

# IKUDU BASELINE STUDY<sup>i</sup>

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## 1.1 Introduction

The iKudu project aimed to develop practices for Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL). Through these COIL practices, the project aimed to internationalise and transform curricula at South African higher education institutions.

This baseline study is aimed at situating COIL practices within internationalisation and transformation of home curricula at the start of the iKudu project in 2019.

The iKudu project application outlined the deliverables of our project, including “a baseline study on curriculum internationalisation and transformation in South Africa, which includes a deep analysis of the five partner universities” (iKudu project application, 2019)<sup>1</sup>.

This study therefore explores rationales and policies for the internationalisation of curricula in South African higher education, as well as the ways in which these have been operationalised at the iKudu partners.

We deviated from the description of this deliverable in the sense that we not only asked the South African partners to report on their level of curriculum internationalisation, but also the European partners. Furthermore, the model of reporting changed from a mere site visit to a deeper engagement with their own reality by producing stakeholder models, engaging in Appreciative Inquiry based on interviews and surveys. This was a process that took quite some time and allowed engagement between the project team of each institution and their stakeholders.

This study consists of three sections. The first is a review of relevant literature and policies that captures the South African situation with regard to curriculum internationalisation and transformation at the outset of the project. This review includes non-South African literature that can be considered relevant to the South African context. The second section is based on the analysis of the appreciative enquiry that all partners (also the European) engaged with in the early stages of the project in 2020.

The third section is an analysis of a survey that we asked all participants to fill out in November 2023, towards the end of the project. This survey required them to reflect on the situation at the start of the project.

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<sup>1</sup> Understood as ‘study programme’

While section 2 gives us insights into project partners' views at the start of the project (2020), section 3 enables a retrospective glance close to the conclusion of the project (2023).

## 1.2 Methodology

Each of the three sections of this study has its own methods. The first section is a qualitative review of literature and relevant policy documents. This literature is both from outside and within South Africa and addresses internationalisation of teaching and learning in relation to a range of concepts, such as internationalisation at home, internationalisation of the curriculum, Africanisation, and decolonisation. The iKudu project aims to use COIL to internationalise the home curriculum and achieve transformation of universities in South Africa.

The second section is a comparative analysis of self-evaluation reports by each of the ten project partners for the iKudu project. The format of these self-evaluation reports was drawn up on the basis of Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider, Whitney & Stavros, 2008).

The third section is an analysis of the survey conducted in November 2023. In this analysis we attempt to find similarities and differences between the South African universities, but also to compare them with the European universities.

## 1.3 Section 1: Policies for and literature about internationalisation at home in South Africa

The first engagement of South African higher education with internationalisation at home took place in a phase “that witnessed the transformation of a once racially defined system into a multi-racial system fully integrated into the global higher education structure, with a strong focus on its European origins”, as Jooste (2015, p. 254) characterises the period from 1994 to 2014.

Individual universities, such as the University of Cape Town, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, and the Durban University of Technology, have engaged

with internationalisation at home since circa 2006. The International Education Association of South Africa (IEASA) included sessions on internationalisation at home in its annual conferences.

There were also early South African publications (e.g. Jooste & Neale-Shutte, 2007).

In 2012, IEASA concluded a MOU with the Expert Community Internationalisation at Home of the European Association for International Education (EAIE) (see Jooste, 2015, p. 259). This resulted in joint sessions at EAIE conferences as well as some joint publications (e.g. Leask, Beelen & Kaunda, 2013).

At the time of the first engagements of South African universities with internationalisation at home, the original definition was still in use: “Any internationally related activity with the exception of outbound student and staff mobility” (Crowther et al., 2001, p. 8).

### 1.3.1 Towards new definitions and policies

In 2015, internationalisation at home was redefined by Beelen & Jones (2015) as:

*the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments (Beelen & Jones, 2015, p. 76).*

In the same year, the definition of internationalisation of the curriculum was revised by Leask as

*the incorporation of international, intercultural and/or global dimensions into the content of the curriculum as well as the learning outcomes, assessment tasks, teaching methods and support services of a program of study (Leask, 2015, p. 9).*

Both definitions above have since been adopted by South African authors and are also used in tandem (see e.g. Quinlan, 2015).

