

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

The Marketing and Executive Plans for the Enrollment of Arab and Foreign Students in Jordanian Higher Education Institutions

2017-2020



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Introduction:

The overall objective of the current plan is to institutionalize and back up the currently existing marketing efforts of the Jordanian Higher Education Institutions for the attraction of Arab and foreign students and the organization and improvement of rendered services, through coordination with the Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research (MOHE). The captioned plan is designed to, inter alia, attract 70,000 Arab and foreign students by 2020, with a projected income of no less than JD 2 billion annually, accounting for 6.7% of the current year GDP, making the higher education sector able to compete with the other sectors in supporting the Jordanian national income. Which is already centered on the production sector by 17%, tourism by 14%, IT by 14%, construction by 4% and agriculture by 2%, as well as to find a solution for universities' debts.

The international situation in attracting foreign students and the income realized therefrom:

International students are defined by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as follows: "those who travel to a country different from their own for the purpose of tertiary study". Walking through the numbers, more than 4 million (male and female) students study outside their home countries. According to the UNESCO statistics, the number is expected to increase to around 7 million by 2020.

The major preferred destinations of the students are in order: USA (19%), UK (10%), France (6%), Germany (6%), Russia (5%), Japan (3%), Canada (3%), China (2%) and Italy (2%).

The countries granting the most scholarships to study abroad are India (18,872), Germany (119,123), Korea (11,942), France (84,089), KSA (73,548), USA (60,292), Malaysia (56,260), Vietnam (53,546) and Nigeria (52,066).

The annual revenue generated in the United States from 800,000 foreign students is about 27 billion USD. In Ireland, for example, and in spite of the extreme competition from English-Speaking Countries, at the forefront of which is UK, the annual revenue produced from teaching international students rose to one billion Euros.

Perhaps the most striking is that 360 million Euros were generated from teaching the English language only, taking into account, that it is a cost-neutral process, and 120 million Euro generated from parents' visits to their adult children. In the UK, the annual income attained from international students added up to around eight billion pounds sterling, out of which 3.4 pounds sterling came from accommodation, food and transportation.

Local reality:

Statistics of the current foreign students within Jordanian higher education institutions (public and private universities) for the first semester of the academic year (2016-2017) reveal the existence of "40,598" non-Jordanian students (males and females), while the total number of students enrolled in higher education institutions (Jordanians and non-Jordanians) is "284,599" male and female students. Thus, the ratio of foreign students to the total number of students is 14.2%.

The percentage of international students studying in public universities amounts to 8.8% in relation to the total number therein. However, the percentage of international students studying in private universities amounts to 29.9%. The number of international students enrolled in undergraduate programs is 36,784, whilst 3814 are enrolled in postgraduate programs.

The table below depicts the total number of foreign students in Jordanian public universities during the first semester of the academic year (2017/2018):

University name	Undergraduate foreign students	Postgraduate foreign students	Total foreign students	Total number of university students	Proportion of foreign students (%)
Univ. of Jordan	3782	1129	4911	44531	11.0%
Univ. of Science & Technology	3965	239	4204	24995	16.8%
Yarmouk Univ.	2484	423	2907	32165	9.0%
Al al-Bayt Univ.	964	503	1467	17478	8.4%
Mutah Univ.	972	170	1142	16559	6.9%
Hashemite Univ.	1187	35	1222	25858	4.7%
Al-Balga Applied Univ.	926	29	955	34209	2.8%
German-Jordanian Univ.	524	110	634	4380	14.5%
Tafila Univ.	26	0	26	3713	0.7%
Al Hussein Bin Talal Univ.	60	0	60	4984	1.2%
Total	14890	2638	17528	208872	8.4%

The table below depicts the total number of foreign students in Jordanian private universities during the first semester (2017/2018)

