



# STRATEGY TO ENHANCE THE INTERNATIONAL PROFILE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

## 1. BACKGROUND

At a MEC strategic breakaway in January 2009 it was recognized that the international profile of UJ was deficient in a number of respects. Such deficiencies impede UJ's progress towards becoming a truly internationalized premier African university with an international reputation that attracts international students and scholars and infuses an international dimension into the scholarly and other activities of its staff and students. The following deficiencies can be identified:

- 1.1 Small and diminishing numbers of international students registered for (undergraduate and postgraduate) academic programmes at UJ, when compared to peer institutions;
- 1.2 inadequate enrolment management of international students (such as a no-more-than-rudimentary recruitment strategy, poor management of English language proficiency testing and the absence of Senate-approved enrolment targets for international students);
- 1.3 small number of foreign academics (and postdoctoral fellows) employed at UJ;
- 1.4 the absence of a Study Abroad Programme and of winter/summer short-stay programmes for international students;
- 1.5 the lack of a clearly articulated institutional strategy for establishing and sustaining dedicated international partnerships that benefit the core academic functions of UJ;
- 1.6 insufficient and inadequate accommodation for international academic visitors and students;
- 1.7 an imperfect appreciation of the division of responsibilities for international visitors and students in the various units/divisions that support international staff and students;
- 1.8 indications of continuing antagonism from South African students towards foreign (particularly African) students and a pervasive sense of "outsider" status amongst foreign students (xenophobia);
- 1.9 an inadequate understanding of an "internationalized" curriculum; and

- 1.10 insufficient institutional support for the general wellbeing of international students at UJ.

In order to address these deficiencies, the Pro Vice-Chancellor and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research, Innovation and Advancement) were tasked to propose a strategy to enhance the international profile of UJ for consideration by the MEC.

Before the proposed strategy is formulated, it is important to state the governing principles that underpin such a strategy, the “international” components of the UJ Strategic Plan and the goals that such a strategy should seek to achieve.

## **2. PRINCIPLES THAT UNDERPIN THE STRATEGY**

The following principles govern a strategy to enhance the international profile of UJ:

- 2.1 The Vision, Mission and Values Statement and the ten accompanying Strategic Goals of UJ (the *UJ Strategic Plan*) must guide and inform a strategy to enhance the international profile of UJ.
- 2.2 An inclusive approach towards international students, one that embraces diversity and encourages integration into the broad student body, must determine policy, rather than an approach that is exclusive and separatist.
- 2.3 UJ’s limited HR and ICT capacity must be utilized effectively and coordinated efficiently to ensure optimal service delivery to international students.
- 2.4 The provision of appropriate multi-campus accommodation for international academic visitors and international students is essential.
- 2.5 Opportunities for income generation must be actively pursued in current and new initiatives to enhance the UJ international profile, particularly in respect of lucrative international research partnerships, and the resources that underpin it.
- 2.6 International partnerships must attract international students (in particular, postgraduate students at master’s and PhD level) and visitors to UJ, and must also create opportunities for UJ staff and students to engage in core academic activities in foreign institutions and/or with foreign academics, and in so doing such partnerships must enhance the academic project.
- 2.7 All four UJ campuses must benefit from, and contribute to, an enhanced international profile.
- 2.8 Strict adherence to compliance requirements for the registration of international students and for receiving international visiting scholars.
- 2.9 Careful scrutiny of existing policy and processes to ensure that they do not inhibit (either intentionally or unintentionally) the enhancement of the UJ international profile by the exclusion of international students and scholars from scholarly opportunities.

### 3. “INTERNATIONAL” COMPONENTS OF THE UJ STRATEGIC PLAN

A strategy to enhance the international profile of UJ must take account of the following elements of the UJ Strategic Plan:

Vision:

“A premier, embracing African city university ...”; “... high ideals of humanity...”; “...distinguished scholarship ...”.

Mission:

“... Leading, challenging, creating and exploring knowledge”

Values:

“academic distinction; “... respect for diversity and human dignity”

Strategic Goals

One:

“To promote recognition of the University of Johannesburg as a South African institution whose brand is synonymous with: ... internationally competitive and innovative research ...”

Three:

“To establish the University of Johannesburg among the top research universities in the country in terms of nationally and internationally accepted research criteria” (See too KPI 5: “Active formal research collaboration with national and international partners”)

Four:

“To add value to external constituencies through strategic initiatives and partnerships” (See too KPI 3: “Active engagement with the challenges of SADC and the African continent”; KPI 4: “stature of strategic partners”; KPI 5: “public scholarship”)

Nine:

“To promote the holistic development of the student in preparation for the world of work and responsible citizenship” (See too KPI 2: “holistic development”; KPI 9: “effective and efficient academic administration”).

