



Mangosuthu University of Technology[®]

**INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY
2017-2020**

“Striving to achieve academic excellence that is relevant to the global challenges that society faces”

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BACKGROUND

MUT recognises that the environment in which it operates is a global one. People, knowledge and resources now move freely across borders. Because we now operate in a global environment we need to be part of the global market for knowledge if we are to build our reputation and standing in research and innovation and teaching and learning¹. We need to internationalise if we want to attract the best students and staff to our campus and to expand the pool of potential research funding to improve our research rankings. We need to take advantage of the possibilities that international partnership brings to building our capabilities and leveraging our reputation. In order to achieve its goal of being a pre-eminence university of technology, MUT needs to embrace the possibilities that internationalisation offers. These possibilities include opportunities for international collaboration in research and innovation and teaching learning; and for harnessing new ideas from all over the world to create an exciting scholarly environment. Globalisation also entails new responsibilities for the university to ensure that students and staff are equipped with the global skills and intercultural competencies that will be required of them to operate in an international environment².

Practically, this will mean building a strong network of strategic partnerships locally and around the world as well as leveraging our research through international research collaboration and joint research training. Internationalising the curriculum and building the intercultural capabilities of our students and staff and improving student experience by providing opportunities for all students to gain some international and intercultural experience during their degree programme. Growing international student load will be a key performance indicator and a shared responsibility, if we are to implement our internationalisation strategy successfully. Building strategic institutional partnerships with world class technology universities and with leading national and international corporations will help to build our brand and enhance our reputation. A focus on enhancing student experience and building the global skills and intercultural capabilities of our students will also help to build a distinctive capability for MUT and make us a preferred destination for international students to study. Our shared commitment over the next three years should therefore be to focus on four key areas of our internationalisation endeavour:

1. Develop high quality strategic, international research and innovation linkages and networks through a new set of strategically-focused, institutional partnerships with leading research-intensive, technology-focused universities both locally and globally to build our brand and reputation. Key technology partnerships should be focused on research collaboration, joint innovation initiatives, including technology transfer, as well as joint PhD programmes and include the possibility for joint research facilities.
2. Build student mobility as a distinctive capability of the University through an enhanced international mobility programme, including new opportunities for high quality, short term study options as well as international volunteering and work placement, and centering on a new flagship global leadership programme.
3. Continue to internationalise the curriculum in line with best practice across the university to build learning environments that enhance the global skills and intercultural capabilities of our students and maximise the opportunities for

¹ Barbara M. Kehm and Ulrich Teichler (2007) Research on Internationalisation in Higher Education. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 11 (3-4); 249-250.

² Samimi P, Jenatabadi HS (2014) Globalization and Economic Growth: Empirical Evidence on the Role of Complementarities. *PLoS ONE* 9(4): e87824. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0087824

international students to participate and feel valued in the classroom.

4. Foster our alumni to develop a strong network of MUT graduates both locally and globally contributing to and benefiting from their close connection to the university.

We will also need to further focus on the recruitment area. To achieve our enrolment targets and to sustain our recruitment levels we will need to grow and diversify our current recruitment channels and country sources; Programme Qualification Mix (PQM) i.e. further develop and improve our product mix; improve our communication strategies to build better relationships with potential students; employ new technologies to communicate with potential new students and convert offers; develop management strategies for tracking the progress of articulation cohorts; significantly grow our study programme abroad; and solve our student accommodation problem. In doing so, the focus for this internationalisation strategy is premised on four key aspects, namely: partnerships, student experience, curriculum and research and innovation³.

Partnerships

The consolidation of partnerships, with a move towards broader, multidisciplinary and multifaceted engagement, and the focus for that engagement being the local, regional and global.

Student Experience

- The maintenance of a diverse and integrated student cohort, with international students from a range of countries and backgrounds across all disciplines
- An increased number of students having the opportunity to travel abroad during their academic programme, with experiences offered ranging from humanitarian, language and culture, internships or exchange
- The development of an enhanced international student experience, recognising that experience extends from pre-arrival to post-graduation

Curriculum

A cohesive and co-ordinated approach to the interculturalisation of the curriculum, ensuring graduates have the appropriate competencies and proficiencies to take their role as global citizens.

