the future. Furthermore, significant influences on the speed, extent, and intensity of a school's internationalization were the motivation to attract more foreign students and the belief that internationalization improved home country students' employability. It is unclear as to where exactly this latter assumption came from, as it was not possible within the confines of an already crowded questionnaire to investigate the matter in any depth. This is a topic worthy of further research explicitly designed to unpick possible relationships between internationalization and graduate employability.

Another topic that requires additional research is the character of the connections between a business school management's satisfaction with its internationalization efforts and the correlates of satisfaction (financing, resourcing, systems, and internationalization skills). Around 70% of the respondents stated that their schools had internationalized gradually. Research is needed into whether this happened by accident or by choice. Is gradual internationalization *necessarily* better than simultaneous internationalization across numerous activities and with high degrees of intensity? It would be useful moreover to conduct detailed research into how precisely the 42% of the institutions that were reported to assess and grade students' intercultural competence had actually set about completing the task.

A number of limitations apply to the research. Less than a majority of the sampling frame participated in the survey although there was no evidence to suggest that the replies were unrepresentative of U.K. university business schools as a whole. The proportions of responses from various sectors broadly matched the situation pertaining to universities across Britain. No regional disparities in response rates or early/late response biases were detected. Another limitation was the need (within an exploratory study in a field where to the best of the authors' knowledge no similar surveys had been completed previously) to cover a wide range of issues in a single questionnaire. This meant that some of the constructs examined could not be fully explored. Moreover, the questionnaire was filled in by "heads of internationalization," or by people with similar job titles. Such individuals might be expected to be upbeat about the contributions of internationalization to the quality of a business school's programs and, in particular, to the employability of British born students. However, most of the participants had long experience of academic work (median = 14 years) and relevant sections of the questionnaire asked respondents to state what they believed the *senior managers of their business schools* thought about specific matters, rather than what they thought about these matters themselves. The respondents would have reported to and worked with their schools' senior managers and would have been involved in most or all of their schools' internationalization activities. Hence the participants represented expert commentators where internationalization was concerned.

Appendix

The Questionnaire

1. General

- (a) When did your institution become a university (please circle)?
After 2004 / after 1991 / 1950-1990 / 1900-1949 / before 1900
- (b) When did your business school or department come into existence (please circle)?
After 2004 / after 1991 / 1950-1990 / 1900-1949 / before 1900
- (c) For how many years have you worked for your current university (please insert)?
- (d) Which of the following internationalization activities are undertaken by your business school or department (please tick)?
- (i) International franchising of courses _____.
 - (ii) Operation of campuses in other countries _____.
 - (iii) International student exchange programs _____.
 - (iv) International staff exchange programs _____.
 - (v) International research collaborations _____.
 - (vi) Deliberate recruitment of foreign teaching staff _____.
 - (vii) Deliberate recruitment of home country teaching staff who possess international experience _____.
 - (viii) Inclusion of compulsory units on international business in most mainstream undergraduate degrees _____.
 - (ix) Compulsory inclusion of international content into the syllabuses of most individual mainstream undergraduate modules _____.

2. The curriculum

Please indicate the strength of your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements by marking the appropriate box.

Key: SA = *strongly agree*; A = *agree*; N = *neither agree nor disagree*; D = *disagree*; SD = *strongly disagree*.

- (a) The business school's curricula have been deliberately designed to produce graduates who
- (i) think globally
 - (ii) understand foreign business practices
 - (iii) understand foreign cultures
 - (iv) respect international diversity.

(continued)

Appendix (continued)

- (b) Student assignments and research projects frequently cover foreign business environments.
- (c) Case studies and tutorial work on mainstream units frequently involve international business topics.
- (d) Lectures on mainstream units routinely cover international business issues.
- (e) The business school (or department) attempts to assess and grade the intercultural competence of students.
- (f) The school assesses and grades its students' capacities to think globally.
- (g) The international content of the school's courses covers a wide range of foreign cultures and countries (Eastern as well as Western).
- (h) The school has adjusted its curricula and syllabuses to take account of foreign students' characteristics, cultures, and learning styles.

