

**UWC STRATEGIC PLAN  
2010-2015**

## INTRODUCTION

It is nearly 50 years since the United World Colleges were created through the birth of Atlantic College. Development since 1962 has been steady and 13 Colleges now educate more than 6,000 students each year. 1,200 of these students are selected annually through UWC's National Committee system, most of them on some form of scholarship. Most graduates go on to leading universities, often supported by scholarships, or, in the case of UWC's agricultural college, to influential positions in the agricultural sector. Many graduates have risen to senior positions in public life and business and make significant contributions to their professions and their communities. More than this, UWC graduates share a commitment inspired by their UWC experience, to make a positive contribution to society – a commitment to peace, to social change and to making the world a better place.

UWC's mission – UWC makes education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future – acts as a guiding light for the movement. It encompasses a commitment to provide an education that will enable UWC graduates to make a difference, as well as a determination to act as an example and an inspiration to other education systems. In particular, it compels us to look beyond the education of each individual student and to see the educational process as a means to the end of a more peaceful and a sustainable world.

The mission is central to all UWC activities. It embraces the original founding idea as well as a contemporary relevance in a world that continues to be scarred by conflict – as often conflict within nations as between them – and where education's role in addressing adverse social and economic situations is ever more important. The clarity of the mission means that it is widely, perhaps even universally, understood within UWC. Naturally, there are different interpretations of how the mission can be implemented, often shaped by local contexts, and this is an important element of UWC's diversity. However, there is common agreement about a set of shared values which are the key ingredients of every UWC experience:

- International and intercultural understanding
- The celebration of difference
- Personal responsibility and integrity
- Mutual responsibility and respect
- Compassion and service
- Respect for the environment
- A sense of idealism
- Personal challenge
- Action and personal example

This commitment to the mission and values leads UWC to be distinctive from other schools, including other international schools, in several ways:

- The Colleges comprise an extraordinary and deliberate diversity of students – of socioeconomic, cultural, racial and religious backgrounds and experience as well as of nationalities.

- A UWC education represents a holistic and transformative approach, the aim being to equip students in every way to be able to take positions of leadership in their communities and to make a positive difference to society.
- A UWC education is viewed as the start of a lifelong commitment rather than a stand-alone education.
- High academic standards are intentionally balanced by a broader experience encompassing intercultural exchange, international awareness, personal challenge and the development of leadership, responsibility and teamwork.
- A very heavy emphasis is placed on student initiative and leadership.
- A vital part of the experience, reflected in the importance attached to it, is the idea of students being expected to lead by serving others.

The National Committee system is a further unique feature of UWC. Students admitted through this system are selected from within their own communities and cultures by locally-based and usually volunteer-run National Committees. This facilitates the diversity in the Colleges: it provides access to selection in more than 120 countries, and means that students are selected with reference to their particular national contexts. It is also significant that students opt to apply to UWC and to pass through the National Committees' comprehensive selection processes. Since they can be selected for any of the 13 Colleges, this requires considerable commitment and confidence in UWC as a whole on the part of both the students and their parents.

We believe that UWC's aims remain as relevant now as they were almost half a century ago. The simplicity of UWC's basic premise – of building understanding by bringing a wide diversity of young people to study and serve together – has made it adaptable in a changing world, although it is also clear that remaining relevant will require constant effort and vigilance.

Other schools, including many that deliver the International Baccalaureate curriculum, have sought to emulate aspects of UWC's work. Although this represents success, it presents a new challenge to UWC to maintain its distinctiveness and continue to act as an example. In these circumstances, our profile globally is not nearly as strong as we would want it to be. UWC must refine its ambition, identity and role according to these changing circumstances and in order to attract the level of funding we require to meet our mission and objectives.

In recent years, stronger foundations have been put in place for the UWC organisation as a whole, and this has been accompanied by a greater spirit of unity that can be characterised by the widely-shared view that we are all stronger if we work together. That prevailing view provides the context for this strategic plan.

