

# **Policy Dialogue on the implications of the Draft Policy Framework for the Internationalisation of Higher Education in South Africa and International Provider and Programme Mobility (IPPM)**

On 14 November 2018, a policy dialogue was jointly hosted by British Council, International Education Association of South Africa (IEASA) and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) with the goal of exploring the implications of the Draft Policy Framework for the Internationalisation of Higher Education in South Africa for International Provider and Programme Mobility (IPPM).

Mr Colm McGivern, Country Director for the British Council in South Africa opened the event with reference to the productive partnership between South Africa and the UK in Higher Education (particularly in terms of research collaboration). He welcomed all participants from Universities, DHET, CHE, USAf and the British Council.

Dr Nan Yeld, Sub-Saharan Africa Senior Advisor, Higher Education Development, British Council provided an overview of the programme for the day and commented on some specifics in the draft policy acknowledging in particular the complexity of curriculum in the current South African context and the necessity of this particular policy to link to other relevant national policies.

Mr Mahlubi Mabizela (DHET), Dr Phumzile Dlamini, Council for Higher Education (CHE) and Dr Nico Jooste (NMU) formed a panel. Mr Mabizela did an opening address outlining the purpose of the policy framework, which is to provide "high-level principles and guidelines; set broad parameters; and provide a national framework for internationalisation of Higher Education within which HEIs must develop and align their institutional internationalisation policies and strategies." He emphasized the fact that the internationalisation policy will be a guide through which HEI's can develop their policies on internationalisation.

Dr Dlamini emphasised that the Draft Policy Framework would still have to go to the Council of Higher Education for final approval. Dr Nico Jooste emphasised that the policy should be looked at in the context of the entire range of Higher Education policies.

Professor Jane Knight from the University of Toronto and a Distinguished Visiting Professor at the University of Johannesburg was the keynote speaker for the day. Professor Knight argued that while international student mobility data (referred to as International Student and Scholar Mobility (ISSM) is recorded in OECD figures, no such data is available on the program and provider side of international Higher Education. This prompted a classification framework to be developed for a new International Program and Provider Mobility (IPPM). There is no question that the movement of academic programs and Higher Education providers across borders is increasing in scale and scope. With rising enrolments and new modes of delivery and partnerships, it is time to pay more attention to the international program and provider mobility (IPPM). Currently, more than 40 different are terms being used to denote IPPM activities resulting in mass confusion about what IPPM involves. There are no common terms of shared understanding. To address this situation an IPPM classification framework has been developed to promote a common understanding of different types of IPPM and to provide logic and structure for collecting data and developing appropriate national and institutional policies. The main purpose of the dialogue was, therefore, to examine the framework and gain a clearer understanding of franchise programs, international branch campuses, distance education, partnership programs, and international joint universities. A mapping project of IPPM policies and activities in selected African countries will be introduced".

Dr Knight also introduced the IPPM mapping study of which South Africa is a part. She emphasised the need for data collection on the African Continent and that there were many research opportunities in this area.



Mrs Samia Chasi's interactive discussion, focused on whether South-North partnerships are genuinely, mutually beneficial, allowed the conference delegates an opportunity to reflect on the quality of partnerships in internationalisation, especially in the context of the Draft Policy Framework's priority focus. Institutional contexts vary, as do the nature of their international partnerships which will also be unique to their histories, contexts and needs. In the current South African environment, partnerships should include a commitment to local development and transformation.

The dialogue then proceeded to talk about existing opportunities for applying the IPPM framework. Dr Whitfield Green, Chief Director of Teaching and Learning at the DHET, highlighted the role of international partnerships in supporting the implementation of the University Capacity Development Programme (UCDP). The UCDP's staff development imperatives were presented and specific examples of international collaboration initiatives were shared, including the latest of such planned initiatives, a 'SA-UK University Staff Doctoral Programme (USDP). In addition, Dr Whitfield highlighted the need for the DHET to consider ways in which the UCDP can support the implementation of internationalisation on campuses – for example, through facilitating the establishment of effective International Offices at all institutions. In his view internationalisation should be supporting transformation and capacity development. Dr Green concluded by expressing openness to DHET supporting national initiatives in capacity-building in internationalisation, such as the development of courses that could lead to qualifications in that area.

Professor Stephanie Burton focussed on the critical issue of doctoral training. Doctoral training is a priority for South African

Higher Education, linked to the national objectives of participating in the global knowledge economy and the technological era, together with the need to build national capacity for research, science, technology and innovation. A major constraint for doctoral training nationally is the availability of supervisory capacity and expertise. Furthermore, there is much scope for improving efficiencies in doctoral training programmes concerning student preparedness, completion rates and time to graduate. Ways to address this include moving away from the traditional apprenticeship model of supervision to 'smarter', and more collaborative approaches involving cohort supervision, peer group involvement, and joint-supervision. Doctoral training centres provide one mechanism for this, allowing for both wide and intensive interaction.

There were some sobering statistics presented on throughput and completion rates of PhDs in South Africa. For example, only one in eight registered PhD candidates completes their studies. It takes on average four years to complete a PhD. While the National Development Plan states the desired target of 5,000 PhD graduates a year, less than half that number complete their studies. Building supervisory capacity and giving people the tools to be supervisors is urgently needed.

While international exposure and mobility can be built into doctoral training programmes, online platforms and communication technology will also assist with facilitating collaboration, enhance quality and in achieving the critical outcomes of doctoral training necessary for academia and employment in the broader global environment. The opportunities lie in developing increasingly global, connected approaches to partnerships for doctoral training programmes for South Africa and Africa.

The following resources and opportunities were shared:

- The Classification Framework and data collection guidelines for international programme and provider mobility (IPPM)
- [https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/tne\\_classification\\_framework-final.pdf](https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/tne_classification_framework-final.pdf)
- DIES/CREST online training course for supervisors of doctoral candidates at African universities  
<https://www0.sun.ac.za/crest/dies-crest-online-training-course/>
- Enhancing post-graduate environments project  
<http://postgradenvironments.com/>

- Postgraduate supervision courses <https://www.ru.ac.za/teachingandlearning/staffdevelopmentpostgraduatesupervision/>
- CHE website <http://www.che.ac.za/>

The Programme Facilitator, Ms Orla Quinlan, Deputy President of IEASA (2017-2018) concluded by thanking participants and speakers from universities, DHET and CHE for their contributions and lively engagement and Prof Jane Knight, for her insightful and refreshing contribution to the day. The British Council was also thanked for their financial contribution to getting participants to the workshop.