Global Graduates

Global Graduates into Global Leaders

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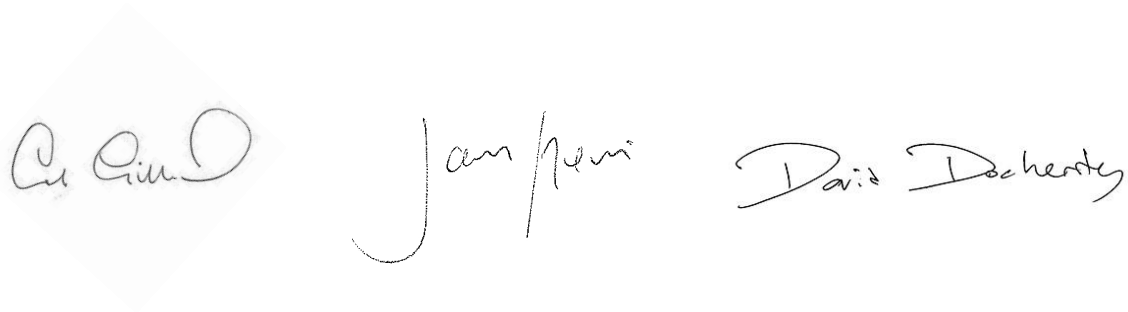
Foreword

Given that the job market for graduates is becoming increasingly global, the Association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR), the Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE) and CFE Research and Consulting came together to explore the topic of global graduate employability and the ways in which UK universities can work with businesses to ensure that future graduates meet the expectations of global and international employers (including SMEs who operate across territories).

This report – *Global Graduates into Global Leaders* - explores some of the hot topics emerging from UK recruiters, whilst building upon the findings from previous research on the internationalisation of higher education, as set out in CIHE's *Global Horizons*[1]. It focuses on what employers and universities understand to be global competency, how such competencies can be nurtured through collaborative or individual endeavours. The report is based on consultations with representatives from large transnational employers, who are often at the sharp end of international talent management, higher education institutions and policy makers, and complemented by insights from relevant existing literature. Our collective thanks go to all who contributed and to the CFE research team. We hope that the report will prove to be thought provoking and spark ideas for further lines of inquiry.



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[1] Fielden, J., *Global Horizons for UK Universities,* CIHE, (2008).

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1 | Introduction: global business needs global graduates

Against a background of continuing globalisation and technological change, employers need graduates who can compete in global marketplaces and meet global challenges.

The market for high-skilled graduates is increasingly global. Economic and technological change is facilitating an internationalisation and de-territorialisation of business, with many companies, large and small, having international operations and international recruitment patterns. Global leaders are challenging national expectations for the graduate workforce. As employers' requirements for their global workforce change, graduates – and providers of higher education – must adapt to prosper.

In the last quarter century the size and dynamic of the graduate talent pool has changed dramatically. The so-called 'massification' of HE continues and the global appetite for graduates is increasing apace. Multinational employers, and increasingly employers of all kinds, require their workforce to work readily and confidently across worldwide operations, using a global outlook to consider new opportunities and challenges. At the same time, they need employees who can assimilate organisational values and operate comfortably with the technological and cultural demands of the 21st century workplace. Expectations extend beyond the early graduate career, with high expectations for graduates to one day take leadership roles. Ultimately, UK graduates, like their international counterparts, must be able to work across national borders, manage complex international and intercultural relationships, and understand global aspects of the world of work.

It is already a fact that businesses recruit from all over the world, a trend which will only increase as economic and technological developments continue. This report asks the simple questions: Are there a set of characteristics and competencies that enable graduates to be successful globally? If so, what are they, and what can businesses, universities and students do to encourage and develop these competencies?

If the UK wants to compete, its graduates need to have additional 'global competencies', *as well as* the traditional capabilities employees have always had. 'Global graduates' can be a key driver for achieving business success, whether through achieving shareholder value, building sustainability or entering new markets. Through their attitudes, skills and knowledge, global graduates can tackle the myriad of challenges and opportunities that globalisation is presenting, in a way that graduates with a narrower national focus simply cannot. Leading businesses have realised this already and are beginning to provide global graduate development programmes to grow the global leaders of the future.

> *The significant growth and development in emerging markets, particularly the BRIC nations, means that to compete effectively UK organisations must take the global view and seek out new opportunities in these markets. A diverse and internationally minded workforce is vital, and UK universities must continue to respond to this through the provision of internationally focused programmes.* (HSBC)

As this report discusses, there are many routes to building global competence, through the efforts of schools, universities and employers, as well as through those of students and graduates themselves. What is clear, however, is that UK graduates must raise their aspirations for the global competencies that employers will increasingly demand. If UK graduates cannot fulfil these expectations, employers can and will recruit from outside the UK. Internationalisation is a key trend in higher education and opportunities to work or study abroad are certainly an important way to build global competence. Figures show that there are over three and a half million international students worldwide studying in countries outside their country of citizenship.[2] The UK is a strong provider of quality higher education and is the second highest receiver of international students worldwide,[3] giving us a valuable pool of international students and graduates from which to recruit. The UK can be proud of its higher education system and the crucial place of international students within it.[4] However, the UK is ranked only 34th for external student mobility,[5] suggesting too few UK nationals are gaining the kind of international experience that could give them a head start in the global graduate marketplace. Many more students from BRIC[6] nations such as China and India, are benefiting from an international education and its associated immersion in another culture. Both these countries grew their study abroad numbers by around ten times over three decades (1975-2005), well outstripping the UK's increase of 33%.[7]

This report is the starting point in our exploration of global graduates. It builds on in-depth consultations with graduate recruiters operating in global businesses to discuss and define what global graduate competencies are, and what stakeholders can do to develop them. To further stimulate interest in this issue, we intend to carry out further research and consult directly with global graduates and global leaders.

[2] OECD, *Education at a Glance*, (OECD Publishing, 2011) p.318.
[3] Higher Education Statistics Agency, Statistics - Students and qualifiers at UK HE institutions, available online at: www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php/content/view/1897/239/ In 2009/10 there were 405,805 international students
[4] OECD, *Education at a Glance, p. 325.* The UK has 15.3 % of tertiary students (only second to Australia with 21.5%).
[5] That is, number of UK students studying abroad, UNESCO, Higher Education Statistics, 2009, available online at: www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Pages/tertiary-education.aspx
[6] Brazil, Russia, India and China.
[7] British Council, Education UK, *Internationalisation of Higher Education*, (2010), p. 20.

2 | What is a global graduate?

This chapter explores the capabilities and attributes employers expect of graduates in order to succeed in a global economy.

