

# Motives and Measures of Higher Education Internationalisation: A Case Study of a Canadian University

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## Abstract

Internationalisation is the inclusion of international, intercultural and global dimensions into the objectives, policies and practices in the delivery of postsecondary education. The objective of the research was to investigate the types of partnerships and internationalisation approaches that exist in higher education, the motives of internationalisation and the most appropriate approaches to measuring the quality and progress of internationalisation in higher education. A number of studies on internationalisation have been carried out. However, there is a limit on the scale and amount of research undertaken on measuring the output of internationalisation in higher education, in particular in the context of the Canadian higher education system. This paper is based on case study research to determine the motives of internationalisation in higher education in a Canadian university and it uses the Knight Internationalisation Tracking Measure to test the quality and progress of internationalisation in the university. The research entailed document analysis, interviews and surveys which were designed to gather data on internationalisation practices and objectives from university staff involved in the management of internationalisation and international partnerships. The content of the interviews and surveys were based on the measures defined by the Knight Internationalisation Tracking Measure. The research found that higher education institutions are motivated by the prospects of attracting additional income to make-up for the reduction in government funding. In addition, internationalisation offers access to staff development opportunities, internationalisation of the curriculum, and wider benefits leading to societal development. These findings and recommendations are drawn from a single case study.

**Keywords:** higher education institutions, internationalisation, international partnerships, curriculum internationalisation

## 1. Introduction

Internationalisation involves the incorporation of global, international, intercultural dimensions into goals, objectives, content and delivery of higher education (Knight, 2015). However, higher education institutions (HEIs) are increasingly being seen as commercial ventures and internationalisation is a source of funding and income for HEIs (P. Altbach, 2015a). Although internationalisation is widespread, the main motives, methods and measures of its effectiveness need further elaboration. HEIs are involved in partnerships, alliances and collaborations with other institutions, organisations and individuals. The objectives of these international partnerships are to achieve a range of benefits: international prestige (Seeber, Cattaneo, Huisman, & Paleari, 2016), knowledge development, innovation, financial income and curriculum internationalisation (Haigh, 2014). The aim of this article is to investigate and identify the institutional motives of internationalisation and institutional partnerships, methods of partnerships and to measure the quality and progress of internationalisation in a higher education institution.

The research looks at partnerships and alliances between an HEI and external organisations; these partnerships include both those that are within a national context and international locations. The terms internationalisation and partnerships or alliances are regularly used interchangeably to refer to the same relationship. However, this research adopts the definition of internationalisation to mean the inclusion of international, intercultural and global dimensions into the objectives, policies and practices in the delivery of postsecondary education (Knight, 2015). While partnerships and alliances refer to institutional partnerships within the national and international context (MacDougall, Mtika, Reid, & Weir, 2013; Mtika, Robson, & Fitzpatrick, 2014).

The research is based on a single case study institution and uses a pseudo name, University of Technology (UofT), to protect the identity of the case study institution, the interview respondents and any sensitive information relating to the institution. Interviews were conducted with respondents from the University which comprised academic staff involved in the management of the University's partnerships, the University's Internationalisation Office and Applied Research Institute (ARI) (an institute that is primarily involved in partnerships on behalf of the University).

## **2. Higher Education Internationalisation**

### *2.1 Higher Education Partnerships and Internationalisation*

Higher educational institutions (HEIs) exist and operate within a global context, taking part in the international activities and benefiting from partnerships and relationships with other institutions, organisations, and individuals (MacDougall et al., 2013; Rose & McKinley, 2018). Their participation in these international activities is a function of internationalisation in higher education. Internationalisation comprises of policies, procedures and practices that HEIs create and enforce within their environment. These are done to ensure that they participate in the external and international academic community through collaboration with other institutions, organizations and individuals (Knight, 2013). Internationalisation should emphasise the development of key areas within the institution, including staff participation in international and partnerships activities, strategic management of the institution to fulfil its role in the partnership, the availability of international students, academic exchange, knowledge sharing and internationalisation of the curriculum (Hall, 2017; Kedziora, Klamut, Karri, & Kraslawski, 2017).

### *2.2 Internationalisation in North America*

Over the last decade a significant number of North American HEIs have been forging partnerships with international institutions, particularly across Asian countries, like South Korea, Japan and India, through the creation of foreign campuses of North America institutions (P. G. Altbach & De Wit, 2015). Canadian institutions mostly practice international partnerships through enabling students to transfer credits across the institutions they study in to continue their education in the partner institutions in other countries. However, there are instances of Canadian HEIs opening branches or local campuses in Middle Eastern countries (Seeber et al., 2016).

