

Review of Support for International Students EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The review of support for international students was conducted jointly by the Office of Student Support and Services and the International Development Division throughout 2005/6.
2. It aimed to summarise and benchmark existing support for international students at the University of Manchester, clarify the role of the International Society, identify areas where the international student experience would benefit from development, and make recommendations about the nature of developments and further work needed.
3. The report is supplemented by detailed appendices which describe existing services at The University of Manchester, provision at other HEIs, and the results of the 2005 student satisfaction surveys and International Student Barometer.
4. The University of Manchester already leads the way in some areas of support for international students, e.g. the Accommodation Guarantee for international students. There are many other examples of good practice referred to in the report and appendices. Nonetheless, the report identifies an on-going programme of work which, if achieved, will make a significant improvement to the experience of international students. Particularly significant are the areas of Cultural Awareness and Transition (especially in making the transition to UK learning styles and expectations) and the need to improve Communication. Induction is also important, and has already been identified as an issue by the review into personal support for undergraduate and taught postgraduate students in Schools, the report of which contains more detailed recommendations concerning induction.
5. With respect to the International Society, the Review Group concluded that it is a unique organisation which adds significant value to The University's strategic objectives in relation to international student recruitment. The International Development Office will work closely with the International Society to ensure that the resource provided by the University is targeted on activities most focused on its international students.
6. The Review Group's recommendations are:

Cultural Awareness

- i) Work to take place jointly between International Development, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Office, the Staff Training and Development Unit, and Equality and Diversity to work with Faculties and Schools to address cultural awareness issues as they affect both teaching and learning and cultural integration, from the perspective of both staff and students:
 - To arrive at conclusions in relation to minimum standards of cultural awareness training for staff in particular roles (to include input from IAT/OSSS/International Society) - e.g. lecturing staff teaching international students, support staff – and whether there should be training available tailored towards particular cultural groups.
 - To address the issue of learning support and the transition to UK educational styles, particularly in terms of clarifying UK expectations in relation to the student-lecturer relationship, plagiarism, independent study, critical awareness, particularly for students arriving into the UK direct from other education backgrounds.
 - To raise awareness of the variation in background experience of students from different national backgrounds.
- ii) The Office of Student Support and Services to work with the Equality and Diversity Office to undertake an impact assessment of the policies relating to student complaints, academic appeals and student conduct to ensure that there is no built in discrimination.

Integration

- iii) Further investigation of the most effective ways by which international students can make connections with home students and UK culture is needed, whilst not overlooking their desire also to retain connections with others from similar backgrounds to themselves. Involvement from the Accommodation Office/Halls of Residence, Students' Union and International Society would be appropriate.
- iv) Schools should consider strategies at induction which provide opportunities for integrating students into the School community, offering them opportunities to meet other students from their discipline area/School, and at different levels of study.

See Also: 'Review of Support for Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Students in Schools' (forthcoming), which includes further recommendations regarding induction.

- v) Explore how the International Society's work with families can be built on more effectively to integrate international students and their families into the University and local community.

Accommodation

- vi) Accommodation Office to work with Student Recruitment Division to a) review the system for maintaining the applicant record, ensuring that communication between the Student System and the Accommodation Office is as smooth as possible, and b) to raise awareness among Admissions Staff of the consequences of any delays in updating information on the system.
- vii) Highlight the University of Manchester accommodation guarantee, which is a significant benefit to UoM international students.

Banking and Finance

- viii) Explore the possibility of striking a partnership between the University and a bank with its HQ in Manchester (such as the Cooperative Bank).
- ix) Explore the possibility of establishing/promoting bursaries etc for international students.
- x) Work to develop opportunities for suitable part-time jobs, and for work experience in general may also partly address the issue of finance.
- xi) Give consideration to means of achieving increased transparency about the fee regime.

Campus Environment

- xii) Review the way that the University is marketed to prospective students to ensure that it does not unrealistically raise expectations of a 'green and leafy 'campus''. A simple solution may be to give consideration to alternative terminology to 'campus' in University literature, e.g. 'city campus'.

Consider how existing green spaces, of which there are several, may be made use of/promoted to students – e.g. a 'green space' map.

Careers Advice Support/Work Experience/Opportunities to earn

- xiii) The University has one of the best Careers Services in the UK and should use this to gain competitive edge in the international recruitment market. Ways in which the Careers Service's new strategy for international students might be supported should be explored. Schools should be encouraged to explore ways in which academic programmes could further enhance the employability of international students.

Communication

- xiv) Develop re-orientation activities for returning students (not just international students).
- xv) Develop a student communication strategy, similar to that introduced for staff communication, and ensure that the particular needs of international students are considered within this. The Review of Support for Students in Schools has also identified this as an issue which affects all students.

Review of Support for International Students REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

Context

- 1.1 The review of support for international students took place in the context of *Towards Manchester 2015*. In particular, it is intended that the review will contribute to the growth of international student numbers by responding to the views of international students and developing an experience for international students commensurate with the University's vision for its international standing.
- 1.2 The review was a joint initiative between the International Development Office and the Office of Student Support and Services. A list of the members of the review group is available at Appendix 4. The group was kept deliberately small, calling on information and expertise from colleagues across the University as it was needed.
- 1.3. The main objectives of the review were:
 - To identify examples of best practice in the provision of welfare and other support services available for international students at Russell Group universities in the UK and in a selection of the world's top 25 universities. See Appendix 3 for a detailed report.
 - to record the full range of services for international students at the University of Manchester and to assess how far this current provision exceeds, matches or falls short of best practice. See Appendix 2 for a summary of the range of services offered.
 - to look in particular at the contribution the International Society makes to the support of international students at this University, including an assessment of how well it is integrated into the overall provision, whether it is providing appropriate services and whether it represents value for money See Section 2 below.
 - using findings from the student satisfaction surveys, to identify areas for development and improvement and report back to PRC on actions being taken in response to these findings. See Section 3 below.

Method

- 1.4 In reviewing support for international students, the group collated a summary of current provision of support specifically for international students. This has been included at Appendix 2. Members of the International Development Office and the International Student Advice Team (SSC) collaborated to review practice at other institutions, both in the UK and overseas, in order to identify good practice and to enable the University of Manchester to benchmark itself against competitors in terms of support for international students (Appendix 3). The Director of International Development held a series of meetings with the International Society (to which the University contributes financially, as do other HEIs in Greater Manchester) with the aim of clarifying the relationship between the University of Manchester and the Society. The International Society has potential to contribute a unique service to international students, and is already valued by those who join.
- 1.5 The review team was particularly keen to identify the student voice in its research, and has therefore placed emphasis on the findings of the University's internal student satisfaction surveys, together with those of the International Student Barometer which the University took part in along with a number of other HEIs from the UK and overseas. Details of the survey results are available at Appendix 2. One key advantage of the barometer is that it will enable the University to measure its standing and progress against that of equivalent HEIs. Focus

groups with international students were also held as a follow up to the first round of student satisfaction surveys, which were conducted in 2005.

1.6 The review was cognisant of research findings by Diane Roberts, a University of Manchester PhD candidate who conducted research into the experience of Chinese and African taught postgraduate students at the University.

1.7 Members of the review team also held meetings with:

- Helen McGlashan, Head of Student Accommodation
- Alison Aucott, Catering Manager
- Gerry Bell, International Student Advice Team

2. THE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY IN SUPPORTING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

2.1 The International Society is an independent Educational Charity and has broad objectives relating to the advancement of the education of students in Manchester, and “particularly in international matters”. They particularly focus on the social welfare of international students and their families. Over recent years, the Society has provided significant support to the University’s Orientation and Welcome Scheme and runs an excellent programme of trips for students. The Charity was established in 1966 with the support of VUM.

2.2 Today the Society is funded jointly by The University of Manchester, Salford University and MMU. In 2004/05 The International Society had a turnover of c£317k, of which The University of Manchester provided c£180k (through a variety of sources, but predominantly through the International Development Division (IDD) budget). In 2004/05 the other two universities in Manchester provided c£27k of funding (c£17k from MMU and c£10k from Salford). So far in 2005/06, IDD has provided the Society with c£186k.

2.3 The finances of the International Society were reviewed by a Task Group chaired by Dr John Rogers in January 2004. The review group had representatives of The Victoria University of Manchester (VUM), UMIST, Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) and Salford University (SU). The model established has resulted in The University of Manchester providing the greatest level of income to the Society.

2.4 Previously VUM paid a membership subscription for all new international students (cost of c£20k in 2004/05). This policy was reviewed and ended in 2005/06 and now IDD supports the Society in promoting their membership and services to our international students.

2.5 The International Society is a unique organisation that adds significant value to The University of Manchester’s strategic objectives in relation to international student recruitment. However, it is accepted that the University needs to ensure that it is receiving value for money from the Society and that the resource provided by the University needs to be targeted at their activities most focused on our international students. The Director of International Development is a member of the International Society Council and is working with its management team to ensure that their activities add value to the experience of international students studying at The University of Manchester.

3. ANALYSIS

Areas for Development and Improvement

3.1 Results from the surveys and focus groups indicated that the main areas which would benefit from more detailed attention were:

- Cultural Awareness – particularly in respect of the cultural transitions to be made in relation to teaching and learning styles

- Financial Support and Services
- The Accommodation Service and Provision for Families
- Campus Environment
- Careers Advice and Support/Work Experience/Opportunities to earn
- Catering
- Communication

Cultural Awareness

- 3.2 There are cultural awareness issues both in terms of UK staff and students being aware of the culture and expectations of international students and colleagues, for international students in adjusting to the UK culture and learning styles, and for international staff in adjusting to UK learning styles, as well as being aware of the expectations of both UK and international students.