University name	Undergraduate foreign students	Postgraduate foreign students	Total foreign students	Total number of university students	Proportion of foreign students (%
Al-Ahliyya Amman Univ.	23	0	23	46	50.0%
Philadelphia Univ.	306	0	306	1393	22.0%
Applied Science Univ.	254	12	266	1988	13.4%
Petra Univ.	1452	131	1583	5109	31.0%
Al-Zaytoonah Univ.	231	14	245	2770	8.8%
Al-Isra Univ.	2012	37	2049	7176	28.6%
Zarqa Private Univ.	2127	33	2160	7097	30.4%
Jerash Univ.	1656	56	1712	7155	23.9%
World Islamic Univ.	632	150	782	3345	23.4%
Middle East Univ.	128	0	128	312	41.0%
Amman Arab Univ.	2122	52	2174	5992	36.3%
Irbid Univ.	1550	76	1626	3493	46.6%
Jadara Univ.	983	46	1029	3858	26.7%
American Univ. of Madaba	20	8	28	899	3.1%
Princess Sumaya Univ.	3072	56	3128	5992	52.2%
Arab Open Univ.	758	140	898	2624	34.2%
Education College/UNRWA	2587	30	2617	5858	44.7%
Jordan Academy of Music	224	0	224	1224	18.3%
Ammon Univ. College	22	0	22	196	11.2%
Ajloun National Univ.	190	18	208	2812	7.4%
Aqaba Univ. of Technology	568	353	921	4556	20.2%
Total	20917	1212	22129	73895	29.9%

Analysis of the figures:

- Private universities in Jordan outperform public universities in attracting international students.
- There is a modest percentage of international students in postgraduate programs compared to undergraduate programs. Furthermore, public universities outperform private universities in attracting students to postgraduate programs.

In regards to the nationalities of international students in Jordan, more than 80 nationalities are currently present. Nevertheless, the larger percentage of international students come from Arab countries, as shown in the table below:

Nationality	Total number of students	Number of students in public universities	Number of students in private universities
Palestinian	8533	3503	5030
Iraqi	7211	1414	5797
Syrian	6863	2014	4849
Kuwaiti	3539	2546	993
Qatari	1304	57	1247
Yemeni	1226	716	510
Arabs 48	1203	746	457
Egyptian	1136	398	738
Saudi	1085	977	108
Omani	1064	255	809

The table below depicts the numbers of foreign students from non-Arab countries, as follows:

Nationality	Total number of students	Number of students in public universities	Number of students in private universities
Malaysian	1302	75	1377
Pilipino	399	35	434
Thai	345	59	404
Chinese	319	17	336
American	144	74	218
Turkish	136	45	181
Nigerian	96	58	154

The most desirable higher education programs for foreign students are as follows:

Program	Total number of students
Pharmacy	6271
Engineering	5710
Business	5183
Medicine	4238
Islamic Sharia (Islamic law)	3367
Literature	2501
Education egree	1997
IT	1970
Law	1386
Dentistry	1139
Nursing	1134
Architecture	1044

The main factors that attract students in the most desirable higher education destinations:

The United States of America (which is the most attractive destination to foreign students worldwide) provides a number of advantages that render it at the leading edge of attracting international students, most notably of which are:

- Facilitating access to visas, student residence, and part-time employment and making profound changes to immigration laws and regulations to encourage and attract international researchers and students.
- Providing scholarships for many foreign students through government departments, as well as non-governmental institutions and agencies, perhaps most notably of which is the Fulbright Program for student exchange in higher education studies that contributed to the graduation of a large number of men and women of science, culture and literature, as well as diplomats and politicians.
- Providing proper employment opportunities to the international students.

The following are the most effective factors in making UK one of the most desirable destinations to international students:

- More affordable tuition fees in UK compared to other countries like USA. The average annual tuition fee ranges between 5000-20,000 Pound Sterling and varies according to the level of study, program and university.
- Possible enrollment in a three-year undergraduate program as an alternative to the four-year program adopted by many other countries, and a one-year Master's degree program, rather than the conventional two-year program.
- International students are entitled to access free full medical care.
- Part-time job opportunities are made available to international students; the UK student visa allows students to work up to 20 hours a week during school-time; furthermore, it allows full-time work during holidays. This facilitation enables international students to count on themselves to pay university tuition, starting their second year of study (having had to cover their first year tuition beforehand).
- Provision of scholarships and student loans to international students. Special offers and discounts for services such as transportation, restaurants, libraries, museums, educational theatres and exhibits, and cinemas.
- Availability of cost effective transportation crossing European borders, which creates a great opportunity for students to visit the different European countries during school or summer vacation.

