

## Higher Education

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# The Route to Pro Vice-Chancellor International

| JULY 2021

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# | Introduction



This report is the joint work of The IC Global Partnership (The IC) and Berwick Partners (an Odgers Berndtson company) (Berwick). It combines the expertise of The IC in the areas of internationalisation and global engagement in the education sector and the knowledge Berwick has of senior and executive leadership positions in the higher education sector. This report is designed to increase the understanding of Pro Vice-Chancellor International (PVC-I) roles in the higher education sector, to identify the career path of PVC-Is and look at the future of the role in a post-coronavirus pandemic and constantly changing education landscape. This report includes both quantitative and qualitative data to ensure extensive evidence and rich insights, both concluded in June 2021. 138 UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) were analysed, to assess the backgrounds of PVC-Is including previous roles, academic backgrounds, disciplines and genders. 10 PVC-Is were interviewed in detail about their role, profile, institution, career path and future. This report examines whether national regulations and frameworks are needed for internationalisation and global engagement, especially timely with the ambitious UK International Education Strategy and the challenges the education sector faces post-coronavirus pandemic. It also looks at how the PVC-I role is viewed in institutions, the profile of a PVC-I and the absence of a mapped career path for this position. In order for PVCs to progress to the top of an institution, their skills and attributes as well as synergies across PVC roles need to be understood more widely. Also, what will the role of the PVC-I look like in a post-coronavirus pandemic environment, with concerns growing for global warming and an increased focus on environmental sustainability?



'Internationalisation' has been defined as

the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society"<sup>1</sup>

A definition of 'Global Engagement' is

"committed, meaningful interaction with the world as a whole"<sup>2</sup>



1 De Wit and Hunter, 2015  
2 CBIE, 2015

The key differentiator between these two definitions applied and observed by HEIs is that internationalisation is the process, a position along a continuum; whereas global engagement is the result, an end point, indicating a position of an arrival point in the process, where the institution reaches the stage of maturity in internationalisation, but one that still requires constant commitment. The two terms have often been used interchangeably in the sector, yet when observing job titles in UK HEIs, the term that has been chosen usually signifies where an institution currently stands or where its aspirations lie in the areas of internationalisation and global engagement. Institutions with senior 'global engagement' roles typically view themselves at the mature stage of internationalisation; whereas PVC-Is are often appointed when an institution has started to actively engage in internationalisation.

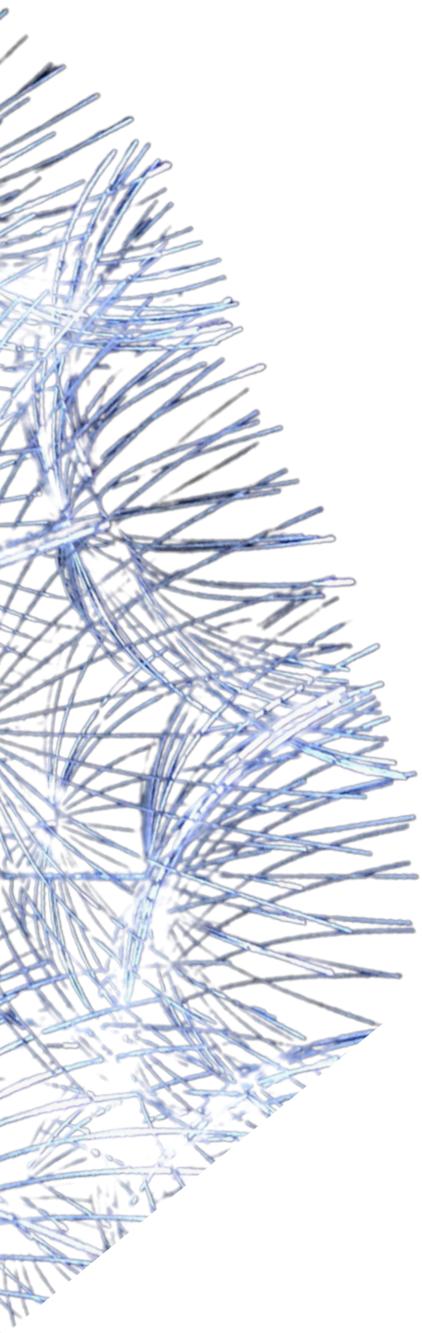
The two terms can also affect the attractiveness of the post. A PVC-I role typically does not include domestic students, whereas a PVC or similar role with 'global engagement' in the title has a broader scope, including a stake in the domestic student market. Potentially, when an institution reaches the stage of maturity in internationalisation, separate roles are seen to be less critical as internationalisation is embedded into the portfolios and activities of all senior roles in an institution. Invariably, the post carries a large share of the risks (actual and perceived) of internationalisation and these risks have become more complex and uncertain.

