

Innovating our way out of recession

Universities
Scotland



Introduction

Scottish universities will play a vital role in helping the economy through the current economic downturn and most importantly helping it to recover quickly and successfully once the downturn is over.

This paper is about universities contribution in the short term. Universities are by their nature long-term organisations. World-class research, the development of a highly skilled workforce, consultancy work and the creation of new ideas, products and industries are all examples of our long-term benefit. However, this doesn't mean that universities are not flexible and adaptable organisations. This publication shows that where possible, universities are making changes in the short term to meet the needs of businesses, learners, our graduates and wider society. The university sector in Scotland has responded to the economic downturn by developing new solutions to old problems, engaging with a wide range of businesses and enabling them to access the knowledge and expertise within universities, looking at course provision to meet the needs of different types of learners, developing new services to meet the needs of different employers, helping our students and graduates to prepare for the new economic environment and supporting cultural and societal engagement.

This publication has identified six main areas in which universities are making a contribution to try and help industry counteract the negative impact of the economic slowdown. They are:

- Consultancy to small and medium enterprise
- Innovation and knowledge transfer
- Engaging with business - Interface
- Skills, training and workforce development
- Supporting the community
- Cultural and societal engagement

Examples of case studies are used throughout this paper to help illustrate the wide range of activity that is being developed.

Consultancy to small and medium sized enterprise

Even before the economic slowdown, universities in Scotland recognised the importance of working with small and medium size enterprise in Scotland. To put this into context, in the last year alone the value of research contracts taking place between Scottish universities and small and medium sized enterprise increased by 12 per cent, to be worth over £7 million, at the same time the value dropped in England.

To put this into context:

- There were 256 research contracts between institutions and SMEs worth a total of £7.2 million.
- 985 consultancy contracts took place between institutions and SMEs to the value of £7.5 million.

The economic downturn is affecting businesses of all sizes, but SMEs make up a significant majority of the industry base in Scotland (SMEs make up 99 per cent of all enterprises and 53 per cent jobs in Scotland). Universities in Scotland have recognised this and have intensified their efforts to make the knowledge and expertise in our universities available to those who would benefit from it the most. The sector is also implementing a wide range of activity to meet the new demands of SMEs in the current climate. Our academics are working directly with small businesses to help them develop meaningful actions and responses to the economic environment. Universities are providing additional training to help SMEs understand the current climate and the ways in which they can respond. Our universities are working with SMEs to find realistic solutions to real-world problems that businesses are facing now. Whilst this will clearly not solve the wider problems that SMEs are facing, such as shortage of credit, it will mean that businesses are more able to find creative ways to respond to problems caused by the economic climate.

Universities are also using their students as a way of encouraging engagement with small and medium sized business. This can be a cost-effective way for SMEs to access the knowledge and expertise in our universities and in most cases produce effective results for the businesses involved.

The Scottish Agricultural College is not included in the figures above however, the work that they do with SMEs should be mentioned. SAC has 7,000 clients in Scotland, mostly in the small business sector. This work supports the development of farming and land-use businesses across Scotland, encouraging rural development, and improving business performance.

Examples of our support for SMEs

First step awards - £5k funding for SMEs – University of Glasgow

The University of Glasgow's new First Step Awards provide up to £5000 of funding for small to medium sized companies to collaborate with their academics. In these difficult economic times it is hard for smaller companies to fund research and development coupled with the increasing pressure to be innovative. The awards give companies the opportunity to start building a partnership with the University which could assist their long-term sustainability.

The Innovation Portal – collaboration

The Innovation Portal has been established to promote and facilitate productive knowledge transfer between the University of Dundee, University of Abertay, Scottish Crop Research Institute and SMEs. The Portal offers a central point of contact for SMEs and assistance to companies in accessing relevant sources of funding together with the relevant resources, expertise and facilities. A small grants scheme is also part of the project, where academics can work with SMEs to identify potential opportunities for innovative projects. These take the form of one day Initial Technology Audits and more in depth Technology Feasibility Studies providing a grant up to £5,000. These have led to a number of further collaborative projects. The Innovation Portal has engaged with companies from most sectors including environmental, manufacturing, construction, food and drink, agriculture and digital media.