Research and Innovation

Further development of MUT's international reputation for research excellence in targeted areas, and a resulting increase in joint research outputs with key international partners

A. PARTNERSHIPS

A related goal is to ensure that all staff are aware of the different partnerships MUT already enjoys, and that they are aware of ways in which they can benefit from, or contribute to, collaboration with a particular institution, or at the regional level.

Globally

The potential to expand this area of the University's internationalisation will be further explored during the period of this Strategy, with an emphasis on engaging a range of areas of the University community and consolidating relationships with key funding

³ Adapted from Griffith University's Internationalisation Strategy 2014-2017

bodies and organisations, both locally and globally. Similarly, the potential to work together with institutions from higher-developed economies and educational systems will be systematically explored, with a focus on MUT's ability to gain research expertise in relevant areas and build capability at both the individual and institutional level.

Student exchange agreements

Given the changing trends in student mobility patterns, exchange and an institutional and national focus on ensuring MUT's graduates are prepared to work internationally, the number and location of student exchange agreements will be initiated to ensure that each agreement of this type is sustainable and balanced. At the same time, efforts will continue to ensure connections are made and maintained with international institutions that will support the different forms of mobility opportunities now sought.

International Reputation

As a relatively new institution, a key goal for MUT for the next five years is to continue to build and enhance its international reputation. This will be achieved through continuing to play a leading role in key international education consortia.

National and International Relationships

In addition to international partnerships, MUT has forged key relationships locally that will contribute significantly to its internationalisation. For the period of this Strategy, a key goal will be to further develop the partnership with other institutions, ensuring that both institutions work cohesively together to develop MUT's diverse international student cohort.

As well as international partners, MUT acknowledges that some international students look for the opportunity to access an MUT education within their own country or region and, for that reason, is committed to further developing its transnational education programme offerings. This requires strong partnerships internationally to ensure a quality educational experience, and opportunities to further develop this mode of delivery will be considered in selected academic areas.

Strategies and Actions

Responsibility of:

1.1	Consolidate the number of formal international partnerships, and ensure all remain strategically appropriate, active and mutually beneficial	DVC: RIE Internationalisation Advisory Committee
1.2	Ensure exchange agreements are sustainable, balanced and meet the changing student mobility trends	DVC: RIE Internationalisation Advisory Committee
1.3	Further develop and consolidate the University's reputation as a key partner in the development of the capacity of government	DVC: RIE

	organisations in the KZN region	
1.4	Develop a multidimensional strategy to expand engagement with organisations from higher-developed international research economies	DVC: RIE, Internationalisation Advisory Committee
1.5	Maintain and further develop strong partnerships to enable the expansion in selected academic areas of MUT's transnational education offering	DVC: T&L

B. STUDENT EXPERIENCE

MUT recognises the need to ensure all graduates are competent to work in culturally diverse environments, as well as having a well-developed sense of social awareness, and the opportunity to be part of a diverse student body, as well as undertake an international experience during their study programme, make a significant contribution to ensuring these attributes are part of every MUT graduate.

Student cohort

As technology changes the way in which education is delivered, and higher education institutions around the world look to increase their international student numbers, a primary goal for MUT is the maintenance of a diverse and integrated student cohort, with a range of opportunities available to both domestic and international students to undertake an overseas experience, whether that be part of their formal academic programme, or an extracurricular activity. With the delivery of programmes online, and MUT's involvement in the delivery of transnational education programmes, ensuring a quality, internationalised student experience is an ever more challenging one.

MUT puts the student firmly at its centre, and so too is the student experience an integral component of MUT's internationalisation. For many of the areas that fall under the broad heading of "Student Experience", participation in, and use of the resulting data from, benchmarking surveys such as the International Student Barometer will be used to drive best practice and set targets for the various areas associated with the Student Experience (e.g. accommodation, arrival, careers support, teaching & learning support). As well as being the responsibility of MUT International, a key requirement in this area is the acknowledgement that enhancing the international student experience requires an "all of institution" approach, and that experience starts prior to the student's arrival and continues beyond graduation.

Global Mobility

Currently, very few students graduating from MUT go on a university-organised international experience during their degree study. Not only is this consistent with MUT's strategic focus, it is also in line with DHET and DST initiatives. Increasingly, students are looking for overseas experiences that will not only develop their

language and intercultural skills, but also ensure that they enhance their future employability.