### 4. GOALS OF THE STRATEGY

The goal of the strategy is to enhance the international profile of UJ by at least the following means:

- 4.1 Increase the number of undergraduate and postgraduate international students registered for full-time academic programmes from the present

- 3,4% of total student numbers to 6% by 2012 and 10% by 2015. The proportion of postgraduate students of the overall number of international students must increase from the current 22% to at least 33% of overall international student numbers by 2015.
- 4.2 Create an embracing environment for international students that encompasses:
    - an efficient *enrolment management* process;
    - adequate and sufficient *accommodation* for the students; and
    - ensure the emotional, physical and intellectual *wellbeing* of the students.
  - 4.3 Establish a Study Abroad Programme and other short-stay programmes for international students, in order to provide such students with valuable and novel learning opportunities (both structured and unstructured) at a market-related fee that generates income for the university.
  - 4.4 Provide adequate and sufficient accommodation for international visiting scholars that will allow such scholars to enrich the academic activities within the faculties by means of visits of a meaningful duration.
  - 4.5 Ensure that the curricula of modules within academic programmes, and research and community engagement projects, have a learning content that sufficiently takes account of the global dimension within which students will necessarily seek and find employment.
  - 4.6 Promote the various campuses of UJ as a preferred destination for international conferences, workshops and seminars and ensure that facilities and infrastructure are adequate to accomplish this goal.
  - 4.7 Establish clear criteria for the dedicated pursuit of strategic international partnerships that add value to the academic core functions of UJ and ensure optimal benefit for UJ from such partnerships.
  - 4.8 Participate in events, active membership of international organizations, diplomatic liaison, all designed to enhance the UJ international profile by information sharing, by accurate and adequate communication and by seeking and pursuing international opportunities for UJ staff and students and for institutional advancement.
  - 4.9 The active pursuit of international research partnerships, underpinned by substantial funding, by the Research Office in collaboration with the faculties.

## **5. STRATEGY TO ENHANCE THE INTERNATIONAL PROFILE OF UJ**

The goals of an internationalization strategy for UJ, described in 4 above, are best achieved structurally by the establishment of an International Office (with a location, composition and functions as described below) and by the allocation of activities and functions to other divisions and units in the university, as described below, in order to complement the work of the International Office.

## 5.1 UJ INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

5.1.1 The *UJ International Office* is responsible for the following broad functions (described in more detail below):

- (i) International student recruitment;
- (ii) international student welfare
- (i) strategic international partnerships and liaison; and
- (ii) management of a Study Abroad Programme and other short-stay programmes for international students and scholars.

5.1.2 The Office is headed up by an executive manager at the level of at least a Director. The staff complement that assists the Director in fulfilling the functions described in 5.1.1 above is determined by the Director from time to time in consultation with her/his executive line manager and with the approval of the MEC.

5.1.3 An Advisory Board provides advice and guidance to the Director of the Office. It comprises representatives from the faculties and from the following divisions; Advancement, Student Affairs and Academic Development and Support. A MEC-approved Charter regulates its composition, functions and meetings.

### 5.1.4 International student recruitment.

The Office is responsible for the dedicated recruitment of international students to undergraduate and postgraduate academic programmes. It exercises this responsibility as follows:

- (i) A recruitment campaign for international students at both undergraduate and postgraduate level is designed annually by the Office. This campaign is submitted to the Advisory Board for its consideration and is approved by the MEC. The campaign is guided by enrolment targets for international students set by the faculties and approved by the MEC and by Senate.
- (ii) In the implementation of its campaign, the Office is actively assisted by the faculties, by the Advancement Division, the Research Office (in respect of postgraduate students) and by the Division for Student Affairs.
- (iii) In collaboration with the Advancement Division, the Office compiles and disseminates information on UJ to prospective international students, to diplomatic missions and to institutions and organizations abroad.
- (iv) The Office participates in events (both national and international) where recruitment of international students to South African institutions is facilitated.
- (v) The Office continuously benchmarks best practice in the recruitment of foreign students with peer institutions and collects and analyzes data on such students.