The benefits of internationalisation and global engagement are vast, leading to a positive impact at local, national and global levels. Globally it provides opportunities and access to a diverse education, supports the solutions to global problems and fosters borderless networks and relationships. At the national level it can support international trade, soft global power and contribute to the knowledge economy; and at the local level within institutions, it generates income, creates a culturally rich environment that helps to produce global citizens and builds and encourages world class academic outcomes.



# Is there a place for a Pro Vice-Chancellor International role at a university's executive table?





PVC-Is provide strategic leadership in the areas of internationalisation and global engagement. They are responsible for a university's international business including international student recruitment, international partnerships, Transnational Education (TNE), internationalisation on campus, international student experience, and brand and reputation management. The role often sits on a university's executive board which provides the day-to-day management and leadership of a university. The PVC role is broad, requires significant experience and an excellent track record.<sup>3</sup>

The role of a PVC has changed significantly with many PVC-Is, especially those appointed externally, making conscious decisions to move into management in a higher education sector that is increasingly complex.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, data shows that PVC-I's portfolios are diverse, vast and contribute, not only to the institution's economy but to the overall UK economy. International students comprise 20.7% of the total student population in the UK and higher education-related exports contributed £13.4bn to the UK's economy in 2016.<sup>5</sup>

**ECONOMIC IMPACT OF  
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS  
IN THE UK**

**£13.4bn**

**TRANSNATIONAL  
EDUCATION**

**666,815**

students are studying for a UK degree overseas

3 Jobs.ac.uk, 18/05/21, (<https://career-advice.jobs.ac.uk/academic/pro-vice-chancellor/>)

4 Shepherd, S, 'The Changing Role of PVC', WONKHE, 18/03/2014

(<https://wonkhe.com/blogs/the-changing-role-of-pvc/>)

5 Universities UK International. 'International Facts and Figures 2020', UUKi, 08/10/2020,

(<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/international-facts-figures-2020.aspx>)

The UK has launched its International Education Strategy<sup>6</sup> and by 2030, it aims to increase the value of its education exports to £35 billion per year and increase the numbers of international higher education students studying in the UK to a minimum of 600,000 per year.



In order to meet the challenges impacting the education sector as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, the strategy looks at how to move from recovery to growth in the following areas:

- Diversifying international student recruitment
- Enhancing the international student experience
- Building lasting global partnerships
- Supporting growth of education exports and internationalisation

The strategy also outlines the areas where international education support will be provided by the Government and one of these is higher education and TNE. In order to meet the areas highlighted in the UK International Education Strategy, as listed above, especially to increase the numbers of recruitment channels to increase the number of international students studying in the UK and build sustainable global partnerships, the role of the PVC-I is of key importance. PVC-Is will be managing an ambitious and broad Government-level portfolio for their respective UK institutions, engaging with Government directly to lobby on behalf of their institution and the sector more widely. This all requires internationalisation to be represented at the executive table if an institution is to be successful in its implementation, and a PVC-I role can provide this.

<sup>6</sup> UK Government, 02/06/21, (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-education-strategy-2021-update>)

# The role of national regulations and frameworks

If PVC-Is have a global footprint to cultivate and manage on behalf of their institutions, do national frameworks support their roles, training and development in their current and future careers? Do they support the credibility of the post-holder at the executive table? The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is the system for assessing the quality of research in UK HEIs and provides a framework which drives institutions' aims and objectives in the area of research. Most UK institutions typically have a PVC Research (PVC-R) role to help deliver a successful REF outcome. The Office for Students requires institutions to register with them and abide by the regulatory framework for higher education in England which focuses on the students' academic experience. This regulatory framework, as well as the National Student Survey and the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), all drive the aims and objectives of the education agenda and those of the PVC Learning & Teaching/Education (L&T/E). This PVC role is always represented at the UK universities executive table. It is possible to argue, therefore, PVC-L&T/Es are perceived to be one of the "must have" PVC roles for institutions. Both the PVC-R and PVC-L&T/E roles have regulatory frameworks associated with them that pose financial and reputational risk to the institution. There is an authority for which universities need to meet legally obliged standards. What regulatory frameworks exist for assessing the quality of internationalisation and global engagement in higher education?

