



i-graduate

INTERNATIONALISATION

Overcoming inertia and evolving institutions' level of internationalisation to meet the need for better global graduates



Executive summary

As businesses increasingly traverse national borders, surveys of employers (e.g. CBI/Pearson 2017, QS 2019) show that they want to recruit graduates with 'global skills'. At the same time, they report a lack of such skills in job applicants and new recruits. Universities all over the world have identified internationalisation as a key goal, including producing the 'global graduates' that employers are looking for. However, there is currently little understanding of what makes a 'global graduate', or how higher education institutions (HEIs) can help foster the associated qualities.

Here, we investigate this fundamental challenge faced by the Higher Education sector, reporting on the steps being taken by researchers and institutions to advance their understanding of the conditions required to meet the growing need for global graduates.



The status quo

HEIs currently rely on structural/compositional indicators to measure internationalisation, such as the numbers of international students and staff. Yet a diverse campus is not synonymous with an internationalised university and does not automatically create global graduates.

Sector-wide and commonly referenced rankings such as Times Higher and QS serve to reinforce the status quo by measuring the proportion of international students and opportunities to study abroad. However, they ignore the critical importance of integration and personal development opportunities - building friendships with people from different backgrounds and finding situations that stretch them is a more valuable indication of an institution's internationalisation.

The reliance on structural/compositional indicators to measure internationalisation has led to many institutions' internationalisation strategies stalling rather than pro-actively fostering interculturally competent staff and those much-valued global graduates.

“There is a notable lack of evidence that can be used to assess and benchmark performance in internationalisation. We selected the GEP as the best available tool of its kind to help our members benchmark in key areas relevant to the development of students in culturally diverse universities.”

**Professor Donoghue, Durham University
and Member of the Executive Board of
The Coimbra Group**

Internationalisation initiatives – demonstrating progress

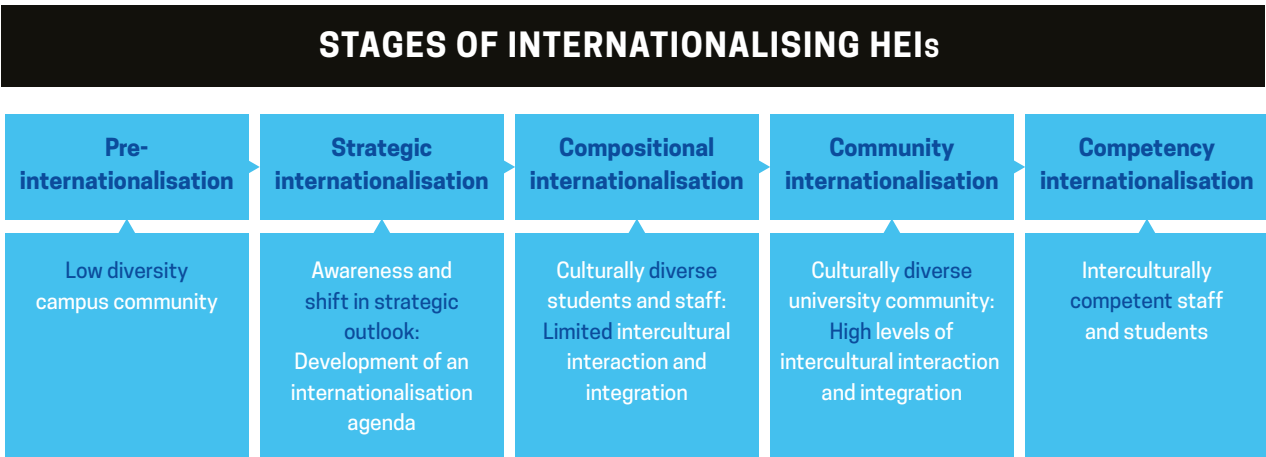
Truly internationalised institutions, who wish to develop ‘global graduates’, pay attention to the quality of their internationalisation process. They support their students in becoming fully integrated, socially and academically, into a multicultural campus, thereby helping them develop the ‘global graduate’ skills that are highly sought after by employers. They also support their staff in facilitating this process and in developing the skills they themselves need to maximise the benefits of internationalisation.

The degree of institutions’ progression towards this goal can be categorised as below.