3. *Motives for internationalization*

Please indicate the strength of your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements:

- (a) The school's primary reason for internationalizing its activities and/or curriculum was to attract more foreign students.
- (b) Managers in the business school believe that internationalization improves
 - (i) the quality of the student experience of *British born* students
 - (ii) the school's ability to attract high caliber *British born* students
 - (iii) the quality of teaching within the school
 - (iv) the friendliness of the university's environment for foreign students
 - (v) the business school's ability to recruit high caliber staff.
- (c) An important reason for the school having internationalized was because the major accreditation bodies (e.g., the AACSB) require this as a precondition of accreditation.

This university's financial survival depends substantially on its ability to attract more foreign students.

This university has been in substantial financial difficulties during recent years.
- (d) This university's financial survival depends substantially on its ability to attract more foreign students.
- (e) This university has been in substantial financial difficulties during recent years.

(continued)

Appendix (continued)

4. Employability issues

To what extent do you feel that the management of your business school (or department) would agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

- (a) Internationalization of the school's activities and/or curriculum improves the employment and career prospects of *British born* students.
- (b) Today, employing firms in general want staff who possess international skills and perspectives.
- (c) British employers value British born graduates who have studied an internationalized curriculum.
- (d) Nowadays, British born graduates need to be capable of working anywhere in the world.
- (e) British born graduates of internationalized curricula are better prepared for employment in *domestic* businesses compared to graduates of curricula that have not been internationalized.
- (f) The study of international and cross-cultural topics is essential for professional success.
- (g) There is little point in teaching an internationalized curriculum to students who are unlikely ever to work abroad.
- (h) The inclusion of international content in curricula and syllabuses crowds out other material and activities that would be more relevant to the employability of home country students.
- (i) Compared to other universities in our sector, a high percentage of our business graduates have always been able to find suitable jobs after leaving the university.
- (j) Historically the percentage of our business graduates who obtain suitable jobs within 6 months of graduation has been sufficiently low to be a source of substantial concern to the university's management.

5. Intensity of internationalization

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

- (a) Internationalization is specified as a major priority in the business school's mission and strategic plans.
- (b) Responsibility for internationalization lies with a top manager(s) within the school.
- (c) Significant resources have been devoted to developing an administrative infrastructure to support internationalization activities.
- (d) The funding of internationalization projects is given very high priority within the school.
- (e) The school operates systems for monitoring, assessing, and improving its internationalization efforts.

(continued)

Appendix (continued)

- (f) The school actively seeks to recruit academic staff who possess a deep knowledge of the international aspects of business.
- (g) Academic staff who incorporate large amounts of international material into their courses are recognized and rewarded.
- (h) The school offers much staff development to support internationalization.
- (i) Academic staff are actively encouraged to direct their research toward international topics.
- (j) The school actively seeks to recruit academic staff with firsthand experience of foreign business cultures.
- (k) The school has proactively sought links, collaborations, and network contacts with institutions in other countries to help with its internationalization activities.

6. *Approaches to internationalization*

- (a) The school has internationalized its curriculum and/or activities gradually, step-by-step, as it gained experience of internationalization.
- (b) The school's management has been reluctant to extend its internationalization activities until all the lessons available from its most recent experience of the internationalization process had been learned.
- (c) The school has internationalized progressively through a series of stages, each stage building on experience gained during the previous stage.
- (d) The school chose to internationalize in a single major effort consequent to a strategic decision to internationalize.
- (e) The school began internationalizing largely because of the enthusiasm for internationalization of its senior managers.
- (f) The school's top management has always been very internationally orientated.
- (g) The school's top management has always had a natural inclination to become involved in internationalization activities.
- (h) Overall the school's management is highly satisfied with its internationalization efforts.
- (i) Internationalization has turned out to be much more difficult than expected.
- (j) The school has lacked the financial and other resources necessary for successful internationalization.
- (k) The school has lacked the experience and skills necessary for successful internationalization.

7. *Miscellaneous*

- (a) If known, please state the approximate percentages of overseas students on the business school's (i) undergraduate courses: _____ % and (ii) postgraduate courses: _____ %.

- (b) This university has approximately the following number of students (please circle):
Less than 10,000; 11-15,000; 16-20,000; 21-25,000; 26-30,000; more than 31,000
- (c) The business school has approximately the following number of students (please insert):

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared that they had no conflicts of interests with respect to their authorship or the publication of this article.

Funding

The authors declared that they received no financial support for their research and/or authorship of this article.

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