Distinguishing clearly between 'global' and 'core' competencies for leaders and graduates is challenging. Often global success depends on the same competencies that engender success at a national or local level. Core requirements valued by most graduate employers include familiar competencies such as teamworking, communication, presentation and self-management, as well as work experience, professionalism and industry knowledge. All of these are vital for graduates whether or not they are engaging on a global basis. However, there are global dimensions to these competencies that must be factored into employers' competency frameworks to secure the development of global leaders.

Prioritising global competencies

Twelve leading employers who collectively represent over 3,500 graduate recruits ranked a list of global competencies by order of importance using a 10 point scale.[8] The tag cloud (Figure 1) represents a diagrammatic representation of responses, displaying relative importance of competency by font size. Relatively speaking, the four most important global competencies were: an ability to work collaboratively; communication (both speaking and listening); drive and resilience; and embracing multiple perspectives. Figure 2 (overleaf) displays the mean ranking of each individual competency. Interesting to note is the low score of 1.7 for multi-lingualism which was viewed as a relatively unimportant skill for global graduates.

Figure 1: Global competencies tag cloud

[8] We asked respondents to rank 14 global competencies with a score of 1 to 10, where 1 is most important and 10 is least important. Each rank may only be used once, leaving 4 un-ranked. For the purposes of analysis we recoded these responses to indicate the reverse, where 10 is most important and 1 is least important. This allows competencies without a rank to be scored as zero, for the purpose of calculating an average.

Global Competencies	Mean Ranking
An ability to work collaboratively with teams of people from a range of backgrounds and countries	8.2
Excellent communication skills: both speaking and listening	7.5
A high degree of drive and resilience	5.6
An ability to embrace multiple perspectives and challenge thinking	5.4
A capacity to develop new skills and behaviours according to role requirements	4.6
A high degree of self-awareness	4.4
An ability to negotiate and influence clients across the globe from different cultures	4
An ability to form professional, global networks	3.9
An openness to and respect for a range of perspectives from around the world	3.6
Multi-cultural learning agility (e.g. able to learn in any culture or environment)	2.4
Multi-lingualism	1.7
Knowledge of foreign economies and own industry area overseas	1.7
An understanding of one's position and role within a global context or economy	1.6
A willingness to play an active role in society at a local, national and international level.	0.5

Figure 2: Mean ranking of global competencies

The extent to which employers incorporate a global dimension in their competency frameworks depends on their organisational context and culture. Employers operating region-centrically tend to recruit graduates on a single country basis, seeking individuals with a good understanding of their local or national market. By contrast, those operating geocentrically are more likely to expect their graduates to become global leaders and may therefore seek more *globally oriented* competencies. Between these two positions there lies a continuum, with global competencies valued to greater or lesser degrees. Some employers have also identified a change in graduate attitudes and a rising cosmopolitan[9] outlook from the generation that grew up with the internet and cheap international travel.[10] As one employer put it:

> *I think we're starting to see in a particular generation, where they think of themselves as quite literally world citizens. I don't mean conceptually. I mean they see the world as boundary-less, that they are able to move, shift, work anywhere, and do anything.* (Prudential)

To further describe the competencies needed by global leaders and graduates, this chapter explores in turn global attitudes, capabilities and knowledge.

Global mindset and cultural agility

The very attitudes and mindset of graduates and leaders can play an important role in their global employability. Some recruiters used the term **global mindset** to describe an individual whose outlook naturally considers wider global influences, and who sees themselves in relation to others

[9] For more on the cosmopolitan generation, see Illum-Engsig, R., *A cosmopolitan generation and human resource management*, (Vienna, Nov 2010).
[10] Saito, H., 'An Actor-Network Theory of Cosmopolitanism', *Sociological Theory*, *29:2, (June 2011).*

around them. Attributes such as openness, curiosity and innovation are integral to this mindset, as well as beliefs and values towards colleagues, clients and the wider community. Betty Leask[11] supports this view of a global mindset identifying that globally oriented individuals will *"consider issues from a variety of perspectives; and demonstrate an awareness of their own culture and its perspectives and other cultures and their perspectives*". Global mindset can be expressed in many ways, including in understanding and respect for other cultures – this can be important for any employer, whether local or global:

> *You need the mindset that says, 'The person I'm talking to isn't like me and I need to understand what they are like and then work with them.' It isn't only about having the technical knowledge, it's also necessary to understand the values, customs, cultures and behaviours that are significant to them.* (National Grid)

The notion of **cultural agility** or **cultural dexterity** complements a global mindset and was described by employers as the ability not only to understand different cultures but to be capable of adapting to work with them effectively:

> *I think cultural dexterity is important: an ability not to impose one's own culture on another one, to be sensitive to other cultures and how to do business in different environments. There are certain ways of working with clients in the Middle East that you wouldn't adopt in Japan.* (PWC)

Communicating in a global environment

Global mindset alone is insufficient for a graduate to succeed in a global economy. Douglas Bourn[12] outlined additional key elements for global skills, he suggests: "*An ability to communicate with people from a range of social and cultural backgrounds*" is also crucial. Integral to effective communication is not only the ability to speak eloquently but in this instance the ability to listen and to show **empathy** for others. Understanding others' viewpoints and feelings may well be informed by an understanding of their background and culture as well as their job role and organisation. Despite this, **multi-lingualism** is not viewed as a key differentiator for global graduates. Whilst employers recognise that "*operating effectively in a global economy relies on the right language skills"* (at least conversationally), most do not seem to recruit actively for languages unless it is for a specific role that requires them. Even employers expecting UK graduates to work abroad accept fluency in a number of languages is unrealistic although the widespread use of English as a medium for international communication means that European graduates do tend to have better language skills. Overall, additional languages are a 'nice to have', rather than a 'must have' and can certainly add value:

> *If you have an ability, or want to develop the ability to speak the local language wherever you are based, I would argue that you will get a lot more out of the experience. This in turn can lead to even more effectiveness as an employee; I think this applies for every country we work in.* (BNP Paribas)

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[11] Leask, B., 'Internationalisation of the Curriculum: Key challenges and strategies', Paper presented at IDP Education Australia conference *International Education: the Professional Edge*, (October 1999), cited in J Fielden, *Global Horizons for UK Universities*, CIHE (2007), p. 36.

[12] Bourn D., *Global Skills*, (London: LSIS, 2008), accessible online at: www.lsis.org.uk/Documents/Publications/GlobalSkillsNov08_WEB.sflb.pdf, p. 5.