The Renewable Energy Electrical System Technology Transfer Network – University of Edinburgh

The Renewable Energy Electrical System Technology Transfer Network (RENEW-NET) is coordinated by the University of Edinburgh and involves Glasgow and Strathclyde Universities, and UHI Millennium Institute. RENEW-NET will establish a network of technology translators with expertise in electrical system design, to forge more effective collaborative links between small businesses in the renewable energy sector with the Scottish science base.

Applied Knowledge Exchange - Glasgow Caledonian University

Rising to the challenge of working more closely with business, the University launched its unique Applied Knowledge Exchange in June 2008. The Exchange provides a one-stop physical and virtual portal to the expertise of the University's academic schools and centres, and is supported by a new business development website, a new customer relationship management system, and a training programme for academics and staff engaged in business development activities. Offering flexibility to small and medium-size enterprises, multinationals, the public sector and social enterprises alike, the Applied Knowledge Exchange enhances the work of in-house teams by providing expertise, insight, applied technologies and continuing professional development.

Shop Doctors' – support for small retailers – Queen Margaret University

Queen Margaret University's retail and business specialists are working on a pilot project, with support from East Lothian Council, to provide business development support to small retailers in East Lothian. Retail and business specialists at Queen Margaret University have been working on ways to meaningfully engage local retailers and independents. They are proposing to offer 'health checks' to a variety of small retailers. The 'shop doctors' could identify areas for improvement and provide a 'prescription' for improving retail performance. This would be a working partnership where the university experts along with the shop managers managed the business's improved 'health'.

Student consultancy – University of Glasgow

Within the Department of Management each year 11 small and medium sized enterprises are supported free of charge by student consultancy to help them identify business issues and make recommendations to encourage growth. This is a significant support for these small companies during this challenging and unsettled climate.

Marketing Decisions – the University of Stirling

The University has a honours course within its Marketing degree which involves small groups of senior students, supported by academic staff, working in partnership with businesses to deliver marketing projects determined by the client business. Projects are designed to deliver outputs that are of direct value to the client in making practical marketing decisions. The business pays only the direct costs incurred on the project, with the University providing staff and student time and expertise. This year, the project will support businesses based on Stirling University Innovation Park (SUIP). In partnership with SUIP, the opportunity offered by the course is being promoted directly to SUIP businesses as an effective, low cost method of addressing key marketing issues and so enhancing competitiveness.

Centre for Enabling Technologies and SMEs – collaboration

The Scottish Centre for Enabling Technologies is a collaboration between the Glasgow School of Art, the University of the West of Scotland and the University of Glasgow. Its aim is to facilitate co-operation in research, development and knowledge transfer in enabling technologies for content and knowledge management between the three institutions and Scottish SMEs. The growth of digital content, and the drive to turn content and information into key knowledge assets that businesses can use as a competitive advantage, is emerging as an extremely attractive, high-growth, high-value market. The Centre provides significant opportunities for Scottish companies, particularly within the creative industries sector. This initial 3-year project will provide a major boost to Scotland's economy, stimulating a contact programme with SMEs, enabling them to adopt innovative technologies to aid them in achieving and retaining a competitive edge.

Free business training for SMEs – Robert Gordon University

The Centre for International Labour Market Studies at Aberdeen Business School has received funding from the European Social Fund to provide free business training for small and medium enterprises in Aberdeen. The main objective of the initiative is to provide short courses to improve SME business skills in specific areas. Participants will be invited to join a series of workshops in which they will have the opportunity to discuss their business dilemmas, with the aim of finding real solutions to these problems.