In 2017, a new *Policy framework for internationalisation of higher education in South Africa* was presented by the Department of Higher Education and Training. This framework was ultimately adopted in 2020. Jooste and Hagenmeier (2022) discuss this adoption process and some of its outcomes.

The framework contains a chapter called 'Internationalisation at Home, Quality Assurance and Accreditation'. Within the section on internationalisation at home, the definition by Beelen & Jones (2015) is presented (without referencing). This is followed by the definition of internationalisation of the curriculum by Leask (2015), also without referencing.

The framework perceives internationalisation at home as

*an alternative mode of internationalisation that can overcome the limitations inherent in international mobility schemes that remain accessible to a minority of students (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2017, p. 46).*

Internationalisation at home is thus presented as an alternative to study abroad, which is implicitly considered more desirable but limited because

*Internationalisation at home involves incorporating international and intercultural knowledge and abilities, aimed at preparing students for performing professionally, socially and emotionally in an international and multicultural context. However, internationalisation of the curriculum must not negate **curriculum transformation imperatives** [my emphasis] which higher education institutions in South Africa have an obligation to fulfil. The two can be carried out together successfully (Ibid).*

### 1.3.2 Transformation

The text above implies that the acquisition of international and intercultural skills is connected to curriculum transformation. Considering the scope of the iKudu project on transformation of curricula, it is relevant to see how 'transformation' is understood. The 2017 framework refers back to *Education White Paper 3. A*

*programme for the transformation of higher education* (Department of Education, 1997), which

*locates the national agenda for the country within the context of the “distinctive set of pressures and demands characteristic of the late twentieth century, often typified as globalisation”. It defines globalisation as “multiple, inter-related changes in social, cultural and economic relations, linked to the widespread impact of the information and communications revolution; the growth of trans-national scholarly and scientific networks; the accelerating integration of the world economy and intense competition among nations for markets”. In its vision statement, it calls for a higher education system that should “contribute to the advancement of all forms of knowledge and scholarship, and in particular address the diverse problems and demands of the local, national, southern African and African contexts, and uphold rigorous standards of academic quality”. The statement is evidence of an outward looking approach with an explicit African continent priority (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2017, pp. 14-15).*

On the basis of the above, ‘transformation’ can therefore be understood as making programmes relevant to local, national, and African contexts. In 2010, Badet (p. 40) – in a paper on the transformation of HEI institutions – already remarked that “democracy brought a welcome internationalisation of the student body”, but it is not clear what this means beyond international outgoing and incoming student mobility.

The iKudu project proposal adds two other aspects of transformation: “Acquiring knowledge and software to increase course accessibility is considered one of the crucial mandates in most universities’ transformation policies to achieve student success” (iKudu project proposal, p. 18) and “Transformation approaches that considers both *internationalisation* of the curriculum and *decolonisation* of the curriculum will be studied” (Ibid., p. 51).

In a draft discussion document from 2015, Keet and Swarz identify the themes that constitute transformation

### **a. Institutional culture**

- i. Governance and management
- ii. Professionalisation of 'transformation' work
- iii. Social structure of the academy
- iv. Social inclusion/cohesion
- v. Language and symbols

### **b. Equity and redress**

- i. Access and success (staff)
- ii. Race, gender, disability
- iii. Support/opportunity
- iv. Diversity and inclusivity

### **c. Research, scholarship, and postgraduate studies**

- i. Knowledge transformations
- ii. Diversity and inclusivity
- iii. Internationally recognised research on 'race', 'gender', 'disability', and social justice

### **d. Leadership, relations with external stakeholders, and community engagement**

- i. Diversity, training, development, and professional growth
- ii. Transformational leadership
- iii. Socially just, diverse, inclusive community engagement
- iv. Equity-based external engagement

### **e. Teaching and learning**

- i. Inclusive enrolment planning
- ii. Access and success (students)
- iii. Critical pedagogies
- iv. Diversity competencies

## **1.3.3 Discussing transformation**

While the term 'transformation' is frequently used in both European and South African universities, differences in context lead to different understandings. The

South African universities focus on accessibility as a key aspect of transformation of programmes of study.