International education and the acceptance of international students in Canada creates huge economic benefits for the country. As at 2016, there were over 450,000 international students in Canada (Preston & Wang, 2017). As at 2016, the Canadian Government reported that international students in Canada spent \$11.4 Billion dollars on tuition and associated expenses, created over 120,000 jobs and generated almost \$9.3 million dollars in revenue for the Government (Majumdar, 2017; Preston & Wang, 2017). There are a growing number of Canadian HEIs that are opening internationalisation offices, thereby creating an executive role to manage internationalisation and international partnerships.

### *2.3 Motives for Internationalisation*

#### *2.3.1 Economic Motives*

Profit-making HEIs are usually motivated by the prospects of financial income and an increase in profitability of their institutions through international partnerships and activities (P. Altbach, 2015b). Most for-profit private institutions are likely to establish new international institutions, partner with established international institutions and firms or purchase existing institutions. These methods enable the for-profit institutions to get a return on their financial investments by way of income from their international presence to fulfil their business objectives (Seeber et al., 2016; Soria & Troisi, 2014).

There are traditional not-for-profit institutions that are also motivated by financial benefits in international partnerships, even though their primary focus is not financial but the acquisition and sharing of knowledge (Knight, 2015; Tilak, 2015). However, they are also increasingly led to seek the financial incentives in internationalisation because of the reduction in the source of funding from their governments (Knight, 2015; Tilak, 2015). These types of institutions rely a lot on the income they gain from international students and the expenses they save from stipends paid to international students working for them in teaching and research assistant roles (P. Altbach, 2015b; P. G. Altbach & De Wit, 2015). The motives behind internationalisation have been questioned in many cases by researchers and authors. Institutions rarely declare that financial income and benefits are an important or even fundamental part of internationalisation in higher education. Conclusively, there is still no clarity on whether altruism or commercialisation is the primary motive of internationalisation (Bedenlier & Zawacki-Richter, 2015; Gao, 2015a).

### 2.3.2 Academic Motives

The primary academic motivation behind internationalisation and partnerships is to attract foreign students, highly talented home students and highly qualified and experienced qualitative research staff and students (P. G. Altbach & De Wit, 2015; Soria & Troisi, 2014). International partnerships make it possible for the HEIs to improve on the quality of their academic and research programmes and internationalise their curriculum, thereby increasing patronage and improving their status in the academic and industrial environment, locally and internationally (Ho, 2017; Warwick, 2014). HEIs are motivated by access to knowledge for research, since localised knowledge is not enough to make the conclusions that research findings are applicable internationally (Costa, Soares, & de Sousa, 2016). Hence, HEIs access to international knowledge creates the possibility of research outcomes that are applicable across national and international borders (Brandenburg & De Wit, 2015).

Knowledge sharing activities and partnerships increase the institutions' access to knowledge, research and academic information, thereby increasing its economic capital value (Bhatti, Larimo, & Carrasco, 2016; Jain, Sandhu, & Goh, 2015). The increase in knowledge capital improves the prospects for academic and economic growth in their institutions resulting from the added value gained through internationalisation. Knowledge is collated, shared, transferred and disseminated across institutions internationally using Information and Communication Technology (Hagsten & Kotnik, 2017).

### 2.3.3 Social Motives

Traditional motivations for internationalisation include the willingness of some HEIs to learn and share knowledge of the culture and structure of other societies and to understand the challenges and peculiarities in those societies (Lewkowicz, Young, Budrytė, & Boykin, 2018; Lumby & Foskett, 2016). The essence of this knowledge is to ensure that HEIs become advocates for social change or a vanguard of reactions to change within those societies (Lotz-Sisitka, Wals, Kronlid, & McGarry, 2015; Marginson, 2016). Students are increasingly demanding access to an international educational experience (Madge, Raghuram, & Noxolo, 2015; Soria & Troisi, 2014) and in order to meet the needs of these students, institutions across various parts of the world are becoming involved in internationalisation. This creates the benefits of exposing students to international cultures, training and development and it gives them access to educational curricula that meet international standards of quality and content (Madge et al., 2015; Soria & Troisi, 2014).