There is no UK national level regulatory framework for internationalisation and global engagement. The UK International Education Strategy sets goals and targets for the UK's ambition in international education. Universities UK International (UUKi), as the sector's influencing body for UK HEIs Internationalisation, offers research and best practice in the area of institutions' internationalisation strategy and development. QAA sets and safeguards standards for UK TNE. There are also global rankings (such as QS, THE, Shanghai etc.) that are being utilised by HEIs as a way of measuring internationalisation impact. At some institutions these rankings are perceived as a de facto framework for internationalisation. These institutions typically choose to focus their resources to achieve the best outcomes against the measures these rankings use for both fear and concern of the negative impact a drop in global rankings can have on areas such as student recruitment, research revenue, global partnerships and an institution's reputation. However, none of the above, (including the QAA<sup>7</sup> which is still optional) have a direct correlation that incentivises or awards outcomes or puts an institution at risk of not meeting its regulatory requirements and therefore it can be the first to be removed, integrated or deprioritised. Engagement with internationalisation and global engagement are an institutional choice.

Are all UK HEIs committed to internationalisation and global engagement and how do they support this area structurally at their executive table? What voice does internationalisation and global engagement have at these top tables? Who typically holds these roles?

New research has just been undertaken with PVC-Is in the UK.

7 Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), 07/07/21,  
(<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/international/transnational-education>)

# The 'shape' of the current PVC-I cohort

It is important to understand the characteristics, background, skills and knowledge of those individuals who currently occupy the role of a PVC-I to identify if there is inequity, if there are recruitment challenges, disparities with other PVC roles and if any differences help shape the role of the PVC-I. We drew on quantitative and qualitative data, looking at the following key data sets - gender, academic background, and internal vs external appointments.<sup>8</sup>

## Gender representation

71.2% of PVC-Is are assumed male, this figure is broadly similar for PVC-Rs: 77% are assumed male in Odgers Berndtson and Berwick Partners' Higher Education: The Route to Pro Vice-Chancellor Research report.<sup>9</sup>

## Ethnicity

In 2013, 96% of all PVCs at UK universities were white.<sup>10</sup> Whilst it is expected that this figure will be similar for PVC-Is, we were unable to find reliable data on ethnicity to be conclusive. Further research is needed in future to understand the ethnic backgrounds of those in PVC-I roles and to track trends over time.

## Academic background

The majority of PVC-Is have an academic background (77.3%) and are from a non-STEM discipline background (62.5%).<sup>11</sup> In contrast, the Odgers Berndtson and Berwick Partners' findings of PVC-Rs show that 66% of all PVC-Rs have a STEM background.

Out of the PVC-Is from a non-STEM background, 88.9% have come from a HEI in their previous role, 57.5% are assumed male and 67.5% are assumed to be from an academic background. With PVC-Is from a STEM background (38.7%), 83.3% have come from a HEI in their previous role, 83.3% are assumed male and 91.7% are assumed to be from an academic background.

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<sup>8</sup> This information was gathered via a desk-based audit of PVC-I information available in the public domain. Whilst there is of course much need to consider representation in all its forms within the professional community, the approach used could not provide data on sexuality, disability, age or ethnicity. A decision was taken to assume gender based upon appearance, but it is fully understood that the veracity of our data in this regard will be weaker than that which a census would provide.

<sup>9</sup> Odgers Berndtson and Berwick Partners, 02/06/21, ([https://www.berwickpartners.co.uk/fileadmin/uploads/berwick-partners/Documents/Higher\\_Education\\_-\\_The\\_Route\\_to\\_Pro\\_Vice-Chancellor\\_Research.pdf](https://www.berwickpartners.co.uk/fileadmin/uploads/berwick-partners/Documents/Higher_Education_-_The_Route_to_Pro_Vice-Chancellor_Research.pdf))

<sup>10</sup> Shepherd, S, 'The Changing Role of PVC', WONKHE, 18/03/2014 (<https://wonkhe.com/blogs/the-changing-role-of-pvc/>)

<sup>11</sup> Within the report, PVC-I's STEM or non-STEM background refers to their discipline background.

