

ASTON UNIVERSITY

INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the International Strategy Committee meeting held on Monday 3rd December 2018.

PRESENT: Saskia Loer Hansen (Chair), Kate Sugden, Bhavisha Koner, Pawan Budhwar, Ania Bailey, Monjur Ahmed, Paul Knobbs, Fiona Kilker, Fiona Lacey, Kerrie Holland, Selena Teeling, Amna Atteeq, Geoff Parkes (Skype)

APOLOGIES: Odette Hutchinson, Matthew Dean, Marc Hornby, Carolina Salinas, Wendy Yip, Christina Matthews, Frank Eperjesi, Mark Smith, Matthew Dean, Patrycja Rozbicka, Jessica Rigby

SECRETARY: Samera Rehman, Julie Goodwin (cover Jessica Rigby)

IN ATTENDANCE: Matthew Hall

1. MINUTES

18/31 **CONFIRMED:**

The Minutes of the International Strategy Committee held on the 25th October 2018 (Blackboard).

18/32 **NOTED:**

The action 18/06 from the previous minutes is outstanding and would be addressed subsequent to the meeting.

2. PPCI Updates

18/33 **RECEIVED:**

- I. An update on the Global Experience discussion following a visit from RMIT, noting the discussion was insightful and emphasized the shift from student mobility to the notion of global experiences. This presented new opportunities for providing global learning experiences to students without them actually leaving Birmingham. Further work would be progressed to tease out how this concept could form part of the 'Global Citizenship' component of the International Plan. Follow up discussions will take place in early 2019.
- II. An update on the Aston in Europe Strategy, which had now been approved by the Exec and would be available on the ISC Blackboard page. Given the continued uncertainty around the Brexit arrangements, an updated version of the Strategy would be produced once it was clearer how Brexit would unfold.

3. Workshop: Aston in India: Engagement Plan

Led by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor (India) Professor Pawan Budhwar, and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor International.

18/34 RECEIVED

- I. An oral update on APVC (India) visit to India, noted very active engagement by participants at the Delhi alumni event despite not all registered participants turning up, and improved attendance and similarly very enthusiastic engagement by alumni at the Mumbai event. Feedback gathered at the events relate to alumni wanting more frequent and consistent engagement with Aston and that all alumni were super enthusiastic and very keen to contribute to Aston's agenda for engagement in India. It was also noted that Aston should do more to register and maintain contact details for alumni in India.
- II. The fifth Annual Centre for Responsible Business Conference was a four-day event and included a pre-conference writing workshop with partner institutions and various high profile events. This had good attendance and extensive media coverage in India.
- III. Aston was a leading partner at the main conference. PPCI and Bimal Arora gave interviews to the media including a local television station to increase Aston's presence and reputation in India.
- IV. Dr Bimal Arora received £400,000.00 from a Canadian Government body, who had representatives at the Conference and engaged with Aston staff separately as part of the Project Launch Event.
- V. Existing Aston partners in surrounding Delhi and Mumbai were visited to identify key meaningful projects to pursue, recognising that there has to be two-way value in the partnerships including Aston actually generating a financial return from its activities in India.
- VI. Noted APVC (India) is submitting an application for funding to support teaching mobility to India under Erasmus+.
- VII. Noted Indian students have high interest in Summer Schools in the UK and that work was progressing to expand the Aston Summer School provision to tap into this interest. Summer Schools would be one tool to attract students to come for subsequent full-time study.
- VIII. Noted India's biggest challenge is financial and that therefore it should be taken into account that fees in India are lower than Aston's and this makes it more challenging to convert interest from students in India to enrolments at Aston. This is not impossible as the Indian student numbers at UK institutions illustrate, but it is a challenge that needs to be understood.

18/35 NOTED:

- I. Aston has an extensive record in research and narrative around sustainability, entrepreneurship and food waste in India. This can be leveraged to build brand and reputation in India as illustrated by the extensive press coverage in India relating to the Centre for Responsible Business annual conference.
- II. While ABS has had the most extensive involvement in activity in India, there are clear opportunities for Aston's other Schools.
- III. It was also noted that Alumni is an untapped resource and that much more significant work should be progressed to better tap into this resource.
- IV. Work will be progressed in early January to finalise the India Engagement Plan.

18/36 NOTED:

There are considerable opportunities with India, and prompt action is required in the following areas:

- I. Discussions with OP Jindal to take place surrounding a 1+1 progression agreement for MBA students
- II. Discussions with OP Jindal to take place surrounding collaboration with Aston Law School
- III. Exploration of a 1-2 week summer school for Indian students from KJ Somaiya to be progressed
- IV. Exploration of a double Master's programme for IMI whereby MBA students from IMI come to Aston to study part of an MSc and get credits recognised through their first year of the MBA at IMI. This would result in dual awards. Further work to explore if this could be delivered in practice and what the student fees associated with a compressed MSc would be and whether this would be feasible in the Aston context.
- V. Discussions with BML Munjal to be progressed surrounding a 2+1 articulation agreement within Engineering.
- VI. Discussions with existing partner MDI to be further progressed regarding a staff/student exchange, and a double exchange degree at Master's level with study abroad fees to be paid for study at Aston.
- VII. Discussions with Symbiosis to take place surrounding a 2+1 agreement within Business and also possibly Life and Health Sciences
- VIII. Discussions with SP Jain to take place surrounding a possible collaborative DBA programme, leveraging SP Jain's extensive industry contacts.
- IX. Early stage exploration of potential collaboration with Thapar, based on recommendations from Ed Sweeney.

The APVC (India) and Selena Teeling will follow up on all actions and liaise with colleagues in other schools as appropriate. All opportunities would be assessed against a 'return on investment' principle to ensure that activities would be of benefit to both parties.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

18/37 NOTED:

Erasmus+ funding is available for staff teaching or staff training activity in partner institutions within the Erasmus network.

ACTION:

Secretary to circulate information about the scheme that colleagues can disseminate in their department/school.

18/38 NOTED:

Any content for the international newsletter should be emailed to Jessica Rigby on j.rigby@aston.ac.uk.

5. DATE OF MEETINGS

18/39 NOTED

Meetings for the academic year 2018/19 are as follows:

- Thursday 21st February 2019: 12:00-13:30pm, Council Room
- Thursday 16th May, 2019: 10:00-11:30am, Council Room