Collaboration and teamwork

Global business activity means bringing together diverse teams of people. With that in mind, **working collaboratively in multi-cultural teams** is imperative for any global senior manager. Global leaders, as Leask[13] points out, must appreciate the "*complex and interacting factors that contribute to notions of culture and cultural relationships*" and be able to utilise this appreciation to interact effectively with others and drive the business forward:

> *People who can relate to people at all levels, people from all different backgrounds, because our customers certainly come from all walks of life-the opposite gender, people with different ethnic backgrounds, different cultural backgrounds, different religious backgrounds, people with disabilities.* (Enterprise Rent-A-Car)

Further to collaboration, employers believe that **managing complex interpersonal relationships** with both colleagues and clients is also critical. One employer in the oil and gas industry emphasised the value in employing people who can build strong relationships as well as respond to external challenges, including political or economic barriers:

> *If you have people that can integrate with local teams, or, who are able to move globally and take with them their experience in a seamless way, I think that can only help the business move forward. A lot of our work is very dependent on engaging with local governments [and] other local and national oil companies, and we need to be able to work with them effectively.* (BP)

The benefit of bringing together a diverse workforce is that it can create valuable opportunities for **knowledge exchange and innovation**. One employer pointed to the value of bringing together diverse global minded perspectives to foster innovation: "*I think the world we're in is ever changing. It's about agility. It's about innovation, and you drive that through diverse workforces.*"

Adaptability, drive and resilience

Of all the behaviours and attributes discussed by employers, those synonymous with **adaptability** and **flexibility** are most commonly emphasised. Global leaders need the ability to handle ambiguity and work on projects that lack pre-determined outcomes. Adaptability and flexibility also enable the application of knowledge and skills to new, unfamiliar situations, or the ability to respond to new social and cultural environments. Levels of adaptability can be increased by a strong sense of **self-awareness**, and a clear understanding of how one relates to others. However, both attributes are not easy to cultivate:

> *I think that adaptability and self-awareness are probably the two things that we find the toughest to find... we want our graduates to feel they fit with our culture and hit the ground running.* (HSBC)

Flexibility also extends to physical mobility. Global leaders need to be willing to work in different locations as an integral part of their career but many employers have difficulty recruiting graduates willing to travel or relocate. Employers felt that graduates with a global mindset would be more likely to embrace international immersion and relish the opportunity to work in different countries. It is essential that leaders are positioned where they are most needed and thus able to respond to market demands:

[13] Leask, B., 'Internationalisation of the Curriculum: Key challenges and strategies', p. 36.

> *We use [our individuals'] energy and drive to leverage networking and maximise virtual communities to respond to the challenges of different geographies and cultures.* (Royal Bank of Scotland)

Furthermore, being **resilient** to potential uncertainties, setbacks and organisational change, without being affected negatively is also crucial for global leaders. Having a personal and professional **drive** to seek out new opportunities was also emphasised by employers. The Vice President of a successful digital music distribution company based in New York and operating in 26 countries explained: "*To be indispensable in a global economy, a graduate needs to be independent minded, creative, a thinker who will make a difference, not waiting to be told what to do*."

Global knowledge

Global leaders also need specific **knowledge about global affairs** and how global forces shape our lives. Fernando Reimers in the United States has described global competency as having an 'academic' dimension relating to knowledge and understanding of world history, geography, and global topics such as health.[14] More specifically, employers see value in industry knowledge and awareness "*not just at one country level but at a global level*". While some will expect their graduates to have a knowledge base which encompasses global affairs and industry issues, it is not generally something that would be tested for at the assessment or application stage. It is therefore more important that the graduates have the flexibility and learning agility to pick up this knowledge once they join. Again, here the primacy of adaptability is underlined:

> *At graduate entry level it's perhaps a bit unreasonable to expect detailed technical knowledge from the start. For example, it would be unrealistic to expect a new graduate hire to fully understand the intricacies of the Chinese banking system, versus the UK system, versus the US system.* (BNP Paribas)

Echoing the global mindset competence described previously, employers also see knowledge in the form of cultural awareness as important. This could relate to an understanding of social etiquettes and practices, cultural differences and religious customs.

To sum up, a global graduate should have the core competencies expected of any graduate, but they will also have: a global mindset; the ability to communicate and manage people of different cultures and backgrounds; an openness to learning new languages (as a route to better communication); an adaptability and flexibility that extends to being open to global assignments and mobility; and a knowledge of global affairs that shape their work and life. Equipped with these competencies, graduates can become the future leaders of global business; how to develop such individuals is a challenge explored in the next chapter.

[14] Reimers, F., Introduction: Why Global Education? What is Global Competency?, (Harvard, 2011), accessible online at: www.sd25.org/superintendent/GlobalEducation.PDF and Reimers, F., "Preparing Students for the Flat World", Education Week, 28:7, (2008) pp. 24-25.

3 | How can global graduates and leaders be developed?

Employers recognise that to thrive in the global economy, graduates need to develop a blend of competencies, attitudes, and knowledge. The question is: how?

Having established the principal components global employers desire from their graduate talent pool - presented visually in Figure 3[15] - the question is: Can graduates be taught these global skills and competencies? And, if so, how? Recruiting students with international experience is one solution for gaining graduates with an international outlook and skills. In a survey conducted by CIHE, 29% of employers felt overseas study experience makes a graduate more employable.[16] However, gaining overseas experience is not necessarily the only way to build global competence in graduates; employers too have a stake in influencing and developing global competencies. Moreover, universities are increasingly being judged on employment outcomes, meaning they care whether their emerging graduate pool is highly employable. Meanwhile, the UK as a whole benefits through a skilled workforce able to interact with and compete in a global economy. We therefore consider the role of all these actors in developing global graduates.

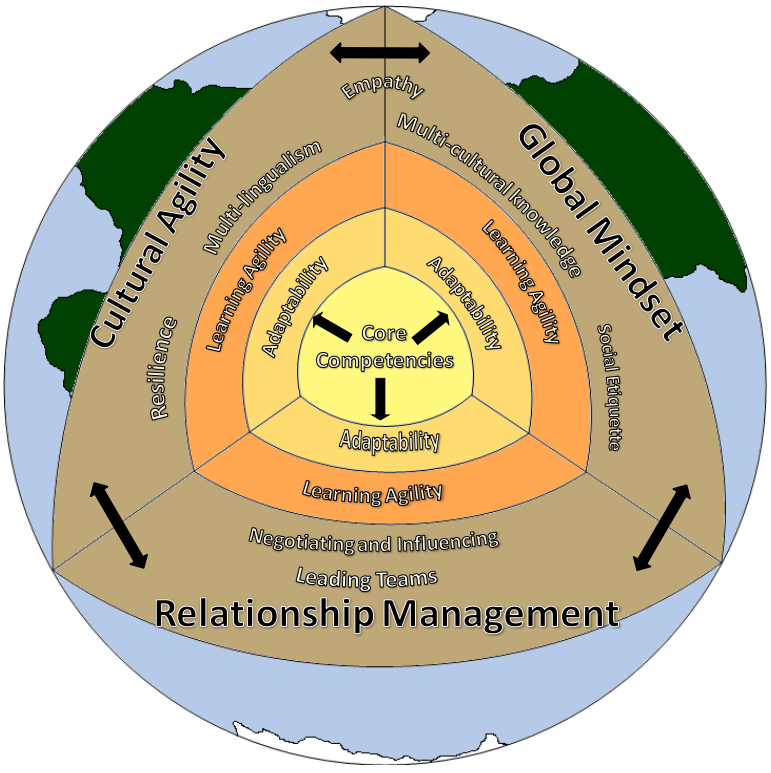

Figure 3: Global competency dimensions

[15] Figure 3 builds on Cascio and Aguinis's work on Global Management Competencies. see Cascio, Aguinis, *Staffing twenty first century organizations*, (Routledge, 2008).
[16] Fielden, J., *Global Horizons for UK Universities,* (London: CIHE, 2008), p.27.

