Internationalisation strategy

ESB Business School's internationalisation strategy serves to support prioritising, operational planning and communicating the school's interim targets 2017-2021. It is aligned with the strategic focus areas of Reutlingen University and is in keeping with the university's approach of 'living and practicing internationality'.

International orientation has been a hallmark and defining characteristic of ESB Business School since the school was founded in 1971. It is an important reason why many applicants choose our programmes and why employers value our graduates. "Truly International" lies at the heart of our mission and underscores the significance we attach to internationalisation.

"Within an educational environment that is truly international, we develop leaders who shape global business practice and society responsibly"(Mission, ESB Business School).

Truly International at ESB Business School means that our graduates are globally employable and, besides having the necessary business or technical expertise, they have gained fluency in at least one foreign language, are interculturally competent and have experience of studying and, in many cases, working abroad.

Internationalisation informs our management system, core offering (studies and teaching) and support processes. Sound quality management underpins our aim to be the most international business school in Germany. When setting internationalisation goals, we ensure that they are closely aligned with our mission, are realistic, measurable and lead to meaningful outcomes. Moreover, we seek to retain our innovative edge and, as such, focus on projects that will help to bring internationalisation to the next level, above all, in terms of meeting the needs of our key stakeholders. Finally, we invest in the necessary digital solutions that facilitate global collaboration at all levels (teaching, research, services).

Strategic focus areas:

1. International curricula and language policy

ESB Business School embeds internationalisation into learning and teaching within all its programmes. The business school engages in close dialogue with corporate representatives worldwide to ensure that curricula are aligned with the requirements of global organisations. Each degree programme has defined 'Learning goals', which are the skills students will have acquired by graduation and which are representative of the education they have received at ESB Business School.

ESB Business School has put together a toolbox of learning interventions that degree programmes can use to achieve their international learning goals:

- Mobility (study abroad, internships and theses abroad, double degree programmes and excursions)
- Foreign language courses and intercultural management seminars
- Offering extensive courses and full programmes in English
- Deployment of international faculty and guest lecturers
- Student group work in international teams
- Incorporation of international perspectives, benchmarks or standards into teaching content
- International study projects (with virtual collaboration or short stay abroad)

The degree programmes receive a high degree of autonomy with respect to translating learning goals into practice. However, some key components such as the integration of compulsory mobility windows into all undergraduate curricula and participation in multicultural learning groups have been defined.

2. International visibility

ESB Business School strives towards increased visibility in terms of internationalisation, both internally and externally.

- We communicate the "Truly International" brand via our website, social media and all relevant marketing materials in both English and German

- Rankings, international accreditation and participation in international educational and business school networks play an important role in communicating the school's high quality international profile

- Students, alumni, faculty and administrative staff are the school's primary ambassadors and a key resource in building the school's international reputation.

- The creation of an international network of corporate, academic partners and alumni to promote knowledge exchange and global graduate employability is an important area of focus in the medium term

- ESB Business School's clear positioning as an expert in the field of internationalisation will be supported by the corresponding research group

3. Intercultural and bilingual campus

ESB Business School commits to the institutional goal to establish a central intercultural and bilingual campus system. This involves offering:

- an attractive range of English-language courses and degree programmes for exchange and degree seeking students

- a wide range of language and intercultural communication courses for teaching and administrative staff

- services to facilitate the integration of the school's international community such as academic forums, collaborative projects, student clubs, excursions and community projects

- all key information about the school including news, internal procedures and regulations in both German and English

- efficient administrative processes such as application, matriculation, timetabling and course enrolment for international students

4. International research and teaching networks

ESB Business School seeks to leverage and expand its vast network of alumni, academic and corporate partners across the globe to strengthen its international practice orientation in both teaching and research further. ESB Business School encourages:

- international student projects and theses in conjunction with partner universities and companies.

- joint publications, research projects and teaching initiatives on an international level

- mobility of international academics and researchers within the framework of the International Guest Lecturer Programme

- use of digital media to facilitate international collaboration in terms of both teaching and research

5. Diversity

ESB Business School seeks to foster the diversity of its community. In terms of our internationalisation strategy, this means

- attracting highly qualified international students, professors and administrative staff
- inviting international academics and industry representatives to offer seminars, workshops and classes
- integrating internationals into the ESB community by means of good communication and support
- leveraging the experience of international faculty and students
- encouraging faculty and administrative staff to gain new perspectives by visiting partner institutions, either to teach, research or exchange good practices.

Internationalisation in operational terms

ESB Business School considers internationalisation to be a cross-functional task, which involves and impacts all sectors of the university.

Internationalisation is firmly anchored at all levels within the organisational structure of ESB Business School and is coordinated by the school's Head of International Relations. Designated academic and administrative functions and bodies ensure efficient operations.

The school strives for sustainable internationalisation by encouraging all entities (central and decentral) and levels to exchange and collaborate with one another. Each semester representatives from degree programmes and central offices meet to discuss international affairs, identify areas of improvement and corrective measures. A combined bottom-up and top-down approach towards internationalisation has been adopted.

Measuring and assessing internationalisation

Internationalisation is not an end in itself. Stakeholders expect a return on investment. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to demonstrate the impact and benefits of internationalisation. Sound quality management and data governance are critical when assessing the effectiveness of internationalisation activities and measures. Vital here are transparency, traceability and clear communication of progress by means of meaningful key performance indicators. Both qualitative and quantitative KPIs have been jointly defined for each strategic focus area. An annual review process ensures continuous improvement.