Innovation and knowledge transfer

Universities currently work with a wide range of partners in a number of sectors and university-led innovation is essential to the Scottish economy and will help to build the industries and products of tomorrow. Universities undertake a wide range of activity in relation to supporting industry and transferring the knowledge within our universities to business. These include consultancy services, research and development, student placements, innovation networks and continuing professional development. The university sector is also undertaking a wide range of activity that will help businesses and industry gain access to their knowledge, expertise and often their facilities. Universities are also looking at what they can do to encourage innovation in industry that will ultimately help businesses be more creative, help them weather the current economic downturn and then set them up more successfully when recovery does come.

A number of existing initiatives will have a particular impact on the economy in these difficult circumstances and will help to translate activity in our universities into tangible economic benefit. The Proof of Concept Programme supports the pre-commercialisation of leading-edge technologies emerging from Scotland's universities, research institutes and NHS Boards. It helps researchers to export their ideas and inventions from the lab to the global marketplace. This initiative is essential to the effective development of the expertise in Scottish universities and at the moment funding for projects in a wide range of sectors, from renewable energy to construction, are being developed and will be fundamental to helping existing industry and creating the new industries which Scotland will need for its future prosperity. The Proof of Concept funding has resulted in 42 new spin-out companies and 44 licensing deals, creating over 500 jobs, and leveraging over £235 million of public and private investment which would not otherwise have happened.

Another important way that universities encourage business to access their expertise is through Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs). This is a UK-wide scheme and each partnership employs one high-calibre KTP Associate for a project lasting one to three years. The KTP programme typically involves recent graduates being placed in smaller companies and working under the joint supervision of the company and university partners to implement significant business or technology innovations that have their origins in research in the university partner - is widely recognised as an effective and efficient form of knowledge transfer. On average, each KTP project produces an annual increase in pre-tax profit of £227,000 for the company partner and creates three genuine new jobs.

Universities are also working directly with industry sectors that have already been affected by the economic downturn. Again, this is about making best use of the knowledge and expertise in our universities to try and tackle some of the major issues that our country is facing. The examples outlined below show that the university sector can and is trying to be as flexible as possible to help meet the unique and specific needs of the industry sectors in Scotland.

Examples of how universities are helping businesses gain access to their knowledge and expertise

Flexible use of campus - Queen Margaret University

Queen Margaret University is currently implementing a plan to make their laboratories; workshops and equipment facilities available to businesses within the local area that may have an occasional requirement for access to such equipment but are not able to fully justify the capital costs involved in procuring and fitting out such facilities on an exclusive use basis. Subject to demonstrated competency and adequate insurance cover facilities will be made available to businesses on an occasional 'licence / rental basis'

Edinburgh Pre-Incubation Scheme - University of Edinburgh

EPIS - The Edinburgh Pre-Incubation Scheme has been running at the University of Edinburgh with support from Scottish Enterprise since 2003. In that time 48 entrepreneurs have been helped by the University to start 39 companies (87 percent of which are still trading) and they have since raised almost £3M in new capital. Each entrepreneur who is accepted on to the programme is assigned an academic and a business mentor to help them develop their new company idea. The programme also runs a series of CPD seminars focussing on the major issues involved in building young companies.

Your Partner in Energy - Robert Gordon University

RGU has produced a prospectus for the energy sector describing the different ways in which companies can interact with the University to benefit their business. This includes:

- **Developing their people** - opportunities for staff development.
- **Placements** - SMEs can benefit from taking a student on placement for specific projects.
- **Recruiting future talent** - offering scholarships to attract new talent.
- **Partners for innovation** - making use of the research expertise within RGU to solve real industry problems and benefiting from technology transfer opportunities.
- **Enhancing reputation** - opportunities for partnerships with RGU to improve corporate relations.

University of Glasgow - VentureNavigator - free, online support to businesses

The University of Glasgow has been involved in the development of VentureNavigator - a free and impartial online service for start ups, entrepreneurs and businesses. The website provides assessments, resources and a community area to help new and established businesses think more critically about the broad range of factors which can affect the success of their company.