#### 5.1.5 International student welfare

The Office is responsible for ensuring the physical, intellectual and emotional welfare of foreign students registered for academic programmes at UJ. It exercises this responsibility as follows:

- (i) The placement of international students in suitable accommodation (on-campus or off-campus). It exercises this responsibility in close collaboration with the Unit for Residence Life and Accommodation in the Division for Student Affairs. In the case of off-campus accommodation, it also assists students with community liaison and advice in cases of landlord-and-tenant disputes.
- (ii) Protect and promote the shared interests of foreign students within the broad UJ student and staff community (e.g., “buddy system”, Newsletter, orientation of new students, website, international festivals, exchange programmes).
- (iii) Support to the *International Student Academic Association* (ISAA).
- (iv) Liaison with diplomatic missions and foreign institutions and organizations to promote the welfare of international students.

#### 5.1.6 International strategic partnerships and liaison

- (i) The Office identifies and facilitates strategically important international partnerships that enable UJ to further promote its strategic goals and secure resources for research and other scholarly projects, and maintains a database of such priority strategic partnerships. Such strategic partnerships are supported by MEC-approved institutional resources. The nature and purpose of such strategic partnerships are determined in accordance with principles approved and amended from time to time by the MEC. Such guiding principles are contained in **Appendix A**.
- (ii) The Office receives international delegations to UJ, plans visitor programmes and coordinates the visits of UJ delegations of senior managers to international destinations.
- (iii) The Office liaises with international organizations and agencies. The purpose of such liaison is to provide accurate and appropriate information on UJ, to secure information that can assist UJ to achieve its strategic goals in an international context, and to secure UJ's participation in international events that enhances its international profile.

#### 5.1.7 Study Abroad Programme

- (i) A primary responsibility of the International Office is to manage a Study Abroad Programme (inclusive of short-stay, non-curricular programmes) in close collaboration with the faculties. The aims, nature, organizational structure and benefits of a Study Abroad Programme for UJ are described in **Appendix B**.

- (ii) A Study Abroad Programme should be self-sustaining and serve as a vehicle for the generation of substantial third-stream income.

## **5.2 INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADMISSIONS AND REGISTRATIONS**

- 5.2.1 Faculties are responsible for the planning and management of the enrolment of international students into subsidized and non-subsidized academic programmes (from admission and registration to graduation).
- 5.2.2 Responsibility to ensure that international students comply with all of the academic, administrative and statutory requirements for the registration of international students for (subsidized and non-subsidized) academic programmes rests with the *International Students Admissions Office*.
- 5.2.3 The Student Enrolment Centre that reports to the Registrar has the following functions in respect of the application and registration process for international students:
  - (i) Provision of information and advice on academic, administrative, financial and statutory admission requirements for international students to prospective and current international students and to internal and external stakeholders.
  - (ii) Internal liaison on registration requirements for international students.
  - (iii) Manage the pre-registration compliance process in respect of international students.
  - (iv) Liaison with Department of Home Affairs on statutory registration and employment requirements (permits; reporting) and management of statutory compliance process.

## **5.3 THE FACULTIES**

The faculties enhance the international profile of UJ in the following ways:

- (i) Active pursuit of international student and staff exchanges and of international scholarship collaboration through informal collaboration as well as formal MoU's and MoA's, with the support, where required, of the International Office, the Unit for Strategic Partnerships and the Research Office.
- (ii) Recruitment, in close collaboration with the International Office, of international students for master's and doctoral programmes in particular.
- (iii) Ensuring that the curricula of academic programmes, as well as research and community engagement projects, have a learning content that sufficiently takes account of the global/international dimension within which students seek and find employment.
- (iv) Ensuring that international students do not suffer a sense of alienation while pursuing their academic programmes and related research projects, and that international students receive

- appropriate academic development and support during their studies.
- (v) Participation by academics in Study Abroad Programmes managed by the International Office.
  - (vi) Liaison with the Unit for Residence Life and Accommodation in the Division for Student Affairs in securing accommodation for international academic visitors to UJ.

#### **5.4 THE RESEARCH OFFICE**

The Research Office enhances the international profile of UJ in the following ways:

- 5.4.1 Dissemination of information on international bursaries and scholarships and management of the applications/nominations process and of post-awards administration.
- 5.4.2 Management of international research partnerships, both inter-institutional and in the context of State-driven bi-lateral and multi-lateral research relationships.
- 5.4.3 Provision of research support in the Postgraduate Research Centre.
- 5.4.4 Identification of international funding opportunities for UJ academics and support to such academics in the applications process and in the post-award administration.