Environment and conditions

Employer expectations of graduate competencies at entry point vary immensely; some assume that global competencies will be developed during a graduate's early career; others hope to find these types of competencies present from the outset. One way in which these competencies could be formed is through a graduate's earlier life experience, and the environment and conditions to which they are exposed. Psychometric testing can be used to look for potential capability in applicants, seeking individuals who display, amongst other things, the right mindset and attitude. If signs of emerging global capability can be identified (at least in a raw state), an employer has sufficient raw material to work with to develop a fully fledged global graduate as the case study below highlights.

Psychometric Testing at Standard Bank

Standard Bank focuses on recruiting graduates who demonstrate high overall potential. A key way to test for potential capability is via a series of psychometric tests at the interview and assessment stage of recruitment. Unlike other forms of assessment, these tests look to identify future capability, rather than analyse existing skills. Applicants are asked to complete tests that are much more focused on strategic thinking and self-awareness, rather than simply being required to demonstrate current capabilities via verbal and numerical reasoning tests. Already knowing how to analyse financial data, and conduct statistical modelling, while seen as beneficial, is not always essential as it can be taught during the graduate programme. What is more important, is that graduates demonstrate that they have the brainpower, entrepreneurial skill and strategic understanding to be able to look ahead to the future, and become an international leader.

Experiential learning both before and after graduates join a company also needs to be considered. Employers find it difficult to pinpoint exactly what situations would be most conducive to developing global competencies, but understand that the solution is as much about conditioning than any formal learning approach:

> *You probably can't make someone have a global mindset or develop this learning agility on their own. You've really got to invest time in them to get them comfortable with it.* (BNP Paribas)

Perhaps a more familiar concept linked to this idea is that of 'overseas immersion'. Immersion in a multi-cultural environment and interaction with a diverse range of people was viewed as an important way to cultivate a global outlook. Overseas immersion may equally have happened earlier in the graduate's life and be linked to their upbringing or the influence of parents. As part of this, the breadth and depth of an individual's **'life-experience'** prior to entering the workforce can also be valuable. Other experiential learning thought to have significance in this context included greater involvement in the community (volunteering and fundraising) or networking with people from a variety of backgrounds. The message was clear – graduates should seek a broad range of experiences to develop themselves in a holistic sense and this learning should start as early as possible.

Student choice and experience

Students, and by that we broadly mean undergraduates, have perhaps the greatest interest in, and power over, preparing themselves for the global economy and 21st century workplaces. They

are undoubtedly responsible for making the most of opportunities presented by schools and universities as well as seeking out their own valuable learning endeavours. Academic achievement (and degree choice) may help differentiate among those graduates who are seeking to join an elite programme and help secure a place on programmes such as those offered by BP, Shell and EADS, but in itself may not be a pre-requisite for global competency development. Many employers also consider candidates with qualifications other than traditional Honours degrees, including Apprenticeships, vocational or professional learning and Foundation degrees.

Travelling overseas

Several employers "*see a difference*" in those graduates who have lived abroad or travelled extensively. Some organisations believe that almost any type of international experience is beneficial; others felt that such experience should be well structured and have tangible outputs, or be business related if it is to be worthwhile. A student's decision to travel may be more valuable in as far as an indication of strength of character and a leaning towards a global mindset. It may also convey the desire to understand internationalisation, and denote (or result in) high levels of confidence and independence. Yet, there were limitations to the value of travel *per se* in developing global competencies. One employer noted that if an applicant says: "*I've back-packed round and got drunk*" is rather different from: "*I've travelled, but actually I've learned something from it*". The overriding message is that "*it's the quality of the experience that is important*".

Learning to learn and studying overseas

Time spent in education is just as much an opportunity for students to develop their own learning capacity and essentially 'learn to learn', in order that they can continue self-directed learning and development across their whole career – something employers certainly value.[17] Furthermore, studying overseas for part or all of a degree can have great benefits for personal development. Research by the British Council[18] suggests that overseas students increasingly study outside of their home country in order to receive a higher quality of education, develop their English language skills, and improve employment prospects and experience living immersed in a different culture. For many employers, studying overseas adds value to an applicant's CV, and for particular technical disciplines[19] the quality of an international education may be a distinguishing factor. However, it seems that UK students, unlike some European neighbours, are reluctant to take up transnational exchange opportunities such as Erasmus. During the 2009/10 academic year, more than 213,000 students received 'Erasmus' grants (a 7.4 per cent increase on 2008/09), but only 11,723 of them were UK students. Spain sent the largest number of students abroad (31,158), followed respectively by France (30,213) and Germany (28,854).[20] There are ongoing debates in HE about how institutions will charge for years abroad under the new fees regime. Traditionally, placement years have incurred 50% of the standard annual course fee, but, with increased fee levels, the implication of paying up to £4500 for a placement may discourage students from pursuing these options and add to their debt.

Gaining international work experience

Work experience, particularly of an international ilk, is one of the best ways to build a global skills-set. Recruiters are looking for graduates to have experienced real-life work situations and started to have developed understanding of the commercial world before they apply for a job. Indeed,

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[17] See Forbes, P., King, M., Modern Graduates for Modern Business; what employers really seek in a knowledge intensive global economy, (London: CIHE, 2011).
[18] British Council, Education UK, Measuring the employability of a UK qualification, (2010), p.14.
[19] Mainly STEM graduates – such as those recruited by BP or BG Group
[20] Source: European Commission, Education and Culture Directorate General, 2011, accessible online at: http://ec.europa.eu/unitedkingdom/press/frontpage/2011/1175_en.htm

some employers prefer to take on 'second jobbers' who can demonstrate a sound track record of work experience:

> *The people we do hire all have work experience...to [be] successful globally, you've got to have some key understanding of what makes money or what is a commercial opportunity.* (Nestlé)

Generally employers believed that working in diverse roles and industries (as opposed to just within one sector) was a worthwhile approach. It was viewed as more advantageous to say: *"I worked in ten different countries in ten different industries"* rather than working in ten roles in the same industry. Moreover, involvement in **entrepreneurial pursuits** was also looked upon favourably and thought to demonstrate drive or resilience. For example, in one case an EADS graduate recruit had hosted a physics-based radio show on Cardiff radio; in another an eighteen year old had "*spent a year of his own volition setting up an orphanage in Nepal, which is now an operating and functional charitable entity*". In both these cases the graduates had taken up the challenge to broaden their business experience and outlook, and in the latter proved they could overcome cultural and political obstacles.