UK Learning Style

- 3.3 During focus group sessions, international students reported the desire for more guidance on skills such as essay-writing, and more explanation about the grading/evaluation system. Difficulties are also encountered where lecturers don't appear to be able to make adjustments for students having to learn in another language, and students find it difficult to make the adjustment to learning in a second language quickly enough.
- 3.4 The Barometer Autumn Wave Report illustrates the diversity in expectation among international students who arrive with many different experiences in terms of academic standards and practice. They come from systems with different understandings of issues such as plagiarism, and from systems where the marking and evaluation frameworks are different. For example, in some educational cultures a mark of 68% would be regarded as a failure, whilst in the UK arts/social sciences context, this would be seen as a mark of a high standard.
- 3.5 These findings were supported by those of Diane Roberts. Her PhD studied students from African and Chinese cultures following taught postgraduate programmes at The University of Manchester. She found that both groups of students had difficulties with their ability to read and write critically in English, such that they were not able to take full advantage of their Masters programme for some months after the beginning. The research raised a number of issues surrounding cultural awareness, and some teaching and learning issues which were applicable to all students, particularly regarding the availability of tutors for feedback and discussion of work in progress.

Recommendation i): Work to take place jointly between International Development, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Office, the Staff Training and Development Unit, and Equality and Diversity to work with Faculties and Schools to address cultural awareness issues as they affect both teaching and learning and cultural integration, from the perspective of both staff and students:

- To arrive at conclusions in relation to minimum standards of cultural awareness training for staff in particular roles (input from IAT/OSSS) - e.g. lecturing staff teaching international students, support staff – and whether there should be training f available tailored towards particular cultural groups.
- To address the issue of learning support and the transition to UK educational styles, particularly in terms of clarifying UK expectations in relation to the student-lecturer relationship, plagiarism, independent study, critical awareness, particularly for students arriving into the UK direct from other education backgrounds.
- To raise awareness of the variation of background experience of students from different national backgrounds.
- To conduct impact assessment on policies.

Equality and Diversity

- 3.6 International students' perceptions that they were not treated fairly were of concern and were explored further in focus groups. It emerged from discussion that this perception was mainly based on how they were treated outside the University, and particularly with respect to banking. However, analysis of complaints and appeals has indicated an over-representation of international (and home ethnic minority) students in the data.

Recommendation ii): The Office of Student Support and Services will be working with the Equality and Diversity Office to undertake an impact assessment of the relevant policies to ensure that there is no built in discrimination. Further investigation is likely thereafter, and will probably tie in with earlier discussion about cultural differences in approach.

It is clear that cultural awareness is an issue at all levels of interaction with international students, and it would seem appropriate that the Equality and Diversity Office is routinely involved in any projects arising as a response to this issue.

Integration into British Culture

- 3.7 International students were disappointed that they found it difficult to become as immersed in British culture as they had hoped. The Barometer survey in the Autumn of 2005 placed Manchester 9th out of the 10 Russell Group universities it surveyed in this respect. In the Spring Wave (March 2006), 18.8% of respondents were dissatisfied with the opportunities they had had to experience the culture of the UK, and 23.6% were dissatisfied with the opportunities they had had to make friends from the UK. Students were less dissatisfied by their chances to make friends either from other countries, or from a similar background to their own (12.5% and 11.9% respectively were dissatisfied with this aspect, and 61.4%/67.4% expressed themselves to be satisfied). The greatest gap between importance and satisfaction was with opportunities to experience the culture of the host country, and in this group of questions, the opportunity to experience the culture of the host country was ranked as the most important.

Recommendation iii): Further investigation of the most effective ways by which international students can make connections with home students and UK culture is needed, whilst not overlooking their desire also to retain connections with others from similar backgrounds to themselves. Involvement from the Accommodation Office/Halls of Residence, Students' Union and International Society would be appropriate.

Recommendation iv): Schools should consider strategies at induction which provide opportunities for integrating students into the School community, offering them opportunities to meet other students from their discipline area/School, and at different levels of study.

See Also : 'Review of Support for Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Students in Schools' (forthcoming), which includes further recommendations regarding induction.

- 3.8 The University regards support for families as a key part of its support for international students, and delivers this through its involvement with the International Society, which is best placed to provide support and networks, especially through social events and organised trips, for the families of international students. The International Society also offers language tuition, and international students and their families can get involved in offering tuition in their language to other students.

Recommendation v): Explore how the International Society's work with families can be built on more effectively to integrate international students and their families into the University and local community.

The Accommodation Service

- 3.9 All unaccompanied international students paying international fees are guaranteed University accommodation for the duration of their programme. Erasmus students are also guaranteed University accommodation for the duration of their stay in Manchester. Study abroad and exchange students are guaranteed accommodation so long as the length of their stay in Manchester is more than one semester. Students who are staying for one semester only are not covered by the guarantee, although the University is, in practice, normally able to offer them accommodation.
- 3.10 However, 36% of respondents to the Barometer were dissatisfied with the Accommodation Office, and 39% were dissatisfied with the cost of Accommodation. General dissatisfaction with the standard of Accommodation among international students also emerged from the University's student satisfaction surveys, with focus group participants identifying the following issues:
- the requirement to commit to a 12 month contract without being able to inspect the accommodation first
 - delays in processing accommodation applications because allocations can not be made until it has been confirmed that entry requirements have been fulfilled.
 - misrepresentation of what's included in hall accommodation; not realising that bed linen was not supplied
 - noise and disruption from other students
- 3.11 Members of the group met with Helen McGlashan, Head of Student Accommodation to discuss these issues. They found that there was already a high level of awareness within the Sport, Trading and Residential Services Directorate (STARS), with issues being addressed as follows:
- To assist students in getting a better picture of the accommodation they were committing to, a 'virtual' room tour was being developed. This would be included on DVDs to be sent to international students, and would also be available on-line.
 - The Accommodation office was aware of the difficulties caused by delays in confirmation of fulfilling entry requirements. It takes regular downloads from the admissions system so that it can process applications as soon as they are confirmed on the system. To be effective, this process relies on the student record being kept up-to-date. It was anticipated that the integration of Campus Solutions would help to address this issue.

Recommendation vi): Accommodation Office to work with Student Recruitment Division to a) review the system for maintaining the applicant record, ensuring that communication between the Student System and the Accommodation Office is as smooth as possible, and b) to raise awareness among Admissions Staff of the consequences of any delays in updating information on the system.

- 3.12 In the longer term it is planned further to develop the on-line process so that students are alerted if their accommodation applications are being delayed due to missing information, for example.
- Bed linen is sold in Halls at a cheap rate on arrival.
 - There is a protocol for students to be moved if they find their accommodation is too noisy, or they otherwise don't like it.

Action: The Accommodation Office will ensure that this protocol is clearly communicated to students and to hall staff responsible for advising students.

Recommendation vii): Highlight the University of Manchester accommodation guarantee, which is a significant benefit to UoM international students.

Provision for Families

Accommodation

- 3.13 Currently the Accommodation Office makes every effort to accommodate students with families, and it is hoped that future developments will offer greater flexibility, with plans for a development at Fallowfield to provide 220 units in one and two bedroom dwellings. The proposals include crèche facilities, play areas and communal spaces.
- 3.14 Approximately 60% of the University's leased stock of accommodation administered by Manchester Student Homes is for families, in a range of different prices. In expanding the property portfolio, account is taken of the suitability of local amenities such as schools and shops. Expansion into east Manchester is expected following the on-going investment and regeneration programme.

Childcare

- 3.15 International students also take up the majority of the available childcare places offered via the University, and are eligible to apply for a reduced rate.
- 3.16 The Office of Student Support and Services, in collaboration with the Students' Union, has put together a website providing information on childcare, and in September 2006 students will have the opportunity to indicate that they have caring responsibilities when they complete registration. Collecting this data will provide an indication of the level of demand for childcare in particular, improving the University's ability to respond to the needs of students with children and other dependents.

Action Taken: From September 2006, all students will be able to indicate whether or not they have caring responsibilities so that the University can assess the level of support it offers to such students.

Financial Support and Services

- 3.17 Banking has emerged as a high profile issue for international students. Banking was the primary source of comments in the 2005 Student Satisfaction Survey that international students were not treated equally. The UKCOSA Report, 'International Students and Basic Bank Accounts' (January 2006) shows that this is not a problem confined to the University of Manchester. There appears to be inconsistencies among the banks about what information an international student is required to submit in order to open an account. International students are also disadvantaged as they are not normally eligible to open a standard UK current account. This means that they are unable to make purchases using debit cards/online and so are not able to take advantage of cheaper prices available on the internet (for example).
- 3.18 The International Development Office and the Student Services Centre are coordinating their approach to local banks.

Action: Continue efforts to achieve a consistency of approach from the banks, and to endeavour to put facilities in place to enable international students to open bank accounts with minimal difficulty.

- 3.19 At the national level, UKCOSA is lobbying the government and the banking system.

Recommendation viii): Explore the possibility of striking a partnership between the University and a bank with its HQ in Manchester (such as the Cooperative Bank).

- 3.20 The International Student Barometer showed that students were consistently dissatisfied with the availability of financial support. Aside from emergency hardship funds, there are only limited sources of internal financial support for international students.

Recommendation ix): Explore the possibility of establishing/promoting bursaries etc for international students.

Recommendation x): Work to develop opportunities for suitable part-time jobs, and for work experience in general may also partly address this issue. (See Careers Advice and Support below).

- 3.21 International students are often resentful that they are charged significantly more than home students for the same course. Whilst it is true that for some programmes international fees are higher, nonetheless it may be beneficial to consider how best to transmit to all students (and some staff) the message that the undergraduate student fee (especially) is not a full cost fee, and Home/EU undergraduate students are subsidised by Government.

Recommendation xii): Consideration be given to achieving increased transparency about the fee regime.

