



STRATEGIC MARKETING PLAN 2013-2018

November 2013

Board approved, 29/11/13

Marketing & Communications

Bournemouth University, Melbury House, 1-3 Oxford Road, Bournemouth, BH8 8ES

Tel: + (0) 1202 961038

Email: M&COperations@bournemouth.ac.uk

CONTENTS

1. Executive Summary	Page 3
2. Introduction and Context	Page 5
3. Marketing Objectives	Page 10
3.1 Reputation Building	Page 11
3.2 Student Recruitment	Page 13
3.3 Partnership Development	Page 18
3.4 Communications	Page 20
4. Measurement and Evaluation	Page 25

APPENDICES

A	SWOT Analysis of Marketing Environment
B	Stakeholder Mapping
C	Marketing & Communications: Proposed Overarching Structure
D	Student Recruitment: Performance Data
E	Student Recruitment Delivery Plans detail: 2014/15
F	Key Messages and Proof Points

1. Executive Summary

Bournemouth University is on a journey to become a UK ranked top 50 university, by 2018. This marketing strategy sets out how taking a strategic approach to marketing and communications will support us on that journey.

We have ambitious targets, set against a challenging and changing external environment. Growth in PGT and International student numbers represents a significant challenge, where we start from a low base. Developing effective partnerships will be key to long term success and we need to be attractive to the 'right' partners for BU. Exploiting our existing industry and professional links and developing new ones is critical to achieving our student recruitment targets where employability is a key message. Attracting the right staff and students through showcasing the best of BU, from research achievement to investment in our estates, infrastructure and the whole BU experience, will be central to success.

Communicating BU's distinctiveness, defined as Fusion in our strategic plan, is central to achieving a differentiated place in a crowded market. In our communications, we need to bring Fusion to life for each audience group. Evidence of what Fusion means for students, staff and our wider community of stakeholders, is starting to emerge through innovative, varied and impactful projects and successes across the institution and our communications must reach out and tell those stories in the language and through the channels our stakeholders want to hear and use.

Set out in this plan are four headline objectives to support reputation building, student recruitment and partnership development, all underpinned by an effective and strategic approach to communications. Central to delivery is a high performing, creative and committed Marketing & Communications team, working in partnership with Academic Schools and Professional Services. Developing and investing in the Marketing & Communications team, who will be leading delivery of this plan, will be a priority during 2014, following a major review of structure in late 2013.

Internally, marketing (as a function – not a department) needs to become integrated across the organisation and awareness of the role that every member of staff plays in building and living the BU brand and “delivering the promise” is critical. Internal communications and a collaborative approach to working will be prioritised within the Marketing & Communications directorate, which will lead on embedding marketing across the institution. The importance of internal communications is recognised in this plan: our staff and students are our potential ambassadors and word of mouth is, as ever, the most valuable promotional tool in recruiting students and building reputation.

The gap between IT and marketing is closing and exploiting new technology and digital communications brings us an opportunity. Highly targeted, data driven and personalised communications, measurement and analysis – digital technology gives us the chance to do this and

become more agile, innovative and cost effective in our marketing communications. Work on a new digital vision for our communications has been undertaken in 2013 and this will now inform development of a fresh public facing website in 2014, to act as the cornerstone for our communications.

Priorities are to:

- Communicate what we stand for clearly. Stand out and be heard above the noise in a crowded market to build our reputational awareness and understanding. We need to know the audience, listen and know how they want to be communicated with and when.
- Use the staff and student experience to tell the BU story.
- Keep the importance of word of mouth and BU staff and students at the forefront of our minds. Develop our internal communications and work to ensure all staff and students - the BU community - know and share our BU values, and that our behaviour does not conflict with what we are saying in our communications.
- Exploit new and emerging technologies to constantly refine and improve our marketing and communications.
- Use market research and intelligence to develop insight and lead a more market informed approach to product development, targeting, segmentation and positioning.
- Know what's working in our marketing and communications through measurement and analysis to make us agile, effective and accountable.

This strategic marketing plan is ambitious and achievable. It has BU values running through it and will demand creative approaches, using authentic voices, telling responsible messages. Pursuit of excellence must be a constant, with achievement celebrated and always present as the goal. Delivery of the plan depends on the whole institution embracing the objectives and approach. It will be led by a strong Marketing & Communications team equipped with the right skills, from analytical thinking to creative ideas and everything in between. The team will be empowered to think and act strategically across BU, to deliver effective marketing and great service to internal and external stakeholders alike. Certainly the external environment is challenging and with a forward-looking, market informed approach BU will be well placed to achieve its ambitions as set out in BU2018.

2. Introduction and context

Bournemouth University's vision is to "create the most stimulating, challenging and rewarding university experience in a world-class learning community by sharing our unique fusion of excellent education, research and professional practice and inspiring our students, graduates and staff to enrich the world." This strategy draws on this vision and the University's Strategic Plan BU2018 and sets out overarching and strategic level marketing and communications objectives and strategies to support the achievement of BU2018.