The role of employers

There was resounding agreement from employers that the responsibility for student and graduate development of global competencies is a collective one. In fact, many employers were eager to tackle the conundrum and not simply pass it over to universities; as one said: "*Don't complain about the problem unless you're willing to be part of the solution."*

Attracting and inspiring young people

In order to attract and inspire potential global graduates it is crucial that employers engage with future talent as early as possible; building aspirations at critical points along the talent pipeline by working with schools and universities. The key is that students are encouraged to develop a vision for their future "*building aspirations and building awareness of different careers: what a career in technology might mean, or what a career in banking [for example] might mean*". Employers suggested that it is important to first raise students' awareness of global industries and the scope of careers therein; and second to inspire and excite individuals about their future and enable them to visualise their own role within a global organisation. Providing young role models or mentors from the existing workforce (particularly alumni or graduate trainees) who can tell real "*stories of success"* can support and nurture early aspirations. Accenture, for example, alluded to their 'Bootcamp' - an intense 48 hour challenge whereby prospective candidates experience the nature of working for the organisation at first hand.

As part of engagement, communicating with students is critical, both regarding the medium and the message. It is essential to communicate in a style that future candidates will understand and in a format which will attract and inspire. Using web-based communications and on-line interactive tools such as **social media** may be particularly helpful in this respect. One employer commented: "*If you want to be seen as really good, you have to actually do genuinely interesting, forward focused things*". In one example, EADS use a STEM dedicated e-journal *High Flyer* and online competitions and quizzes to engage future recruits. The case study overleaf gives a further talent engagement approach undertaken at Shell. However, interacting with students via social media is not always employers' preferred communication channel; several see face to face as the "*ultimate"* means of communicating. Arguably, face to face liaison does help to develop company presence and profile and global values may well be instilled more easily through direct discussion with students. Having said this, there is still scope for more employers to adopt novel approaches to engagement.

Engaging graduates at Shell

Shell provides a five year graduate development programme including rotation across the globe. Potential applicants are engaged at an early stage, and encouraged to develop international business and strategic leadership skills.

The Gourami Business Challenge is a one-week residential event, intended for students in their final year at university. Essentially a "taster" programme, the Challenge is designed to offer applicants insight and experience into life at Shell. Activities include strategic decision-making on the supply and marketing of products to customers, leading to the creation of a mock five-year business plan for Shell. The programme is led by a multi-disciplinary team of Shell professionals, and delivered across small groups, with plenty of opportunity for participants to network and socialise. A particular strength of the Gourami Business Challenge is the ability to introduce real-life team working scenarios to the individual. This provides participants with valuable experience of managing relationships and project deliverables across a highly diverse team. As well as offering first hand work experience of an international business environment, the Gourami Business Challenge provides structured feedback on performance and the possibility of a full-time job offer upon graduation for successful participants. One Gourami participant found the challenge particularly valuable: "*The experience gave me a very real life experience into the ways and workings of an oil company. Also it provided me with new insights into the different backgrounds and cultures of other participants. This was my biggest learning experience: to see how students from different backgrounds and cultures can work together and achieve a great result… The experiences made me see how diverse Shell really is and how important it is to take into consideration what other parts of the business are doing.*"[21]

Hosting internships and enternships

One of the most valuable means of both spotting global talent and instilling global organisational values is through industry-led work experience. Looking for candidates who have completed internships can help employers identify the best candidates; as one employer noted: "*Completing an internship is a real predictor of quality within our organisation.*" In some cases this can be fundamental to an organisation's attraction strategy; some employers report conversion rates of up to 85% from interns to graduate recruits. Designing a well structured placement and setting clear objectives, is crucial, as is the nature and content of the project or task. International level projects are rarer in internships, but where these can be incorporated, it presents an even more attractive and valuable proposition for globally minded students and graduates.

Entrepreneurial work experience may also be particularly helpful in graduates' personal and professional development. Organisations such as Enternships provide work placements in entrepreneurial and innovative environments, such as start-ups or global venture funds. A number of these placements are international and can therefore help to develop the global competence of the participant.[22] Whether internship or enternship; the active participation of employers is crucial. Appendix 4 - International Enternships provides an insight on the value of this experience from the perspective of the individual.

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[21] http://www.shell.co.uk/home/content/gbr/aboutshell/careers/students_and_graduates/meet_our_students_graduates/gourami_profiles/

[22] See Enternships website, www.enternships.com

Nurturing global competencies through global projects

All stakeholders would agree that once the graduate intake is recruited employers are responsible for cultivating their competencies or *"polish[ing] the diamond"*. Even the best graduates are not expected to have perfected global competencies. Development is not always about formal training programmes. Indeed several organisations practice the '70:20:10 rule' about graduate development, believing that 70% of development should take place 'on the job', 20% from feedback and 10% from courses and reading. Based on this approach it is essential to select the right roles for recruits from the outset: "*the key thing is always really what job you put them in*".

As the case study approaches highlight, the design and content of graduate programmes varies, as does the extent to which they incorporate any international component or consideration of global competencies. However, throughout the process, from pre-joining "on-boarding" activities, through to induction and longer term development, there are many opportunities for employers to nurture global competencies. Post induction, many employers use value based development frameworks, which work on the premise of instilling a set of core values, behaviours and attitudes. Managers in programme design must ascertain not only where the individual is against the framework and how far they have to travel, but also the relevance of their plan to their anticipated global role; essentially the programme needs to be tailored to individuals.

One approach to developing global competencies is to present simulated or real-life opportunities to work in a global capacity. Some structured graduate programmes do this formally through rotational assignments across departments and functions, combined with opportunities for placements abroad. As part of EADS's development programme, all prospective senior managers are encouraged to take international assignments. Lloyd's Register's programme also encourages such experience, as outlined in the case study below.

Global Marine Careers at Lloyd's Register

Lloyd's Register offer a two year graduate programme, followed by a further two years on-the job surveying to gain Chartered Engineer status. The programme is intended to be global in nature to reflect Lloyd's global presence.