Campus Environment

- 3.22 The satisfaction surveys showed this as an area in which international students were less satisfied. Among undergraduates, 66% of home students were satisfied, compared with 48% of overseas students, although this pattern was partially reversed for postgraduate students: among taught postgraduates, 56% of home and 66% of international students were satisfied, but only 44% of EU students. Among postgraduate research students 61% of overseas students were satisfied. Focus groups revealed that this may partly be due to expectations raised by the use of the expression 'campus', by which students understood a self-contained, green-space environment, suburban/rural in tone, rather than a city centre environment with a busy main road running through.

Recommendation xii):

- To review the way that the University is marketed to prospective students to ensure that it does not unrealistically raise expectations of a 'green and leafy 'campus''. A simple solution may be to give consideration to alternative terminology to 'campus' in University literature, e.g. 'city campus'.
- To consider how existing green spaces, of which there are several, may be made use of/promoted to students – e.g. a 'green space' map.

Careers Advice and Support/Work Experience/Opportunities to earn

- 3.23 Employability is a primary concern for international students and for many the main reason they choose to study overseas is to increase their career potential. Although the University of Manchester's Careers Service is widely recognised by employers as one of the best in the UK, with Manchester graduates among their first choice for recruitment, this is an area where the International Student Barometer showed some dissatisfaction among international students. It is important to note that the questions on the barometer refer to the broad employability agenda and therefore curriculum interventions as well as the offer of the Careers Service are relevant when aiming to address their concerns.
- 3.24 There are a number of issues which are likely to be involved in this dissatisfaction. One concerns international students' perceptions of what the Careers Service can offer them. Further research is required, but it is anticipated that expectations range from writing CVs right through to actually guaranteeing a job at the end. It will be important to make efforts to give international students a realistic understanding of the support offered by the Careers Service. Other problems relate to students' desire to work in the UK after graduating (particularly postgraduate students) in order to gain valuable work experience. Expectations in these areas have been raised by promotion of UK Government schemes, but then dashed when these do not come to fruition. Data from the Barometer indicate that the majority of students wish to work in the UK on a temporary basis only but this does not necessarily fit with the recruitment strategies of major recruiters. UK employers are often confused about work

entitlements for international graduates and put off by the temporary nature of permits or unaware of the conditions under which international students can work. Some international students plan to be able to work part-time in the UK to support themselves through their study, but can experience difficulty in competing in the UK labour market to find suitable employment in line with their expectations whilst they are here. The Careers Service has recently piloted a new strategy designed to boost the employability of international students and reduce dissatisfaction. This comprises three elements: improving links with international recruiters and regional employers; developing employability skills of international students and generating increased work experience and placement opportunities – including opportunities to work for the University; managing the expectations of international students. It is important that opportunities to enhance employability via curriculum development are also explored.

Recommendation xiii):

- The University has one of the best Careers Services in the UK and should use this to gain competitive edge in the international recruitment market. Ways in which the Careers Service's new strategy for international students might be supported should be explored.
- Schools should be encouraged to explore ways in which academic programmes could further enhance the employability of international students.

Catering Services

- 3.25 Focus groups showed that overseas students have high expectations and standards regarding food and catering. Although there was no specific question about the food available in Halls and on campus in the Barometer Survey, many students took the opportunity offered in the free comments boxes to criticise it. It was seen as bland, of poor quality, lacking in variety, unhealthy and too expensive. Some respondents included it in the 'single thing you would change' section. Many participants in the focus groups had given up on catering facilities around campus, preferring to prepare their own food. The International Officer from the SU reported that international students liked the food provided by the International Society.
- 3.26 Discussions with the Head of Campus Catering indicate that there is already good awareness of the issues surrounding catering on campus, with a recognition of the need better to understand what students want. Already, a halal range of sandwiches has been introduced following a survey among students, and plans are being made to increase the range of halal food. Training in the preparation of halal food has begun, with the prospect of Muslim Council certification being achieved. The Catering service is endeavouring to liaise with students, in particular the Islamic Society and the Student Food and Wine Society.
- 3.27 For the future, the new SCAN building (2008) offers further opportunities for development. Efforts are already being made to introduce healthier food options and a wider range of vegetarian options, and initiatives such as 'wokeries' are being explored.

Action Taken: Halal range of sandwiches introduced, and provision for halal catering increased. An ex-chef has been employed to look at food standards across the campus and in Halls of Residence. To encourage healthy eating, from September all menus in all venues (including Halls) will make use of the Food Standards Agency traffic light system to indicate levels of fat, salt etc. A new look website will be launched in September. A Food on Campus Card will be introduced to provide discounts.

Communication

- 3.28 Communication is an issue for all students, but the timely provision of information has been cited as an issue by international students who generally leave home to travel to Manchester in advance of home students. Students identified issues such as how to register with a GP and Dentist, obtaining a National Insurance Number, etc. All the requirements for information mentioned currently appear in the International Students Welcome Guide, and the problem is likely to be the difficulty in reaching international students with the guides when sometimes there is only a short time between them confirming their attendance and departing for Manchester.

- 3.29 A review of communication to students is due to be conducted and will take into account the particular requirements of international students. The Student Portal Project will also enable the University to deliver tailored content to students, making information delivered more relevant.

Action Taken: Introduced a 'Key Dates' section in the Crucial Guide. More accurate record keeping regarding mailing and email addresses will be facilitated by Campus Solutions from August 2006.

Action To Be Taken: Raise awareness of the presence of the Crucial and Welcome Guides on the relevant University websites, among both staff and students. There will be a link to the Crucial Guides from the Registration Wizard (on-line registration). Target information about examination and semester dates into sections of the Student Portal. Consider establishing an FAQ section of the website/portal, or, e.g an 'Ask Manchester' free text interactive query facility. Develop content of international pages on the website, particularly for the post-application/conversion stage of recruitment.

Recommendation xiv): Develop re-orientation activities for returning students (not just international students).

Recommendation xv): Develop a student communication strategy, similar to that introduced for staff communication, and ensure that the particular needs of international students are considered within this.

Pre-Application Support

- 3.30 During the focus groups, students identified the need for specialist help during the application process, particular with regard to submitting the correct documentation.

Action Taken: The International Development Office has responsibility for international students before they arrive in Manchester and has established a hotline to deal with pre-entry enquiries.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 This review of support for international students indicates that the University is aware of some of the particular support needs of this group. Nonetheless, there are always improvements which can be made, and the report has identified areas which the University can develop and enhance. This will be an on-going process and will require buy-in and action across the University.
- 4.2 The University has no desire to segregate particular student groups and treat them differently. Focusing on the needs of international students is important in order that any specific requirements are identified, but improvements in many of the areas identified will benefit the whole student body. It is important that colleagues giving consideration as to how to improve the experience of international students also consider how such improvements may be delivered for all students, and do not compartmentalise international students.

Actions

- 4.3 The following actions are in progress:

4.3.1 *Banking Support*

Continue efforts to be made to achieve a consistency of approach from the banks, and to endeavour to put facilities in place to enable international students to open bank accounts with minimal difficulty.

4.3.2 *Catering Services*

- Halal range of sandwiches introduced, and provision for halal catering increased.
- An ex-chef has been employed to look at food standards across the campus and in Halls of Residence.
- To encourage healthy eating, from September all menus in all venues (including Halls) will make use of the Food Standards Agency traffic light system to indicate levels of fat, salt etc.
- A new look website will be launched in September.
- A Food on Campus Card will be introduced to provide discounts.

4.3.3 *Communication*

- Introduced a 'Key Dates' section in the Crucial Guide.
- More accurate record keeping regarding mailing and email addresses will be facilitated by Campus Solutions from August 2006.

4.3.4 *Pre-Application Support*

The International Development Office has responsibility for international students before they arrive in Manchester and will establish a hotline by September 2006 to deal with pre-entry enquiries.

4.3.5 *Induction/Orientation*

The International Orientation programme has been re-designed to make it accessible to a higher proportion of international students.

4.4 The following actions have been identified for implementation:

4.4.1 *Equality and Diversity*

The Office of Student Support and Services will be working with the Equality and Diversity Office to undertake an impact assessment of the relevant policies to ensure that there is no built in discrimination. Further investigation is likely thereafter, and will probably tie in with earlier discussion about cultural differences in approach.

4.4.2 *Accommodation*

The Accommodation Office will work to ensure that the protocol for moving rooms is clearly communicated to students and to hall staff responsible for advising students.

4.4.3 *Communication*

- Raise awareness of the presence of the Crucial and Welcome Guides on the relevant University websites, among both staff and students.
- There will be a link to the Crucial Guides from the Registration Wizard (on-line registration).
- Target information about examination and semester dates into sections of the Student Portal.
- Consider establishing an FAQ section of the website/portal, or, e.g an 'Ask Manchester' free text interactive query facility.
- Develop content of international pages on the website, particularly for the post-application/conversion stage of recruitment.

Recommendations

Cultural Awareness

- i) Work to take place jointly between International Development, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Office, the Staff Training and Development Unit, and Equality and Diversity to work with Faculties and Schools to address cultural awareness issues as they affect both teaching and learning and cultural integration, from the perspective of both staff and students:

- To arrive at conclusions in relation to minimum standards of cultural awareness training for staff in particular roles (to include input from IAT/OSSS/International Society) - e.g. lecturing staff teaching international students, support staff – and whether there should be training available tailored towards particular cultural groups.
 - To address the issue of learning support and the transition to UK educational styles, particularly in terms of clarifying UK expectations in relation to the student-lecturer relationship, plagiarism, independent study, critical awareness, particularly for students arriving into the UK direct from other education backgrounds.
 - To raise awareness of the variation in background experience of students from different national backgrounds.
- ii) The Office of Student Support and Services to work with the Equality and Diversity Office to undertake an impact assessment of the policies relating to student complaints, academic appeals and student conduct to ensure that there is no built in discrimination.

