

The UWA Business School and international partnerships¹

Introduction

The Discussion paper offers a review of issues which impact upon the international aspects of the business school and its activities and provides a framework for future decision making.

The challenge facing the School is to build on its existing strengths to raise its international standing and, recognising its limited resources, to do so in a strategic way.

There are a number of recurring themes throughout the Discussion Paper. The School's success internationally is dependent upon the strategic integration of activities across the whole of the School; the School is already international in many respects but needs to do more to achieve its vision and mission; the School needs to improve its self-presentation and provide a clear rationale for other schools to partner with it; and finally, there are clear resource implications if proposed strategies to further internationalise the School are to be effective.

The proposed strategy focuses on partnerships with other prominent business schools around the world to enhance the School's international reputation. It is a conservative strategy, recognising our current size and international position; the more expansive approaches to internationalisation will occur primarily through partnerships with others.

An internationalisation strategy does not stand alone - it must be embedded in the whole of the School's activities and must contribute to the School's primary goals, particularly its financial imperatives. The strategy seeks to draw together the international elements of the School's activities - primarily research, teaching and learning, marketing and alumni - to create a coordinated approach and maximum effect. Success in these areas, particularly in the teaching programs and in research activity, is central to the School cementing its reputation as one of the region's most prestigious and highest ranked educational institutions.

Articulation of the School's internationalisation goal

The mission of the University is to achieve international excellence. The vision of the School is to build and cement UWA Business School's reputation as one of the region's most prestigious and highest-ranked business education institutions. We take this to mean that we will be perceived by our peers and prospective students as the premier business school in Western Australia, being in the top four schools in Australia and being in the top 100 in the world.² Additionally it means being the top Australian business program in any offshore location where our programs are offered.

The primary objective of the School's internationalisation strategy over the next five years will be to build the School's international reputation.

There is a positive effect from a strong international reputation across all of the School's key goals (Table 1). This Table suggests a number of School objectives and how achieving them would be facilitated through the School having a stronger international footprint. It demonstrates the importance for the School to clearly articulate its priorities and key strategies in each area and to

¹ Much of this paper is drawn from 'Internationalisation and the UWA Business School - a discussion paper' which is available on the School website.

² The University has set itself the target of being in the top 50 universities in 50 years and might expect the Business School to have a comparable aspiration.

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then integrate international strategy into these primary objectives. As will be seen later in this paper, the one area where the international strategy does make a direct contribution to the achievement of the School's vision and mission is through the development of partnerships with other business schools.

<i>School objectives:</i>	<i>Some effects of a stronger international footprint</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching and learning Enriched student experience 	Better exchange programs; more internationally aware graduates who obtain more rewarding employment (in Australia and overseas)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and research training Improved research quality and impact 	More invitations to international conferences as keynote speakers etc, more personal networks and cross national research projects, more access to diverse research funds. Better quality research students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resourcing Student revenue Growth in Faculty 	International students of higher quality and more of them More higher quality applicants and appointments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External relations Actively engage stakeholders 	Stronger alumni groups overseas and better student recruitment and alumni fundraising Enhanced business and government support, leading to more scholarships, internships and employment opportunities Strong executive development programs drawing international participants

Table 1 School objectives and the effects of a stronger international footprint

In summary, the primary objective of the internationalisation strategy is to build the School's international reputation and achieving this will assist the School in achieving its primary objectives.

- i) enhancing the School's international standing will enable the School to attract leading academics upon whom its long term success depends,
- ii) staff having a broader international perspective (including through their research and through teaching offshore) will enhance the teaching programs and so improve the quality and relevance of the education we provide our students,
- iii) researching questions of international importance and preparing students for international business will lead to further support from the business community,
- iv) increasing revenue will enable the positive cycle of growth and excellence to be continued.

Building the reputation of the School

The School's reputation can not be manufactured independently, nor is it a stand alone objective. A positive reputation is a reflection of how well we are achieving our mission and yet at the same time assists us in achieving that mission. Thus a good research project will enhance the School's reputation and that enhanced reputation will, in turn, make it easier to attract further research funding.

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The School's reputation is built upon a number of related and complementary elements (see Figure 2). Firstly, any school draws upon the University's own reputation. More directly under our own control, our reputation is built on our intellectual capital which in turn is built upon our research presence and our program strength. Our partnerships build our reputation but also contribute to our programs. Good programs provide an opportunity for the School to develop a strong alumni who will then also reinforce our reputation for quality. Our reputation is endorsed through accreditation and our performance in other external assessments.