## MISSION AND AMBITION

*UWC makes education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future.*

UWC's ambitions are shaped by its commitment to this mission. UWC aims to:

- produce UWC graduates each year who, through their own action and personal example, can become leaders in their communities and demonstrate their commitment to making a positive difference in the world.
- become recognised internationally for its distinctive model of education.
- provide an example for other schools, educational organisations and governments which recognise the role of education as a force for peace and a sustainable future

## THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2010-2015

This strategic plan is an opportunity to place our current work and our future development within a strategic framework that will set a course for the next 5 years (2010-2015), a period which spans UWC moving beyond its first half century. The strategic plan represents a move beyond the 'vision objectives' established in 2005, which were then a major step forward, and has come about as a result of consultation throughout the UWC family. It was adopted by the UWC Council and International Board in October 2009 and is a living document which will be reviewed annually and when necessary updated by the Board and UWC Council. It will also form the core of the Board's and UWC Council's priorities in this period.

The strategic plan focuses on six strategic objectives which form its key themes. These are divided into further specific objectives. The strategic plan is supported by an Action Plan which identifies the steps required to achieve each objective, with a date assigned to each action. These dates will enable the International Board and UWC Council to develop annual plans and assess progress towards completion of the objectives on an annual basis.

In order to achieve the strategic and specific objectives a partnership will be necessary involving all constituencies within UWC. Some of the objectives represent specific and measurable actions that are fully within the responsibilities of the UWC Council, International Board and International Office. However, many of the objectives will rely on actions and directions taken by Colleges and National Committees. It is therefore vital that all constituencies, the Colleges in particular, see this strategic plan as a shared responsibility. The governance model implemented on 1 January 2009 should emphasise this collective responsibility, particularly the composition of the UWC Council which includes all College Chairs and College Heads.

One purpose of the strategic plan is to identify those ways in which all parts of the UWC organisation can be stronger if they work together. In this respect, the plan is intended to compliment the responsibilities carried at local level by trustees, director or governors of the Colleges and the leadership of National Committees. It is anticipated that in many cases the strategic plan will be able to serve as a useful framework for similar plans drawn up at local level.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that UWC's model of education maintains relevance and becomes more widely known as an example of education for a peaceful and sustainable future.
- To extend UWC's impact.
- To strengthen and develop the UWC National Committee system.
- To create a secure and sustainable financial and funding model.
- To increase awareness, recognition and understanding of UWC.
- To continue to strengthen organisational effectiveness and unity.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

***To ensure that UWC's model of education maintains relevance and becomes more widely known as an example of education for a peaceful and sustainable future***

*UWC wishes to develop the potential of students who come to UWC schools and colleges from the widest diversity of backgrounds and who will, through a combination of intellectual skills, emotional intelligence, responsibility and service to others, be able to set an example, become leaders in their communities and commit themselves to making a positive difference in the world. UWC also wants its distinctive educational model to be better able to provide an example to others. In order to achieve both objectives, we must continue to ensure the quality and relevance of the education we provide. To achieve this objective, UWC will:*

1. Define and monitor **UWC's educational philosophy and model** and encourage development which emphasises relevance, quality and innovation.
2. Support National Committees and Colleges to **widen access and increase diversity** by selecting and admitting students on the basis of their potential as much as on their proven achievements.
3. Develop a **system of certification or recognition**, including a UWC Diploma, that will: recognise the full scope of the UWC experience and its objective of equipping students to make a positive

difference; articulate the distinctiveness of the UWC experience; support widening access; allow for the incorporation of an academic or vocational curriculum appropriate to the College and the future requirements of its students; be applicable at various levels.

4. Identify and develop appropriate **outcome data, research and evidence** to support further developments in UWC's educational model.
5. Work with and learn from **relevant other organisations** to develop and draw attention to UWC's model of education.

### ***To extend UWC's impact***

*UWC wishes to extend its impact globally and recognises that this can be achieved in a variety of ways. A strong starting point is the extensive outreach activities in the Colleges and the Short Courses which take UWC experiences to new audiences. Given our ambition, we must think of impact in terms of both the number of people coming into contact with a UWC experience, and in increasing recognition and understanding of UWC's system of education. In order to achieve this objective, UWC will:*

6. Building on the experiences of the Colleges, Short Courses and similar programmes, **define the scope of 'outreach'** activities that extend impact and can be brought within a UWC framework, connecting this definition with plans for a system of recognition or certification and supporting the development of existing and new outreach programmes.
7. Consider carefully **proposals for new Colleges**, seeking to grow strategically in order to strengthen the existing organisation and to minimise any adverse impact of growth.
8. Investigate the opportunities and implications of a programme of **associated and affiliated schools**.
9. Encourage the **Colleges to investigate the potential for their own expansion** in terms of both size and reach.
10. Utilise the **UWC graduate community** to extend UWC's impact.