The access to external curricula, both nationally and internationally, enables the institutions to develop more courses and academic programmes, thereby leading to an increase in enrolment on the specific programmes and their associated courses (Harrison, 2015; Soria & Troisi, 2014). When HEIs are involved in a socio-cultural partnership in their regional environment, it leads to the creation of new programmes that are directly relevant to the communities within the vicinity of the institution (Lee & Lo, 2016; Zen, 2017). This, in-turn, results in an increase in enrolments on the programmes and on major courses within the programme, as well as on elective courses that are related to those newly created programmes. Also, new research partnerships are created within the context of the social environment and HEIs are given the opportunity to participate in existing journals within the regional context (Magne, 2014).

### 2.3.4 Political Motives

Higher education institution have been known to be involved in partnerships with other institutions and organisations with the objective of increasing their public image, status and competitive advantage in the education environment (Magne, 2014; Van Tulder, 2015). This objective of seeking international prestige is political since the objective is mostly about public perception in terms of the positioning of the institution in order to achieve a desired market or public status (Prickarts, 2017). HEIs that have international objectives as part of their organisational mission and visions use international partnerships to fulfil their missions. Partnerships are a viable way of HEIs achieving their mission and policy statements and plans as they bring together members with shared goals, and the advantages gained from each other is leveraged for each member to achieve their own institutional objectives (Elliott, 2017).

## 2.4 Methods of Institutional Partnerships

The motivation for partnerships determines the nature of the partnerships. The following is an analysis of different methods and types of partnerships in relation to their aims and objectives.

### 2.4.1 Traditional Partnerships

Traditional institutional partnerships are agreements between HEIs that are not usually motivated by income but by the opportunity for an international strategic partnership and to improve the prestige and public perception of the

institutions (P. Altbach, 2015b). The institutions are motivated by access to international and inter-cultural views and the knowledge they would gain from foreign languages and culture, leading to an internationalisation of their curriculum (Seeber et al., 2016). Traditional partnerships are focused on academic, research and curriculum development and are involved in programmes like Erasmus and the Bologna process (Seeber et al., 2016). HEIs develop other international activities from these partnerships, such as international franchising programmes, learning with international curricula and syllabi, international collaborations, conferences for academics and research activities with the participation of both staff and students (Hagsten & Kotnik, 2017).

#### 2.4.2 Professional Alliances

In a bid to make sure the academic curriculum of professional courses contains enough practical elements and improved academic content, professional departments in HEIs seek partnerships with other institutions that have excelled in their fields of practice (Hagsten & Kotnik, 2017). An instance is an alliance between the Royal Adelaide Hospital's Department of Nursing with the University of Adelaide Faculty of Medicine, the primary objective of which was to improve the Royal Hospital nursing practices in order to achieve higher standards of clinic practice. The improvement of their nursing qualification and curriculum and the creation of new courses and awards were directly relevant to the regional requirements in the nursing and medical professions (Barr & Dowding, 2015).

#### 2.4.3 Learning Technology Partnerships

The availability of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and its ever improving efficiency creates better opportunities for HEIs to deliver their academic programmes through various leading technologies (Anshari, Alas, & Guan, 2016; Sarrab, Elbasir, & Alnaeli, 2016). The partnership model of web-based learning was designed to improve the contents and technology involved in remote learning. These partnerships are created between HEIs which have good experience of delivering high quality academic programmes partnering with institutions that have high quality ICT facilities (Anshari et al., 2016; Sarrab et al., 2016). This is basically a partnership between specialists in academic delivery and specialists in technological services.

#### 2.4.4 Employer Partnerships Scheme

Graduates of HEIs act as a channel through which institutions create partnerships with employers. These partnerships are used as a source of obtaining relevant industry knowledge and experience. In addition, the experience and knowledge is either included in the academic curriculum of the HEI or as part of professional and career training programmes (Piróg, 2014). Graduates of the institutions keep in touch with their Alma Mater through the alumni associations and invite the employers to participate in training programmes for undergraduate students (Piróg, 2016). Hence, this training focuses on skills and knowledge required by graduates to obtain jobs in their professions.

These kinds of partnerships between industries and the HEIs help new graduates gain the knowledge and skills they need to get jobs and start their careers upon graduation (Szablowska-Midor, Kolecka, Kozak, & Ostafin, 2017). The employer partnership schemes in HEIs contribute significantly to skills development for graduating students and curriculum development for the students. The scheme provided additional work placement spaces for students on practicum as well as those seeking jobs after graduation.