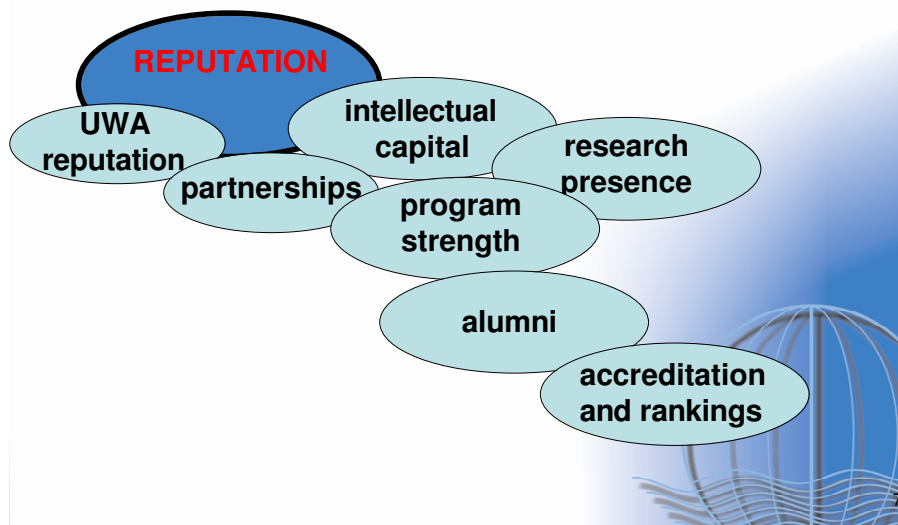


Figure 2 The basis of the School's reputation

It is likely that the School will face increasing difficulty in attracting the best staff and the best students. However, strengthening the reputation through the building blocks shown in Figure 2 will assist the School address these difficulties as well as having a positive effect across all of the School's key goals (Table 1).

Partnerships

While a school, acting alone, may be able to develop its research presence and program strength and so provide its students with a rich experience which they continue to value as alumni, it can do far more to prepare its students for the global economy and provide opportunities for its staff to engage in the international community if it has good partners around the world. Equally important, the School should provide opportunities for its staff to interact regularly with academics from other top business schools and so be exposed to international trends in the business discipline and to the levels of achievement in high performing schools.

The School has many opportunities and requests to partner with other schools around the world. However, any partnership must be active and add value to both parties. They must be properly managed and, given the School's size, it is more appropriate to focus on a limited number of active partnerships than having a lengthy list of moribund arrangements.

It is envisaged that the School will have two types of partner—institutional and exchange. The School's objective is that at the end of five years the School will have strong connections with a limited number of geographically spread business schools, each of which itself has a strong reputation and network. These will be the School's institutional partners with which we have our closest links at staff and student levels. In addition, the School will have a larger number of exchange agreements

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with business schools around the world to meet the needs of UWA Business School students who wish to study overseas.

Partnership development

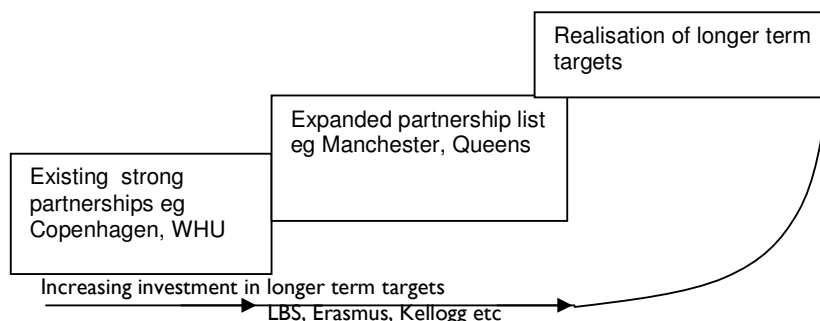
The development of these partnerships is an area where a layered approach is required. As indicated above, the School can leverage the University's reputation. Similarly it can leverage the University's own partnerships, particularly those with which the University has developed a special relationship. Where these universities have comparable business schools the partnership will be cultivated, such as with the Business School at Queens University in Canada. Where the School already has strong relationships with good business schools (which is the case in Europe, Copenhagen Business School and WHU Business School in Germany being examples) these will continue to be cultivated. A limited number of additional schools have been identified and steps will be taken to explore the potential of mutually beneficial relationships.