As a world leading provider of ship classification services, Lloyd's Register offers careers for marine engineers, naval architects, mechanical engineers, electrical and electronic engineers, technical specialists and associated business roles. Lloyd's Register operates in 78 countries, with an approximate workforce of 7,500 worldwide and around 1,000 in the UK. The graduate training scheme allows the pursuit of a range of disciplines, deployed on a global basis. Transfer abroad is expected during the course of the programme, with many graduates recruited in the UK going through a series of rotations. During the scheme, graduates will rotate across both Europe and the rest of the world. For this reason, graduates are expected to be "globally mobile". The global reach of the programme has been acknowledged by the company as highly successful, because of the depth and breadth of international experience offered to new graduate recruits. A representative of Lloyd's Register said: "*We offer a fantastic opportunity for graduates to experience different offices around the world...I would encourage all global recruiters to arrange some kind of international secondment for their trainees. Even if it's for three months, if at all possible…I think the benefits of doing it outweigh the costs*." One graduate trainee reflected upon the value of multicultural teamwork: "*One of the greatest experiences is having the chance to be part of a team with so many talented colleagues from around the world and sharing our experiences helps us to develop as professional engineers."*[23]

[23] See: www.lr.org/careers/marine_careers/Ourpeople/Mark.aspx

Other employers emphasise the importance of creating opportunities for new graduates to network, formally or informally, and work with a diverse range of colleagues. Prudential, for instance, bring together their graduate community with other colleagues of varying levels of seniority in a bi-annual conference, enabling lively discussions and exchange of ideas.

Employers also see the potential for use of digital technology in global graduate development. This can be as simple as social media or shared workspaces to bring colleagues from across the world together, but in some cases the use of technology can go much further. For example, one employer spoke of their plans to adopt holographic learning to make the e-learning experience for staff as "*stimulating as possible*". In an example of how far technology has come, holographic technology can now project 3D animated images of a trainer or colleague, who can then interact with others anywhere in the world. This reduces travel time, overheads and improves the experience of telecommunications.[24]

Employers working with higher education

As with other aspects of graduate development, it is essential that employers work closely with universities to shape global graduates. While there is certainly a desire to collaborate on both sides, the extent and nature of relationships and influence varies immensely. Employers suggest that effective collaboration needs to take place at different levels across the institution, and industry representatives need to actively engage with staff in the careers service, academics in specific departments, as well as senior management. Large multinationals, unlike SMEs, have the resource to establish 'campus teams' and develop long-term, close working relationships with their core universities to feed into their recruitment cycles. Developing a close working relationship with a department is most critical to those employers who wish to target candidates with particular discipline related or technical knowledge and for those who wish to inform the development of graduate knowledge via input into programme design.

The role of higher education institutions

The nature of the university and student relationship and the quality and relevance of provision has come under immense scrutiny given the rise in English university fees. As they are paying more, students expect more from their programmes and employers too want to ensure that the calibre of graduates emerging can match that of international institutions. Most employers felt that there was still a long way to go to develop global higher education offers across the board. Moreover, some preferred to hire a larger cohort of 'second jobbers' given that they are "*not really convinced that universities prepare graduates for work. So, it's far easier [for us] to go out to market and get people who have demonstrated track records*".

Embedding global employability in learning

The extent to which global employability strategies and programmes were in place varied tremendously according to the institution. Certainly almost all universities offer support to students with careers advice services providing assistance with CV writing and job applications. However, developing employability skills and capabilities is primarily achieved through the degree programme itself, rather than careers services. Various universities now offer 'bolt-on' employability modules as part of a degree programme, focused on developing 'core competencies' in areas such as negotiating and influencing, communication, team-working or presentation skills. And some of these may have a globally oriented focus. While welcome in

[24] For example, see: OnTrack International, *Holographic Virtual Learning*, www.ontrackinternational.com/HolographicVirtualLearning/

principle, there was some scepticism from employers on the implementation of such employability development. Firstly, as to whether it is sufficiently global and secondly as to whether a 'bolt-on' approach works. One employer noted: *"I think most universities are doing some sort of award or initiative that students can become involved in, but there is a bit of a mismatch between what industry is looking for and the way they are making sure students get that information".* Even providing mandatory modules could have a limited impact depending on the individual, given that: *"You can make a class mandatory, but it doesn't mean that people will pay attention and take things on board"*.

Another solution is to embed global employability development within the curriculum of degree programmes themselves. This need not be at the expense of academic quality or freedom, and should in fact enhance and enable it. There is great potential to bring in global or international aspects to any discipline, whether engineering, science, humanities or business related subjects. University College London (UCL) aims to embed global employability through its framework *Education for Global Citizenship*. This framework internationalises the curricula and prepares students for active participation in experiential learning. Some employers would go further to suggest that there is scope to instil global modes of working into every day teaching methodology and practice. For instance, it is possible to facilitate students to work in diverse international project teams (with other universities) or help students develop learning capacity through adopting reflective learning practice.

Framework for Education for Global Citizenship - University College London

University College London (UCL), an institution with a reputation for its wide global reach, has for some time been developing the concept of 'global citizenship'. In particular they have developed a framework for education for global citizenship which provides a framework to bring a global dimension to the entire student experience. This extends to the approach to programme delivery, degree design and content, and non-curricular events and opportunities. Through instilling a real-world global dimension in programmes across academic departments, the University hopes to support the development of a distinctive kind of graduate, ambitious by nature, with critical, creative, entrepreneurial and leadership skills that can transcend cultures and geographical borders. As part of the framework, UCL encourages a year or semester of international study with their network of around 250 exchange partners. There are also opportunities to learn a second language and for professional development, including student mentoring. The volunteering services unit coordinates a broad range of non-curricular activities allowing students to become active participants in the city and take full advantage London's vast multicultural scene.

There is also scope for universities to strengthen links with international counterparts and enable students to gain rich cultural experiences. To do this, universities must develop collaborative relationships and make programme transfer affordable for students and feasible for both institutions. Arguably, the overall experience of operating in a different country is just as valuable, if not more so, than the detail of the programme. Nottingham University, for example, has developed satellite campuses in both Malaysia and China, and actively encourages UK students to do part of their degree at either campus, as well as attracting students from China, Malaysia and the rest of the world.

Offering immersion in the world of global work

Universities can also foster global employability by providing, facilitating and encouraging work experience for students in a global business environment. Employers are incredibly enthusiastic

about the potential for universities to provide enhanced work-experience placements and sandwich programmes essentially "*pushing people to get out and get that experience*".