Design Innovation Scotland - Glasgow School of Art

Design Innovation Scotland is a partnership of academia, business and the public sector with a common vision of Scotland taking the lead in developing demand-driven solutions to real-world challenges. The partnership is led by The Glasgow School of Art and includes the Universities of Glasgow and Strathclyde, The Lighthouse, Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland, Gray's School of Art and BT. Design Innovation Scotland's partnership will create a unique capacity comprising research by Scotland's academic community in applying creativity for social and economic benefit; enhanced creativity and innovation in business; policy advocacy through Scotland's civic networks and institutions; co-creation of solutions with local communities and access to a high profile investor network. The benefits for those businesses that engage in design-led innovation will include improved productivity, increased profitability, and create new markets, products and services.

Innovation Network - the University of Glasgow

The University of Glasgow's Innovation Network has been established to help encourage academic and industrial collaborations and has been funded by the Scottish Government, the European Regional Development Fund and Scottish Enterprise. The Network has a long-term focus however a number of the activities also make an impact in the short-term such as tailored events focusing on specific sectors and areas of significance, and innovation support from the Business Development team.

How universities are helping specific industries affected by the downturn

2kT Programme - Edinburgh Napier and Queen Margaret universities

2kT is a unique, first of its kind in Scotland, knowledge transfer support unit operating across two universities. The project involves a team of six business development managers providing support to academics and businesses in all knowledge transfer modes. Recognising the particular pressures on businesses during the current downturn, the business development team are focused on external need and targeted on stimulating innovation in businesses in key markets. Concentrating on Health and Biotech, Energy and engineering, Food and Drink, Creative Industries, Forestry, and Enabling Technologies, the 2kT team is addressing need in multiple priority sectors, providing customer focused access to university tacit knowledge, Intellectual Property and facilities.

Operating in response to corporate pull, as opposed to academic push, the 2kT successes in the first year of operation include 26 new collaborative research and development programmes with a value in excess of £1million, 6 new jobs created and collective increased turnover of over £1.3m. As part of the project, Scottish SMEs now have access to a new innovation fund which offers SMEs awards of up to £5,000 to help small businesses innovate; improving processes or solve problems. Critically, the innovation is at a company level and is not necessarily high tech and supports a wide range of engagement spanning market assessments and feasibility studies. .

Supporting the Scottish Financial Services Sector – the University of Stirling

The University has a long tradition of facilitating debate on key issues facing the financial sector. In the current academic session, the university's Finance and Investment Seminars Series has been focusing strongly on the problems facing the financial sector and the economy in general. The Seminars bring together practitioners from Scottish banking, fund management, life assurance, wealth/asset allocation, corporate law, pensions and banking law, accountancy, back office processing, market data services and corporate finance with academics from a range of Scottish Universities in those areas.

During the spring and summer programme, the Seminars will consider issues including Pensions and Financial Risk & Regulation and the "Alternative, Sustainable Model". This will begin in March with a seminar looking at mutual/co-operative banks and savings institutions, supported by a number of Scottish and Scottish based mutual and co-operative banking institutions. The current series is attracting record numbers of participants who are keen to have the opportunity to pursue the solutions to the very serious problems facing the financial system in Scotland.

Research technologist – University of Strathclyde

The Institute of Photonics has recently employed a new Research Technologist, in an effort to respond more quickly to the needs of industry.

Whilst University staff are often committed to long term research projects, the Institute recognised the need to be able to work more flexibly with industry and in particular with SMEs. It is SMEs frequent desire to be able to start more quickly and work with short term contracts that led to this new initiative. It is one of several initiatives instigated by the Institute to address the misperception that universities are slow to react. This new post enables a researcher with expertise in optics, electronics and software to bring his research experience from academia and industry to bear on challenges from industry. The Research Technologist will be supported by the Institute's in-house electronics and mechanical workshops and will draw on the knowledge of the 60 strong staff and students in the Institute.

Engaging with business – Interface

The sector's knowledge transfer activity is all underpinned by Interface. Interface was created in 2005 and offers a central point of access for industry to Scotland's research base. Interface provides a unique service designed to address the growing demand from businesses seeking to engage with academia for knowledge and expertise. Their unique matchmaking service connects businesses quickly and easily to the world class expertise, skills and research facilities available in all Scottish Universities and Research Institutes.

