



BRITISH UNIVERSITIES' INTERNATIONAL LIAISON ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2016 - 2017



“ BUILA has developed from a grass roots association to a professional organisation involved in advocacy, lobbying and collaborative engagement with major international education stakeholders, whilst still remaining true to supporting the professional development of its members. ”

Wendy Yip, Director of International Development, Aston University

BUILA's goal is to represent the practitioner's voice for international higher education in the UK

BUILA is the UK-wide, membership-led organisation, supporting the work and professional interests of HE staff working on the international agenda. We do this by:

- Providing a strong and unifying international practitioner voice, representing a broad and diverse sector;
- Helping to shape and influence future policy at a national, regional and local government level, through lobbying and work with government departments;
- Helping to unify the sector by supporting enabling and encouraging collaborations with partners at each stage of the student journey;

- Strengthening the sector by enabling the sharing of best practice and enhancing the knowledge and skills of our members.

BUILA's Annual Report is a reflection of the considerable progress that BUILA has made over the last year in each of these key areas of activity. It also provides an overview of the association's finances for the financial year 2016 - 2017.

The Executive Committee would like to thank all of the organisations that have worked collaboratively with BUILA over the past year; and all the individuals and companies that have supported our activities by giving their time, professional advice and sponsorship as well as the employing institutions of our Executive Team

for their continued support to the Association by allowing their staff to work on our members' behalf.

As we await the results of the Migration Advisory Committee Consultation, we look forward to continuing to enhance and support the work of our members whatever the next set of challenges bring!



Charlene Allen, Chair of BUILA

BUILA has provided a strong and unifying voice within the HE sector at a time when it was desperately needed. The current climate of government policy and regulation, along with the shifting roles and responsibilities of partner organisations, has created uncertainty relating to international student mobility. BUILA has grown in reach and impact throughout the year to fulfil a pivotal role within the sector nationally.

Building on a mandate from our members, we continued to increase investment in our core activities and to expand the association's focus, which has resulted in BUILA becoming a 'go to' organisation for comment, partnership and collaboration within the areas of international student recruitment, trans-national education (TNE); and international collaborations and partnerships.

Helping to shape and influence future policy

BUILA has been working hard to address the challenges facing the sector and to ensure positive messages about how it can contribute to a post-Brexit economy are acknowledged by government and stakeholders.

Through continued work with government departments, to replace and a growing research programme, and dissemination of its results, we have been working with our members and partners to target national and local communities and stakeholders, to promote the economic benefits international students and collaborative research brings to their area. During the year we:

- Commissioned polling of 125 MPs, to raise awareness of the benefits International students bring to the economy and supported ONS research aimed at proving international students do not overstay in the UK;
- Worked extensively with the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) to highlight

economic benefits of international students; hosting consultations in three UK regions, London/South East; Wales; and the north, to enable policy advisors to hear first-hand examples of how international students are benefiting the economy. In addition to the 31 attending universities, BUILA actively encouraged individual university returns, substantially increasing the submission rate. BUILA also provided examples and case studies drawn from members to strengthen the UUK's submission to the MAC;

- Partnered with regional groups, University of Wales and the London Higher International Network, to create a series of 'bottom up' regional lobbying events targeting MPs and key local community stakeholders;
- Provided evidence to the Higher Education Commission on the economic benefits of international students and impact of current government policies. This information was also a contributor to the MAC consultation process;

“ BUILA are a very valuable partner to UUKI. In the last year, we've worked closely with them on projects promoting the UK as a study destination and around the MAC enquiry and immigration policy. They are a great group of people - knowledgeable and passionate about international higher education. ”

Vivienne Stern, Director of Universities
UK International (UUKi)



- Continued to work closely with the Home Office Education Sector Forum on a variety of topics, commenting on emerging policy changes;
- Helped to shape the next stage of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) with the DFE, by providing the international student perspective.

Going forward BUILA intends to:

- Commission research in partnership with UUKI to better understand international students' career outcomes and how universities can support and engage with them and employers after they graduate;
- Look at how best to support the influencing of key European stakeholders and partners;
- Work with partners to highlight the amazing and important collaborations and partnerships between the UK and Europe.

Influencing international marketing and communication at each stage of the student journey

BUILA's wide membership offers a pool of global experts within their field, representing a vast array of different types of institutions, large and small, specialist and multi-faculty. BUILA are now ensuring this expertise is used to inform strategies and policies impacting the sector and to promote the UK as a study destination, at each stage of the student journey.

- BUILA was asked to create three groups to help steer the 'GREAT Study UK: Discover You' campaign. The Strategic Digital Review and TNE groups, drawn from BUILA members, are helping to shape the planning and delivery of the campaign;
- BUILA members have been instrumental in the continued development of the British Council's MOOC for agents and advisors created to develop a more knowledgeable service for international students;



- Through the UCAS International Advisory Group, BUILA has continued to help UCAS improve the service offered to overseas applicants and to review its services and priorities;
- Through the AGCAS International Advisory group, BUILA helped to run a one day conference for AGCAS members around employability for international students, highlighting best practice and available tools in this area.