Integration

- iii) Further investigation of the most effective ways by which international students can make connections with home students and UK culture is needed, whilst not overlooking their desire also to retain connections with others from similar backgrounds to themselves. Involvement from the Accommodation Office/Halls of Residence, Students' Union and International Society would be appropriate.
- iv) Schools should consider strategies at induction which provide opportunities for integrating students into the School community, offering them opportunities to meet other students from their discipline area/School, and at different levels of study.
- See Also:** 'Review of Support for Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Students in Schools' (forthcoming), which includes further recommendations regarding induction.
- v) Explore how the International Society's work with families can be built on more effectively to integrate international students and their families into the University and local community.

Accommodation

- vi) Accommodation Office to work with Student Recruitment Division to a) review the system for maintaining the applicant record, ensuring that communication between the Student System and the Accommodation Office is as smooth as possible, and b) to raise awareness among Admissions Staff of the consequences of any delays in updating information on the system.
- vii) Highlight the University of Manchester accommodation guarantee, which is a significant benefit to UoM international students.

Banking and Finance

- viii) Explore the possibility of striking a partnership between the University and a bank with its HQ in Manchester (such as the Cooperative Bank).
- ix) Explore the possibility of establishing/promoting bursaries etc for international students.
- x) Work to develop opportunities for suitable part-time jobs, and for work experience in general may also partly address the issue of finance.
- xi) Give consideration to means of achieving increased transparency about the fee regime.

Campus Environment

- xii) Review the way that the University is marketed to prospective students to ensure that it does not unrealistically raise expectations of a 'green and leafy 'campus''. A simple solution may be to give consideration to alternative terminology to 'campus' in University literature, e.g. 'city campus'.

Consider how existing green spaces, of which there are several, may be made use of/promoted to students – e.g. a 'green space' map.

Careers Advice and Support/Work Experience/Opportunities to Earn

- xiii) The University has one of the best Careers Services in the UK and should use this to gain competitive edge in the international recruitment market. Ways in which the Careers Service's new strategy for international students might be supported should be explored. Schools should be encouraged to explore ways in which academic programmes could further enhance the employability of international students.

Communication

- xiv) Develop re-orientation activities for returning students (not just international students).
- xv) Develop a student communication strategy, similar to that introduced for staff communication, and ensure that the particular needs of international students are considered within this. The Review of Support for Students in Schools has also identified this as an issue which affects all students.

Appendix 1: CURRENT PROVISION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

1. The International Development Office is the contact point for international students before they start their studies at the University. Their support needs become the responsibility of the Office of Student Support and Services, together with Academic Schools and other University services, once they have registered.
2. The University currently provides support for international students in the following ways:

Language – University Language Centre

- Pre-sessional English courses
- In-sessional English language support

Accommodation

Unaccompanied international students are guaranteed a place in university accommodation. Family accommodation provided by the University is largely taken by international students.

Childcare

Echoes Nursery and Dryden Street Nursery are both available to students. Echoes Nursery offers discounted rates to all students. At Dryden Street all students are charged at the full rate. Home UGs then receive a government childcare grant and the remainder are eligible to apply for a reduced rate which reduces the fee by £60 per week. Effectively this is a subsidy to international students who are the main users in this group.

Orientation

Orientation is the programme devised and managed by the International Development Office for new international students arriving in Manchester. It has two main objectives:

- to enable students to adjust to their new surroundings
- to ensure that key information is conveyed effectively

Orientation welcomes international students, familiarises them with Manchester and the University, helps them to work their way through the academic and financial registration procedures, settle into their Halls and meet fellow-students. Key information communicated covers support services, cultural awareness and education techniques (including avoiding plagiarism). An effective orientation programme will improve the chances of students successfully completing their programme of study in Manchester.

In the past Orientation has been run as a pre-sessional residential programme. However, in this format it only reached 30-40% of new international students. This, taken with the objective in Manchester 2015 of increasing the number of international students successfully graduating from the University, suggested the need for a new approach.

The new orientation programme has been planned in close consultation with colleagues in Halls and Schools to ensure integration and complementarity. It will run throughout registration week and on into October, repeating key sessions on a daily basis to ensure that all students have the opportunity to access them.

Induction

Induction takes place in Schools and introduces all students (not solely international) to their programme of study, their School and the key members of staff.

It is recognised that the School is the key unit with which students identify and their level of integration and feelings of belonging will have a significant impact on their feelings of satisfaction.

More detailed recommendations about the approach to Induction are included in the *Review of Support for Undergraduates and Taught Postgraduates in Schools* (forthcoming), which highlights the need for Schools to understand the diversity of their student body, and to make arrangements to ensure that all student groups are supported and integrated. In some cases this may entail making special arrangements, but aiming for excellent support for all students will in most cases cover the particular needs of international students. For example, offering opportunities during the induction process for students to meet and get to know each other will help international students become more immersed in British culture, through building relationships with their fellow students.

International Society

The International Society is funded jointly by universities in Manchester. The University of Manchester contributes c.a. £186,000 per annum. The society offers a number of services to students, including language classes, support groups for families, social events and trips and a café. It can also be used as a temporary address for international students shipping belongings to Manchester.

Support Services

There is a comprehensive range of support services for all students (Student Services Centre for administrative matters, Academic Advisory Service, Counselling Service, Disability Support Office, Nursery, tutorial teams in Halls of Residence etc). The Students Union Advice Centre is also an important source of advice and guidance for students.

The International Student Advice Team in the Student Services Centre comprises three specialist advisers for international students. They deal with the full range of enquiries and are authorised by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner to provide immigration advice and support with visa applications. 80% of the team's work is related to immigration or employment legislation. The team is also involved in aspects of immigration advice which may more properly be the responsibility of the Directorate of Human Resources. This includes dealing with a small number of staff cases and delivering training sessions to the Directorate of Human Resources.

Study Abroad Unit

The Study Abroad Unit (part of the International Development Office) provides support and coordination for students from Manchester going overseas, and for exchange students visiting Manchester.

Careers Service

The Careers Service offers a programme of annual workshops and employability sessions targeted at international students. In Autumn 2006 there were 14 events scheduled specifically for international students. A comprehensive website, networking sessions and careers fairs are also available for this client group including "The Chinese Graduate Fair @ Manchester" being held in December, 2006 involving 20 Chinese recruiters from China and 5 UK recruiters running China programmes. Information on UK employers' approaches to international student recruitment and information on job vacancies overseas are also offered. During Summer 2006, a new event for graduating international students on returning home and job hunting across the Asia Pacific region was held for 80 international students.

International students are encouraged to use the core facilities of the Careers Service including guidance appointments, mentoring programmes, the Manchester Leadership Programme,

career management skills accredited modules and employer events and are frequent users of the services provided. For example, approximately 20 % of students on the Manchester Leadership Programme are international students

The Careers Service proactively engages with UK and overseas recruiters to encourage the benefits of, and minimise barriers to, international student recruitment. This includes facilitating networking events with international students and local employers; signposting immigration advisory services for UK employers and marketing the employment of University of Manchester graduates to organisations in home recruitment markets. The Careers Service has recently developed a suite of international recruiter brochures; undertaken employer surveys and visited a number of international recruiters across priority countries such as India and China and has begun a programme of webcasts to enable international recruiters to target University of Manchester international students. During Sept. 2005 to Aug. 2006 the Careers Service advertised over 640 non-UK vacancy advertisements on their website. In Autumn 2006 the Careers Service also provided an immigration solicitor on site at 4 of its recruitment fairs offering free advice to both recruiters and students. A member of the Immigration Advice team at the university is also offering appointments from the careers service one day per week.

Academic Schools

Most Schools offers social events for international students during the first few weeks. Many actively promote integration of international students by ensuring that they are evenly distributed in tutorial sessions with students from other countries and not concentrated into national groups. Some Schools also offer, e.g. writing skills workshops for international students, or mentoring schemes.

Welcome Guide

Produced by the International Development Office, the Welcome Guide is distributed to all international students and includes comprehensive advice about all aspects of studying and living in Britain and Manchester.

3. The Students' Union supports international students with a (non-sabbatical) International Officer on the SU Executive and an Overseas Student Secretary on the Council. The Union supports a wide range of national student societies, and it also provides an Advice Centre.

The following are some of the nationality societies run through the Students' Union:

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| • African Caribbean | • Korean |
| • Arab League | • Malaysian Students |
| • Bangladesh Students | • Mauritian |
| • Bruneian | • Mexican |
| • Chinese Students | • Nigerian |
| • Chinese Students & Scholars Association | • Nordic |
| • Egyptian | • Persian |
| • Estonian and Estonian Friends | • Portuguese* |
| • French* | • Russian Speaking |
| • German* | • Spanish* |
| • Indian | • Syrian |
| • Iranian | • Taiwanese |
| • Jordanian | • Thai |

* may just be language associations

Appendix 2: SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

2005 Student Satisfaction Surveys

1. The University of Manchester conducted student satisfaction surveys among undergraduate, taught postgraduate and research postgraduate students between April and July 2005. In total, 1721 students took part, of which 506 (29% were international (including EU)). With respect to the PGR Survey, 49% of respondents were international students.

Overall Satisfaction (all students)

2. 67% of respondents were very or fairly satisfied with their experience at the University of Manchester. 56% of international students agreed that people are treated fairly and equally irrespective of their background. 75% of PGR students are proud to say that they are a student at the University of Manchester.
3. It is clear therefore that The University of Manchester is providing a satisfactory experience for the majority of its international students. The task now is to build on existing success so that the international student experience at The University of Manchester is consistently regarded as excellent.
4. The 2004-5 student satisfaction survey gathered student opinion in the following areas:
 - PGR Supervision
 - PGT Programme of Study
 - UG Programme of Study
 - Accommodation
 - Catering Services
 - Environment and Communication
 - Induction
 - IT, Computing and Library Services
 - Opportunities to Network and Socialise
 - Students' Union
 - Sports Facilities and Services
 - Support Services
 - Part-Time Work
 - Overall – including Advocacy, Equality and Diversity
5. Owing to the small number of respondents overall, it was not possible meaningfully to analyse the results with respect to international students in every category. However, there were some categories in which it was possible to identify the specific opinions of international students.