It is to be expected that most HEIs will have already commenced their internationalisation journey, with many making strides to develop culturally diverse students and staff. However, the fundamental problem to date has been the lack of a reliable tool to inform institutions’ internationalisation strategies beyond the middle ground of strategic or compositional internationalisation.

We therefore see two issues:

- 1. **Some HEIs stalling rather than progressing to the higher levels of intercultural interaction and integration where the real gains can be made.**
- 2. **Other HEIs unable to gain meaningful understanding of, and demonstrate, their progression beyond the compositional stage, due to lack of a robust analytical and diagnostic tool.**



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Providing a meaningful measure of global growth

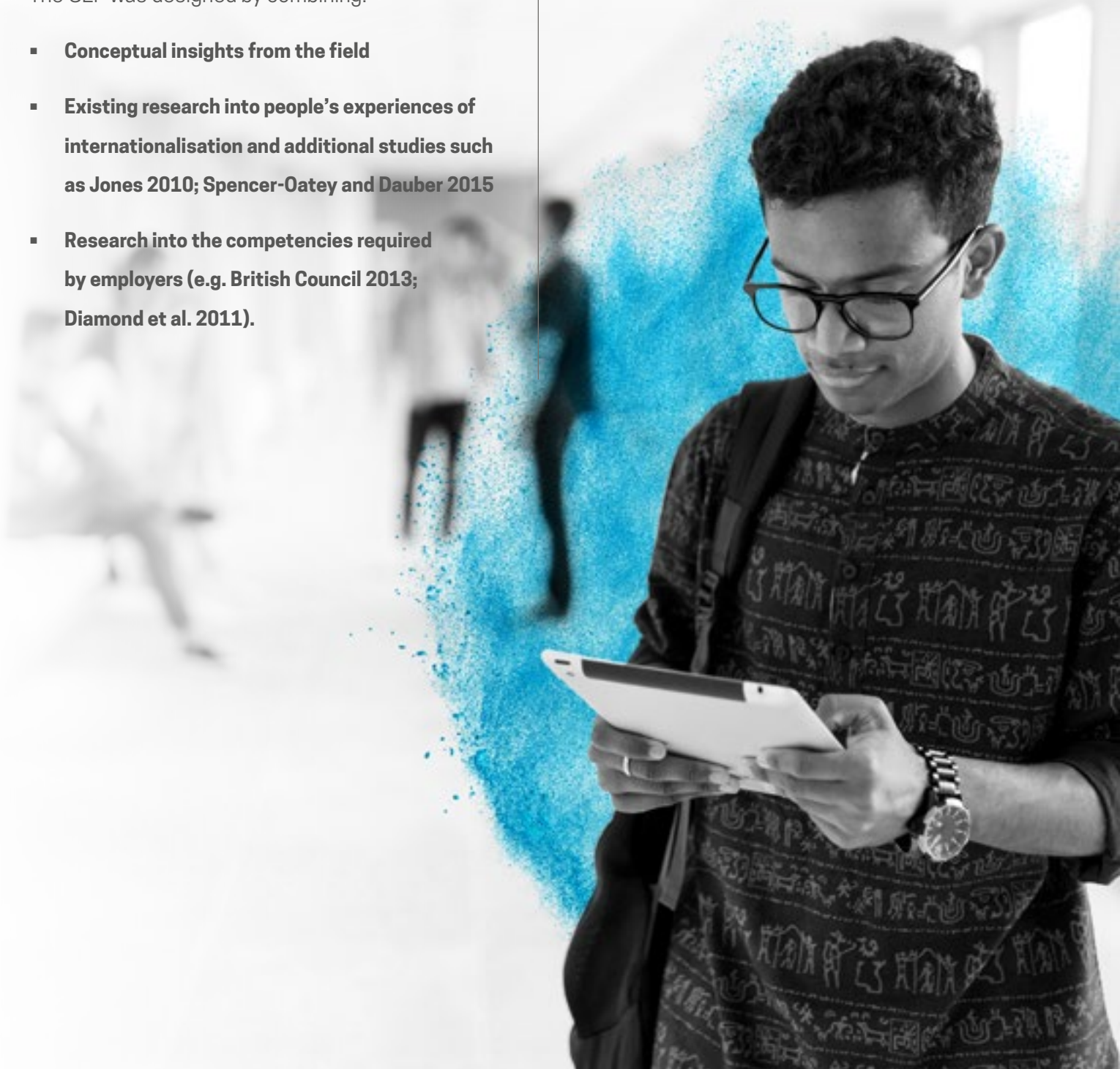
To ascertain the quality of the global learning environment students and staff are experiencing, and to help the sector move beyond strategic/compositional stages, University of Warwick developed a diagnostic and needs analysis tool, the Global Education Profiler (GEP).

