

Internationalisation at UTS 2010-2012

Introduction

The UTS International Strategy 2004-2008 has served the university well. Its statement of international purpose and objectives remains valid and provides a strong base for continuing the momentum and progress in internationalisation that has been achieved over the past five years. A new UTS Strategic Plan 2009-2018 provides an excellent opportunity for the University to re-focus and refine its internationalisation strategies as we move forward to achieve the vision of 'being a leading university of technology', and 'advancing knowledge and learning to progress the professions, industry and communities of the world'.

The UTS Strategic Plan 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 teaching. 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. Finally, we need to use our resources in a way that will aid the development of a peaceful and civil society throughout the world.

In order to achieve its goal of being a world-leading university of technology, university needs to embrace the possibilities that internationalisation offers. These possibilities include opportunities for international collaboration in research and teaching; for enriching campus life and experience through a diverse international staff and student body; 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 environment.

In a practical sense and in line the institutional strategic plan this means,

- Building a strong network of strategic partnerships around the world (UTS Objective 2.5)
- Leveraging our research through international research collaboration and joint research training (UTS Objective 2.4)
- Internationalising the curriculum and building the intercultural capabilities of our students and staff (UTS Objective 1.2)
- Improving the student experience by providing opportunities for all students to gain some international and intercultural experience during their degree program (UTS Objective 1.4)
- Improving the campus experience of our international students (UTS Objective 3.3)
- International service that contributes to the global community and enhances the life experiences of the university community (UTS objective 3.4)

While growing international student load will be a key performance indicator and a shared responsibility, if we are to achieve the outcomes of the Campus Master Plan, our focus nevertheless should be on internationalisation driving our load growth rather than the other way around. Building strategic institutional partnerships with world class technology universities and with leading 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 UTS and make us a preferred destination for international students to study.

In line with the UTS strategic plan, our shared commitment over the next three years should be to focus on six key areas of our internationalisation endeavour:

1. Develop high quality strategic, international research linkages and networks through a new set of strategically-focused, institutional partnerships (*UTS Key Technology Partnerships*) with leading research-intensive, technology-focused universities around the world to build our brand and reputation. Fifteen Key Technology Partnerships around the world would be focused on research collaboration and joint PhD programs and include the possibility for joint research facilities.
2. Build student mobility as a distinctive capability of the University through an enhanced international mobility program, including new opportunities for high quality, short term study options as well as international volunteering and work placement, and centring on a new flagship global leadership program.
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 international students to participate and feel valued in the classroom.
4. Enhance the classroom, campus and community experience of our international students during their period of study at UTS and grow UTS as the preferred campus of study for international students in Australia, including multi-layered learning support.
5. Contribute to a development project(s) in areas of key strength in the university preferably in partnership with a local institution as part of our international civil responsibility.
6. Foster our international alumni to develop a strong network of UTS graduates around the world 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:

7. Grow and diversify our current recruitment channels and country sources; develop in a timely way a comprehensive and competitive set of block credit arrangements; improve our conversion rates; 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 abroad program; and solve our student accommodation problem.

Developing Strategic Institutional Research Linkages

Building high quality international research links with targeted universities is an important component of the UTS Strategic Plan. International institutional partnerships are vital to both the research engagement and the internationalisation of the university. They provide a means for enhancing reputation and brand, building new capabilities, developing synergies, providing opportunities for new external funding sources, building diversity and furthering intercultural understandings and competencies. They will also aid us in attracting the best and brightest students from around the world to revitalise our laboratories and classrooms with new ideas and ways of doing things. Significant opportunities also exist through strategic international partnerships for international research collaboration, enhanced funding opportunities, joint research training, joint research and postgraduate degrees, and for providing opportunities for staff and student exchange.

In general, partnerships are more likely to be successful when their focus is strategic and research-centred, where the objectives are well defined and where there is a good fit in terms of size, rank, and research mix and where there is a sense of commitment between the partners.

Developing flagship 'UTS Key Technology Partnerships' should be the major strategic focus of the university's internationalisation plan and would focus on research engagement and staff and student exchange. This type of agreement would promote dual degree programs particularly in the research and higher degree area, cross institutional teaching, enhanced credit transfer between institutions and flexible arrangements for student and staff mobility between institutions. Such arrangements would ideally promote the establishment of joint centres of excellence designed to enhance collaboration and success in attracting international research funding as well as fostering industry partnerships in the offshore location. A significant emphasis should be placed on research training, particularly through joint PhD programs, and the movement of research students and researchers between institutions. Because this will be the flagship partner program, this partnership category should aim to be relatively exclusive and focused across key regional areas of interest to the university. The aim of limiting the number of partnerships is to raise UTS's reputation, ensure focus, provide standing and allow proper resourcing.