In turn, beneath this plan document, one year tactical plans detail the activities and campaigns required to deliver on these overarching objectives. This hierarchy of plans is shown here:



The supporting plans to this overarching marketing strategy are reviewed and updated annually, through the University's delivery planning process. They contain full details of planned activity with time schedules and budgets. Academic School marketing plans are also produced at this time, which draw on activities set out in the central plans shown above together with detailed School specific activities from the Schools'

annual Delivery Plans. These supporting plans form part of the Marketing & Communications departmental Delivery Plan and are available on request (or to view here I:\OVC\Public\BU Delivery Plans 2013-14\All DPs 2012-13\BU Delivery Plans 2012-13\Approved Delivery Plans).

The University Executive Team has had significant input at all key stages throughout the development of this plan, and the University Leadership Team has been consulted. This plan has also benefitted from invaluable professional and academic input and advice from colleagues in the Business School and the Media School.

The external context

The marketing context in which BU is operating is complex and continually evolving. A top level exercise to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats highlights this point well and is included as Appendix A for reference.

The competitive environment

Competitive forces in UK higher education are increasing, whether through the growth in public and private higher education providers in the UK, alternative career paths for young adults, such as apprenticeships, or development of in-country provision in south-east Asia. Alternative routes to higher education, such as MOOCs (massive open online courses) or split provision across partner institutions and other forms of trans-national education (TNE) have already fragmented the traditional target market segments. Internationally and domestically, increasingly aggressive marketing tactics are being used to reach more sophisticated prospective students. The market place in the UK is noisy, with little clear differentiation between institutions demonstrated for prospective students and their influencers in the home UK market. League table positions and statistics about employability dominate communications, but there is little evidence that these have impact on choice in the UK market (although there is clear evidence of their influence on international students). The need to demonstrate value for money and return on investment, particularly in the postgraduate market is likely to increase. A report from HEFCE (July 2013) highlights concern about the impact of increased debt incurred at undergraduate study level, combined with limited access to finance for UK postgraduate students.

BU's direct competitor set varies for each of our main target markets. For our largest (by volume) market, undergraduate home students, UCAS defines a competitor set of six institutions where our applicants also apply to study and a degree of change is seen in that set from year to year. Individual subject areas have their own direct competitors and these are monitored through BU managed Fresher and Decliner surveys. These course and framework level competitor sets are used to inform pricing policy for UK and non-UK markets.

Communications

At the same time, technology is driving rapid changes in how and when people want to communicate and universities, not traditionally at the forefront of marketing communications developments, must respond and adapt to changing consumer behaviours and preferences driven by these changes. The opportunities presented by digital communications are significant in the context of using data to target and reach the right audience at the right time, with the right message. There are challenges to consider - the first concerns organisational agility and cultural ability to exploit new technology. The second is in the use of new technology, the data and intelligence it gives us access to and how to exploit that information to gain insight and drive action – as opposed to simply increasing knowledge.

Managing reputation has changed dramatically with the rise of social media and power and control lies increasingly with the user, student or customer. Word of mouth takes on even more importance. Effective communications are increasingly two-way and need to be available on-demand, on multiple and mobile platforms.

With increasing choice and such a constantly evolving external marketing context, the BU brand and proposition needs to be clear and, crucially, needs to communicate what is distinct about BU - the reason to choose us over anyone else. This narrative must flow consistently through all BU communications, both internal and external, to create a powerful and coherent corporate identity for the University.

The internal context

Distinctiveness and the BU Brand

At the heart of our Strategic Plan, Fusion is what makes us different from our competitors. Communicating that concept in the right language and then bringing it alive to give it meaning to our different audiences is the challenge for marketing and communications at BU. The use of case studies and stories to illustrate and make Fusion relevant to our stakeholders will be key.

Our brand strategy is to maintain a strong 'masterbrand' architecture, represented by the current BU logo and visual identity, complemented by a degree of sub-branding, judiciously applied, in our areas of academic strength and excellence. Our strategy will be to ensure we develop a cohesive and consistent branding of BU, without losing the individual personality of the constituent parts and allow our diversity, strengths and character to show through our communications.

We need to recognise that there are myriad different elements which make up BU as a brand and which will vary in their resonance and importance to different groups. The quality of our provision, our achievements, our location, estate, student support and the intangible and intrinsic essence of BU (our values and culture) all need to be presented as part of what makes BU unique. Further details of how we communicate through key messages are given in Section 3.4 of this document.

The Portfolio

The need for market research to inform course and programme development is signalled in BU2018. Our strategy is to maintain a broad academic footprint, but with a dynamic layer which will be “highly mobile, responding continually to market demand...” To inform new course development, market research support in identifying new and emerging demand, assessing size and accessibility of market, audience preferences and market testing will be required. At the same time, identification of falling demand as courses reach maturity is required to drive an active approach to assessing on-going viability of courses without clear strategic fit and/or low demand.