Advocacy/Value for Money

6. There is a high level of agreement (82%) among international PGR students that their research degree programme represents value for money. The level of agreement among international UG students is substantially lower – only 40%.
7. This finding may be connected to a lack of visibility/transparency about the true cost of UG study, with many students assuming that the UG fee covers the full cost of their programme of study, leading to the assumption that international students are being charged a significant premium.

Equality and Diversity

8. Although overall a majority of International Students (56%) agreed that 'people are treated fairly and equally irrespective of background', there is clearly scope for improvement in this area. This finding was one of those probed further in focus groups which were held with international students (see below), and it was concluded that a large measure of the

dissatisfaction was due to problems with the banking facilities available to international students. This was a nationwide problem which was probably outside the University's scope to resolve.

Careers Service

9. Of those students who had used an aspect of the Careers service, international students were less likely to be satisfied (52%) than home students (66%).

Focus Group with International Students

10. Following the 2005 student satisfaction surveys, focus groups were conducted among 23 international students representing a wide range of nationalities and subject areas. The focus groups concentrated on whether international students considered that they had specific needs which were not already catered for, the reasons for their lower levels of satisfaction in some areas and how satisfaction levels could be raised.
11. Many issues raised by the participants related to cultural differences, both in terms of the different teaching and learning environment and in terms of awareness among staff of the difficulties of studying in a second language, and communication of information.

Cultural Considerations

12. Students reported difficulties in making the transition to the UK learning culture. Many had little or no experience of writing essays, for example. Others had difficulty in understanding the evaluation and assessment criteria, having come from a country in which the criteria were markedly different. Language skills were also an issue, with many students finding difficulty in adjusting quickly enough to the demands of understanding spoken English in lectures and seminars.
13. International students sought to become immersed into UK culture, but many reported disappointment with their ability to do this. Many were put-off by the 'binge drinking' culture of many UK students. They also felt that there was insufficient opportunity to meet with home students. Several of the participants were members of the International Society and had hoped that it would help them integrate successfully. However, few home students join the International Society, with the result that members simply meet other international students.

Fees and Financial Support

14. The focus groups revealed that the main problem at the source of the perception that they were treated less fairly was the banking system, which made it very difficult for international students to access the full range of services (including internet shopping) which were available to home students.
15. However, another factor related to the fee regime for international students. Students in the focus groups did not understand why they had to pay apparently so much more than home students for the same service and programme of study. The result was that they felt exploited and disgruntled. They also observed that there were many fewer scholarships, bursaries and other support funds available to international students.

Support Services

16. Participants in the focus groups had had little interaction, and hence had a low level of awareness of the various support services. Many of their comments related to the support they needed before they arrived in Manchester, e.g. during the application process, finding accommodation, etc.
17. Accommodation and Catering were both areas which received lower approval ratings from international students.

International Student Barometer

18. The 'barometer' is a survey conducted for the University by i-graduate. The survey is conducted three times a year which enables the results to be placed in context for the whole year. The first survey takes place soon after the students arrive, the second takes place half way through the year – at a time when there is traditionally a dip in satisfaction, the 'midway blues', and the final survey is conducted as the students are about to graduate.
19. The particular benefits of the i-graduate scheme are that it involves HEIs throughout the UK and, increasingly, internationally, thus enabling the University to benchmark itself against competitor institutions. It also enables analysis by nationality, and provides data which can be used for both marketing, and to identify areas to be improved in order to increase the quality of the student experience.

"Autumn Wave"

20. The first 'barometer' survey was conducted at Manchester in October/November 2005. 1834 students responded (21%). Of these, 65% were new students, 45% were undergraduates, 29% taught postgraduates and 19% research postgraduates.
21. 38% of PGR students received a scholarship or bursary from the University to fund their studies. The majority of undergraduates (72%) and taught postgraduates (53%) were funded by their families. Other sources of funding were loans, scholarships from their home government, and their own funds.

Application Process

22. The Barometer results showed that while more than 30% of enquirers received an initial response within a week, 25% had to wait up to a month. Delays in the enquiry and application process caused frustration and resulted in some students missing deadlines in applying for grants and accommodation.

Arrival

23. The University of Manchester scored highly on the quality of its welcome and induction programmes for international students. The one area which caused significant levels of dissatisfaction was opening a bank account, which the majority of respondents described as either poor or very poor.
24. The survey focused on the university experience in three categories: learning, living and support.

Learning

25. Areas scoring highly included the library and the expertise of the lecturers. International students were less satisfied with the careers advice and the opportunity for work experience. On a scale of 1 = very dissatisfied to 4 = very satisfied, careers advice scored just over 2.8 and work experience scored 2.7.

Living

26. The top 5 most important factors students thought were important for a good living experience were internet; safety; transport links; good contact with lecturing staff and value of accommodation. Of these, they were very satisfied with provision for internet access (3.3/4). Safety and transport links also scored well. The value of accommodation scored less well (2.65), with a high gap between importance and satisfaction. Other factors with which students were less satisfied included; visa advice (2.8), opportunities for earning money (2.65) and financial support (2.45). Financial support had an importance score of 3.1, but a satisfaction score of 2.45.

Support

27. The Careers Service received the highest satisfaction rating (3.2). Students were least satisfied with the Academic Advisory Service (2.9), the Counselling Service (2.8) and the Accommodation Office (2.7).

International Society

28. Students were specifically surveyed on their awareness of and satisfaction with the International Society. 89% were aware of the existence of the International Society, although only 28% belonged to it. Of those that belonged to it, 23% described themselves as very satisfied, and 60% as satisfied with the service it provided.
29. Although students using the International Society expressed themselves to be satisfied with it, many of its services were used infrequently. The services used most often were Coach trips around the country, and social events. The majority of students who had not joined the International Society (45%) stated that they intended to join but had not yet got around to it.

Advocacy

30. 40% of respondents would actively encourage people to apply, and 49% would do so if asked.

“Spring Wave”

31. The second wave of the barometer was conducted in April 2006. This is anecdotally a time at which student satisfaction is at its lowest, midway through the academic year. 1226 students (17%) responded, of which 43% were undergraduate, 27% were taught postgraduate and 23% were research postgraduate.

Learning

32. The library received high satisfaction scores (mean 3.3), as did the expertise of lecturers and technology (both over 3.2). Students were less satisfied with the quality of their teachers (2.9). Areas scoring particularly lowly were opportunities for work experience (2.5) and careers advice (2.55). In all areas, satisfaction was lower than in the Autumn Wave.

Living

33. The top 5 most important categories in this wave were internet; safety; accommodation value; transport links and living costs. Students were very satisfied with the internet (3.4) and transport (3.15). They were least satisfied with the financial support available (2.3). Satisfaction with in particular visa advice, financial support and the quality of contact with lecturers had decreased since the autumn wave. In some areas satisfaction had increased a little – including transport links and, very slightly, quality of accommodation.

Support

34. The Student Services Centre received the highest satisfaction rating in this area (3.15), followed by the International Society and IT Support. Careers had fallen to 6th place. Students expressed the least satisfaction with the Academic Advisory Service, Counselling, the Accommodation Office and Catering in that order.

Advocacy

35. 31% of respondents would actively encourage people to come to the University of Manchester, whilst 51% said they would do so if asked.

Appendix 3: SUPPORT SERVICES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS – INNOVATIVE METHODS AND GOOD PRACTICE

INTRODUCTION

1. The aim of this report is to highlight examples of good, innovative practice at universities in the UK and globally in order to inform the debate around the Review of Support Services for International Students.
2. This report aims to highlight key areas of excellence at The University of Manchester and key areas which could be improved.
3. This report draws on both the recent QAA report on arrangements for international students¹ and the results of the “Outstanding Support for Overseas Students” award made by the *Times Higher Education Supplement* in 2006, in addition to referring to the expertise and anecdotal knowledge of staff involved in support of international students. The report looks at the information which could be obtained from the public access areas of the websites of a range of universities, including non-Russell group and universities overseas in May/June 2006 and aims to cover both macro and micro level issues. A range of services that might be provided throughout the student lifecycle has been considered, including pre-arrival practices, accommodation, orientation and social programmes, English language provision, and access to immigration advice. Some of the websites investigated were clearly not up-to-date (eg. including photographs of members of staff who no longer work there) and there is therefore an element of a ‘health warning’ on some information. There was, too, considerable difference in the scope and ease of gaining information from different websites.
4. It must be recognised that there is considerable diversity in the organisational structures and institutional approach to the provision of successful support for international students amongst the different universities and that no one university appears to excel in all areas. What is clearly important is that students are offered the right type, level and amount of support and that the provision of the support is clearly communicated to them.
5. There is considerable debate about what constitutes ‘best practice’ in this field; in the absence of an agreed set of criteria applicable internationally, it is deemed appropriate to highlight ‘good’ and ‘innovative’ practice to inform the Review of Support for International Students.
6. The universities selected for comparison to Manchester are principally from the Russell Group, which constitutes Manchester’s key UK competitors. Northumbria University was included because it was shortlisted for the *THES* “Outstanding Support for Overseas Students” award and is one of the most successful recruiters of international students amongst post-1992 universities. The University of Sydney was included because it is one of the top Australian universities in academic terms, and because, at a national level, Australia is a key competitor to the UK in terms of the recruitment of international students. Many in the field also believe Australian institutions to have a leading approach to international student support.

7. In the tables below Manchester appears in the first line of each table and thereafter UK universities are listed alphabetically. The University of Sydney appears last in each table.