#### 2.4.5 Internationalisation of Curriculum

To meet the needs of globalisation and for graduates to be able to work conveniently in an international environment, graduates are expected to have been trained, educated and carried out research using curriculum with international content which meets international quality standards (Warwick, 2014). Graduates should be able to work in international business environments and understand the needs, nature and structure of various players in the international arena. To make this possible, HEIs internationalise their curriculum through internationalisation and international partnerships (Sutherland, Edgar, & Duncan, 2015; Warwick, 2014). There are certain academic departments that are required by their professional bodies to internationalise their curriculum to remain accredited and to meet the professional standards set by the professional bodies (Sutherland et al., 2015; Warwick, 2014).

### 3. Measuring Internationalisation

#### 3.1 Components of International Partnerships

The analysis and management of internationalisation should be done from two perspectives: the programme and organisational strategies (Gao, Baik, & Arkoudis, 2015). The strategic management and implementation of internationalisation policies and international partnerships should be done taking into consideration policies that have been created in the institution and how those policies are being implemented to achieve the University's objectives (Chang & Lin, 2018). The executive management and academic leadership have to put the organisation

structure in place. In addition, executive management should create the strategies that are required to ensure that policies are implemented and results are measurable. This aids in determining if the policies have achieved the required quality output (Hans De Wit, 2015).

### 3.1.1 Programme Strategies

The programme strategies comprise the measurement of internationalisation policies using academic related activities such as international student exchange programmes and internationalisation of the curriculum (Gao, 2015b; Stafford & Taylor, 2016). The programme areas include focusing on research to study issues relating to other countries, international research collaborations and partnerships, and the creation of knowledge sharing and transfer programmes (Gao, 2015b). Programme strategies also include external relationships with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), community groups, international links with bodies like the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), partnerships and alliances, as well as extracurricular activities for staff and students (Garrett, 2015).

### 3.1.2 Organisational Strategies

Governance is the organisational strategy for assessing and managing higher education internationalisation policies. This strategy is led by the executive management of the HEI and set out an achievable internationalisation mission, vision statement and strategic plans. Converting internationalisation strategies to operational activities enables executive management to involve their employees in the internationalisation process. Hence, employees' involvement would include planning, budget, quality review, communications across the organisation, involvement of staff, financial management of the policies and the allocation of resources to support internationalisation policies (Chang & Lin, 2018; Gao et al., 2015). A fundamental part of the organisation strategies are for the internationalisation process to receive vital support from the institution's service sectors. These include support from information technology, library services, orientation programmes and support from the human resources management (Gao et al., 2015).

### 3.1.3 Quality and Progress of Internationalisation

Quality measurement is very important in all aspects of higher education. Hence, the measures used for quality in higher education internationalisation are particularly important as they give an opportunity to track the internationalisation process from both the programme and organisational strategic points of view (Gao, 2015b; Stafford & Taylor, 2016). In the internationalisation tracking process, quality means trying to do the best job possible and the effort to continually improve the process to meet its objectives (de Haan, 2014). Quality is not easily measurable because each stakeholder would define quality from their own perspectives of what they expect from the output of the process (Gao, 2015b).

Internationalisation progress measures the advancement towards achieving the stated objectives of internationalisation; progress can be measured by both qualitative and quantitative assessments (de Haan, 2014; Gao, 2015b). To have a quantitative assessment of progress, the institution must quantify its expectations from the internationalisation process by identifying specific areas in their internationalisation and partnership plans and their quantitative objectives in those areas (de Haan, 2014; Gao, 2015b; Stafford & Taylor, 2016).

## 3.2 Knight's Tracking Measure

The conceptual framework that has been adopted to analyse the case study's institutional alliances is Jane Knight's Internationalisation Tracking Measure (Knight, 2001). The Internationalisation Tracking Measure is a measure that is designed to monitor the quality and progress of internationalisation and international partnerships in order to determine how well their objectives are being achieved (Gao, 2017).

### 3.2.1 Internationalisation Tracking Measure

The objectives of institutional partnerships are mainly for HEIs to achieve academic and educational benefits (Haigh, 2014). Although there are also political, financial and social motives, the benefits gained from academic and knowledge motives stand out as the primary objectives (Seeber et al., 2016). The tracking measure uses quantitative data by recording numbers, ratios and specific traceable responses to questions on the objectives and outputs of international partnerships (Chang & Lin, 2018; Gao et al., 2015).

The Internationalisation Tracking Measure has been created and is used based on certain key principles (Kerr, 2016). The Tracking Measure is a measure of quality and progress of internationalisation; while progress has both quantitative and qualitative factors, the measure of quality is strictly based on judgement and perception. Quality and progress can be tracked only if the institution explicitly states its partnership and internationalisation objectives. The

organisational and programme strategies within the institution need to be identified and measured to determine their quality and progress. The Tracking Measure is designed to evaluate the process of internationalisation and not the achievements of the process. The Tracking Measure identifies areas for improvement and does not suggest how the improvement should be made. The measure can form part of the general institutional quality measure or can be used independently to measure internationalisation quality (Kerr, 2016).