Early involvement and greater use of market intelligence in the early stages of new course development will be achieved through changes to the level of marketing support provided to Academic Schools.

Attractiveness of BU and promotional reach

Performance over the last five years in attracting students in our core markets is shown graphically in Appendix D and further context is given in Section 3 of this document. In summary, in the undergraduate UK market, BU has performed well, tracking well against competitors and the sector. In 2013/14 we exceeded our regulated student number and met our deregulated target number for attracting high calibre (ABB+) students. BU's share of the UK postgraduate market is small and in decline, mirroring the UK market decline (up to 2011/12, the latest point for which market data is available). Internationally, from a position of growth in international student enrolments between 2008/09 and 2010/11, the last two years have seen a decline in BU's reach and attractiveness to postgraduates, with undergraduate numbers showing a slight increase over the last five years.

Structure

BU has an established Marketing & Communications department which has overall responsibility for delivery of all marketing campaigns, PR, corporate communications, internal communications to staff and students, student recruitment and relationship marketing including handling of international admissions. The existing structure of this function has grown somewhat organically in recent years and a review (October 2013) will propose a re-alignment of roles and responsibilities to better reflect and support the needs of BU2018 and this strategic marketing plan.

There is a base of good technical skills, institutional and market knowledge, creativity and commitment. We now need to become more agile, responsive and connected to leading market and marketing developments. Appendix C gives an overview of the proposed changes to the existing structure.

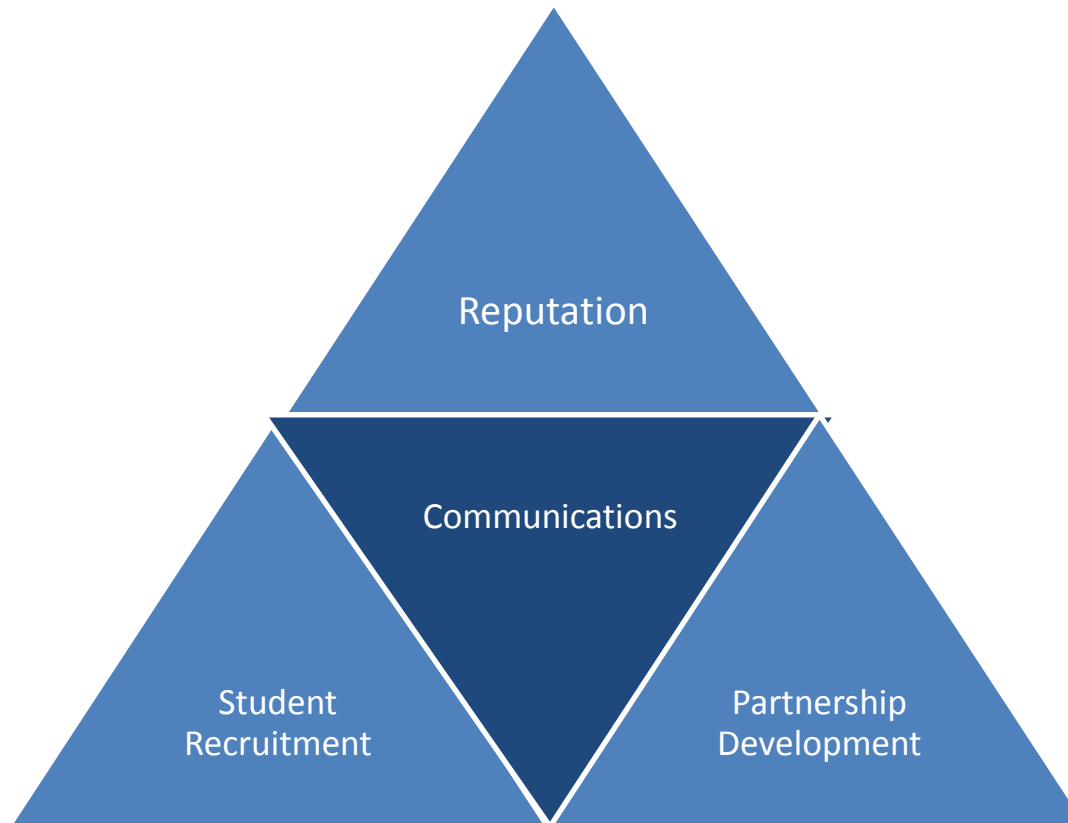
Stakeholders

BU's many and varied stakeholder groups are identified below. Communications with each group need to be tailored, planned and cohesive. They also need to take account of preferences in channel and delivery, consistent in message but tailored in language and tone. For each headline objective, work to prioritise communications with each group was undertaken in summer 2013 and is attached in Appendix B.