The goal for the period of this Internationalisation Strategy is to further increase the number of students taking up at least one mobility opportunity during the course of their study, be that a formal semester exchange, participation in a humanitarian project or an internship, with a focus on developing the work-readiness of all MUT students. The University is committed to working with institutional partners, organisations and alumni in ensuring that all MUT students have the potential to spend a part of their degree overseas. In addition, the important role of academic staff, both as advocates for, and providers of, appropriate mobility opportunities will be acknowledged.

The goal in this area then is to continue to grow the percentage of all students participating in at least one international experience during their studies at MUT. To support the achievement of this goal, it will be necessary to ensure access to appropriate opportunities that are well-supported, and will require an all-of-institution approach, with commitment involving not just resourcing but also curricula that both allow and encourage students to take up international opportunities.

International student body

In addition to maintaining the percentage of international students, continued diversification of the cohort is equally a primary goal. This is to contribute to the integration of all students, and multiculturalism on-campus, and also to avoid over-dependence on a particular market or markets. To achieve this, it will be necessary to ensure marketing resources are allocated accordingly, as well as articulation agreements and other key pathways into MUT are reviewed and monitored to ensure the recruitment of a balanced student cohort.

Employability

Increasingly, employability is acknowledged as the primary motivation for many internationally mobile students. Some effort will also be made to better prepare international students and support them in attaining employment, either locally or internationally, this will be a critical issue for the period of this Strategy. The challenge is to enhance the support for international students while they are still studying at MUT to prepare them for their future careers, and also ensure they develop strong networks and affiliation with the University and their peers post-graduation. This will require commitment from a number of areas of the University. Formal connections will be in place across the various offices, they should depend on a broader formal approach being taken to the experience at different stages of the international student life cycle.

One action going forward then is the development of a more formal cross-University group charged with ensuring the international student experience is the best it can be, from arrival through to post-graduation. With a key motivation for international students being to improve their employability and develop an international network.

Strategies and Actions

2.1

Provide leadership on increasing the number of students having an international experience during their academic programme

Responsibility of:

DVC (RIE)
SD Marcomms
Deans
Internationalisation
Advisory Committee

2.2	Increase the amount of external funding available to support student mobility through alignment of opportunities with government and other funding bodies' goals, and continue to build on the successful application for such funds	DVC (RIE) SD Marcomms
2.3	Ensure the availability and targeted marketing of sought after academic programmes to ensure the attraction of an academically able and diverse international student cohort	DVC (T&L) DVC (RIE) SD Marcomms Deans
2.4	Ensure the range of pathways available to international students entering MUT are sustainable, encourage diversity, and appropriately prepare students in terms of academic background and language proficiency	DVC (RIE) DVC (T&L)
2.5	Develop a strategy to enhance the engagement of international alumni as ambassadors, advocates and fundraisers MUT, through the development of alumni awards, strategic international alumni events, and increased use of social media	DVC (RIE) VC SD Marcomms

C. CURRICULLUM

While MUT support student mobility, it is also acknowledged that some students, for a variety of reasons, will not be able to travel abroad during their academic programme. For those students, a commitment to “internationalisation at home”

initiatives is particularly important if all MUT students are to develop the skills required to be a global citizen. Additionally, the participation by a large and multiculturally diverse cohort of international students in many of our academic programmes requires formal and informal measures to ensure a vibrant multicultural and welcoming campus, with a culturally inclusive classroom experience.

Interculturalised curriculum

This term “interculturalisation” is seen as better reflecting the breadth of internationalisation as being more than geographically defined, and potentially establishes a unique positioning for MUT in terms of its recognition of the importance of intercultural and linguistic competencies for all graduates, regardless of whether they be international or domestic.

To achieve the goal of embedding internationalisation, or interculturalisation, of the curriculum as a key component of all academic programmes at MUT, relevant policies and processes, ranging from those associated with quality assurance through to the proposal of new programmes, will be reviewed and updated where appropriate. Potential outcomes of such a review include the explicit recognition of achievements contributing to the internationalisation or interculturalisation of the classroom experience into academic promotion criteria, and/ or the expansion of the current Internationalisation Awards to specifically acknowledge outstanding contributions to the teaching and learning experience of both international and domestic students. Similarly, the criteria for the current “Cultural Inclusiveness” award in the annual Teaching & Learning Awards will be introduced to ensure that explicit reference to interculturalisation of the classroom initiatives and/or academic programmes is made.