It is therefore proposed that there should be a limited number of 15 flagship institution-to-institution agreements. The spread of these agreements should reflect a combination of the geopolitical, economic and intellectual significance to Australia and to UTS. On this basis it is recommended that partnerships be located in China, India, Asia, North America, Europe and possibly Latin America and be progressively negotiated over a three year period. The partnering universities would be determined on the basis of best fit to the University, especially in relation to their technology profile.

1. These partnerships would also include joint HDR and PG programs with the partner institution. It will be essential to ensure that the partnerships entered into are active and that individual partnerships are viewed as highly significant by both parties.
2. The Key Technology University Partnership Agreements would be supported by UTS for a period of three years to encourage researcher visits and interaction and determine potential joint project fit between designated research groups. This support should ideally be matched by the partnering institution.
3. Centre and faculty partnerships would form a second order of partnership within the university, to acknowledge special and specific synergies and opportunities for research and exchange collaboration that might exist between centres and faculties with similar research interests in specialised fields not covered under the key partnerships category. These agreements also need to be strategic and limited in

order to maximise the degree of possible collaboration under an agreement. These partnerships would normally be supported by the faculties and centres involved.

4. Individual Researcher Collaboration MOUs would exist outside of these categories and would be available to individual researchers seeking collaborative research funding where approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) on a case by case basis. Seed support may be provided to individual researchers depending on the likelihood of success of collaborative or external funding at the discretion of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research).
5. University Student Exchange and Study Abroad Partnerships would be devoted solely to student exchange and study abroad programs and would be entered into as either a university or faculty level agreement as appropriate. There would be no limit set on the number of exchange agreements but approval would be at the discretion of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International and Development).
6. The principal KPIs of the partnership strategy should include increasing reputation and brand for the university; an increased quantum and quality of research outputs; greater quantum of research funding; increased load of HDR students; more extensive research networks; jointly offered degrees and cross partnership teaching; and increased opportunities for student mobility.
7. Performance would be internally monitored over a five year cycle. A small working group under the chair of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International and Development) could be established to determine any further desirable attributes of possible partner institutions; further define the scope of the desired engagement; articulate the desired outcomes from the engagement; and determine potential partners.

Benefits to UTS would include:

- Enhanced reputation and brand equity in our principal markets
- Highly focused and active regional relationships
- Increased research networking output and quality
- Improved teaching performance
- Enhanced intercultural competencies and experience
- Increased international HDR load
- Increased mobility of staff and access to facilities
- Development and enhancement of research capabilities
- Greater campus diversity

Enhanced Student Mobility

The UTS Strategic Plan lists 'leadership in internationalising student experience' as one of the principal drivers for realising its vision and purpose to be a world leading university of technology. It also lists international student mobility and cultural engagement as one of the centre pieces of the UTS model. UTS has led the way in Australia in providing opportunities for students to engage in overseas study as part of their university degree programs. As successful as the International Studies Program and international exchange scheme has been, however, the time has come for UTS to broaden these opportunities for more students to travel internationally by expanding the menu of travel options and establishing a global leadership program which would be open to all students. Providing opportunities for students to gain international experience as part of their academic development is essential if we are to build strong global and intercultural competencies as a defining capability of the university.

Research also shows improved graduate outcomes for students who have international experience. The gathering momentum of globalisation, and increasing inter-connectedness of cultures through business and technology, also means that student mobility is likely to become more, not less, important in the future. Whilst there is very strong interest from

students across the university to study abroad during their degree programs, a number of constraints exist including:

- Financial constraints
- Program time constraints due to professional requirements
- Issues relating to accreditation for professional placements undertaken offshore
- Lack of formal recognition of overseas activities

There are a range of initiatives that can be undertaken in order to expand the number of students participating in outward mobility programs. These include:

- Creating a larger and more flexible 'menu' of outbound mobility options for students including short and non-award programs
- Creating an international leadership program as part of a degree supplement
- Greater flexibility in providing credit for offshore study
- Introducing international work placements and volunteering options
- Using new programs to engage alumni, regional and international communities

In order to implement the proposed strategy, additional funding will need to be committed to the program. This funding is necessary to support new technology platforms, new study options and an expansion of scholarships.

The university has the potential to develop one of Australia's most sophisticated and successful outbound mobility programs that will create a distinctive capability and increase our market attractiveness to both local and international students.

1. The university should expand its current student exchange programs to include a range of short programs to allow greater access to offshore experiences including:
 - Regular exchange programs for credit
 - Short courses and conferences
 - Intensive language programs
 - International summer schools
 - Study tours
 - International work placements and volunteering
2. Examine ways in which non specified credits might be awarded for such study, perhaps through cumulative credits.
3. Set an annual target of 25 per cent of the undergraduate student body having an overseas experience by 2015. Establish a flagship international leadership program as a degree supplement to encourage the building of global competencies to enhance student attributes. Students would be able to complete the program through different pathways but with minimum requirements across a range of fields including academic study and networking, experiential activities including international exchange, volunteering and work placement, and community service and leadership activities.
4. This program might include:
 - A series of compulsory flagship speeches and networking events involving high profile speakers on a range of topics related to international affairs and business.