Interface provides:

- a unique free matchmaking service for businesses wanting to work with academia - no other service like Interface is available to companies in the UK (and internationally)
- a source of extra help available in economic downturn – access to new resources such as expertise and knowledge, leading to innovative products and processes
- a number of different funding options available to offset some of the costs involved
- a quick and efficient service supporting companies throughout the process

Since Interface launched in 2006, it has delivered the following (as of 31st May 2009)

- over 1413 enquiries received
- over 697 opportunities presented to the academic base with currently over 220 under evaluation or at the discussion stage
- 150 industrial-academic projects are underway or completed
- 60 per cent of enquiries are from Scottish SMEs and 20% from other Scottish companies
- 20 per cent of enquiries are from the rest of the UK & international organisations

For the 150 partnerships achieved:

- 76 percent are between SMEs and the Scottish academic base
- 92 per cent of the businesses are based in Scotland
- 80 per cent of companies who have initiated projects have not previously worked with that academic partner

Comparison of quarter one in 2008 versus 2009 has shown a significant growth in demand by companies for the Interface service and in brokering new partnerships with University and Research Institute academics.

Compared to Quarter 1 (January to March) 2008

- Total enquiries to Interface are up by 28 per cent
- Collaborative projects initiated by 116 per cent
- 63 enquires in March 2009 – more than double the monthly average based on 2007 figures

Skills, training and workforce development

Universities in Scotland have well developed links with a number of industries and employers across Scotland. The role that Scottish universities play in developing a skilled workforce is fundamental to the international competitiveness of the Scottish economy both now and in the longer term. Universities recognise that during times of economic hardship, many people turn to education and training as a way of developing their skills and making sure that they are best placed to find employment. A number of universities are looking into creating more bursary or scholarships schemes for postgraduate courses and some have already implemented this. This is important not only for the economy just now, but our economy will need high level skills, particularly post-graduate skills when the economy recovers from the downturn. This is especially important.

Like any person entering the labour market in the current economic climate, our graduates are finding it more difficult to gain employment. Scottish universities recognise this and are aware of the additional support that students and graduates may need during this time. A number of universities are implementing programmes that do just that – provide additional support and help to graduates to reflect the real world conditions. From learning additional skills that will help in finding employment to making better more effective use of the careers service, our universities are making a concerted effort to do all they can to help their students during this time.

Shorter-term training and workforce development is also an area that is often over looked when considering the impact that Scottish universities make, but it is one that is increasingly important in today's climate. Many universities are looking at changing the structure of their courses to meet the needs of potential learners, so more part-time courses, more courses that can be undertaken when working and more courses aimed towards developing specific skills and more short term courses. To put this into context Scotland performed £1.3 million worth of continuing professional development services for SMEs in 2006/07 and a further £21.8 million worth of CPD for other commercial businesses (non-SME). Scottish universities are looking at a number of ways to work with employers to offer bespoke training and development to fit with business needs and company practices.

How universities are supporting students and graduates

Graduate Bursary Scheme – Heriot Watt University

In response to the deteriorating employment market, Heriot-Watt is offering special bursaries equivalent to 20 per cent of normal fees for its alumni who wish to take a postgraduate Master's course in the University. The bursaries will be available to new graduates in 2009 and also to Heriot-Watt graduates already in employment to help them increase their skills or re-train in new areas.

Surviving the recession – University of Strathclyde

The University of Strathclyde has developed a programme entitled, Surviving the recession. This is to advise job seekers on how to be creative in their job search and how to ensure that their applications and performance at interviews and assessment centres will enable them to succeed in a highly competitive job market. As part of this programme the University is also collaborating with the Students Association in an open forum evening with a panel of careers advisers and employers to answer students' questions about how to improve their employment prospects in difficult times.