The European universities tend to associate transformation with learning processes, often of an individual nature. Their association is with Transformative Learning Theory (Mezirow, 1991).

#### *1.3.4 Critical receptions of internationalisation at home in South Africa*

In the South African context, there has often been a “degree of scepticism regarding internationalisation” (Cross, Mhlanga & Ojo, 2011, 76). In their case study of Wits University, Cross, et al. point out the Europe-centric nature of internationalisation, while simultaneously acknowledging that Wits itself is a Europe-centric institution. However, there is no discussion on the concepts of internationalisation of the curriculum or internationalisation at home, although they refer to an article by Leask.

The *Nelson Mandela Bay Global Dialogue Declaration on the Future of Internationalisation of Higher Education* (International Education Association of South Africa, 2014) was a outcome the Global Dialogue, hosted by the ‘International Education Association of South Africa’ (IEASA) on 15 -17 January 2014 in Port Elizabeth, representing nine national, six regional and nine other organisations from around the world, with national, regional and global responsibilities. They declared their commitment to emphasise the importance of decision-making and practices in the development of internationalisation activities that are imbued with ethical considerations and inclusivity the world.

The discussion in South Africa ran parallel with a global discussion on the ‘End of internationalisation’ (Brandenburg & De Wit, 2010) and on safeguarding the values of international higher education, for which the International Association of Universities took the initiative (IAU, 2012).



Some South African authors have interpreted internationalisation as an imposed, Western concept. The scepticism with regard to internationalisation has extended to internationalisation at home (see Teferra, 2019), but specific critiques of internationalisation at home are rarely found. On the other hand, the connection between the local dimension of internationalisation of the curriculum (Leask, 2015) and indigenous knowledge is rarely made.

The discourse on the values of internationalisation culminated in the early stages of the iKudu project in the Internationalisation of Higher Education for Society movement (see Jones et al., 2021).

### *1.3.5 Internationalisation of the curriculum, Africanisation, and decolonisation*

There have been continuous discussions on the meaning and relevance of internationalisation for the South African context. Internationalisation has been discussed in relation to other concepts, notably Africanisation and decolonisation.

### *1.3.6 The role of leadership for internationalisation at home*

Internationalisation at home requires a specific role of leaders. These should not only develop top-down policies, but also strategies that foster bottom-up development within the context of individual programmes of study (see Beelen, 2018).

Leaders could overcome some of the key obstacles identified by Beelen (2017, p. 2-3):

- Proliferation of misconceptions
- Lack of skills of academics
- Lack of strategies for implementation
- Lack of connection between stakeholders

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### 1.3.7 *The role of academic staff in implementing internationalised curricula*

This part of the study looks at views on and approaches to the implementation of internationalised curricula in South Africa and compares these to other views and approaches. The 2017 framework states that: “Internationalisation at Home can partly be achieved through emphasis or increased and/or intensified academic staff international mobility and emphasis on informal curriculum” (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2017).

The importance of academics’ mobility for internationalisation at home seems to be supported by the *Erasmus Impact Study* (European Union, 2014). The authors of the *Erasmus Impact Study* reported that 95% of respondents considered academics’ mobility as “effective in achieving major objectives such as internationalisation at home”. These respondents indicated that lecturers’ mobility “allow[s] students who do not have the possibility to participate in a mobility scheme, to benefit”. In addition, 93% of respondents claimed that academics’ mobility is effective for “the promotion of new pedagogical methods” (p. 149). This leads the *Erasmus Impact Study*’s authors to conclude:

“The star’ impact of Erasmus on academic staff lay in the strengthening of ‘Internationalisation at home’ processes. Teachers were aware that all this information and acquisition of skills would have an impact when they returned home, in that the Erasmus effect would be extended to non-mobile participants” (European Union, 2014, p. 148).

Several critical comments can be made at this point. The first observation is methodological; the respondents were themselves the formerly mobile staff. Thus, respondents were remarking on the relevance of their own mobility.

