



BRITISH UNIVERSITIES' INTERNATIONAL LIAISON ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2017 - 2019

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BUILA provides a constant source of insight and support for International Offices across the UK and in recent years has excelled at offering training for new staff, thought provoking forums for senior leaders, market intelligence briefings for the sector and the 'go-to' conference for International Higher Education specialists.

Lee Wildman,  
*Director Global Engagement,  
Queen Mary University  
of London*

138

Member universities





## 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 Higher Education (HE) staff working in the international arena.

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 our liaison with government departments;
- Helping to connect the sector by supporting, enabling and encouraging collaborations with partners at key stages 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 latest Annual Report is a snapshot of the continued progress and achievements we have 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 years 2017/18 and 2018/19.

On behalf of the Executive Committee I would like to thank all of our partner organisations, both national and international, who have worked collaboratively with BUILA over the past year, and the many individuals and companies that have supported our activities through the donation of their time, professional advice and sponsorship. I would also like to thank 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 a sector we have been resilient in adapting and responding to the major issues impacting on international higher education.

As we await the progress of the latest Brexit negotiations and, once confirmed, the priorities of the newly elected government, we look forward to continuing our efforts to enhance and support the work of our members whatever challenges emerge!

**Bobby Mehta, Chair of BUILA**

BUILA's broad network within UK HE enables us to connect different areas of the sector together to foster a joined-up approach in taking forward the international HE agenda. In an ever-challenging climate BUILA has continued to invest in, and enhance, the Association's core activities. We have expanded the Association's focus and become the 'go-to' organisation for consultation, proactively feeding in our members' comments and concerns, as well as enabling partnership and collaboration within the sector.

### Helping to shape and influence future policy

BUILA has been working hard to address the challenges facing the sector and to ensure that the practitioner's voice is included in major government policy and strategic planning.

Through continued liaison with the government departments of DfE, DIT, Home Office, and the All Party Policy Group (APPG) for International Students, we have also been working with our members and partners to:

- **Lobby for enhanced Post Study Work (PSW) opportunities:** having supported UUKi in lobbying activities and input into policy proposals, we are delighted that an announcement of policy changes in this area has been made.
- **Help influence the delivery and development of the new UK International Education Strategy:** BUILA members and executive have been helping to shape the next iteration of the strategy in areas such as TNE, recruitment and employability.
- **Make, and continue to make, a positive contribution to the new immigration system** that is being developed; working towards a 'light touch' student visa regime: we achieved this through the collection of feedback from across the sector and representing our members at the Education Advisory Group with the Home Office.
- **Better understand international students' career outcomes** and how universities can support and engage with them after they graduate: BUILA worked closely with UUKi

on research which generated key messages about the success of international students, and their positive attitude to studying in the UK. The information has been used in different iterations in different markets to good effect.

- **Understand the issues impacting on key European influencers'** attitude to promoting study in the UK: BUILA commissioned research to better understand the European International School Counsellor perspective that will help inform any European campaigns that we undertake.
- **Strengthen ties and demonstrate continued commitment to our European partners** during and post Brexit: BUILA, in partnership with DAIA, the German Universities Association, hosted a high-profile showcase at the British Embassy in Berlin to coincide with the British Council's Going Global Conference. The 11 innovative exhibits highlighted the unique partnerships and collaborations taking place between universities in Germany, Europe and the UK.

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BUILA are a very valuable partner for UUKi. We have worked together on a range of important issues including international graduate employability, EU student perceptions and post-study work visas. They are fantastic to work with and we can always count on them for timely and useful insights and expertise.

Vivienne Stern, *Director UUKi*

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It is vital for DAIA as a national organisation to exchange ideas, share best practice and identify opportunities for international collaboration with sister organisations such as BUILA. DAIA is proud to partner with BUILA on high-profile international projects and events. BUILA have been an extremely professional and passionate partner throughout the years.

Dr Martin Bickl, *Chair DAIA*

22,000

Twitter impressions on the day of the BUILA Showcase, Berlin in May 2019



The event has led to further partnerships and has given us the opportunity to reinforce positive messaging in support of continued European collaboration between universities and stakeholders.

Going forward BUILA intends to:

- **Ensure that the interests and concerns of the sector are represented**, with all relevant stakeholders in the post-Brexit immigration system from 2021 onwards;
- **Work to get increased recognition for the active role the sector plays in the UK export market**, in what is essentially a Brexit proof industry, and ensure that stakeholders view this in the same light as other export-led sectors when devising policy;
- **Ensure that members' needs are reflected in any post Brexit European messaging and engagement campaign**;
- **Work with key stakeholder organisations in the review and delivery of the UK International Education Strategy.**

## Influencing international marketing and communication at key stages of the student journey

BUILA's diverse membership offers a comprehensive insight into issues impacting the sector. BUILA has worked very hard to ensure our members are heard and their expertise is used to inform strategies and policies at key stages of the student journey.

BUILA has continued to help influence the planning and delivery of the GREAT Study UK campaign through the Strategic, Digital and Alumni steering groups. BUILA has facilitated members' involvement in Instagram takeovers, Facebook live events, alumni videos and promotional Study UK films.

BUILA has supported the British Council in a review of two of the major influencers on student recruitment, that of counsellors and agents, and has created a facility for international school counsellors on the Study UK website

addressing frequently asked questions raised in our International School Counsellor research.

BUILA continues to contribute to the job readiness and employability MOOCs being created by the British Council to better prepare for international students in their continued journey into employment.