Whilst males from an academic HEI background dominate the PVC-I landscape, there is an improved gender balance from the pool of non-STEM PVC-Is compared with STEM PVC-Is. Of note, there are over twice as many female PVC-Is who are non-STEM (37.5%) compared with those from a STEM background (16.7%).

## Internal/External appointments

66.1% of all appointments are internal, and whilst 62.5% of all STEM appointments were also internal, 57.9% of all non-STEM appointments were external which shows that recruitment is from a much wider pool and this could account for a higher number of females and also fewer academic backgrounds, compared with STEM appointments.

## Vacant positions

Out of the 138 universities included in this research, over half of institutions do not have specific PVC-I job titles or equivalent positions listed in the public domain (52.2%) and a further 2.9% have, or are with, vacancies. In contrast, 31.2% of universities did not have PVC-R positions.<sup>9</sup> This indicates that either the responsibilities of a PVC-I role are included in a broader portfolio of other roles and responsibilities, the role is split and different functions shared or HEIs do not/no longer see a need for this role, which could be due to costs, institutional priorities or job sharing. To reinforce this point, whilst some universities have roles with PVC-I responsibility, these roles are typically undertaken by academic staff with a title of Associate PVC-I or Dean of Internationalisation without a seat at the executive table. Such roles are not visible to the public and so institutions are not promoting these roles or, it could be argued, highlighting the importance the institution places on the area of internalisation to an external audience.

## UK/International

Only 21.2% (11 out of 52) of PVC-Is have had one or more substantive international roles (positions based outside of the UK) in their career. With the vast majority of those in PVC-I roles currently having careers based in the UK, and most (66.1%) appointments being internal, there could be an excessive inward-looking focus when coaching and recruiting potential candidates for PVC-I positions. This may also have bearing on the lack of diversity we see in the profile of the current PVC-I cohort.

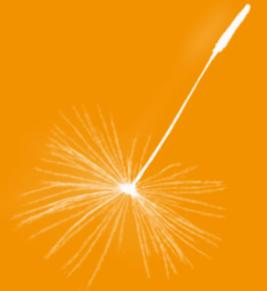
The findings from qualitative research fall into 7 key themes:

## 1. How the PVC-I role is viewed

- Internationalisation has not typically been core to many universities' strategies in the same way that research, learning or teaching has been. Therefore, the portfolio of a PVC-I can be considered incidental or side-lined. There is a fundamental paradox for HEIs to consider in a post-coronavirus pandemic and post-Brexit world; can HEIs afford not to engage with internationalisation and global engagement?
- The UK Government has shown its commitment to international education with a published UK strategy and an **international champion to lead** on its progress. Additionally, a key focus of PVC-Is is engagement with the Government through sector lobbying. So, can HEIs afford to not have an executive champion for international engagement?
- There is an outdated view that a PVC-I's remit involves "taxi receipts and lunches out".
- The requirement to travel outside of a university means there can be a lack of visibility or presence, therefore PVC-Is are often not seen as part of the central decision-making unit that makes up the executive team. This may change as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and the renewed focus on environmental sustainability.
- There is no linear career trajectory or aspirations for professionals in education or international roles to become PVC-Is. If a clear career path was identified and actively promoted, i.e. through mentors, this could affect the desirability and demand for this role from within institutions and external organisations.
- These factors may partly explain why only 52.2% of UK universities don't have a PVC-I role publicised.

## 2. The roles are different at different institutions

- In the most prestigious research-intensive universities, the PVC-I can often act as a gatekeeper, receiving requests for meetings and collaborations and making decisions on which to pursue or not.
- In many modern universities, the PVC-I is a more proactive role and aware that in order to meet the requirements of their role and improve their global rankings, they need to increase awareness of their institution amongst their global peers. This ideally means matchmaking areas of research excellence in their own institutions with relevant highly ranked universities overseas to establish research and teaching collaborations.
- The PVC-I role varies significantly between different types of institutions but the breadth of the role is a common theme.