The GEP was designed by combining:

- **Conceptual insights from the field**
- **Existing research into people's experiences of internationalisation and additional studies such as Jones 2010; Spencer-Oatey and Dauber 2015**
- **Research into the competencies required by employers (e.g. British Council 2013; Diamond et al. 2011).**

"We were encouraged by the results which provide some useful pointers as to how we can get ourselves firmly into the stage of 'Community Internationalisation'."

**Anne Qualter and Trish Lunt,
the University of Liverpool**



For students

The GEP (student version) measures attitudes towards, and experiences of, global education in relation to five aspects:

1. Social Integration	Social integration probes the amount of interaction and social cohesion across people from diverse backgrounds. This important measure provides insights into students' non-academic life, which can have a substantial bearing on their general well-being, which in turn can also influence their academic performance.
2. Academic Integration	Academic integration probes the interaction and cohesion of students from diverse backgrounds within classrooms and courses, as well as with academic and support staff in the department. This is crucial in nurturing students' professional growth and provides the foundation for the development of global graduate skills.
3. Communication Skills	This section of the GEP probes students' communication skills and how they use them flexibly in interacting with others. This applies to fluent and less fluent speakers alike, because an effective communicator needs to be able to adjust his/her language to the requirements of the contextual situation, including the level of fluency of other speakers. This category is less concerned with language proficiency; it focuses on the ability to recognise and adjust communication patterns to the respective context.
4. Foreign Language Learning Skills	This section of the GEP probes foreign language skills and how students take advantage of opportunities to develop them. Several reports have identified this as a key global employability skill. Foreign language courses that are formally offered by HEIs are one element of this, but communication inside and outside the classroom with peers from different language backgrounds can provide important additional opportunities, which students may or may not take advantage of.
5. Global Opportunities and Support	The Global Opportunities and Support section of the GEP takes an employability focus. It probes understanding of the intercultural skills needed for the world of work, the support universities are giving on this, as well as opportunities students have for developing the skills. Scores in this category reflect students' perspectives of the extent to which their educational experience is preparing them for employment in a global workplace.

Each component comprises ten items that together capture the various facets of the particular aspect, ensuring higher levels of validity.

Students rate each of the ten items in the survey in two ways: 'Importance to me' and 'My actual experience'. Through this approach, the GEP addresses three important questions that every internationalising HEI needs to keep in mind at all times:

- 1. What is important to our students?**
- 2. What do our students experience while they are here?**
- 3. Are we offering them the global education experience that they feel is important to them and their career?**

For staff

The staff version of the GEP has two broad sets of constructs:

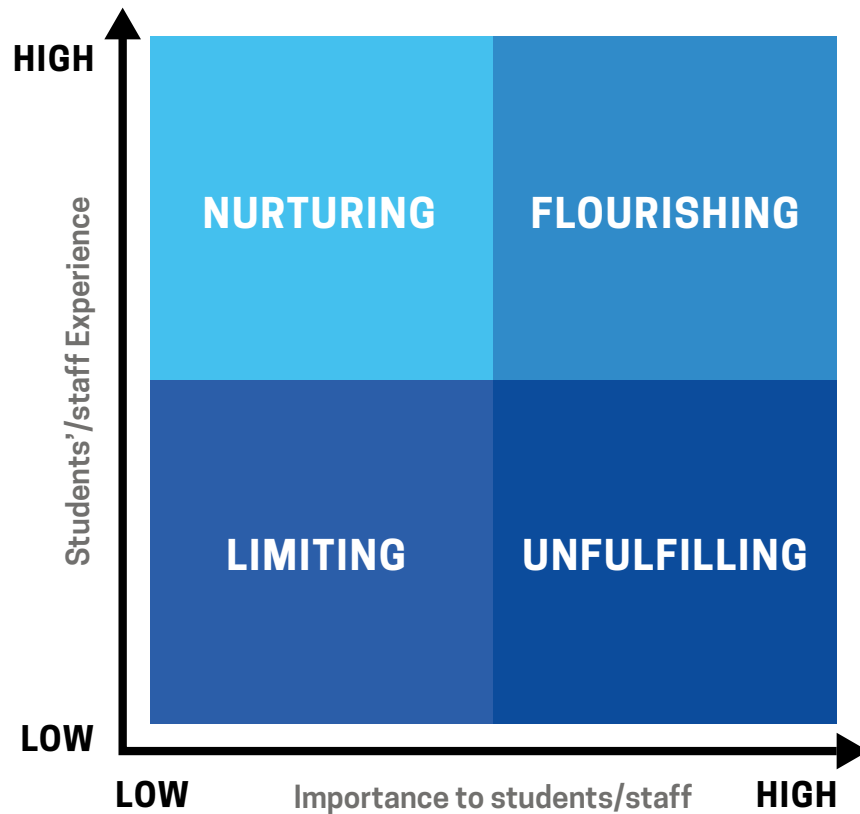
Elements that foster global fitness	Professional performance, for academic staff and for professional services staff, plus their working context
Integration	Classroom composition
Identification	Global curriculum
Global skills support	Student engagement in class
Personal global strength	Teacher engagement with students
Global communication skills	International collaborative knowledge
Foreign language skills	International collaborative relations

Each item is rated twice on a 6-point scale: once for ‘importance to me’ and once either for ‘my actual experience’ or (for performance-related constructs) for ‘my ease of handling’.

Through this approach, HEIs are able to see how they perform on the following matrices. They are used to report the GEP results in a range of ways, including the distribution of scores per construct, the distribution of construct scores by demographic variable (e.g. by level of study, by domestic/international cohorts), or the institutional benchmark scores for each aspect.



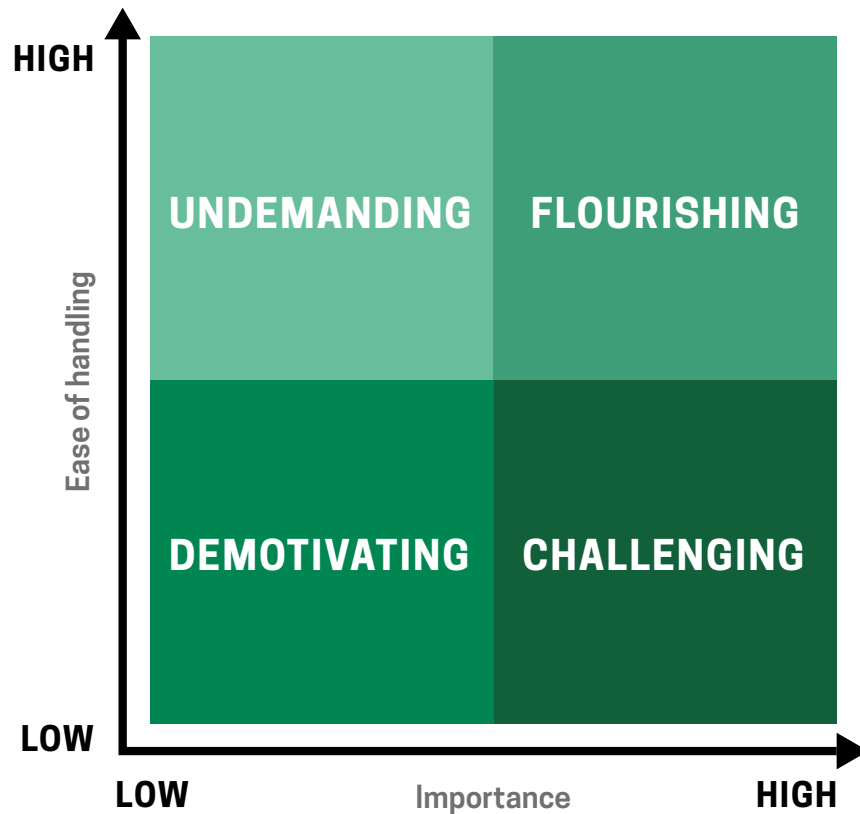
Students, Staff



Flourishing is the most desirable quadrant for the majority of the results to fall in, in that participants not only attribute importance to the internationalisation facet but also are experiencing it and hence taking advantage of it. Nurturing is also a positive quadrant in terms of experience, but the lack of importance such participants attribute to the internationalisation facet may indicate little reflection on their experiences and hence insufficient capitalising on their opportunities. When participants' ratings fall within the unfulfilling quadrant, they are likely to be dissatisfied