### ***To strengthen and develop the UWC National Committee system***

*The volunteer National Committee system is a critical element of UWC's distinctiveness because it enables the organisation to be represented in and to have an impact in a growing number of countries and, uniquely, it delivers to the Colleges diverse populations of students selected from within their own communities and cultures. In some countries National Committees extend their scope beyond the core function of selection. We wish to preserve the best of the system, introduce consistency, develop the strength of National Committees across the world, and support those Committees which are able to go further in extending UWC's impact. In order to achieve this objective, UWC will:*

11. Create and implement a strategy to **develop and strengthen National Committees and the role of the National Committee system**.

12. **Extend the reach** of the National Committee system.
13. Focus on **widening of access** in selection.

***To create a secure and sustainable financial and funding model***

*Financial pressures and their consequences represent the biggest obstacle to UWC's continued development. It is clear that the movement could do more if it was financially secure and confident about its financial model, and that a central fundraising function will have a part to play in this. Financial security would mean being able to offer a level of sustained scholarship funding that is appropriate to each College's model and to UWC's commitment to diversity and selection on potential and merit. In order to achieve this objective, UWC will:*

14. Analyse and monitor **the financial health** of the UWC organisation.
15. Review **UWC's scholarship allocation model** and identify means of delivering scholarships in ways that meet 100% of need.
16. Build a culture of **collective responsibility for fundraising**, in particular to increase significantly the numbers of graduates making a financial commitment.
17. Implement a **fundraising capability in the International Office** that will identify new sources of funds and support and strengthen fundraising across the organisation.
18. Increase the **fundraising capacity** of National Committees.
19. Improve the **quality of information available to support fundraising**.
20. Establish a **group of prominent supporters, donors and others** to support fundraising.

***To increase awareness, recognition and understanding of UWC***

*A strong communications function will ensure that relevant and consistent messages are communicated externally and will reinforce communications and the value attached to UWC within the movement. Good communications will offer vital support to other objectives, but will also ensure that there can be a more widespread and better understanding of UWC's educational model which, given our mission and ambition, is an important end in itself. In order to achieve this objective, UWC will:*

21. Implement a **family brand strategy** with a brand that articulates what UWC stands for and provides coherence of key messages across the movement. It will be sufficiently inclusive to allow for the diverse models of school and college and other UWC activities.
22. Create and implement an **external communications strategy** to identify key audiences and to raise awareness of UWC, its mission and its model of education.
23. Create and implement an **internal communications strategy** to foster a strong sense of belonging to the UWC movement.
24. Use **UWC's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary** to raise the movement's profile.

***To continue to strengthen organisational effectiveness and unity***

*All parts of UWC will be stronger if we work together effectively. This requires a commitment by constituencies to move forward together, supported by a focused and effective centre able to provide leadership and to coordinate, defend and progress the best interests of the organisation as a whole. In order to achieve this objective, UWC will:*

25. Monitor UWC's **organisational structure, relationships, governance model and practices** to ensure that the organisation operates effectively and is best-placed to take forward and coordinate the mutual interests of all constituencies.
26. Develop strategies, including effective use of technology, to allow **the organisation and its constituencies to work together** more effectively.
27. Require **good governance throughout the organisation**.
28. Implement **common codes of conduct** for students and for staff in the Colleges.
29. Develop systems for **supporting and managing volunteers** and establish a code for volunteers throughout the movement.

The actions needed to achieve these objectives are given in the Action Plan which forms a separate document. The Action Plan assigns a target date to each action point. The UWC Council and International Board have also assigned responsibilities for each objective. International Board Committees will naturally carry primary responsibility for most objectives, supported by a relevant member of International Office staff, although this must be viewed in the context that one action necessary to accomplish the objective of ensuring UWC's governance arrangements work effectively will be to develop the effectiveness of the Committee structure. In addition, it will be a clear requirement for successful implementation that there is a strong sense of collective responsibility for the Strategic Plan.

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