Professional Training Years – University of Surrey

The University of Surrey, an institution with a strong reputation for working collaboratively with industry, offers every undergraduate the opportunity to undertake a Professional Training Year (PTY), a sandwich course that incorporates 12 months of working for a host company. Encouragingly, over half of their students take part in the PTY and, given that some of the host employers are large global organisations, the University is well placed to introduce participating students to the idea of working globally and developing global capabilities. The University emphasised the value of the PTY to student development and indeed employer recruitment (most students are offered employment following their year): "*It is incredibly successful. The net result is that we have particularly good relationships with close to 600 companies now…last year employability was at 98% for graduates…in fact the demand for graduates far exceeds what we can supply."*

Enriching learning through student civil society

There is also significant potential for institutions to improve students' participation in extra-curricular activities. University departments, careers services, student societies and student unions can all play a role in promoting an active student 'civil society'. Where extra-curricular activities can bring in international dimensions, multi-cultural awareness can be fostered to a much greater degree, for example through society trips and tours abroad, or campus activities that bring international students together. The University of Warwick's *One World Week* is a particularly good example of engaging and celebrating the diversity of the student body. This is the world's largest student-run international event, held annually, and includes debates, discussions, performances, sporting tournaments and other events.[25] Such events also provide opportunities for graduate employers to connect with university students through sponsorship.

To sum up, the ambition of many global recruiters is that graduates will gain "*a well rounded education*", taking advantage of both academic and non-academic opportunities to develop broader expertise alongside their degree. The learning experience should also embed an international dimension and immersion in global business activity. So, to supply the global graduates and leaders the UK and employers need, action is required by all stakeholders - universities, employers and of course the students themselves. In light of this, the following chapter explores key questions for all these groups.

[25] See: One World Week website, www.oneworldweek.net

4 | Key findings and a call to action

Collectively, employers and higher education have outlined what makes a graduate a *global graduate* and why they are important to business. The question is, so what next?

Key findings

Globalised businesses require talent to compete in global marketplaces and have higher expectations of graduate recruits than ever before. With the aid of technological advances, numerous multinational employers have freed their workplaces from geographical or physical boundaries and are looking for graduates able to work collaboratively with teams from across the globe. Operating in these globalised workplaces requires an ability to empathetically embrace multiple perspectives and communicate confidently. With this in mind it is worth highlighting that:

- Global employability skills which take into account an international dimension are increasingly expected by many employers.
- Global graduates require a blend of competencies and corresponding attributes spanning global mindset, cultural agility and relationship management and must be able to apply them flexibly.
- Achieving global graduate competence is not just about attaining qualifications and excelling in a knowledge based or professional capacity but is also about holistic competency development in the sense of outlook, values and character traits.
- Experience of working overseas and immersion in a different culture can catapult a graduate into being considered for rewarding and challenging roles. Many UK graduates, however, are reluctant to accept the demands of mobility, whether within their home country or beyond, and may even choose to study close to home.

A further challenge comes given the radical changes that we are likely to experience in the way that the global workforce is recruited, organised and managed between now and 2020, and it is important to remember that:

"We are currently preparing students for jobs and technologies that don't yet exist in order to solve problems that we don't even know are problems yet." Richard Riley, former U.S. Secretary of Education.

What can businesses, universities and students do to help?

The UK can either sit back and wait for the BRIC nations to develop the best global graduates or can start to address this issue now. To develop the best global leaders it is crucial that schools, higher education, employers, students and government understand the challenges facing the UK around global talent development and then work collaboratively to address them and respond to the evolving requirements of workplaces in 2020. Government and educational institutions need to provide the right environments and opportunities for young people to flourish and enable them to develop not only sound employability skills but global competencies and a globally attuned mindset. Employers need to inspire their future

graduate intakes to rise to the challenge of becoming their next global leaders and provide opportunities to experience immersion in global business activity.

While we outline below some examples of approaches to global graduate development, it is important to recognise that these are the exception rather than the norm. There is still a long way to go to influence global employability more broadly and ensure learning is being shared and sufficiently integrated into day to day recruitment and talent development practices. The following questions require urgent attention and this report represents **a call to action** to each stakeholder group.

Employers and schools

Employers and schools have a critical role to play in inspiring young people to aspire to global positions well before they arrive at university. Some employers are working with schools to introduce the idea of global business through global role models. And they are also providing opportunities for immersion in the global workplace through internships, enternships and work experience placements.

What more can UK schools and employers do together to inspire future global graduates and leaders? And how should they do this?

Higher Education Institutions

Higher Education Institutions should seek to provide a solid grounding for students, not only in the form of global competencies and business expertise but also by actively encouraging students to broaden their horizons and develop learning capacity. The most forward thinking institutions are embedding some aspect of global employability in the learning experience through providing transnational programmes or opportunities for extra-curricular pursuits. However, there is scope for many institutions to learn from these approaches and consider how raised awareness of the global economy, or experience of global living, will benefit the development of both student capability and mindset.

How can higher education institutions develop students with a global outlook and employability competencies?

How can government, employers and public agencies work with higher education institutions across the UK to help embed global employability into all aspects of the learning experience?

Employers

Discerning employers are pro-actively seeking out global talent by adopting novel ways of interacting with applicants and, at interview, measuring potential capability alongside academic attainment and personal achievement. Once recruited, some employers are helping trainees build on their raw 'global' competencies and aligning these with company values through global on-boarding programmes, tailored development, and immersion in international team working or assignments. There is, however, much more potential for integration in competency frameworks and further deployment of such global schemes.

How can employers go further to embed a global dimension in graduate programmes and nurture their graduates to become their future generation of global leaders?

A minority of employers are also using innovative means to develop and coach their trainees via multi-user internet based 3-D immersive world of Second Life (SL™) or holographic

technology. Such mediums provide a more creative, collaborative and socially interactive way to develop.

How can employers adopt social media and new technologies to aid the development and coaching of global graduate trainees?

Students

It is important that young people build a vision and aspirations for their career whilst they are at school so they are ready to embrace the prospect of global working. Time spent in education is just as much an opportunity for students to develop their own learning capacity in order that they can continue self-directed development across their whole career. The most aspirational students are taking up opportunities to gain rich life experiences and develop life-skills through exposure to different cultures and environments and also getting involved in work experience and internship opportunities to broaden their experiential learning.

How can employers and the education system best support young people to build their global aspirations and help them gain meaningful experiential learning?

Government

Government has an important role to play in driving forward global employability and exploring opportunities to increase the development of global talent. The question is where should government focus its efforts? Two suggested areas for government intervention are:

- Reviewing opportunities for international talent to benefit UK based companies. For example, through broaching reciprocal internship arrangements with countries such as the US and India.
- Incentivising higher education institutions to offer affordable transnational exchange programmes (such as Erasmus) and increase participation.

Areas for further exploration

These findings are only just the beginning of the global graduate journey. Areas which would be valuable to explore going forward include:

- **Global graduate competency frameworks** – the competencies which enable companies to be most globally effective. How do global competencies fit with current competency frameworks and graduate development programmes? What would an ideal global graduate framework and programme look like?
- **The graduate perspective** – insights from graduate trainees and alumni who have experienced global graduate programmes or international immersion. What benefits have they gained from their experience? What was their learning curve?
- **The global leader perspective** – exploration of global role models and the journey taken from graduate trainee to leader. What is their vision for global graduates? What insights can they offer aspiring leaders?