#### 4. Methodology

##### 4.1 Research Methodology

The issues of confidentiality and ethics needed to be considered in the research as they were major concerns of the case study institution. The institutional representatives agreed to participate only on the condition that total anonymity of the institution, its partners and participants would be guaranteed. It was, therefore, agreed that a pseudonym would be used to identify the institution and the respondents would not be identified (Kim & Celis, 2016; Kot, 2016). The name University of Technology (UofT) was chosen as the pseudonym name of the institution for the purposes of this case study research.

##### 4.2 The Case Study

The University of Technology (UofT) is a regional university in the Province of Alberta, Canada. Since its inception over fifty years ago it has strived to meet, fulfil and exceed its original mission of providing the Province with graduates that possess the skills and knowledge required to meet the needs of industries, the government and the private sector, nationally and internationally (Vaughter, McKenzie, Lidstone, & Wright, 2016). A reduction in government funding led the UofT to improve the quality of its academic deliverables, including applied research, and to seek ways to improve the quality and output of its academic and research programmes through national and international partnerships.

There are twenty-six Canadian HEIs in the Province of Alberta, Canada, comprising publicly and privately funded universities, colleges and two technical institutes. These institutions are accredited and their quality is monitored by the Alberta Ministry of Advanced Education and Technology (AET) (Kennepohl, 2016). The University currently offers over 250 undergraduate degree, diploma, and certificate programmes, as well as one Master's degree programme which is delivered in collaboration with a Canadian public funded university in Eastern Canada (Kennepohl, 2016)

The UofT actively participates in partnerships that relate to technological development, improvement of economic activities, and development of applied research. The University created the Applied Research Institute (ARI) which manages multiple types of partnerships across several academic and research areas. The objectives of the partnerships are primarily to create knowledge for the University through knowledge transfer activities, participation in industrial development, sustainability, and socio-cultural development (Haigh, 2014; Seeber et al., 2016) The ARI currently partners with a total of twenty-seven organisations in the oil and gas sector, environmental sector, the government, academic institutions, business and professional associations.

##### 4.3 Research Strategy

The research strategy involved interviews, document analysis and surveys using the Internationalisation Tracking Measure.

###### 4.3.1 Interviews

The internationalisation process is mainly divided into two parts - the organisational and programme strategies (Hans De Wit, 2015). Hence, a total of twelve semi-structured interviews were conducted with respondents from each of these two areas; academic coordinators and managers of the institutional partnerships. The interviewees included management executives responsible for managing partnerships in the University. The interviews were designed to collate data and gather information about the institution's partnership objectives and the management of these partnerships. This links directly to the Knight framework which measures the quality and progress of partnerships in the light of the their objectives.

###### 4.3.2 Document Analysis

The document analysis was undertaken to compare the interview responses with the documentary information and provide an analysis of any discrepancies or agreements between the interview responses and results of the document analysis. This was followed by validation of the information with existing literature and the conceptual framework (Owen, 2014). The objective of the document analysis was to extract information and data relating to the

University's partnerships: the reasons for the partnerships, structure and models of the partnerships, and the academic, curriculum and research benefits the institution had gained from the partnerships.

In addition, the document analysis involved analysis of data collected from the internationalisation Tracking Measure. The data was used to determine quantitative targets and achievements in the internationalisation process. The data collected relates to the case study's international partnership objectives and a measure of the objectives against their achievements using the structure of the Internationalisation Tracking Measure. The documents analysed included international office plans, strategy documents, newsletters, minutes of meetings, discussion papers, action plans, academic records on student enrolments and faculty documents relating to academics, research and curriculum development from various partnerships.

#### 4.3.3 Survey for Internationalisation Tracking Measure

The survey was designed to gather data which would be measured using the Internationalisation Tracking Measure in order to measure the progress and quality of the internationalisation processes in the University. The survey started by stating the objective of the Internationalisation Tracking Measure, making explicit that the Tracking Measure is not aimed at measuring the success or failure of the internationalisation and partnership activities, rather it was designed to measure the progress and quality of the partnership process. The terms 'Progress' and 'Quality' were both defined briefly and concisely to avoid ambiguity and each value of the ratings for both progress and quality were defined within a table in the survey.