There are a number of practical ways in which partnerships can be built. Initially this will be through visits at a senior level, followed up by other faculty visiting to give seminars, during their study leave or in conjunction with teaching commitments.

While this School may have a desire to partner with other prominent Schools it is critical that we provide those Schools with a compelling reason to partner with us. We must be in a position to clearly show how the UWA Business School can add value to our partners. This requires the School to not only build its own intellectual capital and continue to develop the international content of its programs but to also demonstrate this to the outside world through our web site and informational material. Securing accreditation through EQUIS and AACSB is also a key element in demonstrating our quality and establishing our partnership credentials.³

Taking the layered approach to building a network of institutional partners (Figure 4) we will build on existing activity with Schools where we have a strong relationship, particularly Copenhagen, St Gallen and WHU. Concurrently we will invest in building a relationship where there is known potential for a mutual relationship. These schools might include Manchester Business School, Singapore Management University, Penn State, Queens, Zhejiang, these last three being universities with which the UWA is building a special relationship.

As opportunity arises we will seek to build relationships with a limited number of top ranking schools with which we currently have little or no connection, such as the London Business School or Judge in the UK; RMS Erasmus or IMD in Europe, Kellogg or Stanford in the US; and Chinese University, Hong Kong. This suggested list needs to be reviewed and refined; for example, we have yet to identify a business institute in India.



³ As a School we would be reluctant to partner with a school which is not accredited but we are expecting schools to want to partner with us even though we are yet to achieve accreditation ourselves.

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2008

2010

2012

2018

Figure 4 A layered approach to long term partnership building

It is recognised that it takes time to build an effective relationship with a premier business school and that some of the identified partner relationships may not materialise. There will be an ongoing search for potential partners until the School has established the partnerships it needs.

We should encourage students wishing to study overseas to give first consideration to studying at one of our institutional partners. However it is important to offer a broader choice to our students and so with the involvement of the International Centre, the School will review and expand its list of exchange partners beyond the present focus on European schools. This will be accompanied by increased marketing of exchange and study abroad opportunities within and across the School. The number and location of exchange schools will be kept in balance with the student demand. We recognise that as a School we are likely to receive more students from partner schools than we send but this imbalance is accepted as it contributes to the international diversity of the student body here in Perth to the benefit of local students. The combination of institutional and exchange partners will provide a strong partnership profile (see Table 2) which will enhance the School's reputation and provide a rich international dimension to our students' study opportunities.

<p><i>Institutional partners:</i> <i>Existing strong partners:</i> for example, Copenhagen, St Gallen, WHU <i>Additional institutional partners (to be achieved in the short term)</i> A realistic list might be drawn from: Manchester (or LSE), SMU, Zhejiang, Penn State and Queens <i>Additional institutional partners we aspire to (to be achieved in the longer term)</i> A list might include: LBS or Judge, RSM Erasmus or IMD, Kellogg or Stanford, Chinese University, Hong Kong</p> <p><i>Exchange partners:</i> A realistic list might include Bocconi, Dijon and Vienna Business Schools in Europe, California, Colorado State, North Carolina, McMaster Universities in North America</p>
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Table 2 Developing a desired partnership profile

Partnership development: performance indicators

As indicated above a number of tasks are required across the range of School activities to position the School to be a desired partner. In terms of specific action to build effective partnerships a number of performance indicators can be established and some are suggested in Table 3. These will need to be the subject of further discussion. The activity of staff through 2007 demonstrates how a strategic approach can strengthen relationships with existing preferred schools while laying the groundwork for relationships in the future with other targeted schools.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Senior visits to three preferred partners each year and visits from two preferred partners each year• By 2010, at least two study leave visits to institutional partners and at least one academic visit to the School from staff at an institutional partner• By 2010 a list of ten active geographically spread exchange partnerships,• By 2010, at least one study leave visit to an exchange partner and at least one academic visit to the School from staff at an exchange partner• By 2012, regular contact by senior staff or through a research project with one aspired institutional partner.
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Table 3 Partnership building: indicative performance indicators