## 3. The profile of the PVC-I has two core elements

a) **International background:** PVC-Is are often considered for the role because of an implied cultural competency that comes from a deep experience of acclimatising to different cultures and scenarios – a key skill often highlighted as a necessity in the PVC-I community. Their profile can be either:

- because the individual is inherently international in their personal profile – whether they come from abroad, have lived and studied abroad at university, or have had an early overseas academic or professional post, or
- the individual's research has resulted in international networks and collaborations, and therefore they tend to have an established track record of international collaborations and travel.

Although these are the observations of those interviewed and the requirements stated by institutions during the recruitment process, the quantitative research shows that only 21.2% of PVC-Is have an international career background (looking at their previous substantive international roles outside of the UK). Therefore, the current reality of the international background of a PVC-I profile is likely to be based on the role holder having had an international education or involved in international research, networks and collaborations.

**b) Academic or Professional background:** The PVC-I role is typically a university executive position where it is possible to have an academic or professional in the post, but this may vary depending on the expectations and remit of the role.

- In a research-intensive university, a PVC-I would typically be an established professor or at least hold a PhD. The respondents felt it was essential that a PVC-I needed to have a firm understanding of how research is conducted and delivered in order to be a credible ambassador for the university. Whilst it was felt that typically this was best proved by having done research themselves, not all PVC-Is would agree. Others would argue they can successfully understand and represent research without a PhD. Although there is a need to have this high level understanding as a PVC-I, one could argue that financially, international research does not generate as much income to the university as other aspects of internationalisation, which has become critical for universities, and therefore shouldn't be the lead criteria for this role.
- The core strands of the PVC-I role are multi-faceted and typically focus on student recruitment, partnerships, mobility, changing the mindset of the institution to be truly engaged globally and realise its potential. Of the very few non-academics interviewed, whilst they recognised there is a divide between themselves and their academic peers, they felt they could bridge that gap through experience of vast operational breadth across university management which their academic peers can often lack.

#### 4. The skills and attributes of PVC-Is need greater recognition

- PVC-Is have a broad skill set and multiple attributes because of their complex and demanding role which is set within a challenging and changing organisational context. This is multi-layered, because of national and international policies and practices which can impact on their work and of their university. Therefore, PVC-Is need to be resilient yet flexible; think strategically but make operational decisions; manage risk but seize opportunities; and be open minded but focused. They also need to have excellent communication, interpersonal and influencing skills; show excellent diplomacy and judgement; be good listeners and able to build strong international networks and collaborations.



- PVC-Is understand the international, national and institutional landscapes and demonstrate strong skills and attributes, which enables them to play a critical role at the executive table. Their strategic oversight of countries and regions can also result in the efficient use of resources and because of their ability to see the integrated nature of universities and to mobilise internal resources and international partnerships, they can help their institutions to meet their strategic goals and their operational requirements. This broad understanding and knowledge can also contribute to the strategic aims of others at the executive table and should put them in a strong position to fulfil the role of a VC.
- Furthermore, with environmental sustainability becoming a key area of concern for students and institutions alike, PVC-Is are well positioned to lead in this area, as environmental sustainability is an area of global concern; could benefit from greater centralisation and visibility; and requires a person who is globally minded, has a breadth of knowledge across the institution as well as in its global position in the world.

## 5. Synergies across PVC roles need to be emphasised

- Important elements of the post include engagement and partnership building which mirrors that of the PVC-R and the PVC-L&T/E roles respectively.
- As with their other PVC peers, the ability to influence (and have the credibility to do so) is instrumental in their effectiveness as a PVC-I – and no less so than a PVC-R or L&T/E.
- Much like the PVC-R, the PVC-I needs to have a broad understanding of research conducted across the entire university in order to be an effective broker in high level conversations about research collaboration. Academic staff in PVC-I positions have an advantage in this scenario as they are typically deemed more credible counterparts with which to have this kind of conversation.
- The TNE element of a PVC-I portfolio, including quality processes and assessment exercises, touch on the L&T/E activities of the university. Infact, the PVC-I has a critical role to play in supporting the L&T/E and Research strategies as both require an internationalisation focus. Additionally, because a university's international reputation for research and teaching underpins global rankings, an institution's international profile and partnerships are mission-critical for research-intensive universities.

- The PVC-I role, in its various forms, touches on most areas of university management, and is not singly focused on 'international' in the abstract. This includes areas such as promoting the university's brand, developing research partnerships, financial forecasting and planning and supporting the future employability of students: all of which overlap multiple faculties or departments as well as the other PVC roles.
- It should be noted that whilst a comparison has been made with traditional PVC roles, many senior teams have specific PVC roles that have wider portfolios which can include civic engagement, corporate engagement and other key priorities for their institution, as well as responsibility for internationalisation and global engagement.

