



**29 July 2009**

**For immediate release**

**Response to The Herald on INTO's business performance**

All of us at INTO feel the continued spate of accusations and loose interpretations of facts grossly misrepresent our work. We would like to highlight the irony of a union such as UCU criticising INTO on the basis of how much it earns in its second year of operation - especially at this time when the sector as a whole is coping with significant job losses, funding cuts and general insecurity.

Our performance has been in line with plan and in fact ahead of plan. We do not for a moment dispute the fact that INTO made losses in its second year, this is a matter of record. In light of the fact that we are a young, privately-funded start-up company, the loss is more indicative of our willingness to invest and build up the business. Happily our financial performance is completely within our expectations, and we are on course to finish our third financial year in the black. Before UCU make any more remarks about our accounts we would like them to consider the nature of our partnerships, where safeguarding terms and conditions and university led quality standards is of the utmost importance to us and our seven university partners. In short, quality is higher on the agenda than the traditional outsource approach, seeking short term profit maximisation.

The facts on our performance are very positive and better than our original business plan. This year (Aug 08-July 09) we have seen over 4,600 international student commencements across our academic and English preparation programmes with our university partners. This is substantial growth across all regions as compared with 2,600 in 2007/08 and 400 in 2006/07 when we had one partner. Key to the long term success of the partnerships is not just student numbers in the Centres but progression into degree and postgraduate programmes of the University partners. More crucially - given the global environment and challenges with the new visa system worldwide - our confirmations and forecasts for this September are going to be up by a minimum of 35% from last September (and we expect to see confirmations rise even further in the coming weeks).

We emphasise quality, long term and sustainable partnerships with universities. We are proud of the success we have had with our partners and 550 plus colleagues across the UK and the USA, and benefit from a global network of over 600 agents and presence in 15 key countries. Our growth continues and we have just announced our new partnership with Queens University Belfast and a groundbreaking London study centre with the University of East Anglia (<http://www.into-global.com/pressreleases-into.php>). We also expect in the next fortnight to announce another new UK university partner. Under the current climate, our success and growth in job opportunities in the sector is second to none. We are expecting better performance next year, with the synergy brought by an expanded partnership alliance. We are creating hundreds of new jobs in the sector. In the next few years, an investment of £1 billion has been set aside to strengthen infrastructure and facilities.

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We do not think UCU's claim does justice to our success story, as on one hand we are said to have reaped profits from higher education, while at the same time being criticised for being not profitable enough where investments are made. At a time when UCU have raised concerns on behalf of the sector about the future of jobs, it seems misguided and unfair to convey negativity on our performance and paint alarm amongst our more than colleagues who are seeing their jobs more secure than those elsewhere in the sector. We are confident that by next year our performance results will prove the case, and we can move the debate away from ideology and towards the interests of staff and ultimately the international students who we are all focused on serving through our public private sector partnering model.

## **About INTO**

INTO University Partnerships (INTO) is a global organisation that works with universities worldwide to help them transform internationalisation strategies and student experiences in universities, through long-term joint venture partnerships. It has a strong marketing network of over 600 agents worldwide, a regional presence in 15 key countries, and over 4,300 students have commenced INTO's academic preparation and English language programmes in 2008/09.

Since its commencement in 2006, its partnership alliance has grown steadily. Its university partners in the UK include the Universities of East Anglia, Exeter, Newcastle, Manchester, Glasgow Caledonian and Queen's University Belfast; and Oregon State University in the US. In the next five years, INTO plans to invest up to £1 billion in strengthening its facilities and infrastructure.

More information about INTO can be browsed at [www.into-global.com](http://www.into-global.com).

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