1. Current students
2. Prospective students
3. Staff
4. SUBU
5. Board
6. Graduate employers
7. Alumni
8. End users of research
9. Professional Bodies
10. Local community
11. Local /regional councils/influencers
12. Business community: regional/national
13. Schools and Colleges: UK
14. International agents
15. Partnerships: International
16. Feeder institutions: overseas
17. Partner organisations: national
18. Parents of students/prospective students
19. Chancellery
20. Suppliers
21. National HE policy influencers

3. Marketing objectives

Four overarching marketing objectives have been identified to support BU2018. The first three are interconnected while the fourth, communications, supports successful achievement of the first three.



3.1 Objective 1: Reputation building

To position BU to its stakeholders as a world-class learning community in its areas of academic strength, built on its core concept of Fusion and reflecting a league table position within the top 50 UK universities.

Measured by:

- Stakeholder perceptions of the BU brand and distinctiveness
- Achievement of relevant KPIs and measures. E.g. League table position, student recruitment targets met.
- Engagement and influence in Public Affairs and Thought Leadership

The first of four headline objectives in BU's strategic marketing plan 2013-18, reputation building is central to the achievement of BU2018. At the start of managing and building that reputation, understanding awareness levels and, where there is awareness amongst our stakeholder groups, how we are viewed today is fundamental. Without understanding our starting point, we are making assumptions with no empirical underpinning and are at risk of misunderstanding our audiences. Research to understand reputational standing in key groups forms part of this plan.

Central to BU's Strategic Plan is a differentiation strategy (paragraph 2, BU2018 Executive Summary). With Fusion providing our distinctive proposition, we will build our reputation through communicating and demonstrating Fusion in action, underpinned by academic and service excellence.

3.1.1 Awareness building

We will continue to build on existing awareness of the Bournemouth University brand, drawing on areas of academic excellence across BU, on our areas of research strength and its impact on society. We will develop tailored and sustainable communications plans to each target stakeholder group, using case studies, student and staff voice and evidence based stories of Fusion in action. Key messages and communicating Fusion is set out more fully under Objective 4: Communications, Key Messages, below.

Central to our messaging will be our achievement in the 2013 Quality Assurance Agency review and we will maximise the opportunity this presents to position BU as 'first for quality of student learning opportunities', to all our stakeholder groups.

Internal communications will be prioritised, recognising staff and students as central to delivering BU2018, with the potential to be our best ambassadors in telling the BU story.

An increased emphasis will be placed on planned corporate communications to priority stakeholder groups, (prioritisation shown in Appendix B). We will take a proactive approach to PR, focused on impact rather than inputs, using a targeted approach to the media. Thought Leadership in research, professional practice or student experience; Public Affairs; public and regional engagement; staff and student voice will all build BU reputation.

3.1.2 Stakeholder Perceptions

BU's aggregate position in the three main UK league tables is a KPI in the strategic plan and our ambition is to be in the top 50 ranked HEIs by 2018. League table position is undoubtedly an important factor in influencing choice and perceptions of BU - particularly in the international student market. However, a further dimension to consider is how we are perceived (including where we are perceived to be ranked in league tables) and the more intangible qualities of the BU brand and how audiences feel about us. It is how our stakeholder groups perceive the BU brand, what engagement with us says about them and reflects on them, which will play a critical role in their decision to engage - or not - with BU. Knowing how we are currently perceived by each group in relation to other organisations (and competitors) is important therefore to understanding levels of awareness, how and what to communicate in order to positively influence those stakeholders. Perceptions about our ranking in league tables may have greater effect than the reality of where we are.

3.1.3 Social media

Operationally, we will use social media as a key tool to monitor conversations about us, to listen to our audiences, to respond, broadcast and actively manage our reputation when needed. Social media has brought about a major shift in the balance of power between individuals and the organisations they engage with and we will recognise and embrace this change. Word of mouth takes on even more significance as digital communications become mainstream channels and, as mentioned above in regard to internal communications, the staff and student experience from first contact point to last must reflect and deliver BU values and proposition consistently.

3.2 Objective 2: Student Recruitment

To develop the student profile in line with BU2018: maintain the overall size of BU's student body at 2012 levels, while changing the profile within that overall number.

- (a) UK UG: to maintain BU's overall market share in UG UK market year on year through growth in the ABB+ segment, securing hold in SNC segment and achievement of WP targets.
- (b) International: to grow the percentage of non UK students at BU to 16% (from 12%) of overall student body, which represents growth of approximately 600 students on campus.
- (c) Postgraduate (UK and non UK): to grow percentage of PGT/PGR students within overall student body from 12.4% to 20% by 2018.

Market demand

We will foster further, deeper and coordinated use of market research and intelligence to support portfolio development and recruitment strategies. This will be delivered through the revised structure of Marketing & Communications and further embedding of market research priorities within wider BU planning and information. At the same time, the review of M&C will look to provide strategic level marketing advice to Academic Schools to inform course planning and development at the earliest stages. The use of both quantitative and qualitative research will be emphasised, to inform development of new courses for existing markets, new modes of delivery or new courses for new markets.