## 6. The route from PVC-I to VC is not well established

- There are examples of PVC-Is who have become Deputy Vice-Chancellors. However, the few numbers of PVC-Is making it to VC level, affects the desirability of the post. A number of respondents expressed dismay that such a dynamic post rarely leads to the top position in an institution.
- Individuals who have applied for VC roles are often discounted at the long list (LL) stage; few get through to the shortlist (SL), and only one interviewed for this report got through to the interview.
- After being discounted at the LL stage, PVC-Is were frustrated at the feedback from headhunters. It indicated a lack of understanding about the breadth and extent of their role and an indication of a 'one size fits all' stereotype to the PVC role.
- As a result, all PVC-Is interviewed were conscious that their roles, when initially agreeing to take them on, offered something more than just the international remit – they have purposely sought broader portfolios that they hope will stand them in a better position for a VC role.



## 7. How the role of the PVC-I could respond to a post-coronavirus pandemic environment

- Whilst there were many differences of opinion, all agreed the PVC-I position would need to adapt and change. In HEIs which prioritise international student recruitment over long-term international brand enhancement or partnerships, there is a sense that immediate commercial needs will force boards to examine the costs of their executive teams and make cost savings. This could result in the PVC-I role being cut completely or the 'internationalisation' agenda either being picked up and absorbed by the PVC-R and PVC-L&T/E or creating an international specific non-executive senior role. However, of course this model ignores the reason why a separate individual had a full time role driving the internationalisation agenda in the first place.
- For other HEIs, the emphasis of internationalisation will shift away from direct student recruitment and focus primarily on TNE partnerships, 2+2 agreements, virtual mobility (both inbound and outbound) and possibly franchise agreements. This could result in an increased need for a PVC-I role, who has the networks, skill set, knowledge and passion to drive these models forward.
- Institutions potentially have to adapt to lower numbers of international student recruitment over the short term, but there is a greater sense of confidence that those numbers will rebound in due course. In the meantime, a focus will be to link to The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and persevere with high level research and teaching partnerships. There is also a need to ensure a strategy of diversity for international student recruitment to alleviate reliance on a single market or region as this poses student experience and financial risk to the institution. Due to Brexit, over reliance on single markets and border controls resulting from the coronavirus pandemic, diversity is an even greater issue.

- Risk management remains a vital function of a PVC-I and this sits within an increasingly complex and dynamic environment. Risks are numerous and include reputational risks (e.g. rankings, partnerships), financial risks (e.g. research funding, reduced tuition fees); operational risks (e.g. equipment, TNE) and compliance risks (regulations, fraud).
- PVC-Is have lacked visibility and influence because of their travelling commitments. For some, this may have resulted in them being side lined at the executive table. With the coronavirus pandemic changing travel attitudes and behaviour, combined with the growing environmental sustainability agenda and climate emergency, PVC-Is may spend greater time on campus and their presence could ensure they are more central to the decisions and leadership of the institution.
- With the education sector increasingly under pressure to respond to global warming and engage in environmental sustainability, institutions will need a senior-level champion with an understanding of global literacy and SDGs, as well as someone who can deliver a globally minded, coordinated approach to tackle the problems that face institutions and indeed the whole world. PVC-Is are well positioned to lead in this role based on their global outlook, the breadth of their role and their many attributes and skills outlined above.



# | Conclusion & Recommendations



The PVC-I role is of strategic importance to UK institutions in leading, building and maintaining international reputations and global objectives. The economic benefits of internationalisation to institutions and the UK economy is significant and the UK's International Education Strategy sets out ambitious new targets for UK institutions to reach. PVC-Is' portfolios are increasingly complex, broad and challenging, operating in shifting national and international landscapes. Given the critical function of a PVC-I and the high-level skill sets and attributes needed, they should clearly have a place at the executive table and be well placed for a future VC role. However, our research shows the barriers that need to be overcome and our recommendations for change so that PVC-Is can reach the top of their careers at their chosen institutions.