Secondly, *Trends 2015* found that mobility had a negative effect, namely, the creation of a division between mobile and non-mobile academics (Sursock, 2015, p. 72).

The third critique addresses the relevance of staff mobility as a professional development tool on the basis of volume. Only 7% of universities that participated in the European University Association's survey (2013, p. 11) named "providing our staff opportunities to go abroad" as one of their top three priorities. Asked how European Union mobility programmes contributed to internationalisation of their university, 2% selected "they provide funding for staff mobility" as their first choice. The significance attached to mobility thus seems much greater than the actions undertaken in practice.

Fourth, the *Erasmus Impact Study* was limited in that it did not research the reverse effect of academics' outgoing mobility (i.e., the impact of academics' incoming mobility on domestic students).

The above literature describes a practice in which mobility's positive effects are presumed rather than demonstrated. The *Fourth Global Survey* found that 37% of universities claimed to offer professional development for the internationalisation of the home curriculum. In particular, African universities indicated that this was their main activity in relation to the home curriculum (Egron-Polak & Hudson, 2014, p. 101). However, there is a lack of evidence that professional development through academics' mobility is associated with predetermined outcomes. Both the literature and this example of practice therefore suggest that academics' mobility is primarily an unstructured form of professional development.

Lecturers' vital role in the process of curriculum internationalisation has long been acknowledged (see, for example, Van der Wende, 1997, p. 53); this means that the 'academic self' should become internationalised before anything else (Sanderson, 2008). The lack of structured professional development for internationalisation available to academics sharply contrasts with their expected role in the internationalisation of teaching and learning. The *European Parliament Study* therefore noted that, "appropriate professional development programmes will need to be put in place to ensure that staff are able to design and deliver internationalised curricula" (De Wit et al., 2015, p. 53).

The *Fourth Global Survey* (Egron-Polak & Hudson, 2014) found that 37% of universities across the world claimed to offer professional development for the internationalisation of the home curriculum. In particular, African universities indicated that this was their main activity in relation to the home curriculum (Egron-Polak & Hudson, 2014, p. 101).

However, at the 2015 conference of the International Education Association of South Africa, a number of representatives of South African universities indicated that professional development related to academics' mobility was not associated with predetermined outcomes. Both the literature and this example of practice therefore suggest that academics' mobility is primarily an unstructured form of professional development that does not necessarily lead to outcomes.

### 1.3.8 Conclusion of section 1

The 2017 framework does not offer guidance on how internationalised curricula or transformation should be achieved other than through indirect means such as academic mobility and the informal curriculum. This is not necessarily problematic, as it is the task of universities to make internationalisation of teaching and learning a reality, taking into consideration the requirements of the different programmes of study.

This implies that the implementation of internationalisation and transformation of curricula involves a wide range of variables, such as discipline, skills of academics, support mechanisms, and leadership.

## 1.4 Section 2: starting points emerging from Appreciative Inquiry

This section captures key quotes from the Appreciative Inquiry reports that we asked all iKudu partners to submit, although originally it was only planned to request the South African partners to do so:

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*In the past academic year alone (2020-2021), more than 7 000 students engaged across 170 COIL exchanges, led by 141 CU staff, delivered in conjunction with 134 institutions from 52 countries. (CU)*

*THUAS has been pursuing internationalisation and internationalisation at home for more than fifteen years. Therefore, the institution provides a fertile ground for COIL. In line with the general drive for internationalisation at THUAS, there is widespread support for COIL, but it is not (yet) an explicit component of internationalisation policies and strategies. Some respondents consider the new institutional plan, which will be developed from January 2022, a good opportunity to make COIL a more explicit component of policies and strategies. (THUAS)*

*The conclusion is that a development started at grassroots level can lead to incorporation of Internationalisation at Home, with COIL as a tool, into the strategy of study programmes. (AUAS)*

