

FORUM

MEMBER
MAGAZINE

Discussing international education



THE NEW INTERNATIONAL OFFICER

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SENIOR INTERNATIONAL OFFICER?

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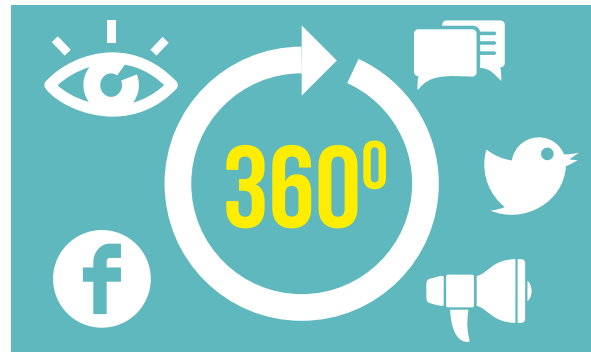
“Ongoing transformations leave their imprint on the job of international officers”

NEW TIMES, NEW CHALLENGES

29

“Without well-rounded communication, internationalisation reduces itself to the central international office and the activities of isolated groups”

360° COMMUNICATIONS



32

“I firmly believe in the value of sharing our experiences and learning from one another”

IN CONVERSATION WITH DENNIS MURRAY

39

“Everyone who identified as a Senior International Officer reported either leading or being involved in strategic planning efforts”

WHO IS EUROPE'S SENIOR INTERNATIONAL OFFICER?



EDITORIAL

Creative. Collaborative. Knowledgeable. Nimble. Specialist. Generalist. Academic, advocate, or scholar-practitioner. Which way (or ways!) forward for the international officer of today and for the future? This is the fundamental question of the current issue of *Forum*, bounded in a discussion of what is needed to effectively manage internationalisation and move our institutions forward into new – both exciting and daunting – territory, as this very volatile 21st century unfolds before us.

The articles in this issue illustrate the many dimensions of the work that international offices and officers need to address, as well as the range of complex circumstances in which professionals in our field must operate. Common threads include the need to anticipate change, deal with ambiguity, and cultivate and sustain productive relationships with many different kinds of actors who have a stake in the internationalisation agenda.

Yulia Grinkevich's piece uses the term *bricoleurs*, which for me captures two crucial ideas relevant to our field. First, there is the constant call to **create**, to build out new programmes and new initiatives as new demands arise. There is a real sense of evolution in the field of international education. We see this, for example, in the context of Nigel Healey's article on the very new role of the international branch campus manager, and certainly in the inter-generational

reflections of (daughter) Sara Marie Ullerø and (mother) H el ene Bernot Uller o, also captured in this issue. Second, the work of a *bricoleur* is done with whatever materials may be at hand. This requires a keen ability to understand one's context and to leverage the resources at one's disposal. Making the most of relationships – for example, between academics and administrators – is touched upon by contributor Douglas Proctor and others, while working to turn our international offices into 'classrooms', as suggested by Jane Edwards, also builds on this notion of making creative use of the particular resources within our reach.

Our interview with Dennis Murray, a 'founding father' of the International Education Association of Australia (IEAA), highlights key issues related to the future work of international education professionals, particularly in relation to creativity, adaptability and "*shared and distributed*" leadership. He also alludes to the notion of being attentive to 'surprises' – a powerful insight in a year that brought us Brexit and a thoroughly tumultuous presidential election in the United States, both developments with potentially profound effects on the global international education community.

Despite – or perhaps precisely because of – the inevitability of unexpected turns in the road, the need has perhaps never been greater to think and plan strategically, and to act on the basis of thoughtful, ethical vision and purpose. This goes



for individuals and for institutions. The EAIE's newly unveiled strategy for the period 2016–2020 provides an important roadmap for our organisation as we seek to navigate the uncertain – but certain-to-surprise! – period ahead. *Forum* and the EAIE's other publications will do their best to contribute to the realisation of the four strategic goals that underpin the Association's vision, and to foster wider conversation about the ways we can improve our individual practice and work collectively to make a positive difference in the world through international education.

—*Laura Rumbley*, Editor
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When she isn't at work, Erin, a recent transplant to Dublin, enjoys visiting the city's many comedy clubs and experiencing the renowned Irish humour at its finest.