Price sensitivity in each of our markets must be monitored and we will continue to undertake comprehensive competitor-watch research to inform our fee setting and scholarship package. Finance is already a barrier to masters level study in the PGT UK market and so price setting and strategic use of scholarships will become increasingly important when the first undergraduate students to have paid £9k tuition fees graduate in 2016.

Segmentation and targeting

We will use market intelligence combined with a data-driven approach to identify and assess attractiveness of different market segments. In the international market, target regions and countries will be based on external data and intelligence combined with strategic match with BU. We will maximise the use of our own data and intelligence as well as drawing on external sources, working with specialist agencies to refine and target market segments. Understanding

target segment preferences and behaviours will be part of our campaign and activity planning, with insight gained from internal and external market research. The use of qualitative research and listening to our prospective and current student body will form part of our intelligence.

Target numbers

At the time of writing (October 2013), work is underway to remodel the student enrolment targets for all markets, to ensure delivery of BU2018. Charts showing BU current and past performance in each of key markets are shown in Appendix D.

The scale of the challenge is likely to be approximately as follows:

1. Total ABB+ and equivalent students intake to be in region of 1,000 per annum by 2015/16, which is approximately 100 per annum over current levels each year for the next two years;
2. International non-EU student intake to be region of 2,000 per annum by 2018/19 which is 80% growth over 2012/13.
3. In light of under recruitment in 2012/13 and 2013/14, this will equate to approximately 125 additional non-EU full-time students per annum over and above students progressing from the BU International College.

Work is underway, based on these overall target numbers, to develop application targets for use in our marketing and communications planning. Extrapolating application target numbers by student type (UK, EU, non EU) and subject area will allow better focus and targeting of marketing communications and promotional activities and allow us to measure effectiveness, adapt our channels and messages and ultimately improve our understanding of cost of acquisition per applicant and return on investment.

UK student recruitment

We will increase our pool of high calibre (ABB+ and the BTEC equivalent) prospective students. We will seek to establish strategic partnerships with a small number of schools, colleges and academies where there is good strategic fit with BU, to provide flow through of prospective undergraduate UK students.

We will target our activity to a combination of known best feeder schools and colleges, where there is good subject area match and existing brand awareness and reputation. In addition, we will identify and target aspirational schools and colleges where our pull of high calibre students is low. We will combine this with mapping academic profile to match BU portfolio. We will target BTEC providers to maximise advantage already gained in this market.

Outreach work to achieve WP targets is planned within BU's Fair Access Agreement. Schools, colleges and academies in the region are targeted each year and activities on and off-campus are tailored with the focus on raising aspirations to higher education. Dedicated resource is focused on developing interest in STEM subjects.

Prospective students are found in the same social, online and physical spaces, it is therefore imperative that we are attracting ABB+, BTEC equivalents and WP students with messages and incentives that are relevant to them. The emphasis will be on targeted communications using a mix of channels, employing trained student ambassadors and alumni to bring the BU story to life.

Activity will promote the BU corporate profile, with a specific focus on courses that traditionally under-recruit as well as those courses with the capacity to exceed target, which will mitigate shortfall in other courses. This will result in niche marketing for specific courses.

There will be an integrated approach with consistency in our key messages from awareness raising to enrolment, with an emphasis on personalised conversion communications through the enquirer and applicant stages of the student journey. Details of activities to deliver and support these priorities are contained in the annual supporting plans to this document, available on request. An overview of activity to support 2014 recruitment is given in Appendix E.

Postgraduate UK student recruitment

Over the past five years, the demand for postgraduate taught (PGT) courses within the UK market has been in decline. Figures from HESA show the total number of new entrants to postgraduate taught courses in the UK declined by 12% between 2009/10 and 2011/12. Over the same period, BU's home PGT new entrants fell by 23%. BU's figures recovered slightly in 2012/13, but show a further fall for 2013/14. See Appendix F for UK and BU figures over ten years. To retain a share in this market is strategically important in order to support success in international postgraduate recruitment and in our reputation building objective. Therefore, we will need to adopt a much more rigorous and market-led approach to this market, listening to what the market demands and responding with the programmes and delivery modes to attract applications, where there is a strategic fit.

The most significant and consistent barrier in this market is financial and in 2014 we will increase our scholarship offering to prospective UK postgraduate students. This is unlikely to be sufficient to halt the decline in our applications, particularly when the first graduates of the £9K fee regime graduate. A rigorous approach to market research and intelligence to inform portfolio development combined with data-driven targeting of our communications and conversion activity will be adopted.

Undergraduate and Postgraduate International student recruitment

Market conditions for attracting international students to the UK are certain to remain challenging and these are set out in the linked International Student Recruitment & Marketing Plan referenced below. Our performance over the last five years is shown in Appendix D. The establishment of BU International College in partnership with Kaplan International, during 2013, will form an important part of our international marketing strategy.

