



Internationalisation Strategy (2020-2024)

Introduction

The overarching priority is to further enhance our global presence. At July 2019, Duhok Polytechnic University (DPU) has more than 23 partner universities across the world. With these partners, the university maintains a number of collaborations in research, and teaching programmes. These kinds of collaboration are proof of the internationalisation that is becoming reality at DPU.

DPU attributes great importance to gaining an international reputation for quality in teaching and learning, research and knowledge transfer, which will be at the heart of our future activity. DPU wants to develop further relationships with the best international universities across this spectrum of activity. Hence, the university attempts to be a hub of international cooperation regarding the international exchange of students and professors.

Subsequently, the international orientation, which is supported by the International Office at DPU, includes all aspects of university life and academic activities. DPU places great value to the Internationalisation Strategy that is detailed as follows:

Objectives

The main objective of DPU is to increase public awareness to the international level in order to strengthen the international orientation within the university environment. This lays the foundations to prepare highly qualified technical graduates and researchers with distinct levels of knowledge and capable to generate technological innovation as well as to achieve the international standards of quality assurance in accordance with the labor market needs of the public and private sector. This can be done by providing the opportunity of exchange programmes, internships and summer training for students, staff and researchers. The objective of internationalisation strategy is to strengthen the international position and reputation of the university with regard to high-profile research and teaching, research cooperation and the education of future scholars, specialists and managers.

Strategic Goals

1- Student exchange

Student exchange is an important component of the efforts of the university to internationalise and to bring different cultures to the university. Also, DPU applied the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) to make it easier for students to move between countries and to have their academic qualifications and study periods abroad recognised, as well as to attract the best international students. International mobility programmes provide the opportunity for the students who participate to be exposed to new cultures and concepts.

The strategic process and steps to achieve this goal are the following:

- Signing Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs): DPU plans to sign at least 10 new MoUs with international universities, making 100% active over the next 5 years and closing inactive ones.
- Standardising the curriculum offered by the University in order to attract international students: 5 departments out of 47 will be selected as a pilot department to reach 5% of international students.
- Allocating financial support for student mobility programmes for 50 new students per year, while 50% of them is our ultimate target each year.
- Promoting English language skills for nominated students, achieving 100% of them with English skills level B1 each year.
- Targeting 100% of students nominated each year to go abroad.

2- Staff exchange

Promoting the international exchange of academic staff is essential in conveying a cosmopolitan world view to all members of the university. This means that the university aims to build an open arms culture for international members and guests of the university. Indeed, the university needs to reinforce the existing relationships with universities from abroad and its infrastructure at home to foster international staff exchange.

The strategic process and steps to achieve this goal are the following:

- Providing comprehensive support and consultation for incoming international staff and outgoing staff from DPU, measured via questionnaire and level of

satisfaction of staff with support and consultation provided. Support and consultation services should be assessed as “good” on average.

- Increasing the number of incoming international staff by 10% each year.
- Increasing the number of DPU staff members sent abroad by 10% each year.
- Providing English language courses for DPU staff to improve their language skills. 100% of staff covered by language courses, at least 50% of them achieve level B2 in the next 4 years; implementing an incentive programme with the best 10 candidates being dispatched abroad.

3- International Research Cooperation

DPU is striving to enhance its research profile by encouraging the academic staff to work on increasing the research output, participation in conferences and publishing in journals locally and internationally. Therefore, DPU is working on expanding the international research cooperation with its international partners and local institutes. Through these activities, the university will reach a higher level of research development and attract researchers from the abroad.

The strategic process and steps to achieve this goal are the following:

- Motivating the faculty members to increase their research activity by appreciating and financially supporting them. 100 % of academic staff to be requested and 75% of them successfully submit to accredited journals in the next 4 years. DPU has a financial support programme for published researches local or international.
- Providing intensive orientation which includes training course on proposal writing and financial support programme to encourage the researchers to collaborate with international universities and research institutes. 100 % of academic staff to be requested and 30% of them successfully submit joint researches.
- Conducting at least one international conference per year in various technical and scientific fields in order to publish a high number of research publications. Based on the field of the conference, 100% of academic staff working on that field to be requested to submit papers, at least 50% of them successfully to be accepted.

4- Internship/Summer Training

Due to its guiding principles of quality and sustainability, DPU is considered to be the premier provider of technical education, skill training, and lifelong learning in Kurdistan Region of Iraq, providing its students and graduates with the knowledge and competences to build successful carriers in the private and public sector while also supplying the labor market with the highly qualified personnel needed. An international internship and summer training will provide the opportunity for our students or young professionals to work alongside active professionals in an authentic work environment, to gain valuable hands-on experience and educational/professional insight into a possible career path. Furthermore, internships and summer training are great tools to improve a student's chances to find employment after graduation and help to make them a better future employee.

The strategic process and steps to achieve this goal are the following:

- Engaging in systematic networking with partner universities and (international) companies based on their respective fields and according to the needs and interest of DPU in order to create opportunities for summer training courses and internships locally in international companies and organisation as well as abroad. 5% of all students from the colleges are to participate in these internships and summer trainings annually, of which at least 30% are beneficiaries of internships.
- Increasing the cultural fluency for both staff and students through workshops and summer trainings abroad. Cultural fluency gives individuals a competitive advantage over others, especially amongst businesses that operate across borders. 3% of staff and 5% of students are to participate annually, at least 50% of them to be beneficiaries of summer training.

Fund Allocation

To support those strategic goals, DPU will allocate funds from the university income, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, and/or International Organisations' Programmes, such as Erasmus+, DAAD, Fulbright, IREX, etc.

For this, Duhok Polytechnic University will

- allocate 5% of its annual institutional budget to fund its international activities, while overall spending on internationalisation will increase by 5% annually.
- reinforce its efforts to raise third-party funding, striving for an annual increase of third-party funds by 10%.



Internationalisation as part of the Strategic Development Plan of DPU

A strategic development plan of DPU has been developed to realise DPU's aim of pioneering a new kind of elite education institution and research-intensive university in Kurdistan Region and Iraq. This can be done by keeping up with the latest achievements and developments in the fields of science and technology, preparing technical professionals in various fields according to modern and internationally recognised standards, strengthening scientific research focusing on community needs and problems, and improving quality in academic programs and organisational management. All the aforementioned activities of this internationalisation strategy should be implemented well in order to reinforce and achieve the overall strategic plan of DPU.