Institution	Overall Student Numbers	% International Students
Manchester	38,971	14%
Birmingham	30,083	15%
Cardiff	28,459	11%
Leeds	35,078	12%
Liverpool	18,002	12%
LSE	8,815	47%
Northumbria	25,457	11%
Nottingham	26,959	17%
Sheffield	25,622	15%
Southampton	23,136	12%
Warwick	28,849	16%

Fig. 1 – HESA 2004 statistics

8. This report covers the following areas: Policy Framework and Codes of Practice; Pre-arrival; Orientation Programmes; Accommodation, Immigration Advice, English Language Support; Careers Service Provision, Student Advice and Support, Provision and Support for Different Faiths; Specialist International Student Support,; Social Activities and Programme, Health Services, Childcare Services, Hardship Funding and Re-orientation.

Policy Framework/Codes of Practice

9. The QAA report has pertinent comments on the organisation of support for international students and notes the many challenges that institutions face in setting up the appropriate policy frameworks. Of particular relevance to this report are:
- the need for a common policy framework to ensure that the support provided is coordinated across the institution even though the support may be delivered by a variety of (academic and administrative) departments
 - the additional support needs of taught postgraduate students who take longer to adjust to the expectations of a new teaching & learning culture
 - the pressures on careers services from the special demands and expectations of international students
 - the necessity of providing cultural awareness training for academic, administrative and support staff with responsibility for international students
10. Although many institutions work to a Code of Practice/Ethics, formulated internally or by an external organisation (eg: UKCOSA), this information is rarely published on websites. Some universities have a Student Charter covering all students in addition to a Code of Ethics. The University of Sheffield has a Code of Good Practice for international students in addition to its Charter for Students in recognition of the additional support needs of international students.
11. The University of Manchester already works to the UKCOSA/AISA Code of Ethics and to the UKCOSA Code of Practice but may wish to consider developing its own more detailed Code of Practice in order to provide a framework for policies and their implementation.

Pre-arrival

Institution	Pre-arrival publications
Manchester	Advantage brochure (sent 2 weeks after offer made from January onwards and also available as pdf); Arrival brochure sent to offer holders in hard copy and available online; Orientation Guide sent to offer holders in hard copy and available online; Pre-departure booking form; Airport Collection Scheme booking form; Orientation Programme booking form available online. Downloadable example

	material from Orientation Programme available. Telephone conversion campaign.
Birmingham	Downloadable Welcome Brochure; Guide (somewhat misleading entitled 'Your Invitation to Birmingham for 2006 Entry'); Guide to Bringing Your Family Pre-departure briefings listed on website
Cardiff	Downloadable Introduction brochure and Guide for International students Separate page for downloadable documents, including The TrainLine, National Express Coaches, searchable map of UK and BC Education UK pages in Chinese, UCAS and UKCOSA Pre-departure briefings listed on website
Leeds	Downloadable Pre-arrival Guide and BC Safety First Guide. Page in Chinese including link to Chinese embassy for students to register with embassy. Interactive real-time 'Ask Leeds' facility. Meet and Greet online booking form
Liverpool	Link to Hotcourses Uni overview in 6 languages (Arabic, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish and Thai.
LSE	Information on opening a bank account; useful links for international offer holders including registration guide, guide to University support services, visas, travel, course induction, accommodation, life in the UK, legal matters, driving, culture shock. Little advice on what to bring. No mention of an Orientation Programme. No link for International Students on main website home page.
Northumbria	Downloadable 'Coming to Study' guide; BC Safety First Guide; fun quiz; thought-provoking exercise on culture. 'Ask Northumbria' facility
Nottingham	Link to Hotcourses University overview in 9 languages (Arabic, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), Korean, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Thai and Vietnamese. Information for disabled students.
Sheffield	Extensive, easily accessible webpages on what to do before leaving. Covers registration guide, guide to University support services, visas, travel, course induction, accommodation, life in the UK, legal matters, driving, culture shock and lots more, and in far more detail. Link on home page for prospective international students. Country-specific advice, including Chinese translation for China. Booking form on line for airport collection and orientation with extensive advice on what to do about lost luggage.
Southampton	Link on home page for prospective international students. The website is very easy to navigate. Good FAQ section covering orientation etc. Downloadable PDF equivalent of Arrival Guide. Basic introduction to Southampton available in 21 languages. Comprehensive sections on 'Before You Leave Home' including tick lists and on-line registration. Booking form on line for both airport collection and induction
Warwick	Downloadable Welcome Guide; comprehensive information on how to get to Coventry using different types of public transport; extensive 'Before You Leave Home' section (including information on advance mailings and emergency contact details); briefer 'Before You Arrive' section; online booking forms for airport collection and orientation programme
Sydney	Detailed information (albeit presented unimaginatively) about what to bring, documents to check, things to do pre-arrival and immediately post-arrival (eg: ring parents to confirm safe arrival)

12. The standard, range and ease of access of information available online varied hugely. It is now clearly becoming common practice to have arrival guides available in pdf format online and to have booking forms for airport collection and orientation online. Manchester was the only university investigated to have actual presentations (albeit from the previous year at the time of writing) available online. Noted below are 'innovations' which should be considered at Manchester:

- Information on the website in other languages – primarily useful for parents (NB: a brochure in Chinese is planned)
- Downloadable documents from external organisations (with permission)
- 'Ask Manchester' facility (NB: there has already been some discussion on this feature)
- More innovative approach to dealing with key support issues (eg. New culture issues)

- More information on topics such as opening a bank account
- Information on delayed luggage, advance mailing, storage
- Warwick's and Melbourne's websites include a dictionary for unfamiliar terms – this would be a useful addition to Manchester's printed and electronic publications
- Information for disabled international students

Orientation programmes

13. The QAA Report states that "it is clear ... that institutions appreciate that international students require more extensive induction than home students and that early contacts and careful orientation enable students to settle more quickly and give them the confidence to refer themselves for any support they might need". There is considerable variation in the nature, content and duration of orientation/induction programmes at different institutions but this variation is due in part to the variation in institutional policies and structures.
14. Many institutions, including Manchester, have pre-departure briefings in-country in addition to separate induction and orientation arrangements held over a period of time. Manchester's schedule of pre-departure briefings is extensive, covering 15 countries, with several locations in many.
15. Most of the universities run a limited airport collection service, concentrating on peak periods on certain days around orientation/start of term. A number charged for airport collection and several charged EU students for the orientation programme, or offered a shorter programme.
16. There is considerable variation in the approach to arrival and orientation issues in the different universities investigated. Some institutions (eg Sheffield, Aston) have a programme which begins with an orientation course in the week before Fresher's Week, though a number of universities charge EU students to attend the programme, and Sheffield charges ALL students on its programme £99.00 (applications without payment are not processed). Manchester is one of a number of universities offering additional orientation programmes throughout the year (indeed Manchester was the only one investigated to offer an April orientation programme). In terms of information rather than sessions, orientation packs are available all year in (Leeds) and Manchester's are available to download all year round from the Manchester website.
17. The format of Manchester's orientation programme has been changed for 2006 in order to address two key issues – the possibility of involving all new international students (which the former residential programme could not) and the recognition of the importance of international students integrating with home students. The operation of the scheme will be closely monitored and reviewed for subsequent years. However, to note is the development of the programme content this year to include new sessions such as 'Health and Safety in Laboratories' and a planned session on mobile communications, as well as specific activities for families. From the research undertaken (as shown in table in Appendix) key advantages of the Manchester Orientation Programme are:
 - extends over a long period to allow for flexibility and convenience for students, as well as latecomers
 - allows students to integrate from the beginning with home students
 - several sessions and events are specially designed for families
 - social events suitable for families are highlighted as such in the guide
 - format allows for dealing with huge capacity (Manchester being now the largest single-site university in the UK)

Institution	Orientation Programme (including Airport Collection)
Manchester	Free airport collection service runs 11-22 September 0730-2100 from Manchester Airport and is bookable online from the beginning of July. OP runs from 15 September – 22 September (18-22 alongside Fresher's Week) with key sessions repeated until 11 October. Free of charge, including all but one optional social event. Booking form available online and downloadable example material from

	previous year's Orientation Programme available.
Birmingham	Airport collection from Birmingham airport for 1 day only 0900-1800. 5-day OP for all international students.
Cardiff	Airport collection from LHR and Cardiff on 2 days. Free for non-EU students and dependants; £10 pp for parents of non-EU students. EU students charged £15 pp. Comprehensive OP; some events charged.
Leeds	Free collection from Leeds/Bradford airport, Leeds railway station or Leeds city coach station. Free Orientation events – standard list. All bookable online.
Liverpool	Airport collection is free and operates for 3 times per day between 0830 and 1800, for 3 days before the start of the orientation programme. The orientation programme is free and lasts 2 days. Students pay for their accommodation.
LSE	No mention of an Orientation Programme.
Northumbria	Airport collection runs from Newcastle airport 09-24 September. 3-day OP for non-EU students only.
Nottingham	Airport collection operates on 1 day only (19 September) from LHR and Manchester. LHR 0800-1900; Manchester 1000-1300. Service is free for students; £20 pp for friends/relatives. OP is free for all international students but for non-EU it lasts 5 days; for EU 3 days. OP includes university accommodation.
Sheffield	Airport collection operates over 1 week from both Manchester and Doncaster airports and is charged at £25.00 from Manchester (with a discount of £5.00 for prompt payment). Students are told of payment procedure on arrival at Manchester. Website informs students that in 2005 this represented about 55% of the total cost of the service. Cost from Doncaster is £10.00. OP runs over 5 days and students arriving the night before the start must pay for an additional night's accommodation. The programme is charged at £99.00, payable in advance. Website informs the students that the University contributes a similar amount to the cost of the programme. Payment must be received with the application form - applications received without payment will not be processed. Brief information on programme content concentrates on social side.
Southampton	Airport Collection operates 4-times daily, for 4 days, only from T3, LHR . 4-day OP, bookable online from 07 June. Scanty details of programme content.
Warwick	Airport Collection operates on 1 day only (26 September) only from T3, LHR . 4-day residential OP with online application from 03 July. 850 places available; free to non-EU; EU price £85. OP includes trips to Oxford and Stratford.
Sydney	No airport collection service. Helpdesk staffed jointly with other local universities at airport give information on temporary accommodation, advice on local transport, a map of the University and help find transport to get to the city. Details of different modes of transport to city centre are on website. Comprehensive details of OP which takes place 2 weeks before start of term. Includes very specific sessions (eg. Aussie English/Surfing Safety) as well as topics common to most OPs. Charges for some trips.