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Douglas is a keen singer and sings baritone in the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Chorus. From February, he will be in Dublin and is open to recommendations of a good choir there!

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IN CONVERSATION WITH

DENNIS MURRAY

LAURA MESQUITA
EAIE



Dennis Murray is Senior Honorary Fellow of the LH Martin Institute for Leadership and Management of Tertiary Education at The University of Melbourne, Australia, and Director of IDĒON, International Higher Education Pty Ltd. One of the core founders of the International Education Association of Australia (IEAA), Dennis actively participated in the professionalisation of the field in Australia. He has extensive international experience, having worked closely with European and North American partners. For Dennis, the future of international offices lies in the hands of adaptable, future-oriented and creative professionals.

Who is the international officer of today?

DM: The nature of leadership in all kinds of enterprises is changing fundamentally and university leaders aren't immune. The context we operate in is volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. While this may have been true in the past also, the speed, frequency and scale of change today are unrelenting and pose special challenges. And, as international education practitioners especially understand, complexity in the global environment is particularly challenging.

Much emerging research attempts to identify the organisational imperatives that universities worldwide need to attend to in order to survive and thrive. Four strike me as particularly important. (1) Universities urgently need to change and to differentiate themselves to stay viable in the longer term. This means that (2) diversity amongst universities will increase – and this can only be a good thing. (3) Different approaches – let's say different 'business models' – need to be found and aligned to each institution's strategic future; no one size fits all. (4) Finally, universities need a flexible and agile workforce. A focus on nurturing specialised and self-renewing academic and professional staff that is responsive to change will be crucial.

In the prevailing management literature, 'creativity' is often said to be the most important leadership quality for enterprises seeking a path through complexity. More than ever, international officers and their teams are enjoined to be creative in finding

solutions to the challenges their universities face. Being creative without understanding the context in which we operate is going to be sterile – or worse, counterproductive. So it is important for international officers to have a good grasp of their own institution and its 'saga', but also the global forces and trends affecting their institution. This means keeping abreast of the broad megatrends affecting our societies, specifically the trends affecting higher education locally and globally.

More than ever, international officers and their teams are enjoined to be creative in finding solutions to the challenges their universities face

When it comes to leading and managing within the organisation itself, leadership literature points to foreground shifts in attempts to deal with complexity and uncertainty – a move away from the leader as a control agent towards a more diffused, shared leadership amongst senior peers and their teams. As internationalisation becomes integrated into the core functions of universities, and as responsibilities for achievement of strategic outcomes become shared, this shift opens up spaces for international officers to

engage in more creative and collaborative problem solving. The international officer of today is someone who is oriented to the future, willing to embrace and to lead change, able to mobilise and persuade others to contribute collectively and creatively to solutions to complex problems.

In 2004, you helped establish the EAIE's Australian counterpart: the International Education Association of Australia (IEAA). Why was the time right for initiating a professional association for international educators then, and what changes have you seen in international education in Australia since?

DM: There was a long-standing recognition amongst Australian international education leaders, and particularly amongst international education directors in universities, about the need to professionalise the field of international education. From the mid-1980s, we began interacting with colleagues in Europe and the USA, and we watched with interest and with some envy the activities and achievements of both the EAIE and NAFSA. There were two attempts prior to 2004 to establish a professional international education organisation in Australia. Both faltered, in part because of political opposition from university vice-chancellors and presidents, but also because our professional consciousness was not particularly strong at that time.

This changed in the early 2000s, because of our heightened recognition of the need to support up-and-coming professionals in the field, but also because of the growing political need to influence the Australian government in public policy terms. In 2003, I was able to convene successful exploratory discussions between

senior international leaders to establish a membership-based, multi-sectoral professional association. The initial focus of the fledgling IEAA was on professional development of our growing membership and this has remained core. We quickly established a range of workshops and national symposia focused on critical professional issues and challenges. At the same time, we began engaging as a professional group with the long-standing Australian International Education Conference and eventually become joint presenters of the Conference, responsible for its programme.

Our second and equally important motivation – one that initially we did not stress publically – was to foster a better understanding, amongst our political leaders and with the Australian public, about the value and importance of international education to Australia's diplomatic, educational, economic and social well-being. Our ultimate objective was to advocate for an international education strategy and

Australia's future prosperity and to our successful engagement with the world – including the necessity for tangible support for Australian students to study abroad. The public policy levers, including crucial student visa laws, are actively supportive. This is a change from just ten years ago.