### **6. IMPLEMENTATION**

In order to ensure a smooth transition from the current dispensation where activities and services in support of internationalization at UJ are dispersed within a number of divisions and units, to a fully fledged International Office, with the functions as described above, the following implementation arrangements will apply after this Strategy has been approved:

- 6.1 A dedicated search for a Director of the International Office will be undertaken in order for an appointment to be made by the end of 2009 at the latest.
- 6.2 Once the Director has been appointed, she/he – with the assistance of appropriate staff redeployed or appointed to the International Office – assumes initial responsibility in 2010 for the following functions:
  - 6.2.1 International student welfare, as described in 5.1.5 above;
  - 6.2.2 management and implementation of a Study Abroad Programme, as described in 5.1.7 above;
  - 6.2.3 devising a campaign with a view to international student recruitment for 2011 and beyond.
  - 6.2.4 drafting (in consultation with the Registrar) of appropriate policies and processes that ensures good governance in respect of the International Office; and

- 6.2.5 finalizing a staff complement and budget for the Office in consultation with the Pro Vice-Chancellor and with the approval of the MEC.
- 6.3 The appointment by the MEC of an Advisory Board for the International Office, with the requisite Charter, will be finalized before the end of 2009.
- 6.4 The transfer of functions in respect of international strategic partnerships and liaison (see 5.1.6 above) from the Unit for Strategic Partnerships to the International Office will be effected in the second half of 2010.
- 6.5 The International Office will assume full responsibility for all of the functions detailed under 5.1 above by the end of 2010.

## **PRIORITISATION OF INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS**

Partnerships between the University of Johannesburg and foreign institutions and organizations serve to promote the strategic goals of the university through collaborative effort. These typically include the following:

- (a) Student and staff mobility;
- (b) Joint academic programme development and implementation;
- (c) Joint research projects (including the sharing of research infrastructure);
- (d) Postdoctoral supervision;
- (e) Funding of academic projects.

Principles that guide the choice of international strategic partner must be underpinned by the UJ Strategic Plan, and in particular by the following elements thereof:

- (a) UJ's vision of being a premier African city university;
- (b) UJ's vision of being an institution known for its distinguished scholarship, its excellence in teaching and learning, reputable research and innovation and for putting its intellectual capital to work;
- (c) UJ's mission to contribute to national objectives regarding skills development and economic growth;
- (d) UJ's value of academic distinction;
- (e) UJ's value of academic freedom and accountability;
- (f) UJ's goal of promoting a brand that is synonymous with nationally and internationally competitive and innovative research;
- (g) UJ's goal of teaching and learning excellence, achieved among others through quality assurance practices and innovative teaching, learning and assessment strategies;
- (h) UJ's goal to be an internationally competitive research institution, achieved among others through formal research collaboration with international partners;
- (i) UJ's goal of being an engaged university that adds value to its external constituencies through among others active engagement with the challenges of SADC and the African continent and the stature of its strategic partners;
- (j) UJ's goal to be competitively resourced by among others securing the financial resources to develop strategic initiatives;
- (k) UJ's goal of providing a preferred student experience that promotes the holistic development of the student.

The following principles guide a determination of which international partnerships enjoy priority status, and thus become eligible for dedicated institutional resources:

1. As a premier African city university that seeks to actively engage with the challenges of SADC and the African continent, UJ must give priority to strategic partnerships with African (and non-African) institutions and organizations that seek to utilize UJ's intellectual capital to address the developmental needs of Africa (including the education of postgraduate students and postdoctoral fellows and the sharing of research infrastructure).
2. As a premier African city university, UJ must give strategic priority to international partnerships that enhance its ability to contribute to national objectives regarding skills development and economic growth, including the skills development of its own staff.
3. As a premier African city university, UJ must engage in strategic partnerships with institutions and organizations similarly situated in the developing economies of the Southern hemisphere in particular (within the framework of existing national cooperative frameworks), by putting its intellectual capital to work in promoting the economic, environmental and social wellbeing of communities in such developing economies (including our own).
4. As a university dedicated to the promotion of internationally competitive research, UJ must give priority to formal research collaboration with institutions with research stature in those research areas strategically identified within UJ as niche areas of existing or potential strength.
5. As a university dedicated to the promotion of teaching and learning excellence, UJ must prioritize strategic partnerships with international institutions that have proven expertise in quality promotion and assurance practices and in innovative teaching and learning methodologies.
6. As a university dedicated to the promotion of distinguished scholarship, UJ must give priority to those institutions that in their own national context have a reputation for distinction in the pursuit of scholarship.
7. As a university dedicated to competitive resourcing, UJ must prioritize partnerships that will enable it to source the highest level of funding for its research and teaching and learning endeavours.
8. As a university that upholds the value of academic freedom and accountability, UJ must allow individual academics and departments to pursue their freedom to collaborate with international partners of their choice, but must also hold them accountable for the utilization of limited resources in the pursuit of such partnerships within the parameters dictated by the UJ Strategic Plan.
9. As a university that promotes the holistic development of its students, UJ must continue to actively seek opportunities (by means of student exchange programmes) for its students to gain a learning experience in

- international institutions and for them to be exposed to international students at UJ.
10. Only international partnerships that are identified by the MEC as enjoying priority status will be considered for institutional funding support.