Accommodation

Institution	Accommodation guarantee for international students
Manchester	All unaccompanied international students paying international fees guaranteed for duration of programme. Erasmus students are also guaranteed accommodation in University accommodation for the duration of their stay in Manchester. Study abroad and exchange students are guaranteed accommodation so long as the length of their stay in Manchester is more than one semester. Students who are staying for one semester only are not covered by the guarantee, although the University is, in practice, normally able to offer them accommodation. The international student website is concise and clear regarding accommodation. However, the accommodation office's website does not make clear that the accommodation guarantee covers international students.
Birmingham	Guarantee for single students for at least first year of studies
Cardiff	Accommodation guarantee for new and returning single international students, provided they apply through stated procedures
Leeds	All international students paying the international fee rate are guaranteed a place, provided application is made and the deposit paid within the time limits. For international foundation year students and international undergraduates, the guarantee lasts for the duration of the course; for postgraduates, this guarantee lasts for the first year of study. Limited family accommodation.
Liverpool	Guaranteed to those who apply by 25 August deadline
LSE	No guarantee of University-owned accommodation but high percentage of rooms pre-allocated on a quota basis.
Northumbria	Guaranteed for all new students
Nottingham	New full degree undergraduate and postgraduate students are guaranteed University accommodation provided that certain conditions are met: UG students must have firmly accepted place and applied for accommodation by 01 August 2006 and PG students must have accepted their place to study, applied for accommodation by 01 August 2006 and included a £250 deposit with their application form. The accommodation guarantee also applies to international exchange students and study abroad students. It does not apply to family accommodation or to students commencing their courses after September.
Sheffield	Accommodation guaranteed for NEW students but not those with families.
Southampton	Accommodation guaranteed for full duration of studies but not for students with families
Warwick	All unaccompanied, non-EU students (non-EU) are guaranteed accommodation on the campus itself for their first year of study, and, if they are undergraduates, also for their third year.
Sydney	No accommodation guarantee

18. Manchester's guarantee is clear, simple and comprehensive; it is therefore amongst the best practice in the sector. Clearly, with the move towards Manchester 2015, the University will need to plan for much greater provision for international students with families, and this could be a key factor in decision-making, given the (current) relatively low provision of (guaranteed) university-owned accommodation for families.

Immigration Advice

Manchester	International Advice Team in Student Service Centre are key source of advice about immigration and are the only accredited staff within the University able to give Level 3 advice. Their website gives detailed information, some of which is in the form of downloadable leaflets. Advice about immigration matters relating to work is available on the Careers Service webpages. from a number of sources. Information advice is available via the careers service. Contact details are given and students are encourage to email enquires.
Birmingham	International Student Advisors (International Student Advisory Service, International Office) Very comprehensive section in Pre-Arrival Guide
Cardiff	Student Support Centre, Student Advice Centre. Website also lists independent Immigration Advisory Service; JCWI and UKCOSA contact details
Leeds	Very comprehensive information on the website, including several downloadable documents
Liverpool	Comprehensive information on website; International Support Team offer drop-in sessions and appointments
LSE	Students' Union Advice and Counselling Centre; NB: note on website that SU is independent of LSE and that LSE is not responsible for any advice or information obtained from SU staff or website
Northumbria	Basic advice on registering with the police etc. on website
Nottingham	International Student Support Section of International Office; good range of information on website
Sheffield	International Student Advisors in Student Services; comprehensive information on webpages
Southampton	Unclear where responsibility for immigration advice lies; SU deal with police registration. Webpages contain good range of information
Warwick	International Office provides immigration advice service on appointment basis and has feedback form on website for students who have used the service. Very comprehensive information on the website
Sydney	Excellent and comprehensive information on immigration on website.

19. After they register different levels of personal and administrative support are offered to students at different institutions mainly depending on the number of international students at the institution. The range extends from the provision of specialist advice on immigration and work permits to the provision of very general information or signposting.
20. Whatever the level of specialist support provided, it is important that there is a supportive environment created within the institution by ensuring that there is good communication between academic and administrative departments as well as within central administration offices. This is achieved at Manchester by close liaison between nominated staff members in IDD and IAT.
21. At Manchester, specialist immigration and work permit advice is provided by the International Advice Team, Student Services Centre (SSC) while more general advice and signposting is offered by other SSC staff, IDD staff and other staff in academic and service departments throughout the University and the Student Union. A suite of information leaflets (in-house as well as external publications) is available for students in SSC and in the Student Union Advice Centre and also on the respective websites. There is information (leaflets and on the web) available directing students to sources of alternative/independent immigration advice.

English Language Support

Institution	Free in-session English Language support provided	Language classes for provided spouses of international students	Web-based language/study skills resources
Manchester	√	In the International Society	√
Birmingham	√	√	√
Cardiff	√		√
Leeds	√		√
Liverpool	√		√
LSE	√		√
Northumbria	√		√
Nottingham	√		√
Sheffield	√	Single sex twice-weekly sessions for partners	√
Southampton	√		√
Warwick	√	√	√
Sydney	√	√	√

22. Most universities offer comprehensive and free English language support in-session to existing students. More innovative offerings include:

- Birmingham offers some unusual – and very helpful – services on its website, such as a publication – ‘Voices in the University – to introduce students to different accents/voices; a ‘Kibbitzer’ page of common difficulties in English grammar, lexis etc. with examples from real pieces of work.
- Sydney’s Learning Centre, which provides workshops and courses on a number of study skills, and a Program for International Postgraduate Students and an Individual Learning Programme. It also encompasses a mathematics learning centre specifically for maths/statistics students and a centre for Economics/Business students
- Sydney’s Centre for English Teaching works in conjunction with the International Student Placement Centre to offer work placements (1-12 weeks) with multi-national companies
- Warwick offers language classes at times which are likely to be more accessible for full-time students, such as at lunch-times and in evenings

Careers Service provision for international students

23. This is an area in which Manchester excels. The Career Service has been voted the best Higher Education careers service in the UK by employers for the 4th year running (Barkers/AGR Media Audit 2006) and provides an extensive range of services for students, graduates and employers. The provision for international students has been a priority for development in recent months and the service is now piloting a tripartite employability strategy for international students.

The Division’s strategy for 2006/7 incorporates new initiatives to enhance the employability of students and respond to the 2005/6 Barometer results. This includes: piloting a new work experience programme that seeks to place international students in local business; expansion of the Manchester Gold mentoring programme to include a number of international e-mentoring opportunities for international students wishing to return to a home country; the

allocation of careers consultants into “country manager” roles for the university’s target countries to help the division to maintain and develop its knowledge of international labour markets and the quality of its international guidance resource.

In collaboration with the Division for Development & Alumni Relations, the MLP, Careers & Employability Division is also planning to develop an online interactive alumni-careers network in 2007 with online guidance and support by alumni for international students to better understand the employability challenges and opportunities they face and receive a valuable source of support and guidance.

Managing the expectations of international clients also features within the strategy. For example, in 2006 the orientation session on careers was expanded to a 1 hour session from a previous 15 minute slot. However, changes in the running of the orientation programme did reduce attendance. Expansion of the careers pages for prospective international students is also planned in accordance with the re-launch of the University of Manchester’s website to help to manage the expectations and awareness of careers services and employment opportunities for international students.

A key challenge facing the Division is the resourcing model for international student employability and identifying ways to embed pilot provision for international students into the core provision of the Division.

Provision for Different Faiths

Institution	Student Advice and Support
Manchester	<p>Full chaplaincy service supporting Anglican, Baptist, Methodist and United Reformist denominations. The Catholic Chaplaincy is based in a separate building. There is a team of dedicated staff and volunteers that work exclusively work with students.</p> <p>Manchester Jewish Students bring all the Manchester universities together to form one society. Their Rabbi is based at the Fallowfield synagogue. The Jewish Society runs regular events and activities.</p> <p>There are two prayer rooms for Muslim students – one on North, one on South campus. The Islamic prayer rooms are maintained by the Islamic Society, and are separated into separate areas for men and women.</p> <p>The Hindu Students' Forum operates across all Manchester universities and students use the Hindu temple in Withington.</p> <p>Ven. Piyatissa of Ketumati Buddhist Vihara has been appointed as the Buddhist chaplain to the university and attends the St Peter's building regularly. The Buddhist society runs regular meetings and acts of worship in the Student Union.</p> <p>Halal, oriental and kosher food widely available. International Society restaurant is completely Halal.</p>
Birmingham	All major Christian denominations are represented in the Chaplaincy, plus a Jewish Rabbi. Webpage lists contacts for wide range of other faiths.
Cardiff	Referred to external chaplaincy webpage that could not be found
Leeds	<p>Chaplaincy runs an International Student Society and provides information for other faith communities about activities in the local area</p> <p>University Islamic Society has headquarters with prayer rooms, washing facilities, a women-only room, and a common room where halal food can be brought at lunch-times</p> <p>Every Friday, prayers are led by the university's Imam in a lecture theatre</p>
Liverpool	<p>All major Christian denominations are represented in the Chaplaincy, which has close links with religious societies</p> <p>The Guild of Students has a prayer room for Islamic prayer</p>
LSE	Chaplaincy works with an ecumenical Christian team and representatives of religious societies from the Students' union e.g. Islamic, Jewish and Buddhist societies; has a Jewish Associated Chaplain Islamic prayer room provided
Northumbria	Islamic prayer room provided. Only Christian chaplains based at university.
Nottingham	<p>One chaplain concerned specifically with international students</p> <p>Chaplaincy has a multi-faith quiet room</p> <p>Two Islamic prayer rooms provided</p>
Sheffield	<p>Chaplaincy Service has a chaplain/associate chaplain or religious adviser for several world faiths:</p> <p>Baha'i</p> <p>Buddhist</p> <p>Christian</p> <p>Hindu</p> <p>Islamic</p> <p>Jewish</p> <p>Sikh</p> <p>Three Islamic prayer rooms, with separate rooms for men and women</p> <p>Chaplaincy website has links to student religious societies, which have very well-developed and maintained websites</p> <p>University's Statement on Religious Activities on Campus is available online, and is extensive</p>
Southampton	Islamic Prayer room provided
Warwick	<p>Jewish and Christian Chaplains</p> <p>Islamic Prayer room provided</p>
Sydney	Prayer facilities for all faith are available on campus