IEAA continues to commission research and promote the benefits of international education, including having large numbers of international students in our midst, to the Australian community. This is critical in a climate of emerging xenophobia in some parts of our society. Another serious challenge is the need to forge greater linkages between Australian education institutions and overseas governments, businesses and industry for research purposes and to help tackle great global questions. Fostering enhanced learning and teaching, particularly to help develop global competence and global citizenship amongst our domestic students, is also a critical challenge.

I firmly believe in the value of sharing our experiences and learning from one another

to achieve bi-partisan political support to advance Australian education's global engagement across the spectrum of teaching, research and service.

Professional development and advocacy, supported by research, remain central to IEAA's purposes. We have been highly successful, especially over the past 10 years in gaining the attention and the tangible support of the Australian government. It now recognises the centrality of internationalisation of our education system to

Do you think some of the same trends apply to the European context?

DM: I am aware of similar trends in Europe, although our solutions to emerging issues and challenges must be contextualised and applied within our individual communities. I firmly believe in the value of sharing our experiences and learning from one another. Indeed, it is incumbent on us in far away Australia to break out of our physical and mental boundaries to share and to learn from

our colleagues elsewhere. In my own experience, our most fruitful ventures to enhance our understanding and professionalism have been with our colleagues and friends in Europe.

You do a lot of consultancy-based work for universities. What type of advice would you give to an international officer struggling to get academic staff involved in internationalisation?

DM: There comes a time when we need to make a judgement about what is strategically important in the short and the long term. We need to look for allies, the progressives in our institutions – both academic and professional staff – who, together with us, can move important ideas forward. Ideas are easy. Successfully implementing them is as much the task.

Academic staff are not a homogenous group. Although there are identifiable motivations that will drive their interest and willingness to participate and persevere with you to achieve international objectives, it is often not the tangible motivations (incentives of salary and travel and business return) that succeed so much as the intangible ones (doing a good job, changing the future for a group of individuals or the institution, the pleasure of engaging with others). Don't be overly optimistic, but trust the instincts of the academic community when it operates at its best. Don't hit your head against a brick wall for too long. There is often another solution that you haven't thought of.

How do you see the role and competences of the international officer evolve over the next 10 years?

DM: I've suggested earlier that the context

in which we operate has changed and will change further. It is no longer the case in Australia that a single individual stands at the head of international activity. With the mainstreaming of internationalisation, multiple individuals and teams have a responsibility for one aspect or another of internationalisation – student mobility, international relations and global affairs, offshore delivery,

Leadership in practice increasingly will be shared and distributed. It will involve fundamental social processes such as personal interaction and the ability to persuade. It will also involve the courage to engage in experiential learning to produce desired outcomes. Competences in these areas will be essential for successful future leaders of internationalisation. Competences must be both broad and deep. We will

With the mainstreaming of internationalisation, multiple individuals and teams have a responsibility for one aspect or another of internationalisation

learning and teaching, international strategy, international work placements, and international research engagement. The roles now are multiple. Responsibility is specific to these functions and to that extent dispersed – in some sense, it is shared across the institution. The issue of specific competences is defined, to a large extent, by specific functional roles and responsibilities. That being said, there are identifiable broad competences that apply regardless of function. Recent publicity around the 2016 World Economic Forum included reference to the top 10 notional skills professional leaders are said to need in 2020 in order to thrive in the fourth 'Industrial Revolution'. The top five skills are: (1) complex problem solving, (2) critical thinking, (3) creativity, (4) people management, and (5) coordinating with others. At least two of these skills are intellectual. At least two (and, if creativity is included, three) of these are people skills.

all need to apply our knowledge across a broad range of situations: strategy, operations, technology, people engagement, business functions, and cultural and geographic arenas. And we will need to ensure that we have deep knowledge in at least one discipline, business function, cultural or geographic area.

What advice would you give a young professional starting their career in internationalisation today?

DM: I hesitate to give advice at all. But I have found that, to be successful and to enjoy the work, it pays to be passionate (informed by purpose, preferably to achieve something that will benefit others), patient (informed by a willingness to listen and to learn while acting decisively) and flexible (because the world is full of surprises).