Appendix 1 | Method

Project aims and method

This study is the first stage in a journey to explore the issue of global graduates and global leadership. Understanding and developing global graduates requires action from various players, each of which must begin to develop their expectations and practices to encourage better global talent development. In this, our first study, we set out how employers' expectations and needs for graduates are changing in response to globalisation, and what the UK needs to do to ensure that its graduates are able to meet that standard if we are to prosper. The report aims to stimulate debate and does not provide all the answers. In some respects, the areas for further exploration identified in this report are as important as the insights it provides.

Large multinational employers are often at the sharp end of international talent management, so we have begun by interviewing a selection of these types of employers, followed by consultations with university representatives and policy stakeholders (Appendix 2). This report outlines the key findings from these interviews and we explore how globalised industries recruit graduates into professional roles and define, at a high level, the international standard for graduate recruits and global leaders across different business contexts. Where indicated, quotations come from our interviews with multinational employers.

The employer lens

It is worth highlighting that employers' views are highly influenced by the nature of their operational structure and recruitment practices. Surprisingly few employers display a 'geocentric' approach[26] whereby the organisation is seen as a single enterprise and talent is sourced and placed globally – not least because this is often non-viable due to resource constraints and other impracticalities. Whilst the value of having a centrally coordinated global graduate recruitment programme is certainly recognised, it is largely an aspiration for most employers. The majority of employers operate on a 'region-centric' basis. More typically, therefore, 'exporting' graduates to posts overseas occurs on a case by case basis. Some organisations, particularly those with high global profiles, attract or seek a significant proportion of talent from overseas. This tends to happen if there is inadequate expertise in the UK talent pool (predominantly STEM[27] expertise) and also when companies are simply seeking to recruit the best talent in the marketplace. They key question is therefore how the UK ensures that there is an adequate supply of talented graduates. And to achieve this it is necessary to understand how UK universities can strengthen their efforts to help students develop global graduate competencies. This matters, as it is likely that in the context of changes to tuition fees and the midst of sweeping transformational change throughout the higher education marketplace, it will be this ability that will distinguish leading universities and attract fee-paying students.

[26] See: www.sanjeevhimachali.com/?p=193
[27] Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

Appendix 2 | Organisations consulted

Below is presented a list of organisations and institutions who contributed to the findings of this study.

Type	Organisation
Employers	Accenture
	Barclays Wealth
	BG Group
	BNP Paribas
	BP
	Centrica
	Cisco Systems
	EADS
	Enterprise Rent-a-Car
	HSBC
	Lloyd's Register
	National Grid
	Nestle
	Prudential
	PWC
	Royal Bank of Scotland
	Shell
	Standard Bank
Higher Education Institutions	Plymouth University
	Regents College
	University College London
	University of Surrey
Government and Policy Stakeholders	Department for Business Innovation and Skills
	Higher Education Funding Council for England
	British Council
	Confederation of British Industry
Other Key Stakeholders	SHL

Appendix 3 | Examples of globally oriented programmes

During our study we found examples of existing globally focused programmes that offer either international experience, or support the development of global competencies. The majority of these are graduate programmes.

Organisation	Programme title	Approximate size of workforce	Overview of programme
BNP Paribas	Global Graduate Programme	20,000 worldwide / 8,000 in the UK	> Programme runs for 12 to 18 months > Graduates are recruited into one of three specific streams in the business: Capital Markets, Investment and Internal Functions
BG Group	International Graduate Development Programme (IGDP)	9,000 worldwide / approx 3,600 in the UK	> Structured two year programme > The IGDP is designed to give young professionals the opportunity to gain management skills and hands on experience in different locations > Includes opportunities to work internationally in at least two different countries and at least one international placement is guaranteed in the first year
EADS	PROGRESS programme	120,000 worldwide / 12,000 in the UK	> Structured two year programme > PROGRESS enables graduates to rotate around various areas of the business; three-four placements are undertaken by each individual in various parts of the organisation, and in different parts of the world
Prudential	Momentum Programme	28,000 worldwide / 3,300 in the UK	> Structured five year programme > Aimed at Graduates that hold first job experience (two years) > Involves rotation across 3 different roles, including global placements
Lloyd's Register	Global Marine Careers	7,500 worldwide / 1,000 in the UK	> Two year initial programme, followed by a further two years surveying > Intended to enable graduates to study towards chartered engineer status (CEng) > Involves rotation between location or role every three months > Programme is intended to be global in nature, to reflect the involvement of Lloyd's Register with a large number of countries
Shell	Graduate programmes (various)	100,000 worldwide / 7,500 in the UK	> (Pre-recruitment) Shell offer the Gourami business challenge, an internationally focused short-programme that enables students awaiting graduation to gain some hands-on experience of international business and strategic leadership > The standard graduate programme is five years > Shell provide a graduate development programme that enables rotation around different parts of the business, and sometimes to different global locations > Graduate recruitment is focused on hiring those with leadership potential that can be developed through technical and commercial career paths

Appendix 4 | Case study: international enternships

Enternships – Entrepreneurial placements with a difference

Enternships is an organisation which provides opportunities for ambitious and forward thinking students to learn about business and enterprise through work placements in entrepreneurial and innovative environments. The placements are typically with start-ups, fledgling organisations or unique one-off opportunities to work for high profile or successful entrepreneurs and can be organised with international firms. They typically involve project work and can be set up remotely or part-time. Enterns gain experience of working in an entrepreneurial and dynamic environment and have the unique opportunity to work closely with successful businessmen and entrepreneurs. Undertaking responsibility early on is often encouraged, enabling the entern to provide significant input and see their own ideas put into practice.

The experience and personal development that an enternship can provide is substantial. One entrepreneurial student, Max McQuillan, joined Playkast, a San Franciscan start-up, for a 12 week summer programme. This enabled Max to get involved in the early stages of company development while the firm was still in alpha mode. Working on the firm's new website and business plan, Max spent the placement researching and developing the companies offer, creating a closed community of users that will enable the company to progress to beta stages. Max found the experience rewarding, particularly being part of a team which has taken a company from its birth to its beta stage and experiencing life in California:

"*To sum up my experience thus far, it has been really interesting, challenging and incredibly exciting…I think that [it] is pretty unique experience to have coming out of college*."

Enternships are aimed at aspiring individuals that have the attitude, skills and mindset to grasp opportunities, wherever they are in the world. The programmes serve as a valuable way of spotting upcoming global talent for employers, and help to instil global competencies and experience in individual participants.

www.enternships.com/

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