	Halal food is available from most Student Union catering outlets on campus and kosher food is available for all students on one campus
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Specialist International Student Support

Institution	Student Advice and Support – Specialist International Student Support
Manchester	International Advice Team, Student Services Centre Advice Centre, Student Union
Birmingham	International Student Advisory Service
Cardiff	Two advisers in the Student Support Centre; SU has a Student Advice Centre and International Students' Officer
Leeds	International Students Office; Leeds University Union Welfare Services
Liverpool	International Support Team
LSE	Students' Union Advice and Counselling Centre
Northumbria	Limited information on web pages; International Student Adviser
Nottingham	International Students Bureau Student Support Section of the International Office
Sheffield	International Student Support Services and International Student Adviser (in SU)
Southampton	Student Advice and Information Centre
Warwick	International Office and Advice and Welfare Services in SU
Sydney	International Student Support Unit

24. In institutions where there are large numbers of international students, it is important that specialist international student support is made available to cater for the additional support needs of international students. The advisers need to have a working knowledge of UK legislation (particularly immigration legislation) affecting international students as this adds an additional layer of complexity to any problems that arise.
25. Manchester has a team of 3 specialist advisers in the International Advice Team. In addition to working directly with students they also provide training and information sessions to academic and administrative staff on international student support. This has included: cultural awareness workshops; basic immigration updates and Q&A sessions; intermediate immigration workshops; workshops on work permits and support services for international students.

Social Activities/Programme

Institution	Social activities/programme
Manchester	International Society run extensive series of trips throughout the year Advice Team; also organises language classes; women's and families' group; organise all social events for Orientation Programme. There are 22 national societies in the SU.
Birmingham	Birmingham has a monthly international student newsletter that details day trips organised by the English for International Students Unit (EISU). Organised trips are run, approximately, every week. The newsletter is also available on the International Office's website. International Office
Cardiff	Information about any activities organised by International Development not available on website. However, several national societies in SU.
Leeds	The international office run monthly day trips – students are encouraged to send an email to enquire what trips are running and when. 'Global Café' evenings are organised for both international and UK students every Monday evening to meet on an informal and relaxed basis. The International Students' Club also have a varied social programme.

Liverpool	Social activities for international students are arranged through the International Students' Association. Regular day trips are organised; there is a comprehensive social and academic support programme.
LSE	It would seem all social programmes are run by the LSE Students' Union. LSE has an international society that run a wide range of social activities.
Northumbria	No information available
Nottingham	The International Students' Bureau runs "a wide range of events and activities". Students are encouraged to join a mailing list. International students are also encouraged to join the main Students' Union activities.
Sheffield	No information available
Southampton	Activities and social events for international students are concentrated in the 26 national societies at the students' union.
Warwick	International Office runs a number of social events and organised trips throughout the year. A calendar is available to view on the internet and bookings can be made via the International Office.
Sydney	Unimates scheme

26. Manchester's International Society is a registered charity, open to any student studying in the Greater Manchester area. The society was founded in 1966 and attracts a good proportion of UK students as well as international students. Activities include:
 - Cultural nights, social meetings and theatre visits
 - Visits e.g. like The Lake District, North Wales, Stratford, York, Chester, Lincoln and Edinburgh
 - Cheap lunches Monday-Friday (of spicy/oriental food)
 - A Hospitality Scheme to link up international students with local people
 - A Women's and Families' Group organise regular informal meetings together - with talks, cookery demonstrations and visits. Children are welcome
 - English and other language classes
 - Regular events including World quiz nights, tai chi, juggling, belly dancing classes
27. 'International 16' is organized by the International Society and brings sixteen students from sixteen different countries together for a unique shared educational and cultural experience. The group attend regular meetings and workshops together and work towards promoting international friendship and raising cultural awareness.
28. Every year the 16 create a performance and workshop which includes songs, stories, dances and games to help introduce children to other cultures. Groups in previous years have visited primary schools in Greater Manchester, Warrington Peace Centre and a Diversity Festival at the Eden Project in Cornwall.
29. International 16 is open to all members of the International Society and selection of participants is made by interview. The project is funded by the International Society – there is no cost to the students.
30. At the University of Sydney, Unimates is a University club supported by the International Student Support Unit to provide international students with an opportunity to meet both international students and Australian students through social activities.
31. The Unimates committee (made up of local and international students, and staff) organises a variety of enjoyable social activities like free Salsa dance classes, weekly Coffee and Cakes meetings, sporting activities, bushwalks, harbour cruises etc.

Healthcare and Childcare Services

The table below summarises the findings for this area.

Institution	Healthcare Services	Childcare Services
Manchester	The University run an occupational health centre for both staff and students. However, the website has very little information about students' ordinary healthcare needs. The students' union website provides no information about student health matters.	There are two University Nurseries, Dryden Street and Echoes. The Dryden Street Nursery is operated jointly with Manchester Metropolitan University, University website also has comprehensive signposting information about other services/facilities/organisations outside the University related to childcare and schooling.
Birmingham	University Medical and Dental Practices	Two day-care facilities
Cardiff	Health Centre – students to be registered with a GP	Day Care Centre - 64 places
Leeds	University Medical Practice; Dental School offers free treatment to students	International Student Centre has a drop-in facility for spouses and has a play area for children Nursery with 50 places
Liverpool	Student Health Service – medical and nursing service Student Health Advice Service at one university residence	Nursery with 68 places Play scheme with 32 places during the school holidays International students may be eligible for help with fees
Northumbria	No University Health Service BUT useful information on webpages warning of meningitis and contact details for NHS Direct	Nursery with 30 places
Nottingham	University Health Service – medical services for students and their families if eligible for NHS care. Dental Centre	Nursery with 50 places Playcentre with 24 places (term-time) Holiday playscheme and Out of School Club ChildCare Support Scheme provides some assistance towards childcare costs
Sheffield	University Health Centre – GP's, Practice Nurses	Nursery with 60 places (places prioritised according to a set criteria e.g. lone/working parents) Pre-school playgroup during term-time – parents help on a rota basis
Southampton	Two Health Centres	Nursery with 108 places Holiday playscheme
Warwick	Two medical centres on campus – children of students may also be seen	Nursery with 47 places; babysitting service organised through University
Sydney	University Health Centre – Overseas Student Health Cover is a visa requirement	6 nurseries in 2 campuses – 250 places Childcare Co-ordinator based in Student Services

Hardship Funding

Institution	Hardship Funding
Manchester	The University of Manchester – through its alumni fund – runs an emergency hardship fund that can be accessed by all students in need. The aim of funding is to ensure that if unpredictable and unforeseen loss of income arises it will not threaten a student's ability to continue his or hers studies at the University. Information regarding hardship funding on the Manchester University website is spread across a number of pages, and it is not immediately apparent that there is any connection between them.
Birmingham	No information available
Cardiff	No information available
Leeds	No information available
Liverpool	No information available
LSE	An 'Annual Fund Award' is available to students but does not specify whether international students are eligible to apply.
Northumbria	No information available
Nottingham	If students find themselves in dire need they can apply to Student Crisis Fund. The Students' Union also provides small, short-term loans – no more than £50.
Sheffield	Hardship loans are administered through Churches Commission on Overseas Students Hardship Fund. Grants are given to those who face unexpected financial difficulty during their studies. Grants do not usually exceed £800 (the average is £500).
Southampton	No information available
Warwick	The International Students' Emergency fund is made available to those who can demonstrate that they explored all other alternatives and the small contribution from the fund will enable the student to continue their studies.
Sydney	No information available

Re-orientation

32. Relatively few of the universities investigated offer re-orientation programmes; Northumbria was significant in having useful, creative web-based materials students could work through themselves to deal with the emotional side of returning home, as well as information on practical issues. The University of Sheffield Code of Good Practice for international students guarantees students a reorientation programme each year; Birmingham runs 2 events at different times of the year and Sydney runs termly 'Returning Students' Seminars'. At Leeds students are able to download a leaflet from the International Office's website called 'Returning Home.' The leaflet highlights some of the problems and issues students returning to their home countries may face. For further advice, students are encouraged to book an appointment with an advisor.
33. In June 2006, Manchester piloted a 'Farewell Event' open to all international students, but with a focus on students wishing to work in Asia-Pacific after graduating. The event was organised and coordinated by the Careers Service. The University is reviewing the pilot to decide how best to open up participation to all international students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Welcome from President and Director of International Development on International pages of website

- Develop content of international pages on website, particularly for post-application/conversion stage of recruitment
- 'Ask Manchester' free text interactive query facility
- It would be useful to discuss with ULC more comprehensive information on English Language provision and web-based learning resources
- The University may wish to consider developing its own more detailed Code of Practice in order to provide a framework for policies and their implementation
- Development of re-orientation activities

Appendix 4: Membership of the Review Team

Head of International Development	Tim Westlake
Head of Student Support & Services	Pat Sponder
Student Experience Officer	Sarah Beer
Student Experience Administrator	Jenny Wragge
Head of International Relations	Tanya Luff
Admissions Officer, Social Sciences	Amanda Grimshaw
Senior Lecturer, MACE	Adrian Bell
International Officer, UMSU	Dan Xie