



INTERNATIONALISATION POLICY

1. POLICY PARTICULARS

DATE OF APPROVAL BY RELEVANT COMMITTEE STRUCTURE:

Internationalisation Committee 2011/08/16

DATE OF APPROVAL BY SENATE: 2 September 2011

DATE OF APPROVAL BY COUNCIL: 8 September 2011

COMMENCEMENT

DATE:

REVISION HISTORY: Version 2

REVIEW DATE: Every 5 years

POLICY LEVEL: All staff and students

RESPONSIBILITY [Person/Division/Committee accountable for]:

- IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING: International Office

- REVIEW AND REVISION: Director of the International Office in conjunction with the Internationalisation Committee

REPORTING STRUCTURE: Director International Office → Deputy Vice-Chancellor:
Research and Development/Internationalisation Committee → Senate → Council

2. POLICY STATEMENT

2.1 POLICY DECLARATION:

Rhodes University, in its Mission and Vision Statement, commits itself to internationalisation as a key element of the institutional culture and quality in university curricula, teaching and research.

The University has always viewed international students and staff and international connectivity in terms of its teaching and research as enriching the institution, the department and the individual and is therefore to be encouraged. In this ever-changing world, it is equally important that South African staff and students have a clear sense of the global context in which they are operating and that they are encouraged to travel out of South Africa on academic and student exchanges; to experience other cultures; to engage in global networks and to participate in internationally collaborative research. Where students and staff do not have the opportunities or finances to travel, internationalisation at home activities can help increase global awareness.

The University believes that the infusion of internationalisation at every level of thinking and practice within the institution ensures that the University remains abreast of internationally accepted good practice and fosters an open and inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and respected.

2.2 POLICY OBJECTIVES:

Rhodes University recognizes that a commitment to internationalisation has implications for curricula, teaching methodology, research collaboration, administration, selection, induction, orientation and promotion of staff, student recruitment, fund-raising, marketing, experiential learning through student and staff mobility, quality review, the university budget, communication and all aspects of our institutional culture. This policy therefore aims to ensure that:

1. All decisions regarding the curriculum, cooperative teaching and research agreements, staff and student mobility, and international projects are guided in the first instance by considerations of innovation and potential for *academic excellence*, as well as the potential for personal growth and the development of leadership skills within the South African context.
2. Internationalisation at Rhodes University, at the institutional level, develops within the *framework* provided by policies, strategies and laws at the national system and sector level. Important documents include: The SADC Protocol on Education and Training, especially Articles 7 and 8; and the Code of Ethical Practice in the Provision of Education to International Students by South African Higher Education Institutions, International Education Association of South Africa. Internationalisation will also be aligned with relevant University policies such as those on language, assessment of student learning, curriculum development, quality assurance, recruitment and selection of staff, and staff development.
3. Special attention is paid to developing relations with institutions in *Africa* and to continue to provide quality and affordable tertiary education to African students, especially to those from the SADC region.

4. Special attention will also be paid to countries where there is potential for new alliances with South Africa including China and India, who are demonstrating an increase of activities with South Africa. The next generation of academics and young professionals need to understand these countries and their interests in South Africa to ensure that South Africa benefits from engagement with them.
5. It is also recognised that academics will identify institutions of world leadership and excellence in different fields. Engagement with these institutions, regardless of geographical location will primarily be determined by the potential for academic excellence.
6. International staff and students and what they have to offer Rhodes University, enrich the daily life of the University. They have available to them the range of excellent services available to all. There is simultaneously a recognition that International staff and students face unique challenges, notably in the areas of visa, study permits, medical aid etc. and require dedicated services additional to those provided to South African staff and students.
7. In the development of its academic programmes, in the review of curricula and in the assessment of courses offered, Rhodes University will endeavour to model international best practice while at the same time ensuring that teaching methods and courses are relevant to the African context and take into account the key influences on Africa at any particular point in time.
8. With respect to *research* programmes, every effort will be made to facilitate international links and to provide staff with the opportunity to visit foreign countries and work with international colleagues.
9. Rhodes University encourages bilateral or multilateral agreements with institutions outside South Africa when there are demonstrable *mutual benefits* to all the partners in the agreement.
10. Rhodes University follows a participatory approach to stimulating internationalisation and recognises that the *enthusiasm* of the individual students and staff involved is crucial.
11. Rhodes University will from time to time determine the optimal size of the international student component taking into account the size and shape and the enrolment plan of the University.
12. Rhodes University strives to make the international student component as diverse as possible.
13. Rhodes strives to ensure that South African students benefit from the presence of International students and encourages “internationalisation at home” activities.

2.3 DEFINITIONS:

Internationalisation:

Internationalisation at Rhodes University is the conscious, proactive and consistent effort to create an institutional learning environment inclusive of international, intercultural and global dimensions at every level of thinking and practice within the institution. Our ambition is to provide an environment and culture that facilitates academic staff development and practice that in turn fosters the development of graduates who are aware of the wider world and who have a sense of responsibility and commitment to making constructive contributions at the local, national, continental and global level in their chosen fields.

Internationalisation includes but is not limited to:

- 1) **curriculum development** that encompasses international dimensions and ensures that students are exposed to comparative perspectives and contemporary developments in their fields internationally;
- 2) the cultivation of **international partnerships** that enrich the quality of academic research and debate;
- 3) **teaching and learning** that embraces innovative methodology, new technologies and international academic exchanges to enrich and enhance the learning experience;
- 4) seeking opportunities for **international mobility of staff and students**;
- 5) participation in **global networks** and conferences;
- 6) “**internationalisation at home**” which promotes and values diversity and nurtures a culture where everyone feels valued, is curious and respectful of others and actively engages in socially responsible, inclusive activities.

International student: Students who require a study visa in order to study in South Africa.