because of the gap between the importance they attribute to the issue and their actual experience of it. So, high proportions of responses within this unfulfilling quadrant is concerning in terms of student satisfaction. The limiting quadrant is the most concerning of the four in terms of reaping the benefits of internationalisation, in that participants neither attribute importance to it nor are experiencing it. These respondents may be satisfied, but they may be significantly missing out on the benefits that internationalisation can bring.

Staff only



Once again, flourishing is the most desirable quadrant for the majority of the results to fall in, in that participants not only attribute importance to the internationalisation facet but also feel comfortable handling it. Challenging is also positive insofar as participants regard it as important, yet it is concerning in that they find it challenging to handle, which may result in stress. Scores that fall into the undemanding quadrant are the opposite of this. Such ratings are positive insofar as participants feel comfortable in handling the internationalisation

facet, but the lack of importance they attach to it suggests that they may not appreciate what it can offer and may therefore fail to capitalise on the benefits it can offer. Participants who fall into the demotivating quadrant are the most concerning. Their ratings indicate that they find the internationalisation facet challenging to handle, but attribute little importance to it. This may be because of disillusionment and reflect a way of coping psychologically with the situation.

Key findings of the first-wave study

As part of the first-wave study, the GEP was completed online by 2360 domestic and international students at six English speaking universities. Five of the institutions were traditional universities with strong academic reputations; the sixth one was an applied technical university.

Around 75% of students regard all five aspects of internationalisation measured by the GEP as important or very important.

Around 50% of students report that they are not experiencing, or developing in, these areas.

The most important aspects of internationalisation to students are global skills and support, social integration, and academic integration. Lack of experience in these three areas is particularly high.

Around 25% regard the various aspects of internationalisation to be of little or very little importance to them - a noticeable minority of students.

Domestic vs non-domestic. Domestic students attach significantly lower levels of importance to internationalisation than non-domestic students. They also report the least experience of internationalisation at university.

Asian students (compared with domestic and non-domestic European Economic Area students) attach the greatest importance to internationalisation and show the largest gap between the global education they aspire to and what they actually experience.

So, what does this mean for those spear-heading their institution's internationalisation strategies?

The GEP enables higher education institutions' Internationalisation functions to achieve the following:

Benchmark their internationalisation achievements.

Diagnose their level of community integration

(social and academic), including their strengths and weaknesses.

Diagnose their level of provision for developing

'global graduates', including their strengths and weaknesses.

Continuously improve the effectiveness of their internationalisation strategies.

Inform meaningful interventions and strategies to

develop global graduates and improve the student experience.

Set themselves apart on the internationalisation stage.



