



BUILA ANNUAL REPORT 2011-2012

### Welcome from the Chair

Even more than in previous years, this has been a year of real transition and change within the international arena and that has been reflected in the make-up and work of the organisations that BUILA liaises with, and, to a lesser degree within BUILA itself as we look at how we need to respond to the fresh challenges thrown up by this change.

Our membership grew again, to 134, and delegate numbers exceeded our expectations at the 8th Annual Conference, held at the University of Glamorgan for the second year. 50 new international staff attended training on the first day and our overall attendance reached an impressive and record-breaking 179. The participants of the 'Fresh In' training session found the training very useful, particularly the interactive aspects of the workshop as these allowed participants to share ideas and good practice in relation to common issues. The pre-session questionnaire highlighted the need for more marketing training, this was therefore given more emphasis during the programme. We received overwhelmingly positive feedback from conference participants who enjoyed sessions on 'social media, working in consortia' and 'the student experience'. The conference dinner, held at Cardiff City Hall, was a huge success and provided excellent networking opportunities.

I'd like to offer our thanks to Glamorgan Conference Services for their excellent assistance over the last two years and of course to the members of the Executive team who worked so hard to make the event such a success. Conference next year will take place in Edinburgh during the second week of July: we are committed to delivering a programme which we hope will surpass the success of the 2012 programme.

Internally we increased the resource available to support BUILA through the extension of contractual hours of the new Secretary, Philippa Collins Robson. Philippa comes to us with the experience of creating and delivering the strategy for the London Universities International Partnership and we look forward to her developing into the role. Thanks must also go to Richard Farr and Kay Swain who also held the role during the year, and in particular to Richard who returned from retirement for a handover period. I would also like to thank outgoing members of the Executive team, Tim Gutsell, Sue Ward, Lorraine Gaytten and in particular Sue Piggott for the time that they have given to the Association. Thanks too must go Exec members' employing institutions for continuing to support the Association by allowing them the time to attend meetings on your behalf.

This year, the **Joint Education Taskforce** underwent a significant transformation, with membership being reduced from 40 to 9 sectorial and UKBA representatives. The aim was to provide a more focused and confidential forum to discuss policy and implementation. Despite this reduction, BUILA retains a seat at the table, in partnership with GuildHE and UUK. Early indications are that the new group is working more productively.

During the year, there were further changes to Tier 4 rules and clarifications on guidance, which have caused turbulence in the sector, particularly for the monitoring and reporting of student engagement/attendance. Anecdotal feedback of UKBA inspections of HE institutions across the country appear to suggest a variety of approaches being taken by UKBA officials as to what does (or does not) constitute compliance.

In recruitment activity, rules were changed to allow the (re)introduction of ECO discretion in relation to students' English Language and credibility through visa interviews, and TB screening requirements were extended in a range of territories.

It is anticipated that Tier 4 activity and related policies will not see further changes in the coming year, notwithstanding known judicial considerations arising from the first HE license revocation in August 2012. This assumed stability will depend in part on the Government's progress to reducing net migration to sub 100,000. Regardless of this, previous changes are clearly biting, with members reporting significant reduction in enrolments especially at PGT level, from India, Pakistan and Nigeria to name a few. While many factors contribute to this, the loss of the Post Study Work visa is clearly a major concern in those markets, at a time when other destinations (particularly the USA, Australia and Canada) are expanding their post-study work provision and proving more attractive to students.

The on-going various rules changes and license suspensions/revocations have been reported widely in international press and are contributing to the perception that students are no longer welcome in the UK, or that sponsors cannot be assumed to be 'safe'. BUILA proposes to work with the HE sector in the coming year to counter these negative associations where possible and to re-establish the UK as a welcoming destination for high quality study and research.

BUILA has continued to engage with **NARIC** but there have been some difficulties in getting members of the core services monitoring group together. There was a move to enlarge the group in order to better represent the main users of NARIC, additional representation from both within education and also key employers was sought.

Looking forward there are still opportunities for working far more closely with NARIC on joint projects, however the core services monitoring group may not be the forum for developing the relationship. We are proposing to invite Ian Bassett to a BUILA meeting early in 2013 in order to discuss how the relationship could develop.