The Enterprise Gym – the University of Dundee

Dundee and Tayside, like Scotland as a whole, shows modest levels of company start-up activity. At a time of recession it is important that every effort is made to boost entrepreneurship. As a contribution to this the University has established the Enterprise Gym. This is an extra-curricular resource for students to develop their skills and knowledge in entrepreneurship. Activities include training workshops, business counselling, business planning and master classes with visiting local and national business figures.

Shared vacancy system - collaboration

Higher education Careers Services across Scotland have also collaborated to produce a Shared Vacancy System, allowing employers to post a vacancy at their local higher education Careers Service and share it with all the other universities in Scotland. This creates a free, one-stop shop for businesses across Scotland to gain access to a rich pool of UK and international talent as well as gaining access to support in raising their profile and recruiting effectively.

How universities are helping to develop the skills of Scotland's workforce

Distance learning – Heriot-Watt University

Heriot-Watt is at the forefront of the development and delivery of flexible distance learning, in particular at the postgraduate and post-experience levels in professional and vocational areas including the well-known Edinburgh Business School MBA, Petroleum Engineering, Renewable Energy Technologies, Food & Drink, and an extensive range of programmes relevant to the Construction and Property sectors. The distance learning materials and independent distance learning delivery methods developed by Heriot-Watt offer a very high degree of flexibility and value both to individual learners and to businesses and other organisations in their CPD activities.

Flexible learning - the University of Glasgow

The University of Glasgow recognises the importance of continuing professional development to help nurture SMEs and they include a wide range of activities within their CPD portfolio including, from conferences, seminars, very short courses (even lunchtime meetings) to credit-rated and award bearing programmes such as MBAs, MScs and other more traditional postgraduate taught (PGT) courses spread over a number of months/years for part-time students.

Curriculum development - University of Aberdeen

The Business School at the University of Aberdeen has redesigned and redeveloped some of its work in response to the current climate. One of the Business Schools MSc's has been refocused with a new theme MSc Management, Enterprise and Change and has been reorganised to give part-time delivery. MSc courses in Property will also be delivered part-time to meet the needs of potential students. In the law school, new courses on corporate finance have been introduced and existing courses on corporate governance have been adjusted to address the issues that have arisen. Close liaison with industry has helped the university act on feedback - businesses consider in-house continuing professional development more efficient in these times. The university has responded by helping to tailor in-house delivery. The focus in developing new courses will be on regulatory and other legal mechanisms to support and monitor the changing business structures that will arise from the economic environment.

Graduate School in Engineering – University of Strathclyde

Last year, the Faculty of Engineering set up a new Graduate School in Engineering (GSE) with the aim of reaching out to companies who needed help in training and re-skilling staff.

- The GSE focuses on business strategic objectives as identified by Scottish companies. For example, the new Power Plant Engineering MSc is delivering the education and training needs of graduate engineers in a growth industry with strong export and international business.
- All our PGI & PGR students receive "business ready" training through a unique programme of Master Classes so their skills are more immediately relevant to organisations under economic pressure.
- Student placements are a feature of many of our courses, they give student work experience that makes them ready to help future employers and the projects they undertake add immediate benefit (at no cost) to the placement company.
- Sustainable Engineering Workshops help the graduate students on this MSc programme to access and develop their personal marketing skills, CV and interview techniques, team working and networking expertise, along with presentation and project writing skills.

Supporting the community

The knowledge and expertise in our universities will not only help businesses, they can also either help individuals in our communities to gain a greater understanding of what is happening in the current climate and how to respond and react. Some universities are directly supporting those seeking employment, making course and other information on universities more available to those who need it and hosting a wide range of public seminars. Universities are also working with employers and are able to provide information to staff that have been made redundant.