- A range of seminars designed to build global skills and intercultural capabilities.
 - A requirement for students to gain a designated number credit points of both theoretical and experiential items of international-related activities, including approved international courses in their degree programs, offshore short courses, language study, international volunteering, exchange programs, international internships, on-campus service programs involving international students and activities, international conferences related to professional associations, etc.
 - Inter-cultural competence training (perhaps through online study)
5. Give consideration to increasing the professional development opportunities for all staff to grow their global and intercultural competencies through funded short program travel offshore and training programs.
 6. Investigate technological solutions to increase program capacity, including a review and update of the website.

Internationalisation of the Curriculum

Internationalisation of the curriculum is an embedded feature of the UTS model of 'global practice-oriented learning, which aims to strengthen graduate attributes for a global workplace by systematically embedding them into the curriculum. UTS should build on its already substantial accomplishments in internationalising the curricula to ensure we:

- continue to progress internationalisation of the curriculum in line with best practice across the university;
- build learning environments that enhance the global skills and intercultural capabilities of our students;
- maximise the opportunities for international students to participate and feel valued in the classroom;
- Explore ways for increasing the availability of foreign language study to undergraduate across the university, including concurrent undergraduate foreign language diplomas and language summer schools; and
- Develop a pedagogy for curriculum internationalisation that embodies inclusiveness and recognises cultural difference.

Additionally with the growth in international load, the need for additional English language and learning support services to support international students must be a priority for the university if we are to provide the appropriate learning support needed to harmonise student learning in the faculties and to build a reputation in the international student learning domain.

Improving the international student experience through better campus and community integration

Integrating international students into campus and community life and providing an excellent experience is an important responsibility that the university has both as part of its duty of care and in building its reputation as a preferred destination for international students. Recent surveys of international students in Australia identify loneliness and isolation as significant factors affecting the experience of international students especially those from China and parts of South East Asia. The 2006 AEI Survey of International Students identifies the failure of international students to connect with local students and the broader community as major issues. Most international students (85 per cent) feel the need for more

Australian friends while local students feel less of a need to have international students as friends. While most students from Europe, North America and South America feel that they are treated with due respect (90 per cent) by local students, students from Asia are much less likely to feel the same way (60 per cent). Integration strategies are required at both campus and community level to deliver a better international student experience. Whilst UTS has already developed an impressive and comprehensive range of achievements in this area some additional strategies to address campus and community integration might include:

1. Establishing an International Student Liaison Committee chaired by the DVC (International and Development) to provide a formal structure to work with international students to improve the international student experience and to address immediate issues of concern such as safety and accommodation.
2. Making staff and students aware of the integration issues facing international students.
3. Conducting an internal review of international student experience to determine student needs and community attitudes at UTS including focus groups and survey instrument.
4. Implementing strategies (outlined above) designed to develop intercultural competencies of all students and staff as well as further internationalising the curriculum.
5. Introducing a Cultural Awakenings festival to bring local and international students together, including film festival program, culinary program, dance etc.
6. Building partnerships with community organisations and services to assist in the process of educating their client groups and the wider community of the value of having international students as part of their community.
7. Developing a community service 'connections' program to actively seek opportunities for international students to participate in community events and volunteering and as visitors at local schools.
8. Further developing student buddy programs.
9. Expanding International Student Internship program in conjunction with local business chamber.
10. Lobbying at local and state levels on issues pertaining to international students
11. Developing effective classroom and school strategies for improving social interaction and friendships at classroom and school level between international and local students.
12. Expanding peer mentoring programs for international students to provide support
13. Developing programs to promote 'university clubs' to international students.
14. Developing a 'family program' to provide English language and conversation classes as well as play groups to develop opportunities for social interactions for spouses and children.
15. Improving part time work opportunities and on-campus employment opportunities for international students.

Developing a strategy to provide guaranteed accommodation options for international students and provide integrated on campus accommodation for both local and international students to facilitate integration

Building a strong international alumni network

This is an imperative if we are to leverage our reputation and influence in our key markets. Our international alumni form part of influential elites in their home countries and a close connection with them can only assist the university in building networks of influence in our key markets and possible benefactors for the university in the future. Our approach should be a holistic one which involves staying connected through building both life-long and inter-generational relationships. Some immediate measures might include:

1. Introducing partial fee assistance to the children of UTS graduates in full fee paying programs. Building intergenerational relationships will confer great benefits through possible philanthropy
2. Developing an innovative range of short program learning options especially designed for international alumni to assist with life-long learning needs
3. Developing new life-long learning opportunities for alumni
4. Having our alumni assist us as UTS Ambassadors in various forums and in recruiting fairs
5. Providing additional assistance for setting up and maintaining new alumni chapters
6. Appointing key high profile alumni to 'patron' positions in new locations
7. Engaging in an alumni database 'reconstruction project'

Development Activities

Contributing to the development of the global civil society should be an important part of the international mission of every university and UTS has the opportunity to enhance its reputation through contributing to international aid/development projects, ideally with in-country partners. We need to develop two flagship programs in areas such as public health and training.