Kim Hadley continues to liaise with **DJG** on behalf of BUILA members. Dave Gardner attended the BUILA Annual Conference in July to promote good relations between DJG and member institutions. DJG also sponsored the event and we hope this relationship will continue for next year's event.

Much discussion has been held over the British Council's new freight provider policy and the decision to cease recommending a specific company. Kim is still talking to the British Council on this matter and intends to write a simple checklist for BUILA members to avoid some of the pitfalls encountered in recent months by institutions using freight providers other than DJG.

**UCAS** appointed a new Head of International Strategy, Sally Mansell, in March 2012 and undertook two sector-wide consultations during the year: the Admissions Process Review and the Qualifications Information Review.

The first, a review of the 50+ year-old undergraduate admissions process, included a consultation with the higher education sector including BUILA. 454 written responses, input from over 500 participants at consultation events and survey responses from over 11,000 applicants were received. The findings and recommendations were published in March 2012: <http://www.ucas.com/reviews/admissionsprocessreview/>. A move to a post-results system, or PQA as it is widely known, was not recommended.

The BUILA response offered to engage with the international recruitment and admissions sector to develop a system which would be more readily accepted by HEIs. UCAS welcomed this response and discussions are on-going regarding an appropriate governance structure and terms of reference to effectively facilitate this process.

Following the outcomes of the UCAS Qualification Information Review (QIR), the UCAS Board in September 2012 approved the decision to continue the existing management model of the UCAS Tariff. The current Tariff management model has been in place since May 2011. More details may be found at <http://www.ucas.com/reviews/qireview/>.

Key priorities for BUILA during 2012-2013 will be seeking feedback and input into the international strategy from the International Advisory Board and wider sector, and implementation of the various strands. We will also look at re-establishing a UCAS presence at key international events and conferences, and collaborating with key stakeholders to help members achieve their international recruitment and admissions goals.

In 2011 the **International and Europe Units of UUK** merged to form the new International Unit. The newly merged Unit has retained the two different advisory groups, and BUILA has representation on the International Coordinating Group (ICG). During the year concerns were raised of a potential overlap between the work of the British Council and the Unit, particularly in the area of market intelligence. The role of the IU brand was also queried, and how this would sit with other sector stakeholders. The group were reassured that through regular communication and partnership duplication of work would not occur and expertise would be shared.

Research projects included an updated legal guide by Eversheds and additional country legal profiles for Brazil and the UAE. Proposals for potential projects focused around employability for international students, the value of international mobility, and a guide to the financial aspects of offshore activity by HE institutions. An India Masters mapping project was also proposed.

The ICG contributed to recommendations made by the Joint Steering Group to support UK outward mobility, the recommendations included a national strategy for mobility in the UK. Recommendations were also put forward to shape the future of the new HE Global Integrated Advisory Service.

Much of the agenda for the Advisory Group is taken up with the imparting of information with limited opportunities for discussion at the two meetings held each year, and it is unclear whether the discussions have much influence on outcomes. In the present format, the BUILA representative is not adequately representing the views of the wider membership or feeding discussions back. We are therefore proposing that discussions are held with the Chair of the ICG to identify the best ways of ensuring the views of BUILA members are fed into discussions and can be used to influence decision making.

## BUILA SCOTLAND

Scottish universities have continued to meet and work collaboratively under the auspices of the Scottish Universities International Group (SUIG). The group meets regularly throughout the year as a means to discuss issues relevant to the HE sector in Scotland, exchange knowledge and best practice, engage with key partners and identify initiatives in which institutions can work collaboratively to promote groupings of Scottish Institutions or the sector as a whole in Scotland.

The Scottish Universities, both individually, and through SUIG and the North American Recruitment Group (NARG) have continued to engage proactively with the Scottish Government, who continue to hold Internationalisation and International Student Recruitment as a high governmental priority.

The Higher Education sector and Scottish Government have supported a number of initiatives in the past year. The Scotland's Saltire Scholarships (SSS) is a substantial programme of scholarships, offered on a matched funding basis between the Government and Scottish Higher Education

Institutions, available across key priority countries of Canada; China; India and United States of America.