Other strategies key to success in the international student recruitment context are staff and student mobility (facilitated by initiatives such as BU's Global Horizons Fund), international academic and research collaborations and enhancing the international student experience. Coordination and leadership for these and other distinct but interdependent strands are expected to fall within the planned International Office (working name) remit.

A review of BU's international recruitment position was undertaken in April-June 2013 and key recommendations include greater use of scholarships as promotional tools, emphasis on provision of specialist international student support and development of academic overseas partnerships.

Options for development of BU overseas offices in China and Nigeria are being actively explored (starting autumn 2013), for feasibility and attractiveness.

Enhancing the international student experience

Sustainable success in international recruitment at BU rests largely on the positive experience of our students from point of initial contact through to graduation. Coordinated and dedicated support for international students needs to be prioritised. Word of mouth endorsement is the most powerful asset and our marketing and recruitment strategy will draw on alumni as ambassadors to increase our reach in target markets.

International marketing priorities

The following priorities have been set for international student recruitment 2013-2018 and activities:

- Market selection and penetration – identify and focus on limited number of markets and expand presence at all levels in those markets (UG, PGT, PGR)
- Communications focused on areas of academic excellence and identifying synergies between subject and markets
- Increase the number and quality of international non-UK applications at undergraduate and postgraduate level
- Increase in conversion rates for undergraduate and postgraduate international non-UK applications
- Maximise recruitment potential from the development of formalised progression routes at various levels into BU (UK and overseas). This includes the BU International College
- Strategic use of BU alumni as international ambassadors
- Maximise the potential of our International Representatives (Agents) Network
- Develop appropriate and integrated marketing communications tailored for international students
- Ensure strategic commitment to International PR to support wider marketing communications campaigns and build awareness in new markets.

Full details of activities to deliver and support these priorities are contained in the International Recruitment Plan 2013-2018, available on request from Marketing & Communications. However, an overview of 2014 marketing activity is given here in Appendix E.

3.3 Objective 3: Partnership development

To support the development of sustainable partnerships across all areas of BU's operations and in pursuit of BU2018, through:

- Public and Regional engagement
- Local community engagement
- Building relationships with employers and businesses
- International engagement (a minimum of 20 key strategic and active academic international partnerships by 2015)
- Developing strategic recruitment partnerships
- Continue to build on strong relationships with SUBU to enhance the student experience

Public and community engagement

In 2012-13 we invested in and developed our community and public engagement activities significantly. This was demonstrated at a strategic level by signing the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement's manifesto for public engagement . In turn, these commitments were brought to life by BU's first Festival of Learning, which offered over 100 free to attend activities for members of the public last June.

In 2013-14 and beyond, we will develop a coordinated and University-wide approach to public and community engagement, to ensure we maximise synergies. This will bring together key stakeholders from all relevant departments (including M&C, R&KEO, and OVC) and Schools to develop a far reaching and embedded approach to engagement. Annual self-assessment and reflection on progress will take place using the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement's Edge Tool.

Business and employer engagement

As an institution, BU has many excellent links with businesses and employers which are established through a variety of mechanisms, including student placements , alumni, support for SMEs , practitioner networks, knowledge exchange schemes (such as Knowledge Transfer Partnerships) and industry focused research collaborations. Increased public and community engagement, as described above, also offers the opportunity to further expand our business and employer engagement to build new partnerships and increase the level of collaboration with existing partners.

In 2013-14 and beyond, enhanced understanding of these networks will enable a more strategic approach to business and employer engagement, and in-turn will facilitate enhanced partnerships. With the Witty Review recommending Universities making economic growth their third mission, a proactive approach to maximising business and employer engagement is essential.

BU will maximise its existing network and strong relationships with placement employers to drive wider business engagement. Our reputation for providing all students with the opportunity to undertake work placement is a strength and the opportunity to develop those professional links with organisations further will be prioritised.

Strategic recruitment partnerships

We will actively target potential partner organisations, schools or colleges where we can identify the right strategic fit for both parties. This will form the basis of our longer term and ultimately more sustainable recruitment strategies.

The BU International College, established in 2013 in partnership with Kaplan International Colleges, will play a key role in developing a feeder route for non UK students to BU UG and PGT courses during the lifetime of this plan. This relationship will be actively managed, joint marketing activities will be planned where appropriate and further collaboration to improve BU's reach in our target countries and regions explored.

In the UK, we will develop strategic relationships with a small number of local and regional feeder schools, colleges or academies where there is good strategic fit for BU to secure high calibre flow through of undergraduate UK students, contributing to our ABB+ targets.