*Lecturers who are familiar with the concept of COIL agree that COIL definitely helps to internationalise the curriculum and to create possibilities for internationalisation at home. COIL is an excellent tool to ensure that a large group of students (i.e. those who do not engage in physical mobility during their studies) can acquire international and intercultural competences. COIL makes an international experience feasible and affordable for every student. Through COIL, every student has access to an international experience. The term COIL is definitely not yet known by all academics and students, but once it is explained to them, almost all see the value. The fact that the pandemic has disrupted physical mobility certainly helps to raise interest in alternatives such as COIL. (UA)*

*As far as internationalisation at home is concerned, 2020 has seen an increase of experiences of virtual mobility. The university participated in the Erasmus Virtual Exchange (EVE) project and quite a number of students, also due to the COVID pandemic, has chosen EVE courses in order to both conclude their Erasmus experiences from home and to gain credits for their curricula activities on transversal competences. COIL has also recently been added to the experiences of the university, with a few teachers organising it within their courses (with Japan and USA). This attention to 'virtual exchange' is likely to be a permanent feature of the internationalisation processes, also due to the participation in the iKudu project itself. (UNISI)*

*Part of our internationalisation activities [are] through projects that include virtual engagement programmes such as Collaborative Online Learning. In addition to this, activities such as internationalisation of departmental advisory boards and facilitated institutional discussions and projects on decolonisation of the curriculum at DUT are current practice. (DUT)*

*To support internationalisation of undergraduate programmes, international exchanges of undergraduate teaching staff and 'Collaborative Integrated Online Learning' (COIL) will be prioritised. The UFS recognises that the development of staff capacity is critical in order to transform internationalisation at the multi-campus institution. (UFS)*

*The vision of CUT and CILT [Centre] is to lead a comprehensive approach to internationalisation to support all CUT stakeholders in their respective contributions towards CUT's vision to be a leading African university of technology, shaping the future through innovation. (CUT)*

*The LPT (Local Project Team) has been the driver of COIL, but there is now some momentum and interest in COIL and curriculum internationalisation at UL. The support of senior management and some directors of schools is also picking up, which gives the LPT courage that there will be more progress in expanding COIL at UL. (UL)*

*UNIVEN participates in several capacity building programmes for both staff and students. Recent ones are EU Erasmus+ (iKudu, ELEPHANT, CPC, SATN HERES, IMPALA, etc.) partnerships for capacity development for staff and students. UNIVEN is also part of the US-SA HE network, UK-UCDP, SASUF, Vliruos, DAAD, and other networks and research collaborations. UNIVEN is a member of the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM); Association of African Universities (AAU); the Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA); South African Universities Vice-Chancellors Association (SAUVCA); BRICS Universities Network (BRICSUN); Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU); International Education Association of South Africa (IEASA), etc. (UNIVEN)*

As expected, the Appreciative Inquiry demonstrated that most of the European iKudu partners were more advanced in their practices for COIL, notably CU, which had a considerable number of practices in place at the outset of the project.

Among the South African partners, DUT was the forerunner at the start of the project, but the other institutions had policies in place that formed a foundation for the implementation of internationalisation of the curriculum.

## 1.5 Section 3: Internationalisation at home and COIL in the policies and practices of five South African universities at the outset of the iKudu project

### 1.5.1 Introduction

In line with the collaborative focus that the iKudu project has embraced from the start, we conducted a survey among all iKudu partners, rather than just the South African partners. Originally, the project intended to have certain activities implemented by South African partners only; however, in line with the collaborative character of the project, we decided that all partners would contribute to all project activities, such as appreciative enquiry and stakeholder analysis. The focus of the survey was to tease out the perceived position of curriculum internationalisation and transformation at the beginning of the iKudu project with a retrospective lens. This online survey was conducted in November 2023. It was anticipated that partners would draw on their Appreciative Inquiry Narrative Reports as part of this 'looking back' process, which they all completed in 2020-2021. In the section that follows, insights from specific questions posed will follow.

### 1.5.2 Curriculum internationalisation and transformation/renewal prior to the iKudu project (question 1.1)

We asked the iKudu partners to recognise what was happening prior to the iKudu project in terms of curriculum transformation through curriculum internationalisation.