Twenty four responses were received from the Tracking Measure survey and respondents' comprised of staff who are involved in both the academic and management of international partnerships. The tracking ratings for 'Progress' in the Internationalisation Tracking Measure used the numbers 0 to 3, while the tracking rating for 'Quality' used letters A to D.

To analyse the quality ratings, the letters A to D were converted to numeric values and the average value of the ratings were determined in numeric terms, approximated to whole numbers were necessary. The final figure was reversely translated back to the 'Letter grade' (A to D) to get the final grade for each item of the quality ratings. The Progress ratings were in numeric values hence an average was found with the number ratings to find the final rating for each item on the survey.

The results from the document analysis, interviews and Tracking Measure survey served as an input to map the case study against the Internationalisation Tracking Measure and track the quality and progress of academic related areas of the University's partnerships. The results were also used to create a case study narrative as a discussion of the findings (Owen, 2014).

## 5. Case Presentation and Analysis

### 5.1 Case Study Analysis

The Internationalisation Tracking Measure survey was designed to collect data required to measure the quality and progress of internationalisation within UofT. The information used to fill in the columns for strategies, Tracking Measures and qualitative objectives was derived from the documentary analysis and the data for rating the progress and quality of international partnerships was derived from the responses to the Tracking Measure survey. The measures on the tracking measure are defined thus:

Table 1. Case Study Tracking Measure

Progress Rate	Quality Rate
0 – No Progress	A – Needs significant improvements
1 – Low	B – Needs some improvements
2 – Medium	C – Adequate
3 – High	D – Excellent

Table 2. The Case Study Tracking Measure

Serial Number	Period Assessed: 5 Years			Progress	Progress	Quality
	Strategies	Tracking Measure	Qualitative Objectives	Quantitative Measure Yes/No	Qualitative Measure 0/1/2/3	Qualitative Measure A/B/C/D
1.	Receive financial benefit to meet the business objectives of the institution	Partnerships quarterly report	Overall profit: Income is greater than expenditure	YES	3	D
2.	Staff development benefits that accrue to the institution	Human Resource Staff Development Report	10% of departmental staff trained annually	YES	3	C
3.	Enhancement of the institution's reputation and status	Report on external relations	Positive feedback through relations with organisations and industries	NO	2	D
4.	Integration of international components into existing programmes and curricula	Departmental curriculum reviews	Annual curriculum review and update with international content for each course	NO	1	A
5.	Potential to support private sector, provincial and national activities for the purpose of economic development	New partnership agreements	Creation of regional partnerships with economic development objectives	YES	2	B

#### 5.1.1 Financial Income

Internationalisation in the University is motivated by economic reasons; this is made clear in its strategic statement which states that the main reason is to 'receive financial benefits to meet the business objective of the institution'. The Tracking Measure indicates that the UofT has made a lot of progress in meeting its business objective of raising financial income for the institution through its international partnerships. The rating measure for quality (Table 2) is also at the highest. Hence, it is safe to say that the financial income objective of the University has been successful. The institution set a target to ensure that they make a profit from their partnership relationships.

#### 5.1.2 Staff Development

A target to train at least 10% of the academic staff in each faculty annually was set by the institution. However, the staff training is focused on activities related to international partnerships and not professional development training which staff and academics receive annually. The findings of the Internationalisation Tracking Measure indicate that the training and staff development resulting from international partnerships has progressed to a high level. However, responses indicated that the quality of training had not yet reached the quality expectations of the institution. Thus, the training in international context within each academic field had not yet reached its full potential.

#### 5.1.3 Prestige Development

The enhancement of the institution's reputation and status is a political objective that is aimed at improving the public perception of the University and international partnerships are focused on achieving that objective. The respondents indicated that the University has achieved excellent levels of quality towards this objective. However, the progress was rated medium. The interpretation is that the prestige of the University has been enhanced satisfactorily but there is room for improvement in building a stronger public reputation of the University, especially



with industries in the regional context.

#### 5.1.4 Social Objectives

The University seeks to achieve several social objectives through the provision of professional support through partnerships with industries in the private sector. This is done by providing consulting services. This helps the University to determine its business needs and develop training courses and programmes that will support the industrial needs. The University also provides similar kinds of support to the Provincial government, but usually in developing professional service resources. The overall objective is to stimulate economic activities through the creation of private and public sector economic partnerships and specific development projects. These partnerships include partnerships in science knowledge, sustainability, training and education, and environmental development. The Internationalisation Tracking Measure rates the progress of this as medium and requiring improvements in the quality of the partnerships and the outputs.