3.4 Objective 4: Communications

To develop tailored communications plans for prioritised stakeholder groups in support of objectives 1-3, which understand user preferences and opportunities presented by new and emerging communications channels. We will adopt an integrated marketing communications approach across media, always drawing on relevant key messages which are anchored in Fusion. We will use the staff and student voice to tell the story.

Priorities will be:

- Develop and implement corporate communications strategy
- Develop and implement internal communications strategy for the BU community, staff and students
- To exploit social media as a key communications channel
- To implement a new website during 2014, to be the cornerstone for a multi-channel digital communications strategy

Underpinning successful delivery of all our objectives will be effective communications. We will build awareness, engagement and loyalty to the BU brand through tailored, consistent and sustainable communications to each target stakeholder group. We will use evidence based key messages which reflect our core values and use case studies, stories and the staff and student voice.

3.4.1 Channels

We will continue to strive always for an integrated approach to our communications. We will use research to understand preferences and behaviours of our target audiences and use the most appropriate channel or combination of channels to reach them. Our tactical plans will include use of all of the below, where and as appropriate:

- Corporate communications, PR; Events; face to face
- Public Affairs; regional engagement; internal comms; CSR.
- Media relations, media partnerships
- Social media
- Online space, whether advertising or search
- Thought leadership and REF impacts
- Professional practice and endorsement

Effective communications are critical to the achievement of Bournemouth University's strategic plan and vision. BU's strategic marketing plan 2013-18 identifies reputation management, student recruitment and developing effective partnerships as key objectives. Delivery of these is contingent on our investment in sector-leading communications strategies.

Digital technologies and channels underpin all our communications with a large and varied stakeholder set. Growth in the development and use of mobile apps for current and future students, use of social media for both 'pull' and 'push' comms has been organic and successful to date in discrete areas. However, an overarching strategy or framework within which to work has been missing and we now need a clear and longer term vision and road map to ensure we are equipped with the right technologies and skills to support achievement of BU2018.

Marketing & Communications will work closely with Information Technology to ensure we maximise available technology, while securing delivery of new and enabling technologies for our web and mobile platforms. Work to develop a vision for digital communications at BU is underway in 2013 and this longer term vision will inform development and delivery of a new external facing website, as the cornerstone of our marketing and communications activities.

3.4.2 Internal Communications

The importance of effective and two-way communication within the BU community of staff, current students and alumni is recognised in BU2018. Internal communication has an important role to play in achieving an excellent staff and student experience and, in turn, developing a community of ambassadors for BU. Increasingly, we will develop use of case studies, stories and tap into the staff and student voice to 'tell the BU story'. Greater emphasis will be placed on developing our internal communications strategy, channels and effectiveness, with additional resource proposed to be invested in this area through the review of Marketing & Communications.

3.4.3 Key Messages


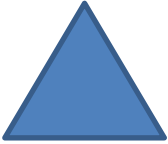


Our vision statement states: *"Creating the most stimulating, challenging and rewarding university experience in a world-class learning community by sharing our unique fusion of excellent education, research and professional practice and inspiring our students, graduates and staff to enrich the world."* BU2018.

Based on this vision and encapsulating the core elements of our strategic plan, the following strapline has been agreed and will be used in conjunction with the BU core logo and variations of the core logo, as appropriate:

Create. Share. Inspire.

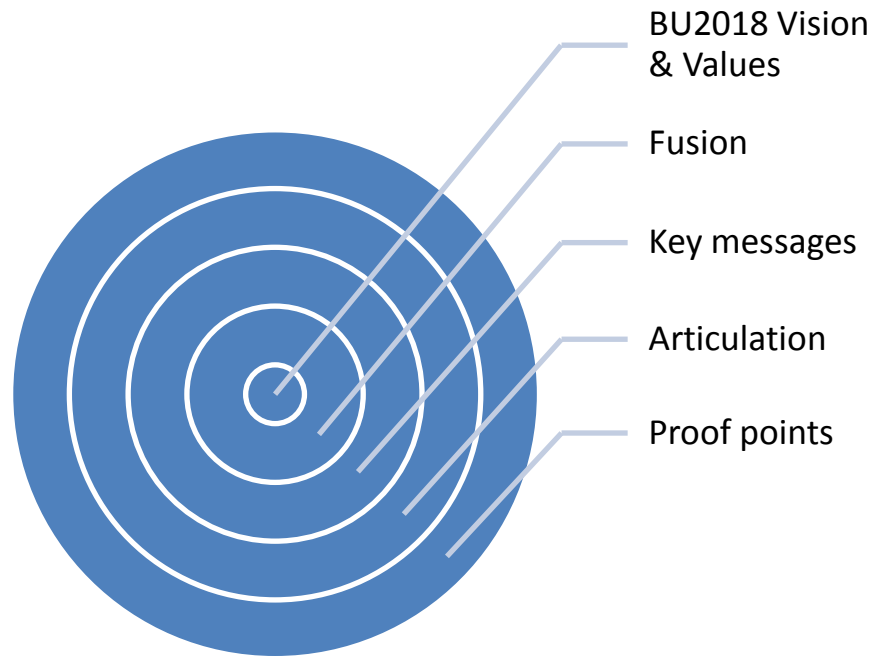
Six key messages for BU's communications to all stakeholders have also been defined. The following diagram provides a framework to show how these messages relate to our vision and link directly to BU2018 and our audiences. Details can be found in Appendix F.

