by Anais Kit

What's In It For Me? Managing Faculty HRM Challenges in Multicampus Business Schools

Since 2014, EQUIS Process Manual guidebooks state that "*an increasing number of business schools maintain more than one physical campus location*" (EQUIS Process Manual Annexes 2014, p 76). This statement has been confirmed over the years by the continuous growth of multicampus business schools. Growing concerns regarding the social and environmental implications of internationalisation strategies do not suggest putting an end to international mobility but to encourage us to adopt a more comprehensive approach to develop best practices. Internationalisation is often discussed in the context of student mobility, however, faculty members are equally central to this notion. Yet little is known as to how internationalisation impacts faculty, especially in terms of management and career development.

We conducted a study of the HRM practices in four EQUIS-accredited European business schools evolving from single-campus non-English speaking schools into multicampus business schools located in various countries. The study suggests there are three points in particular that deserve the attention of business school leaders.

Preparing for inpatriation challenges

The first challenge concerns inpatriation. Inpatriates are foreign-born academics hired locally at the home campus (Altbach and Yudkevich, 2017). In each school, within 20 years, the number of foreign-born professors went from less than 20% to comprising over 50% of the faculty. Long-term recruitment and integration of foreign faculty enhance international experiences at home and strengthen the schools' publication capabilities. Such practices require schools to develop inpatriation services. In common with multinational companies, to recruit foreigners, they need to consider allowances, language courses, family support, visas, etc. But they also need to prepare for the probable departure of those resources. The departure of inpatriate academics may not be an issue if we consider that the job market in academia is fluid and schools can continuously recruit new international profiles that adapt quickly to the school environment. However, the experience of the schools interviewed shows that suitable profiles are not come by easily. Thus, a solution proposed during one interview was to recruit professors from regions where the school is located, which would help prepare students for their cross-campus experience, and also provide an opportunity for professors wishing to come back to their native country to pursue their cooperation with the school. Additionally, this alignment can strengthen the relationship of the school to local and international business communities, especially in countries where academic status matters in the establishment of institutional relationships.

Therefore, beyond the primary needs for language skills and international display, the heavy reliance on inpatriation practices raises further questions such as:

What are the induction capabilities of the school? What are the departure capabilities of the school? Does the school have a plan to manage the departure of inpatriates? What is the value of an internationally mixed faculty? Is the faculty internationality mix adequate for the school strategy, and does this align with the international development of the school?

Implementing cross-campus mobility

The second challenge is cross-campus mobility. The four schools studied had respectively grown from one campus to three, five, six and seven campuses. Campuses are sometimes spread across various continents making cross-campus practices an essential tool for building an integrated multi-campus strategy and nurturing the international exposure of academics - a crucial aspect of career development in academia. Cross-campus mobility practices are implemented in different ways. Teaching experiences, programme development, research seminars, sabbaticals, or project developments may consist of a few days, a few weeks, or a few months; a diversity of international cross-campus experiences tightens the relations across campuses. Longer-term cross-campus experiences are also vital to the schools' strategies, although there isn't a consensus among expatriation practices. The logistic considerations of the schools and the faculty suggest that the schools need to further support the assignees. As a response, some organisations have started to develop global staff exchange programmes which also enable staff and professors to exchange accommodation during their trip and maintain a balance between institutions.

Meanwhile, the study of mobility practices and career development shows that cross-campus mobility needs to be clearly defined in terms of time, duration, purpose, career value and recruitment criteria. Schools who want to develop transparent mobility practices may consider the following questions:

What are the benefits of cross-campus mobility practices for the school? What are the benefits of cross-campus mobility for the professors? How are cross-campus mobility practices valued in terms of career development? Are cross-campus mobility practices balanced across the whole school? Does the school have formalised cross-campus mobility practices? Who can apply for geographical mobility and what is the application process? Is the process clear and accessible to the entire faculty?

Addressing these questions through clear, formalised processes would ensure that cross-campus mobility benefits both the school and the faculty, promoting knowledge transfer and a shared culture.

50%

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Empowering academic managers

Finally, our research shines a light on the depth of business schools' managerialisation. Managerialisation refers not only to the scientification of academic tasks (Alajoutsijärvi et al., 2015) or increased administrative tasks, but to the implementation of managerial practices (Gerhardt et al., 2018) in a larger sense. In each of the four schools, there is a critical need for actors who have an understanding of the academic culture and a set of managerial skills, and who are willing to grow their skills with the school's strategic development. Thus, schools may wonder:

> *Is the legitimacy of professors in management positions recognised by faculty members? Are professors in management positions able to carry out the school's strategic objectives? What are the processes and practices in place to legitimise professors in service missions? What training is offered to professors in a service mission to improve their management skills (collaboration, leadership, interpersonal skills, conflict management skills, intercultural knowledge)? How are heavy service missions valued in terms of career development?*

The progressive internationalisation of business schools implies reconsidering the career value of service missions and the role of those in service positions in the deployment of business schools' internationalisation strategies. Even though, academic freedom remains an important factor of business schools and academic success, the idea that academics are unique and don't require any form of management no longer fits with the complexity of the academic environment. On the contrary, managerial positions are no longer purely coordination roles. Managers need to embrace their role to orient the transformation of the faculty toward the schools' needs at every level, with the aim of transitioning from a traditional disciplinary structure to a multidisciplinary structure. Among the benefits of such reorganisation, we can notice the increased interaction between members of various disciplines, a more comprehensive perspective during interviews, and the rise of a middle management with transversal perspectives. The transfer of HRM missions such as workload management, mid-term reviews and recruitment, while having regular meetings and discussions with other heads of departments enables them to develop relations with a diversity of faculty members, strengthen their management position and inspire the strategic orientation of the school. Therefore, the empowerment of academic managers and the evolution of a renewed academic mindset appear intertwined with multicampus internationalisation.

Ultimately, as our study reveals, business schools must continually develop their HRM strategies to support the changing needs of faculty at both individual and organisational levels. Proactively addressing these challenges would contribute to sustainable growth, enhanced academic mobility, and stronger institutional ties across borders. This is why, in recent peer review reports, questions are being raised regarding the development of faculty HRM approaches to promote multicampus strategies.

References

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