#### 5.2 Case Study Narrative

The case study narrative has been created from the findings of the analysis of the Tracking Measure survey, documentary evidence and interviews.

##### 5.2.1 Motivation for Institutional Partnerships

The UofT primarily has three major types of partnerships which are categorised around their objectives: Prestige Partnerships, Regional Business Partnerships and Financial Income Partnerships. Prestige partnerships are with organisations that promote the regional and international reputation of the University through collaboration in social, economic, environmental and cultural development. The Regional Business Partnerships contribute to the academic and research development of related programmes and courses in the institution relevant to the business needs of regional industries. These partnerships therefore create indirect income. The increase in income in this case results from an increase in enrolments on both existing courses and on newly created courses, programmes and training classes. Financial Income Partnerships generate direct income to the University through international teaching and training partnerships with universities, technical institutions and governments across several countries including Australia, China, Cuba, India, Kazakhstan, Libya, Madagascar and the United States (US). In these partnerships the UofT trains employees, teachers, students and academics in these countries for a fee and raises most of its partnership income through training and educational consulting services.

##### 5.2.2 Methods of Institutional Partnerships

A partnership arrangement between higher education institutions is aimed at achieving mutual benefits between the institutions in that relationship. The objectives of these partnerships are agreed, clarified and stated upfront before the partnership is implemented. The UofT explicitly states in its Internationalisation Plan that the first and foremost motive for its international partnerships is to raise financial income for the institution through partnerships that meet the business objectives of the University. The Applied Research Institute (ARI) in the University currently manages partnerships with a total of twenty-seven organisations in the oil and gas sector, environmental sector, the government, academic institutions, business and professional associations. The University also has multiple partnerships across various continents.

##### 5.2.3 Measuring the Quality and Progress of Institutional Partnerships

The UofT manages its regional and international partnerships within the Business Development Department and is headed by a Dean. The institutional partnerships are seen primarily as tools for raising financial income for the University, despite the Internationalisation Plan having other objectives relating to academic development, improving knowledge, increasing understanding of culture and internationalisation of the curriculum. An interview respondent stated:

*“International partnerships are strictly a business function; funding has been cut by the government and this area is the opportunity to find alternative sources of funding.”*

Another respondent stated that:

*“There are currently no clear measuring criteria for partnerships” and “Each partnership is measured by its own ability to achieve the University’s business objective.”*

The objective of a partnership needs to be clearly defined before the measure of quality, since quality measures the improvement in the internationalisation process to achieve its stated objectives (de Haan, 2014). The University has several Quality Management processes to ensure that the academic deliverables continue to meet their required

academic and professional standards(Warwick, 2014). However, institutions have an option to inculcate the measure of the progress and quality of its partnerships with the academic quality process or make it independent of the latter process (de Haan, 2014)The UofT has an audit process for all the activities within the Business Development Department including its international partnerships. However, the audit does not measure the quality and progress of internationalisation, but measures financial management and legal compliance. A respondent stated:

*“We have never deeply considered a full quality test of our international education relationships; but since we measure input, output, legal issues and management concerns, we consider this as an adequate measure of quality.”*

This indicates that there is an audit for internationalisation but the itemised objectives of the partnerships are not measured by the current audit. The respondents indicated that the institution is willing to measure internationalisation, but also mentioned that the measure might not always state the true position of the successes in international partnerships, since major areas of the measure will be qualitative.

#### 5.2.4 Internationalisation of the curriculum

The internationalisation of the academic curriculum has been stated as a fundamental objective in the internationalisation process. Although, the respondents have indicated, through the interviews, that there are specific processes in the institution to upgrade the syllabus of various courses and programmes with international content, there is not a clear measuring criteria to determine if this is been done or achieved as expected. The respondents to the Tracking Measure have indicated that there has been slow progress in that direction and that significant improvement is required in internationalising the curriculum. The international education plan in the University showed that the University is very involved with international training across a large number of countries, including training and curriculum development in other countries. This indicates that the University is more focused on the income generated through training than on the generation of knowledge; the outflow of knowledge greatly supersedes the inflow of knowledge through curriculum development.

### 6. Conclusions and Recommendations

#### 6.1 Conclusions

The overall objective of the Tracking Measure is to point out areas of the internationalisation process where improvements are desirable and necessary(Hans De Wit, 2015). Hence, the following conclusions which are drawn from the analysis of the case study also indicate areas of improvement.