## A STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMME AT UJ

### 1. Introduction

A ***Study Abroad Programme*** provides opportunities for short-term educational experiences to non-degree seeking international students. Such a programme is primarily directed at international students, but also provides an international academic experience for local students that enhances their global citizenship and international understanding of global concerns.

### 2. The Study Abroad Programme (SAP)

The Programme is integrated into the regular curricula of Senate-approved subsidized and non-subsidized academic programmes. In so doing it exposes both international and local students to the culture and conditions of a foreign country, within a structured academic context.

It is designed for international students registering for modules in (mostly) undergraduate programmes for one or two semesters at UJ. The students will be able to transfer credits to their home institutions for undergraduate degree credit. In many cases (particularly in the US) this is normally part of fulfilling a degree requirement for study abroad.

A Study Abroad Programme has many formats. Typically, they include the following:

- 2.1 *A Programme Infused into the Curriculum.* This standard format of the Study Abroad Programme comprises a set of modules in one or more academic programmes for which the student registers in a specific semester. The student selects the modules in consultation with the International Office and the academic departments concerned and in line with the academic requirements of her/his home institution. Language courses, research, community engagement and excursions may also form part of the programme.
- 2.2 *Topic Specific "Stand-alone" Programmes.* Aspects of South African culture and civilization are selected as specific topics by administrators or in response to requests from institutions or students abroad and "packaged" into unique, non-subsidized modular study units. Other requirements may include community research projects, relevant educational excursions, as well as optional or required language courses and community engagement projects or internships.
- 2.3 *Short-term Study Abroad Programmes offered by UJ.* Short-stay programmes for international students ("Winter/Summer Schools"), from

one to several weeks' duration (less than a term), can be offered in collaboration with faculties and academic support divisions, drawing its design, resources and assignments from the unique offerings of Johannesburg and environment as programme site.

- 2.4 *Short-term Faculty-led Programmes.* The academic content of short-term programmes is typically designed and delivered by the home institution's faculty member(s) accompanying their students to UJ for these programmes, e.g. "Winter/Summer Schools". UJ programme administrators provide on-site logistical support.

Curriculum design and assessments are in accordance with Senate-approved academic policies and processes, and are in all cases subject to Senate approval in order to ensure quality and compliance with foreign accreditation requirements.

### **3. Institutional Management of the Study Abroad Programme**

The key elements of a successful Study Abroad Programme include the following:

- 3.1 The academic component of the SAP, although managed separately from the faculties within the International Office, is fully integrated into the academic core functions of the university and subject to Senate control.
- 3.2 The SAP is subject to MEC-approved policies and procedures that ensure good governance and accountability.
- 3.3 The SAP should be adequately resourced in accordance with a budget approved annually by the DVC (Finance).
- 3.4 It should be managed by a senior manager at the level of at least a Director, with a support staff that includes a high-level Coordinator and Administrator.
- 3.5 It should be financially self-sustaining and generate substantial third stream income.
- 3.6 The success of the Programme is dependent upon the annual participation of a critical mass of fully fee-paying international students in the (different formats of the) Programme. Such a critical mass is achieved if around 50 students per semester participate in the SAP.
- 3.7 UJ must enter an existing – and growing – market of international students seeking a short-term study abroad experience. Since UJ is as yet an unknown and untested study abroad venue, it must actively engage in a marketing and recruitment campaign in a highly competitive market. This is best achieved by partnerships with recognized recruitment agencies that specialize in the recruitment and placement of international students in Study Abroad Programmes. There are many such agencies world-wide. For South Africa, the most influential are the *Council for International Education Exchange* (CIEE) and *Interstudy*. Concluding agency agreements with these organizations before year-end is essential.

- 3.8 Academic colleagues whose fields of expertise typically coincide with SAP academic offerings must recognize the substantial benefits of a SAP to enhance the international profile of UJ and therefore commit to participation in the programme. Their commitment to and participation in the SAP is essential.
- 3.9 The provision of adequate and safe accommodation (whether on-campus or off-campus) for SAP participants is crucial. Collaboration between the International Office and the Unit for Residence Life and Accommodation in the Division for Student Affairs in securing such accommodation is critical.

Approved by Senate  
30 September 2009