Going forward, BUILA intends to:

- Work with the British Council and Study UK on two new MOOCs to assist international students at different stages of their journey: 'study readiness' and 'job readiness' for those

that are graduating and joining the world of work;

- Co-host a reception with Study UK and UCAS, targeting international counsellors and advisors, to increase their understanding of the diversity of the UK study offer;
- Work with Study UK to develop a new model for showcasing UK internationally.

Enhancing the knowledge and skills development of our members

BUILA has been providing the mechanisms and networks, both nationally and increasingly internationally, to help advance the skills and knowledge of the UK HE international staff.

Over 300 international staff attended our expanded training programme during the year with all sessions achieving a 98% good/excellent rating. Sessions included: working with agents; TNE & Partnerships; the legal implications of the Consumer Marketing Act and the EUs GDPR.

Our Annual Conference and Directors Forum brought together 250+ international professionals, key stakeholders and partners drawn from the UK, Europe and across the globe. In addition to providing a lively and thought-provoking forum to challenge the way members think and how they deliver their work, the events created a platform for increasing understanding between European and UK HE as Brexit develops, and solidified BUILA's ongoing relationships with key European organisations EAIE and EUA.

BUILA created two new Regional Interest Groups during the year, offering members the opportunity for debate, networking, new ideas and sharing experiences in the key markets of India and China. These groups are already making an impact. We are currently working with the Country Director, British Council India to ensure the practitioners' views are formulated within the new strategy to promote the UK's HE offer in the country; and the China British Business Council to look at potential solutions for connectivity issues for online TNE students, and

to create understanding about Chinese methods of payment.

BUILA has also continued to develop working relationships with international associations around the world to promote the UK perspective and engender collaborations to tackle global issues impacting on international HE. Current relationships include those with the Australian Universities International Directors' Forum (AUIDF); Canadian Bureau for Education; and the German Association for International Education (DAIA).

Going forward, BUILA intends to:

- Expand our Regional Interest Groups to include the Middle East and Europe;
- Create additional training sessions looking at professional development and career progression within the international department;
- Identify ways to work closer with the Commonwealth universities.

“ AUIDF are delighted to be working with BUILA to discuss how to tackle global issues impacting on international HE, we are looking forward to continuing to explore best practice from each other’s organisations and areas for ongoing collaborations.”

Oliver Fortescue, Chair, AUIDF





“ BUILA and their network of experienced professionals have been a close and extremely effective partner, offering crucial guidance and support to all aspects of the GREAT Britain Campaign’s Study UK: Discover You. ”

*Ioana Serghiuta, Project Manager,
GREAT Britain Campaign*

Notes to the Accounts

As at 31 July 2017

The following accounts have been subjected to an 'independent examination' rather than a full audit in line with our role as an association. The four main income streams during the financial year were from the annual membership subscriptions, sponsorship generated to support and enhance the annual conference, training fees to assist in a break even for our training programme and a small amount of bank interest. The main streams of expenditure were for the Project Manager, and Training Co-ordinator, continued investment in an expanded training programme, research and lobbying activities, and BUILA executive costs. The latter relate only to travel, and subsistence costs incurred by the executive team in their liaison roles with partners, these unpaid officers continue to represent excellent value for money.

	Notes	2017 £	2016 £
Current assets			
Trade debtors		86,064	74,259
Cash at bank and in hand		104,830	79,830
		190,894	154,089
Current liabilities			
Trade creditors		57,637	48,084
Net current assets			
		133,257	106,005
Members' funds			
		133,257	106,005

	2017		2016
	£	£	£
Net profit for the year		27,252	18,474
Dividend as follows:			
Member Universities	27,252	18,474	
	27,252		18,474
Partners' current accounts	At 1 August 2016	Share of profits	At 31 July 2017
Member Universities	106,005	27,252	133,257
	106,005	27,252	133,257

“ We have experienced first-hand BUILA’s expertise in delivering an innovative range of education programmes to international HE office staff. Pulling together leading industry experts to tackle a wide range of issues international teams encounter, sharing valuable knowledge, experience and tools to understand and overcome common issues. An ideal platform for individuals to connect and network. ”

Domenica Di Lieto,
Director, Emerging
Communications





“With both its Directors’ Forums and Annual Conference, BUILA is a key internationalisation player in the UK. Especially now, during this delicate phase of Brexit, BUILA is helping to foster understanding and ensure that cooperation across the European higher education sector continues to take place.”

Sabine Pendl, Vice Chair, EAIE



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