INTERNAL  EXTERNAL

VISION	"The Big Idea"	Key Messages	Proof points (<i>Authenticity</i>)
Creating Sharing Inspiring 	Fusion 	These will remain largely the same and need to have longevity  Campaign messages will support these but are short term.	Evidence based, case studies, stories – the staff and student voice  These will change and be refreshed throughout the plan period.

Same message, different audience

All stakeholder groups will look through different eyes and need different channels, tone, language. Different proof points and articulation statements will be used to speak to different audiences, but all will demonstrate the same core values and key messages.



Communicating Fusion

As highlighted above, communicating BU's distinctiveness, defined as Fusion in our strategic plan, is central to achieving a differentiated place in a crowded market. The following statements are our articulation of Fusion and what it stands for. In our communications, evidence through examples of Fusion in action, to bring its potential to life for the audience, will be central to our approach.

“Fusion – our big idea

We believe that there's more than one way to join up your thinking, and that how you think is just as important as what you think. That's why we encourage thinking without boundaries, across disciplines and departments. As a result, our ideas are informed through multi-disciplinary input across research, education and professional practice. This enables us to co-create knowledge that tackles societal issues, and helps us to share that knowledge in innovative and inspirational ways. Thinking differently means that, not only are the answers we provide unique, but that the questions we ask are too.”

This can also be articulated in a shorter form, as

“Fusion is a different way of joined up thinking. It is the co-creation of knowledge, the sharing of that knowledge and its societal resonance which combine to enable BU to make a difference in the world. It helps us to think differently, so that not only are the solutions we provide unique, but the questions we ask are too.”

Stories

With Authenticity as a core value, taking an evidence-based approach to how we communicate Fusion as what makes the difference at BU will remain a core principle in our communications. We will use examples, profiles and case studies to tell the BU story, tailoring the language and tone as appropriate for the target audience and using a range of channels while maintaining consistency in the key messages. The investment made in projects across BU through the Fusion Investment Fund and other funding initiatives is now having impact and as a result we have a growing bank of case studies to draw on to bring to life what Fusion means. As well as case studies, the staff and student voice are powerful tools and will be used to tell the BU story and substantiate our key messages.

Measurement and evaluation

Measurement and evaluation are key themes in the Marketing & Communications Delivery Plan which supports this Strategic Marketing Plan and will continue to be so. Understanding our return on investment is central to driving continuous improvement in efficiency and effectiveness. Digital communications and marketing techniques enable far greater measurability than ever before and we will exploit this.

Analytics will become a core function within the Marketing & Communications staff base, with dedicated resource to understand performance and drive agility in our marketing campaigns.

BU institutional key performance indicators will be used to monitor progress of this marketing strategy. A further set of marketing performance indicators will be developed in Q1-Q2, 2014, including application targets for key markets linked to enrolment targets. The stakeholder perceptions research project currently underway is expected to inform development of metrics for objective 1, reputation building.

Risk

A comprehensive risk register forms part of the supporting M&C Delivery Plan referenced above and will be reviewed as part of that planning process.

Schedule

BU Strategic Marketing Plan 2013-2018: key activities Year 1 (AY 2013/14 - 2014/15)

Strategic Marketing Plan developed and agreed		
M&C Structure Review and implementation (all objectives)		M&C DP 2013/14
Stakeholder perceptions research (Objective 1)		M&C DP 2013/14
Target (applications) setting work (Objective 2)		
Development of PIs / metrics (all objectives)		
Digital vision development (Objectives 1, 2, 3)		M&C DP 2013/14
External website development (Objectives 1, 2, 3)		Strategic investment
Corporate Comms Plan development (Objectives 1, 4)		
Internal Communications Plan		TBC
QAA Achievement Comms Plan (Objectives 1, 2, 3)		Strategic investment
UK: ABB targeting work (Objective 2)		
UK: Strategic Partners ident and planning (Objective 2)		
UK: Strategic Partners activity (Objective 2)		
Overseas offices: planning (Objective 3)		Strategic investment
Operation 2014: Recruitment Campaigns (Objective 2)		M&C DP 2013/14

References

BU2018: Strategic Plan for Bournemouth University, 2012-2018.

An avalanche is coming: Higher education and the revolution ahead', Institute of Public Policy & Research, March 2013

Postgraduate Education in England and Northern Ireland – An Overview Report, HEFCE, July 2013

International Recruitment at Bournemouth University: an interpretation of the present and reflections on the future. Professor Christine Humfrey, July 2013.