Through specific focus groups and the UCAS International Advisory Group, BUILA has helped shape the international strand of UCAS's five-year strategy, aimed at improving and enhancing the service they offer to universities and overseas applicants.

BUILA helped to run, the now annual, one day conference for AGCAS members around employability for international students. This has helped create a better understanding of the wider political landscape and the changes facing international students. It also gave us the opportunity to highlight best practice and to signpost the online tools available in this area.

Going forward, BUILA intends to:

- Work with UUKi on research into best practice in **supporting international students into employment** and work with UKCISA on creating training for members in this area;
- Continue to work with the revamped Study UK campaign, and **support promotional campaigns aimed at Europe**;
- Run a **Graduate Route briefing event with Agents** in India;
- Create a **showcase for stakeholders in India** to promote collaborations between Indian and UK universities while also promoting the imminent reintroduction of the Graduate Route visa.



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It is with the unstinting support of BUILA that we've been able to ensure that the UK higher education sector has a real voice and presence in our Study UK campaign. The BUILA team continues to support us and galvanise members to drive up engagement.

**Fiona Samson**, *GREAT Britain Campaign Director*

### Enhancing the knowledge and skills development of our members

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

During the year over 230 international staff attended our training programme created to reflect a cross section of operational needs. All sessions achieved a 97% good/excellent rating. Sessions included: new to international; working with agents; TNE & Partnerships; using social media; and getting data protection right after GDPR.

Our 15th Annual Conference and Directors Forum brought together 260+ international professionals, key stakeholders and partners drawn from the UK, Europe and Japan. Once again providing an opportunity for international staff to explore new concepts, challenge current thinking and share best practice and experiences.

Our packed agenda included opportunities for our members to consider:

- how the Japanese and Swedish internationalisation strategies compared with the new UK strategy and what the UK strategy meant for international offices;
- what the latest developments were in the political and economic environment and how this might impact on international offices post Brexit;
- and what the do's and don'ts are for TNE partnerships.

We were also pleased to be able to continue our relationship with EAIE and to create new partnerships with other organisations that impact on the work of international HE such as QAA, English UK, NARIC and DE4.

We have added Africa to the BUILA suite of Regional Interest Groups. Our existing groups include the key markets of India and China and offer members the opportunity to debate, network and share new ideas and experiences. Collaborations are also planned with partners in key countries and BUILA are considering integrating the Africa group into the 7th Commonwealth African Summit in 2020.

BUILA has continued to develop working relationships with international associations around the world to promote the UK perspective and collaborate with them 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, USA and Europe;
- **Explore delivery of the Regional Interest Groups in-country** and host wrap around stakeholder events;
- **Look at how we can deliver training to staff in-country;**
- **Liaise with our members to review and streamline our communication channels** to ensure the content we distribute adds value to their professional development;
- **Create new 'familiarise yourself with international' training sessions** for academic and senior management.



**445**  
Members trained  
over the last 2 years

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It was a great opportunity to speak to other officers, and to find out more about their practices and network.



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As someone new to the sector, the insight from experienced professionals was really useful.



**500**  
Delegates attended the BUIA Conference over the last two years

## ACCOUNTS

### Balance Sheet

As at 31 July 2019

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 activity and services costs such as continued investment in an expanded training programme, research and lobbying activities, conference, directors' forums, regional interest groups, and events such as the Berlin Showcase. Plus, support costs such as the Project Manager, and Training Co-ordinator, 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.

<b>Profit and Loss Account</b>	<b>2019</b>	
	<b>£</b>	
Income for the year * inc bank interest	246,506	
Activity and Service Costs	151,391	
Administrative Expenses	54,561	

  

<b>Partners' current accounts</b>	<b>2019</b>		<b>2018</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Net surplus for the year</b>		40,554	43,131
<b>Divided as follows:</b>			
Member Universities	40,554		43,131
		40,554	43,131

  

<b>Partners' current accounts</b>	<b>At 1 August 2018</b>	<b>Share of surplus</b>	<b>At 31 July 2019</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Member Universities	176,388	40,554	216,942
	176,388	40,554	216,942

## ACCOUNTS

### Balance Sheet

As at 31 July 2018

<b>Profit and Loss Account</b>	<b>2018</b>		
	<b>£</b>		
Income for the year * inc bank interest	244,687		
Activity and Service Costs	139,289		
Administrative Expenses	62,267		
	<b>£</b>	<b>2017</b>	
		<b>£</b>	
<b>Net surplus for the year</b>	27,252	18,474	
<b>Divided as follows:</b>			
Member Universities	27,252	18,474	
	27,252	18,474	
<b>Partners' current accounts</b>	<b>At 1 August 2017</b>	<b>Share of surplus</b>	<b>At 31 July 2018</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Member Universities	106,005	27,252	133,257
	106,005	27,252	133,257

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At a time when our sector is responding to external threats and opportunities, BUILA is uniquely positioned to promote mutual understanding and foster collaboration across European higher education.

Michelle Stewart,  
Vice-President EAIE



Africa Regional  
Interest Group,  
London 2019

Bobby Mehta, Chair  
speaking at the BUILA  
Annual Conference 2019



BUILA Annual Conference  
Executive Team, Belfast 2019

BUILA consultation  
by the All-party  
Parliamentary Group  
for International  
Students, Houses of  
Parliament 2019



Andy Mandebura,  
Vice Chair in  
discussion with Jamie  
Arrowsmith Assistant  
Director Policy, UUKi,  
Conference 2019

BUILA Annual Conference  
Ambassadors, Belfast 2019





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