International Staff: Staff who require a work permit in order to work in South Africa.

3. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 THE ACTIONS AND PROCESSES BY WHICH THE OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY WILL BE ACHIEVED:

3.1.1 The **Director: International Office**

- reports to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Development;
- makes recommendations and reports to the Internationalisation Committee of Senate;
- reviews the policy and proposes adjustments in the context of a rapidly changing global environment;
- develops and drives the internationalisation strategy at Rhodes University, within the guidelines of the Policy;
- advocates for internationalisation across the University;
- represents the university at IEASA and International Conferences;
- drives internationalisation at home activities and works with a variety of stakeholders across the university and
- manages the International Office.

3.1.2. The **International Office**

- serves as a contact point and support for international students (especially study abroad and exchange students), staff and visitors;
- assists Rhodes staff and students who travel and study abroad in the interest of internationalisation;
- supports and organises internationalisation at home activities;
- develops international opportunities, links and exchanges for Rhodes staff and students;
- liaises with the international offices at other South African universities;
- does research on the process of internationalisation at Rhodes and
- participates in the activities of organizations of international higher education, both local and elsewhere.

3.1.3 The **Internationalisation Committee** of Senate is to:

1) **Model internationalisation in on-going roles and responsibilities**

1. Actively champion internationalisation in the areas that fall under each IC member's area of responsibility;
2. Keep abreast of world trends in the members' specific area of expertise in Higher Education.

2) **Influence and inspire others**

3. Shape and influence the University's policy on internationalisation;
4. Encourage the internationalisation of research and foster collaboration with international research partners;
5. Encourage innovative and internationalised curriculum;
6. Ensure that in on-going university discussions and decision-making, the impact on internationalisation is taken into account and specifically considered;
7. When in positions of influence, actively encourage an outward-looking international mind-set, across a range of different academic endeavours;
8. Actively encourage the involvement of up-and-coming undergraduates, postgraduates and young academics in internationalisation and commit to developing a new generation of academics, with strategic links and networks outside of South Africa;
9. Actively encourage other colleagues and students to provide content that shares good practice and inspire others to consider internationalising activities in their areas of University life.

3) **Monitor internationalisation**

10. Ensure the internationalisation policy is implemented, monitored and regularly reviewed;
11. Ensure the University meets its commitment to internationalisation, as defined in its policy and described in its mission and vision statement;
12. Ensure the IEASA (International Education Association of South Africa) Code of Conduct for International Students is monitored.

4) Communicate with others

13. Share any significant strategic global developments in International Higher Education, with other members of the IC;
14. Ensure Senate and Council are advised on new developments in the realm of internationalisation in higher education;
15. Ensure Senate and Council are advised on the internationalisation of curricula;
16. Where it is already modelled, bring good practice to the attention of the International Office to increase the visibility of good practice with other RU academics and postgraduates;
17. Increase the awareness and visibility of good practice and interesting initiatives in RU by sharing these at the Internationalisation Committee meetings;
18. Proactively suggest new initiatives in internationalisation;
19. Alert the International Office to all international endeavours so that these may be captured on the International Office website.

5) Network

20. Make special efforts to establish academic alliances with institutions in countries, facing similar challenges to South Africa, and with high potential for future collaboration, including the emerging global players such as Brazil, Russia, India, and China (BRICS), as well as other parts of Africa;
21. Identify international networks in each member of the IC's area of expertise; bring their web links to the attention of the International Office to increase the visibility of Rhodes University's connectedness with other parts of Africa and the rest of the world.

6) Nominate and Select Ambassadors

22. The IC will call for applicants to be Ambassadors for the areas in which Rhodes University has a strategic interest, as defined by the revised policy. These include but are not limited to: 1) Southern Africa, 2) West Africa, 3) North Africa, 4) East and Central Africa, 5) China, 6) India, 7) Scandinavia, 8) The Netherlands, Germany and Mainland Europe, 9) UK and Ireland, 10) US, 11) Canada, 12) Australia and New Zealand. These Area Ambassadors will be nominated and selected, according to a range of criteria, including their existing networks, international initiatives and the commitment to internationalisation they already demonstrated. Ambassadors must progress an academic agenda and have tangible results that impact institutionally and are not just relevant to that individual's research. Ambassadors will be on a rotational basis;
23. Area Ambassadors should ideally be in a position to commit to one or more of the following internationalisation activities on an annual basis:
 - 23.1) Establish new international academic connections and relationships or connect existing contacts with other people who may be able to engage in areas of mutual academic interest;
 - 23.2) Present at international conferences or invite international academics to

present at RU conferences;

23.3) Initiate special academic mobility programmes with support from the IO;

23.4) Initiate special student exchange programmes with support from the IO;

23.5) Encourage the development of and pilot innovative and internationalised curricula and share progress with the International Committee.

3.1.4 **Deans of Faculties, the Dean of Students, Directors, Heads of Departments and Divisions and the Students' Representative Council** encourage and support the internationalisation of the curriculum, international activities by and for all staff and students, and the development of international links and cooperative agreements in collaboration with the Director: International Office.

3.1.5 **The Registrar and the Data Management Unit** are responsible for maintaining a data base in order to report information on international students to the International Office as and when requested.

3.2 REVIEW PROCEDURE:

3.2.1 The Internationalisation Committee reconsiders the effectiveness of the Internationalisation Policy every 5 years, preferably at the first meeting of the relevant year. The first revision of this policy will be due in 2016, unless circumstances arise which require an earlier revision.

3.2.2 The Committee's recommendation is submitted (via the Internationalisation Minutes) to Senate and Council for consideration

3.2.3 If revisions are recommended and approved, a copy of the revised policy is widely distributed by the Committee Secretariat, and the web version is replaced by the new policy.