BRITISH COUNCIL

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INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITIES
INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITIES BUREAU

Clarity of Concept Working Group

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- The concept does not require a perfectly shared meaning in order to be relevant and useful.
- There is an emerging shared meaning at a general conceptual level, but operational diversity in practice.
  - Diversity is shaped by institutional academic and profession realities, regional needs and differing motivations and goals for internationalization.
- Internationalisation is a means to other ends. Aspects of its meaning are defined by the motivations and intended outcomes driving it.

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Stakeholders differ in what drives or motivates their engagement of internationalisation. The drivers may mix:

- Interests that are linked directly to higher education core missions (e.g., learning and research gains, workforce development, cross-cultural understanding and responsibility, and building institutional capacity).
- Interests that are instrumental such as revenue, institutional prestige and rankings.

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The challenge for institutions (public and private organizations) and for governments is to consciously consider the appropriate balance among motivations for and desired outcomes from internationalisation in contexts of:

- Regional, country and institutional academic and professional needs
- Institutional starting points
- Institutional mission priorities

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We see common themes in methods and outcomes emerging for the internationalisation concept, including:

- Expanding the reach of international content and learning among students, ultimately to mainstream access
- Expanding the number of faculty and staff involved in advancing internationalisation
- Integrating internationalisation throughout institutional academic and professional missions and programmes
- Integrating international and global, and local and global

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There are positive and potentially negative outcomes from internationalisation (e.g., brain drain, subversion of local culture).

- The balance of positive and negative can be shaped by understanding consequences of certain motivations and methods of internationalisation
- Although the positive outcomes of internationalisation are more assumed than supported by hard evidence,
  - there is a broad sentiment that internationalisation is a 21st century reality and at base beneficial