##### 6.1.1 Financial Income

The measure of the ‘Progress’ and ‘Quality’ of the internationalisation process require that managers of the process should continually seek improvements in the quality of institutional partnerships. Although the case study analyses indicate that the financial motive of the institution has largely been met, there should always be ways and means of improving the process.

##### 6.1.2 Staff Development

The internationalisation activities of delivering training and education to international clients should also be focused on the staff of the institution. As the University’s reputation continues to grow the academic staff would be required to participate increasingly in international curriculum development and teaching methods. Staff seem not currently to be as involved in receiving the benefits of internationalisation and their training and education should, therefore, involve gaining new, additional knowledge and information within the international context to improve the quality of the University’s academic and research deliverables.

##### 6.1.3 Internationalisation of the Curriculum

The internationalisation of the curriculum is a benefit of an inward flow of knowledge into an institution. The interaction with other organisations and institutions should be done out of a collaborative mutually beneficial transaction. The University might generate income from its interactions, but it might miss out on the opportunity to gain knowledge from its international partners. The knowledge gained could be used to develop a better understanding of international cultures which, in turn, can form part of the learning process for both students and academics through the internationalisation of the curriculum and knowledge transfer partnerships.

##### 6.1.4 Prestige

The institutional reputation significantly relies on its products and services, the quality of its deliverables and its social cultural relations. The University’s political objective of improving its public reputation would improve as

long it remains committed to improving the quality of academic, research and educational services, and these services will improve with an increase in the education and training investments in its academic staff, especially within an international context.

#### 6.1.5 Social Objectives

Given that the positive reputation of the institution is on the rise and the social objective also supports the reputation objectives, there seems to be a contradiction in the two positions. The reputation of the University is improving but the quality of social partnerships was said to require improvements in its quality. The resolution of this contradiction can be explained by the fact that the measure of quality, prestige and social contributions are largely qualitative and, therefore, the actual position of the achievements of the University cannot be determined accurately. More specific ethnography based research is recommended which would give a more precise measure of the qualitative acceptance of a university by its social environment.

#### 6.2 Recommendations

These recommendations are drawn from the findings of a single case study and the researcher by no means implies general applicability of them.

##### 6.2.1 Dedicated Internationalisation and Partnership Office

Universities with internationalisation and partnership policies that are fundamental to their mission would need to create dedicated internationalisation and partnership departments, managed by a person with senior executive responsibility and authority. Respondents in the case study explained that the current structure was not clearly defined since internationalisation and institutional partnerships were being managed as part of the Business Development Department and the activities of the Applied Research Institute (ARI) in the University. The creation of a dedicated department would ensure that the management, reporting and quality assurance processes are easily identifiable and managed within the University's organisational hierarchy.

##### 6.2.2 Measuring Objectives

The creation of a dedicated Internationalisation and Partnership office would ensure that the internationalisation and partnerships objectives are more accurately defined. The differentiation between the University's business objective and partnership objective would create the opportunity for these objectives to be better defined and allocated appropriate qualitative and quantitative measuring criteria. The creation of measuring standards would not only measure the achievements of the business objectives but would also include measures of the quality deliverables of the entire partnership process which would lead to more accurate measures of quality and progress of the University's international deliberations.

##### 6.2.3 Quality Measuring Approach

The University should investigate and adopt an Internationalisation Quality Measuring Approach. The Tracking Measure is an extraction from the Internationalisation Quality Review (IQR) created by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The IQR Model and the Tracking Measure have been widely tested in universities in Europe and have been endorsed by the OECD (Gao et al., 2015). The adoption of a quality measuring approach would validate the objectives of the University's partnerships and measure quality and progress using agreed qualitative and quantitative measurements. The outcome would encourage the dedicated office to broaden its view and improve on fulfilling all its objectives, and not just focus on the financial income objective as is the case with partnerships managed by the University's Business Development Office.

##### 6.2.4 Internationalisation of the Curriculum

The University stated that internationalisation of the curriculum is one of the primary objectives for its institutional partnerships. However, the focus on financial income may have adversely affected its focus on the internationalisation of the academic curriculum. The internationalisation of the curriculum could be achieved by ensuring that other objectives like training and education of staff comprise an international context, encouraging an increase in exchange students, improving on the recruitment of academic staff with international experience and qualifications. The University currently implements these activities but they do not have a clearly defined process of tracking the progress on achieving curriculum internationalisation and measurement of its quality.

The adoption of all the aforementioned recommendations will aid the management, measurement and improvement of the University's partnership processes, as none of the recommendations can be accepted and implemented in isolation.

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