**Consideration to be given to the role of national regulation and the creation of a framework for internationalisation and global engagement.**

Regulations and frameworks provide guidance and foundations for PVC-Rs and PVC-L&T/Es and help to advance the aims and objectives of their work within their institution. Without such frameworks existing for internationalisation and global engagement, PVC-Is and the area they represent may be at a disadvantage, because their roles may not be seen as essential to institutions and often don't have a place at the executive table.

**A proactive approach that continues to ensure diversity and inclusion within the recruitment process and appointment of PVC-I roles.**

The typical background of a PVC-I is assumed male and white, which is similar to the PVC-R profile. However, PVC-Is differ because the majority are from a non-STEM discipline background. Out of the non-STEM PVC-Is, over twice as many are from a non-academic background compared with the STEM PVC-Is, and a perception exists that PVC-Is need a detailed understanding of research in order to represent the university effectively. Very few PVC-Is have an international career path, although individuals are often considered for the position because of an implied international background or through research.

**Reflect and review the positive effects and impact internationalisation has at the local, national and global level, when considering the composition of a university executive board and external representation of the institution's commitment to internationalisation and global engagement.**

The future of the role is complex and divergent. Due to the cost of the coronavirus pandemic, internationalisation activity could be reduced to save money in the short term, resulting in the PVC-I role being removed or merged. Alternatively, the coronavirus pandemic could result in different models of education delivery with increased interest in TNE, leading to a need for a PVC-I's knowledge and skills. PVC-I's roles may also be increased to include the centralisation and prominence of environmental sustainability within institutions.

When institutional understanding of Internationalisation is achieved, by acknowledging its scope, breadth and significance, as well as the impact it has to an institution's vision, finances, reputation and global footprint, the need for an executive role to lead in this strategically important area is recognised.

**Create a development plan that supports the career route to PVC-I and PVC-I to VC and consider complimentary additional portfolio responsibilities/remits such as environmental sustainability.**

The PVC-I role lacks the presence and visibility of other PVC roles because travel commitments take PVC-Is away from the executive table. Fewer reach the top positions in their institution, compared with PVC-Rs, and the lack of a career trajectory, lack of comparison with other PVC roles and lack of understanding of PVC-I's skills and attributes are likely to be the reasons. Additionally, the number of vacant PVC-I roles shows this role may be merged with other duties or internationalisation is not seen as critical to an institution. There is a clear need for a development plan for PVC-Is to ensure they can make it to VC level as well as greater recognition and support from others in their journey to get there.

With environmental sustainability becoming increasingly important for students and stakeholders, institutions need to take positive actions in response to environmental sustainability and global warming. PVC-Is are well placed to lead in this area because of their skill set, their global outlook and multi-layered and multi-national remit.



# | Our People

## The IC Global Partnership



**Charlene Allen**

Co Founder

Charlene has 21 years' experience in Higher Education. She has held

senior roles across several universities in the UK, held a national sector leading role as Chair of British Universities International Liaison Association (BUILA) and sat on strategic international advisory boards for the British Council, Universities UK International and the UK Council for International Students Association. Her work has included the development and implementation of various internationalisation projects, lobbying on internationalisation matters and working with the Department of Education and the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy International Team on the UK International Education Strategy.

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**Sirin Myles**

Co Founder

Sirin is passionate about unlocking individual and organisational potential. As a qualified leadership

career coach, Sirin does not believe in worrying about, or wasting too much time on, what has not worked but prefers to focus on what could work, why and how. Sirin's MBA focused on the delivery of institutional international and global engagement strategies. Sirin is a highly experienced International Leader and specialist in Higher Education. She has more than 20 years of international marketing and leadership experience in diplomatic and higher education institutions in the UK and internationally.

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At The IC, Charlene and Sirin provide strategic and operational consultancy to institutions and organisation engaged in international education, as well as coaching, mentoring and training for professionals working in this area.

## Berwick Partners



**Elizabeth James**

Partner & Head of the Education Practice, Berwick Partners

Liz is a Partner and leads the Education Practice at Berwick Partners. She is an academic appointments specialist with experience of supporting universities in the attraction and appointment of Heads of School / Department and Professorial / Research staff across all disciplines. Liz has over 10 years' experience in Executive Search and has worked with a range of institutions in that time, including the University of Cambridge, De Montfort University, Durham University, University of Exeter and Queen's University Belfast. Liz maintains an active presence in the sector on issues related to diversity including age and leadership strategy.

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