In Summer 2012 bids were called by the Scottish Government to support outward student mobility projects in the 4 priority countries listed above, as well in other countries not currently funded by ERASMUS, with the aim of increasing the number of Scottish students undertaking a period of study, research or work placement overseas.

Further information can be found here:

<http://www.talentscotland.com/Students/Study/Scholarships/Saltire-Scholarships.aspx>

European Association of International Educators Conference 2015: Glasgow was successful in its bid to host the 2015 EAIE conference where it is expected to bring together more than 4500 higher education professionals from across the world to discover new trends in international higher education and network and exchange.

**Contact BUILA Scotland:**

Alan McLachlan [amclachlan@qmu.ac.uk](mailto:amclachlan@qmu.ac.uk)

## BUILA IRELAND

The two Northern Irish Universities, the University of Ulster and Queen's University, were represented by Sue Ward on the executive. As Sue moves on to life after Higher Education, we wish her well and extend her a big thank you for her excellent contribution to the executive team especially as part of the

conference team. We would also like to welcome Rosin McEvoy to the executive and look forward to working with her as we take BUILA forward.

**Contact BUILA N Ireland:**

Rosin McEvoy [r.mcevoy@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:r.mcevoy@ulster.ac.uk)

## BUILA WALES

The 11 Welsh universities worked collaboratively on a number of projects, via the Wales International Consortium during the year. These included the marketing of Wales, recruitment of students, plus sharing intelligence and good practice. This year's outward missions included Turkey and USA with universities also hosting various inward visits.

The Welsh Government continued to support its Delhi, Chongqing and New York offices, and the European and External Affairs Division is working with Welsh HEIs on training and development opportunities in Chongqing (China). It also continued investment in both the UK-India Education & Research Initiative (UKIERI) and the UK China Partners in Education programme.

During the year however the landscape surrounding HE provision changed and evolved. The Wales International Consortium closed permanently on Friday 27th July 2012, following a decision by Higher Education Wales to re-direct funding and the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales has given the Welsh Government proposals for cutting the number of universities in Wales through mergers from 11 to 6.

This follows concerns that universities in Wales are not achieving the full potential for the investment made in HE (for example, the capacity to secure additional funding, to capture research grants or to sustain a broad subject portfolio) and as a result, are not offering as good a service as they could to learners and employers.

The mergers that are currently on the horizon are:

**Group 1**

- Swansea Metropolitan University
- University of Wales Trinity Saint David - Carmarthen and Lampeter
- University of Wales

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-15410424>

**Group 2**

- Cardiff Metropolitan (UWIC)
  - University of Glamorgan
  - University of Wales Newport
- Latest only University of Glamorgan and University of Wales Newport to merge

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-18876315>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-20227572>

Without the WIC as a mechanism for communications it means that BUILA Wales does not have a formal vehicle through which to operate and it will be the aim in the year ahead to work more closely with the key BUILA contacts at Welsh Universities.

**Contact BUILA Wales:**

Bobby Mehta [bmehta@glam.ac.uk](mailto:bmehta@glam.ac.uk)

## BUILA LOOKING FORWARD

With all the changes facing international staff, the executive of BUILA are very keen to ensure that we are offering the right level of services and support to the membership. At the time of conference a questionnaire was prepared asking how members would like to see BUILA develop going forward. As a result of the feedback from this a Value Added Services paper was produced and circulated for comments to all the named reps. We would like to share with you some of the key areas we are proposing for development, but as always seek your thoughts and input to ensure that these fulfil your needs.

**Training:** We are proposing to run a more professional and comprehensive training programme with links to accreditation where possible and appropriate.

**Membership:** We would like to reshape the process for communicating with each members' staff

through a fuller representational role, letting each institution take control of managing their interface with the mailbase and website. We hope to increase the effectiveness of communication between the executive and the membership with quarterly updates on activities and developments, and scheduled consultations and feedback before and after liaison meetings.

**Communication Tools:** A second phase development of the website is planned to make it a resource for training, sharing knowledge and best practice through a more mobile application.

