

Camelot, Calamity, or Catch 22: Global Higher Education Myths and Realities

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*Trends in
Global Higher
Education*



What Factors are Driving Universities into Global Markets?

- Competition – Competition - Competition
- Securing alternative funding sources to replace reduced government allocations to tertiary education
- Exponential adoption of ‘English’ as the global language in commerce
- Interconnectedness of a global society and economy
- Diversification and increase in international student mobility
- Workforce needs – skills migration
- Demand by developed and developing countries for technology transfer and research collaboration

The Changing Landscape (s) of Cross-Border Higher Education

- Host nations are becoming more selective of entering foreign providers
- Asia, the Middle East, and Gulf States are most active cross-border regions for global delivery . . . Now
- Increasing global competition
- Cross-border research exchange is a rapidly growing priority among nations
- More public-private partnerships
- Quality assurance oversight agencies, internal and external, are paying increasing attention to universities operating abroad

Myths and Realities

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Myth 1: Educational quality is driving the global HE market

Reality

Continual reductions in government funding to higher education is serving as a catalyst for universities to secure alternative sources of revenue enhancement. Institutional rhetoric about the importance of globalisation and internationalising the curriculum do not change this fact.

Many institutions have no business in the business of global HE.

Myth 2: China has an ‘open door’ policy for foreign providers

Reality

Make no mistake: China wants to be the leading power in higher education, and it will extract what it can from the U.K. [US] In particular, they want to benefit from our strengths in science and technology, and to absorb our talent and our intellectual property....U.K. institutions are rushing to partner with [Chinese institutions], but the risks are considerable. [Chinese institutions] are capable of gaining more from the partnerships than we are if we do not do our homework properly and negotiate a win-win situation.

Ian Gow, Pro Vice-Chancellor of the University of West England and founding Provost of the University of Nottingham, Ningbo

Myth 3: Student choice is driven by academic quality-reputation

- Cost and quality and breadth of student services
- Financial assistance and employment opportunities during and following program completion
- Institutional and program reputation
- Social and cultural opportunities of institution, country, and region
- Comprehensive and in-depth opportunities to master English; research resources and facilities
- Streamlined immigration and visa regulations and processing
- Historical linkages between home country and the host nation

Myth 4: Global HE is delivered primarily by open & distance education

Reality

The majority of cross-border higher education is delivered in face-to-face formats. Foreign nations that are spending considerable money for Western academic programmes, technology, and research equate credibility and value with having real people on the ground in their countries. China and the Gulf States are two primary examples.

Myth 5: The UK, U.S., and Australia will dominate global HE

Reality

The U.S., UK, and Australia continue to have the largest international student populations and are the leading providers of cross-border HE. Competition for international students and 'regionalisation' in East Asia, the Gulf States, India, and Europe will increasingly compete with 'the big three.' Predicting student mobility will become exponentially more complex and regional cross-border and international student recruitment will compete with global student destination choices.

The Competition Game

When you compete with everyone everywhere on everything, you compete with no-one nowhere on anything

Who do you want to compete with and why?

Who don't you want to compete with and why?

And who **can you** compete with and why?

Challenges for Quality Assurance and Validation Agencies

- Assessing an institution's 'comprehensive' globalisation strategy, mission, quality and services
- Ensuring that institutions provide student services for international students at a level commensurate with programme quality standards
- Evaluating how curriculum revision and pedagogy are addressing language, culture, and social norms for international students
- Maintaining programme flexibility and realistic timelines for institutions to build their international programmes, services and strategies

Henry L. Mencken

**For every complex problem there is a simple
solution . . .**

And it's wrong!!



Thank You!

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