Recruiting new international students

Growing international student enrolments is an important priority for UTS. Increasing international load to 6700 EFTSU over the next five years is possible but will be challenging given the uncertain times. The market is also increasingly competitive both within and outside Australia. Load growth at UTS has somewhat stalled over recent years and is unbalanced in terms of its reliance on the PG coursework market and its underachievement in undergraduate, study abroad and research load. A number of important measures which will need to be implemented include:

1. Grow and diversify our current recruitment channels and country sources;
2. Develop in a timely way a comprehensive and competitive set of block credit arrangements;
3. Improve our conversion rates;
4. Further develop and improve our product mix;
5. Improve our communication strategies at the enquiry stage;
6. Employ new technologies to communicate with potential new students and to convert offers and develop management strategies for tracking the progress of articulation cohorts; and
7. Significantly grow our study abroad program.

In order to grow international revenue as a proportion of total revenue we need to invest more strongly in growing UG numbers. This requires a two pronged approach. China and India will continue to be important markets and a significant effort needs to be made to continue to grow these markets, partly through increasing our brand through developing our strategic Key Technology Partnership strategy and partly through diversifying/augmenting existing marketing channels through high quality articulation programs. Successful articulation management requires the ability to tag cohorts of students and manage and monitor their progress as a cohort.

To be successful in this effort it is essential that we establish representative offices in both China and India and appoint Country Directors in both countries as a matter of urgency to manage our business and government relations.

In addition to India and China, we need to pursue growth in new markets in Latin America and the Middle East as well as a more aggressive study abroad strategy, concentrating on the US and Europe, to grow enrolments in this area. To do this we will need to be able to guarantee accommodation and we may need to be more actively involved in the accommodation market through the head leasing of properties. In the case of study abroad, we should have planned numbers and be able to take time-specific leases to cover the duration of the study abroad students with minimal financial risk being involved. Ideally, having a part time consultant working on both continents to manage the SA program relationships would yield the greatest success and our major competitors already have these resources deployed.

UTS also needs to be more actively involved in the funded government scholarship market, predominantly research and higher degree, but not exclusively, in China, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and the Middle East. To do this, UTS will need to invest in up to 15 UG/PG and 20 PhD fee scholarships per annum. We will also need as a matter of urgency to streamline our HDR application process in order to improve processing times.

Critical to our success in growing undergraduate load will be to get our block credit (RPL) arrangements in place in a timely, comprehensive and competitive manner. Deputy Vice-Chancellor, (International and Development), has already written to Deans suggesting a methodology for achieving this and hopefully this matter can be resolved quickly. Without resolution of block credit arrangements UG load at UTS will continue to stall.

Improving conversion rates is also an important part of growing international load. I am suggesting a number of projects which will need to be undertaken.

We need to develop a customised e-brochure which students are able to build on-line. The e-brochure would contain details of an enquirer's preferred study program along with additional information relating to UTS, based on a list of FAQ options. The e-brochure enables students to acquire personalised information in multiple formats and is print friendly, able to be emailed to family members and friends, automatically emailed to potential students and able to be read on screen. Users' names and email addresses would be automatically collected and then integrated into the international enquiry management system administered by Hobsons.

We also need to develop an online self assessment tool that would enable UTS International to generate automatic real time conditional offers. Through this tool, prospective international

students would be able to self select through a range of admission criteria, block RPL and information relating to English language requirements to generate real time offers and provide a significant competitive advantage in the market place. The assessment tool also requires a sophisticated credit database and credit tracking system.

There are also a number of faculty-specific initiatives which will need to be taken to improve international load performance.

Additionally UTS needs to have a more sophisticated communication strategy for converting enquiries into offers, containing many smaller communication bytes of information on a wide range of topics designed to build a stronger and more personal and engaging relationship with prospective UTS students.

Critical Success Factors

For UTS 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 learning, teaching and research environments
2. Building key institutional international partnerships
3. National and international accreditation of professional programs
4. Developing new, timely and innovative academic programs
5. Developing staff capabilities for internationalisation
6. Developing work placement opportunities and a substantial post-graduation recruitment service
7. Enhancing the international student experience
8. 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 program.

Professor William Purcell

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International and Development)

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