**Lobbying:** We will seek the members' mandate to lobby key organisations and bodies on an agreed set of priority issues which we will circulate shortly for approval.

**Marketing:** We are proposing a much more active role in working with UUK and the British Council to promote the UK brand overseas.

### CURRENT EXECUTIVE TEAM ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES 2012/2013

NAME	HEI	LIAISON ROLE/RESPONSIBILITY
Tim Johnson (Chair)	Northumbria	UUK/AGCAS
Charlene Allen (Vice Chair)	Reading	UUK/Marketing
Bobby Mehta (Wales)	Glamorgan	
Rosin McEvoy ( N Ireland)	Ulster	
Alan McLachlan (Scotland)	Queen Mary	NARIC /Conference
Mike Gibbons	Manchester	JET
Adrienne Clarke	East London	UKCISA/Training
Kim Hadley	Portsmouth	Logistics/ Conference
Jessica Guiver	York St John	Training
Charlie Carter	Loughborough	UCAS
Bob Masterton	UAL	Conference
Martyn Edwards	Nottingham	British Council
Philippa Collins Robson		Secretary

## ACCOUNTS

The accounts following have been subjected to an "independent examination", rather than a full audit in line with our role as an association. The three income streams during the financial year were from the annual membership subscriptions, surplus generated by the conference and a small amount of bank interest. The main streams of expenditure were for the Secretary costs, investment in the website and

executive costs. It should be noted that these only relate to the travel and subsistence costs incurred by the executive team who as unpaid officers represent excellent value for money. Overall, the Association's finances are in extremely good health, and investment is proposed as indicated under 'BUILA the Way Forward' to a number of areas to enhance and increase the services and benefits to the membership.

### BRITISH UNIVERSITIES INTERNATIONAL LIAISON ASSOCIATION INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2012

	2012	2011
REVENUE	<b>51,678</b>	26,337
Expenditure	<b>12,602</b>	1,717
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GROSS SURPLUS	<b>39,076</b>	24,620
Overheads	<b>17,021</b>	17,402
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OPERATING SURPLUS	<b>22,055</b>	7,218
Interest receivable	<b>27</b>	25
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SURPLUS ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES		
BEFORE TAXATION	<b>22,082</b>	7,243
Tax on surplus on ordinary activities	-	- 5
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SURPLUS ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES AFTER TAXATION, BEING SURPLUS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR		
	<b>22,082</b>	7,238

BRITISH UNIVERSITIES INTERNATIONAL LIAISON ASSOCIATION  
BALANCE SHEET  
YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2012

	2012	2011
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Debtors	-	7,088
Cash at bank	<b>78,749</b>	46,511
<b>CREDITORS</b>		
Amounts falling due within one year	<b>6,650</b>	3,582
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>72,099</b>	50,017
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>72,099</b>	50,017
<b>CAPITALS AND RESERVES</b>		
Income and expenditure account	<b>72,099</b>	50,017
<b>MEMBERS' FUNDS</b>	<b>72,099</b>	50,017

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

BRITISH UNIVERSITIES INTERNATIONAL LIAISON ASSOCIATION  
DETAILED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT  
YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2012

	2012	2011
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Membership	<b>31,750</b>	25,050
Conference receipts	<b>19,928</b>	-
Training course fees	-	1,287
	<b>51,678</b>	26,337
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Conference costs	<b>10,339</b>	-
AGM expenses room hire	<b>2,263</b>	1,717
	<b>12,602</b>	1,717
<b>GROSS SURPLUS</b>	<b>39,076</b>	24,620
<b>OVERHEADS</b>		
Travel and subsistence	<b>6,300</b>	5,234
Website design	<b>503</b>	3,823
Postage & stationery	<b>276</b>	159
Sundry expenses	<b>115</b>	1,085
Consultancy inc Secretary	<b>9,335</b>	6,631
Accountancy fees	<b>492</b>	470
	<b>17,021</b>	17,402
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS</b>	<b>22,055</b>	7,218
Bank interest receivable	<b>27</b>	25
<b>SURPLUS ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>22,082</b>	7,243



[www.buila.ac.uk](http://www.buila.ac.uk)