Two of the South African partners mentioned that nothing was happening or that they did not know. One partner referred to the 1997 *White Paper: A Programme for*

*the Transformation of Higher Education*<sup>2</sup> and the *Policy framework for internationalisation of higher education in South Africa*<sup>3</sup>. Two partners referred to curriculum internationalisation in general terms such as ‘strategic focus’ and ‘approach to internationalisation of the curriculum’.

Three of the five EU universities (THUAS, CU and AUAS) had policies for internationalisation at home/internationalisation of the curriculum in their policies before the start of the iKudu project.

Two EU partners mentioned that they also had COIL projects before the iKudu project started, such as Coventry University (since 2011) and The Hague University of Applied Sciences (since ca. 2014), which also held a European COIL conference in 2017. The former applied a top-down institutional approach to COIL following the promotion of small-scale trailblazer projects, which led to strategy development and scaling up, with COIL becoming a key part of the university’s internationalisation at home and global engagement initiatives; the latter applied a bottom-up approach. Both universities’ practices were written up as the subject of a comparative case study (Beelen, Wimpenny & Rubin, 2020).

Curriculum internationalisation was a more clearly identifiable focus at the European universities than at the South African partners, where the picture is more diffuse. This is not in itself remarkable, since Dutch and Flemish HEIs have been early adopters of internationalisation at home since circa 2001 and the UK partner embraced the related concept of internationalisation of the curriculum from around the same time. It is also worth mentioning that those responsible for completing the

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis\\_document/201409/18207gen11960.pdf](https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/18207gen11960.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.dhet.gov.za/Policy%20and%20Development%20Support/Policy%20Framework%20for%20Internationalisation%20of%20Higher%20Education%20in%20South%20Africa.pdf>



survey may not have consulted widely to best appreciate all that was happening locally around that time.

### *1.5.3 Champions and enablers of curriculum internationalisation (question 1.2)*

We asked the iKudu partners to name the champions and enablers of curriculum internationalisation prior to 2020.

The South African respondents varied considerably in their answers. Some mentioned champions at institutional level, such as a deputy vice-chancellor of teaching and learning or international offices<sup>4</sup>. Others mentioned that there were no champions or that academics acted as champions, which is difficult to qualify.

One respondent from senior leadership at the UFS identified a clear strategy about decolonisation and its implications for the curriculum as an enabler in discussions at national and institutional level.

Two of the European partners mentioned that the champions were the international programmes (i.e. those taught in English). In addition, one of the Dutch respondents mentioned that Dutch-medium programmes took the lead in COIL. The two Dutch partners mentioned research on internationalisation as enablers. While professorship in internationalisation ended at AUAS in 2014, the research group Global Learning started at THUAS in 2018. The UK partner mentioned the driving role of research as well.

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<sup>4</sup> In both South Africa and Europe, international offices are referred to in many different ways and very often have different functions. However, globally the use or reference to international offices refers to departments within higher education institutions charged with the responsibility of implementing some functions of internationalisation.

One European partner mentioned the role of faculties (i.e. organisational units) in the process of curriculum internationalisation. The UK partner described an elaborate top-down structure from the deputy vice-chancellor downwards as part of the curriculum internationalisation, with COIL as a key activity.

As with the previous question, the responses varied considerably, both across the consortium and within the European and South African contexts. Also, responses tended to mention both curriculum internationalisation and COIL, without distinguishing between them or clearly considering COIL as one of the instruments of internationalisation at home.

#### *1.5.4 How was curriculum internationalisation visible in institutional policies, practice, and discourse at that time? (question 1.3)*

The question was posed to iKudu partners whether curriculum internationalisation was visible in policies, practices, and discourse during the initial implementation of the iKudu project. Generally, curriculum internationalisation was visible in institutional policies across all partners; UL was in the process of integrating curriculum internationalisation into its various policies and strategies. However, when it comes to curriculum internationalisation in terms of its visibility in practice and discourse, we observed differing stages in terms of implementation and conception.