Providing opportunities for more formal communication and interaction to occur regarding the enhancement of interculturalised teaching and learning experiences across the wider University is a key objective. To ensure that all graduates leave MUT fully competent and ready to work in culturally and linguistically diverse environments, all academic staff must be supported and encouraged in the provision of initiatives that enable these competencies to develop. Similarly, as the number of international visiting PhD/postdoctoral students continues to grow, the development of appropriate, culturally-inclusive skills in all supervisory staff will be increasingly important.

Work-integrated learning

It is widely recognised that “windows” of international experience need to be included in academic programmes that enable students to have such an experience without unreasonably extending the length of time required to complete their qualification. To meet both the goal of increasing numbers participating in at least one overseas experience, together with meeting the need to develop work ready graduates, an important action is the review of various academic programmes and the inclusion of work-integrated learning opportunities which, where relevant, could be taken overseas. Student demand for this type of opportunity is already evident in the changing mobility patterns in recent years, with more students choosing short term programmes with placement or internship opportunities elsewhere.

Strategies and Actions

3.1

Consider the implementation of an “interculturalisation of

Responsibility of:

DVC (T&L)

DVC (RIE)

	the curriculum” approach	Internationalisation Advisory Committee Dean
3.2	Ensure relevant academic policies and processes explicitly recognise the importance of actions that develop global competencies in MUT students	DVC (RIE) DVC (T&L)
3.3	Ensure all academic staff, including supervisors of higher degree students, are appropriately supported and recognised in the provision of a culturally- inclusive study environment across all MUT classrooms and research centres	DVC (RIE) DVC (T&L) Deans
3.4	Ensure the provision of “mobility windows” and encouragement of international work- integrated learning opportunities in academic programmes	DVC (RIE) DVC (T&L) Deans

D. RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Research, Innovation and Engagements has started to “enhance and strengthen international research links and performance. A focus will be exploring the potential for mutually beneficial partnerships across a range of research areas in other regions within South Africa and abroad

Partnerships and agreements

With MUT’s research strengths matching countries globally and higher developed countries globally, there will be a continued emphasis on building partnerships in those areas. To achieve the full potential available through such partnerships and agreements, resulting in an increase in the number of joint research outputs, a multipronged approach is required. Thus initiatives that result in joint research publications, successful research grant applications and/or joint higher degree by research (PhD) completions will be pursued.

These include the targeting of senior researchers from partner institutions for joint appointments, together with providing support for the development of joint centres and research programmes in selected areas. The latter also offer the potential to further develop MUT’s growing international reputation, as well as focusing collaborative activities in strategic areas. With a number of agreements in place that have collaborative research as their main objective, it is important to ensure that each relationship is active and achieving the aims originally set for it.

The ongoing provision of strategic funding to support international research partnerships, as well as further development of relationships with key international bodies, is essential to the achievement of goals in this area, as is a commitment to offering an attractive research environment to attract overseas talent.

Strategies and Actions	Responsibility of:
4.1 Undertake an analysis of our current international research footprint to inform a better understanding of the status quo, and from which to develop ongoing funding priorities and initiatives	DVC (RIE) Director of Research
4.2 Explore the potential for joint appointments with targeted senior researchers in key international partner institutions and promising candidates for fellowships and postdoctoral opportunities	DVC (RIE) Research Director
4.3 Streamline PhD admission process for students from partner institutions	DVC (RIE) Research Director
4.4 Encourage and support through the Infrastructure Plan, Research Centres policy and other strategic funding, top-level international collaborations to facilitate access to leading research facilities, data and equipment	DVC (RIE) Research Director
4.5 Formalise informal research and/or innovation collaborations both national and international	DVC (RIE) Research Director

CONCLUSION

The Critical Success Factors for MUT to be a truly internationalised university, it will need to embrace internationalisation in all of its dimensions and will need to be committed to:

1. Internationalising the teaching and learning and research and innovation environments
2. Building key institutional international partnerships
3. National and international accreditation of professional programmes
4. Developing new, timely and innovative academic programmes
5. Developing staff capabilities for internationalisation
6. Developing work placement opportunities and a substantial post-graduation recruitment service
7. Enhancing the global capabilities of the student body; and
9. Effectively recruiting international students.

The challenge ahead for us all will be to get wide university support for internationalisation from every area of the organisation; to work on multiple projects simultaneously; and to secure the necessary resources required to complete our programme.

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