GEP growth

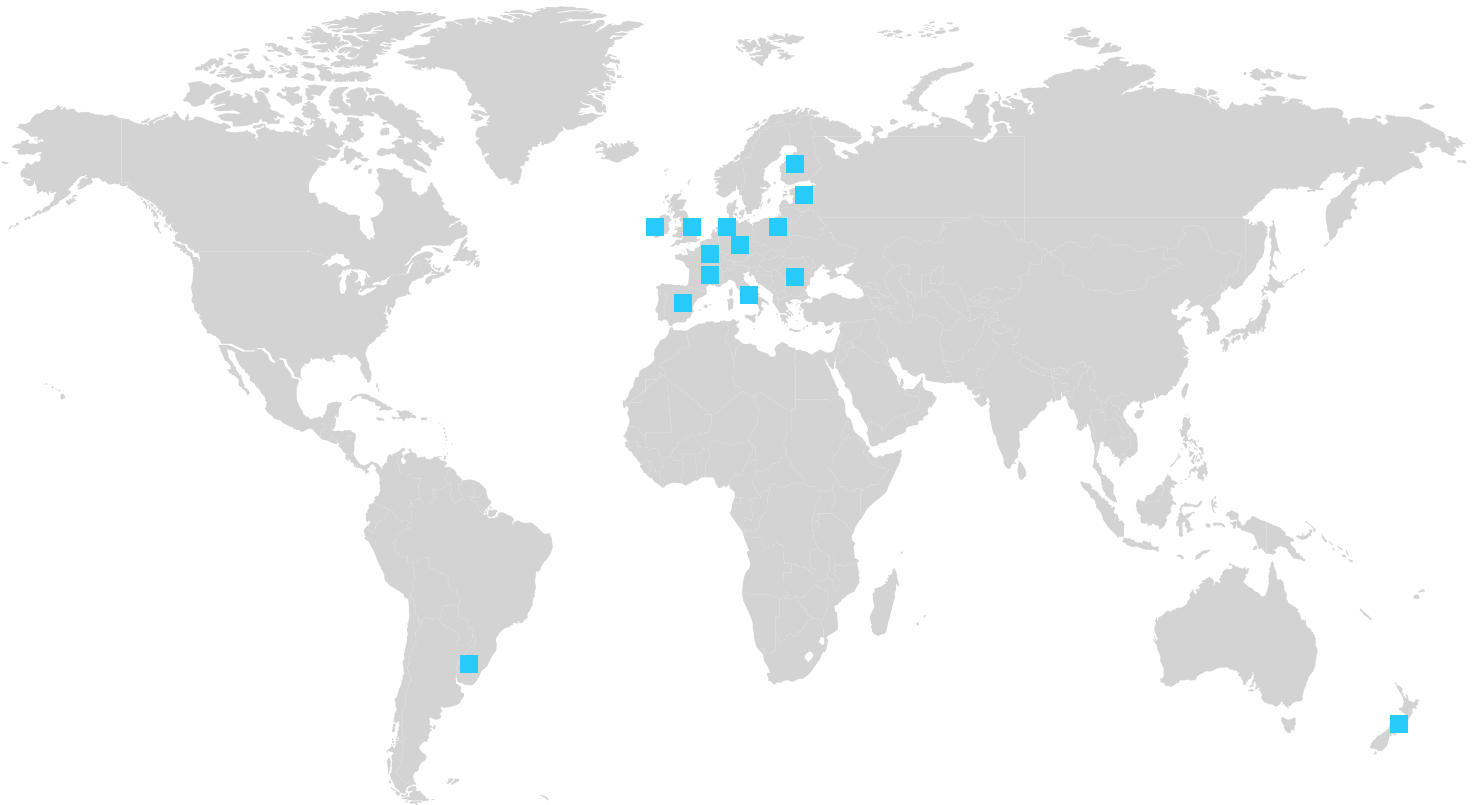
— Over 20,000 students

— Over 8,000 staff

— 22 universities

— 14 different countries

Belgium, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Republic of Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Romania, Spain, the UK, and Uruguay

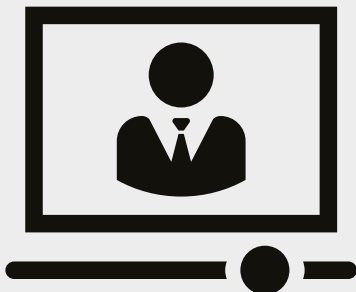


Getting involved and further information:

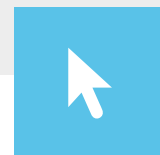
Find out more about:

- **How to participate either individually or as part of a network of HEIs**
- **The two intake deadlines**
- **Essential information for potential participating HEIs**
- **Demonstrations of the reporting suite**
- **Details of the administration of the GEP**

Access our latest overview webinar:



INTERNATIONALISATION -
establishing the conditions
required to meet the growing need
for global graduates



i-graduate

Global Education Profiler (GEP)

Shortlisted for the PIEoneer of the Year Award 2019

The GEP was developed and designed by Helen Spencer-Oatey and Daniel Dauber, Applied Linguistics, University of Warwick. It is administered by i-graduate, the market-leading student experience benchmarking and analysis provider. Part of Tribal Group.