Most notably, there is a dichotomy across all the partners as to whether curriculum internationalisation should be viewed and practised as a qualitative process or whether it should be quantified in terms of credits accruing to students or even key performance indicators that will provide guidance on how faculty and international offices should support the implementation of curriculum internationalisation. For instance, AUAS and UA had more quantitative objectives, such as the number of credits for internationalisation, while THUAS emphasised the qualitative aspects, such as intercultural competence. Notably – in the South African case – the UFS went beyond teaching and learning at undergraduate levels, and through its Learning and Teaching Strategy 2019-2024 (TLS) advocated for curriculum internationalisation at

research and community levels. An emerging salient point was that where internationalisation policies and strategies were present, they were championed at senior and executive levels.

### *1.5.5 What insights do you have into why all or some aspects of curriculum internationalisation and transformation were important at the institution? (question 1.4).*

Trying to understand the drivers and catalysts for curriculum internationalisation and transformation, we asked iKudu partners if they had any insights into why curriculum internationalisation and transformation were important at their institutions. In general, the main catalysts were the following:

- Executive leadership through deputy vice-chancellors and vice-rectors.
- A stronger emphasis on internationalisation at home.
- The growing COIL agenda.

Apart from the evident need for curriculum internationalisation and transformation as captured in the respective institutional policies and strategies across the iKudu partners in Europe, our project work has underscored how access to an international student community could be a key driver for internationalisation at home programmes. At CU, the COIL agenda has aided the internationalisation at home programme, offering an immediate solution for exposing its students to international contexts. Generally, all partners argued for the need to have an internationalised student population that could function and thrive in different international contexts. A unique driver within the South African context was also the need to align with international standards when it came to new programmes offered, a process imposed by accreditation procedures with professional bodies.

### *1.5.6 Conclusion of section 3*

Remarkable among the responses to this survey was how several respondents discussed COIL as the key mission of their institutional practice development rather

than as an element of curriculum internationalisation, which underlines the continuous struggle with terminology and framing of COIL.

The Dutch and Flemish partners (AUAS, THUAS, and UA) were focused on internationalisation at home well before the iKudu project started and considered COIL as one of the instruments for that. Instead, CU pursued COIL as a driver for internationalising curricula and global engagement.

Most of the South African partners had already developed strategies for internationalisation of teaching and learning at institutional level when iKudu took off, but their implementation was at various stages.

Champions of internationalisation at home can be found at different levels with all partners, ranging from senior leadership to academics. This illustrates that curriculum internationalisation is both a top-down and a bottom-up process. It is remarkable that educational developers or teaching and learning centres are absent as champions of curriculum internationalisation at all partner institutions.

The role of incoming international students in internationalised curricula is considered in different ways, as is that of international programmes taught in English. These are mentioned as drivers of internationalisation but tend to miss the key characteristic of internationalisation at home, which is to reach all students.

## 1.6 General conclusion

This study demonstrates that the foundations for COIL was laid well before iKudu was launched, both in Europe and in South Africa. In South Africa, institutions have started responding to national policies, but some early adopters started their practices well in advance of the 2017 framework. The movement towards transformation of institutions as manifested in South Africa is perceived differently in Europe, where aspects of transformation are seen as ‘accessibility’ and ‘inclusion’.

The European partners, notably CU and THUAS, had already published on decolonisation of academics, teaching and learning, before the start of iKudu.

The European partners have – in varying degrees – already embraced COIL, either as an institutional policy (CU) or as a bottom-up practice. In South Africa, DUT was most advanced in its COIL efforts in 2019.

This shows that the configuration for capacity development in COIL in this project has been aptly chosen. The majority of European institutions had considerable – if varying – experience with COIL within internationalised curricula. But among the South African partners, some were more experienced in COIL than their European counterparts, which led to interesting dynamics. The dynamics were further enhanced by the participation of a variety of higher education institutions – research universities, former polytechnics that became universities, and universities of applied sciences.

Finally, iKudu demonstrated at the start of the project – but also at its conclusion – that it remains vitally important to ‘unpack’ concepts, not to assume that they are understood in the same way, to keep a focus on the hidden curriculum, and to adapt practices to local and disciplinary contexts.

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<sup>i</sup> Disclaimer: The author has the opportunity to develop and publish this report into a full paper on condition of appropriate attribution to the project and the funders