Case studies to show how universities are helping individuals & the wider community

Access Summer School

The University of Dundee works to encourage those displaced by adversity to benefit from opportunities offered by higher education, and works in close partnership with local and national employers, providing support to staff being made redundant from companies struggling to cope with the downturn. An online version of the University's Summer School has been created for 2009 and is being offered to those who need to re-skill and qualify for future graduate employment. The Access Summer School and its sister programme, 'Discover Learning at Dundee' enable learners to rapidly prepare and qualify for immediate entry to degree-level study and have been welcomed by local medium and large sized companies impacted by the downturn, including manufacturers, solicitors, estate agents, chartered surveyors, as well as those resettling from the armed forces. These programmes are available free of charge to EU nationals meeting basic access eligibility criteria and the online modules are Individual Learning Account registered with Learn Direct Scotland to enable them to be used by the widest possible audience.

Re-launch – Open University

The Open University has developed a new website, Re-launch, for anyone seeking advice, services, information, practical help or tools during the current period of economic uncertainty. The purpose built website gives access to free educational resources, top tips for getting jobs, help to conduct a personal skills health check, support in dealing with redundancy and a wealth of other information and advice.

Designed to help people to outsmart the recession by topping up their skills, the site is likely to be of particular value to people who may be feeling the effects of the global economic climate and who want to either improve or secure their employment prospects. The website provides tips on areas like CV building and skills assessment, as well as offering advice on free courses and how to access funding for higher level courses. Visit Re-launch at www.open.ac.uk/recession

Business seminars for the community – University of Aberdeen

The University of Aberdeen is hosting a series of business seminars for the local community with a focus on enterprise, innovation and leadership.

Cultural and societal engagement

The report of the Joint Future Thinking Taskforce on Universities recommended that universities should be recognised as the seventh key industry sector given their priority position within the Government economic strategy and in recognition of their contribution to the country's economic, cultural and social wellbeing. The Report indicated that the direct and indirect benefits from higher education, would mean that our universities would be regarded as a £2 billion plus business, spending over £500m per annum on goods and services and directly employing approximately 34,000 people. A key part of the contribution made by universities to the economy relates to the international market in which they operate and the significant inward investment that they are able to attract from outside the UK. One area of activity, that is relevant to this paper is the recruitment of international students, Universities will continue to work hard to grow international student recruitment, and with support, are well-placed to do so.

Universities are also enthusiastic about their engagement with Homecoming Scotland 2009 and wider efforts to support tourism during the recession.

Case studies of how universities are supporting the culture and the tourism industry

The Gathering 2009 - Edinburgh Napier and Queen Margaret universities

This is a joint university initiative involving a range of work on behalf of The Gathering 2009 including the identification of the marketing motivations and service quality perceptions of the attendees and the participants in The Gathering 2009 and more crucially analysis of the social, environmental and cultural impacts generated by the event. The Gathering 2009 is a celebration of the culture and history of Scotland. The two-day event in July will be the greatest international clan gathering the world has ever seen, and the largest Highland Games to have been held in Scotland.

Tourism technology transfer – Glasgow Caledonian University

Kit-Out (Knowledge, Innovation & Technology Out of University into Tourism) the Park is a 3-year programme, running until 2010. Kit-Out the Park is a project that aims to encourage the uptake of the latest technological developments by SMEs within the Loch Lomond area. The objective of the project is to help companies to improve their business performance, develop new products, through the adoption of the latest technologies in five sectors - IT & communications; business process improvement; food technology; green tourism; Sustainable buildings & construction methods. Companies participating in the project will be able to take advantage of ongoing advice from tourism experts to develop ideas and put them into practice within their own businesses; grants of up to £5,000 to carry out feasibility studies for suitable project ideas; free workshops with focused support and the opportunity to develop new products and access new markets.

Engagement with Tourism – Glasgow Caledonian University

As the Moffat Chair in Travel and Tourism Business Development, Professor John Lennon leads the UK's largest University based consultancy and research centre for Tourism. In this expert capacity, Professor Lennon prepared the executive strategy for Homecoming 2009. The strategy provides clear strategic guidance for this year long event and incorporates direction on the development of ethnic Scots / Scottish Diaspora databases. The project incorporated a strategic review of international competitors and other year long celebrations. The final document provides guidance on over-branding and development of new events targeted at host communities, domestic and international audiences.

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