In the global competition of attracting international students, several countries apart from UK and USA are emerging. Amongst others, China has become a major player, particularly after they had established a long-term strategic plan for investing in international students.

The plan aimed to attract bigger numbers of international students, simultaneously, granting scholarships to Chinese students to study in the west and specialize in certain desired disciplines. In addition, Singapore has become one of the most important emerging destinations for student attraction.

Having considered the practices of the countries and universities in attracting students, the most important new developments that could be tapped into are as follows:

- Certain countries have institutionalized attraction of students from outside their country of origin, through the creation of ad hoc councils to this end like USA, Canada and Germany.
- Many prominent universities developed short and long-term marketing plans and strategies for student attraction; set up foreign student-specialized administrative units and increasingly used specialized experts to this end.
- Increased attention to university's names, reputation and world ranking from students and their parents.
- Creation of university liaison offices in certain countries.
- · Use of internet marketing to attract international students.
- Upgrade exchange and bridge programs (2+2), joint studies and dual degrees.
- Upgrading websites and facilitating browsing.
- Development of appealing and useful pamphlets in selected foreign languages.
- Effective follow-up to handle considerable numbers of applicants.
- Intensive use of social media.
- Reconsidering some admission and graduation requirements in certain countries such as the UK.

Factors that appeal to international students in Jordan:

The following are certain factors that strongly contribute to the attraction of international students to study in the Jordanian universities:

- Jordan adopts the credit hour system of teaching rather than the system of years in the majority of university programs.
- English is the teaching language in the scientific colleges and in other disciplines.
- The Jordanian faculty members hold higher qualifications and expertise and are graduates of prestigious European and American universities.
- Peace and security are made available in Jordan. As a tourism State, it is characterized by virtues of hospitality and courtesy.
- Certain academic programs are accredited by international agencies such as engineering, medical sciences and business administration programs.
- Certain higher education institutions have established academic partnerships and agreements, in addition to joint research projects with eminent global scientific institutions and centers.
- Certain Jordanian universities are trying to get advanced international ranking at Arab and international levels.
- Faculty members at certain Jordanian universities have won regional and international awards in the scientific research field.
- Some Jordanian universities are operating in foreign partnership like the German-Jordanian University.
- Students of certain universities have won international awards in the scientific research field.

Factors hindering the attraction of students to Jordan:

Results of the current position analysis of Jordanian universities, in connection with their capacity to attract Arab and foreign students, have revealed the following:

- 1. Vulnerable culture of orientation towards international education. This is evidenced by the many plans and strategies of Jordanian universities, which are devoid of the international dimension in education, scientific research and community service.
- 2. Poor marketing orientation towards international education among many Jordanian universities. This is reflected in the following:
- Ineffectiveness of administrative units that are established for international students' administration amongst certain Jordanian universities.
- Lack of marketing strategic plans that target international students in most Jordanian universities, particularly the public ones.
- Lack of follow-up with, analysis of and communication with international students alumni.
- Most universities' websites are devoid of clarified admission and residence procedures and other important information, whether in English or any other international language, which international students need before arriving to Jordan.
- Lack of dedicated financial provisions and human resources for promotional campaigns and travel to attract students from different countries.
- Small number of contracts with specialized companies and offices for the service of international students.
- Poor participation in international higher education exhibitions.
- Reliance of several universities only on traditional methods of marketing such as exploitation of personal relations in addition to some promotional means. Such unilateral efforts are scattered and never organized.
- 3. Some foreign students face issues of language, in particular those who wish to apply for programs that are taught in Arabic such as Sharia and Islamic studies in certain Jordanian universities.
- 4. Some international students in Jordan experience difficulty in finding proper residence, lack of suitable accommodation at certain universities, in addition to the emergence of cultural sensitivities sometimes in certain geographical regions.
- 5. Some Jordanian universities, in particular the private universities, are facing the issue of not being recognized by some Arab and foreign countries.
- 6. Certain Jordanian universities suffer from the limited capacity or accreditation to some internationally required programs.
- 7. Issues of residence and entry faced by some students coming from abroad.
- 8. Lack of university admission required documents and complicated equivalency and validation procedures by the Ministry of Education.
- 9. The constant change in admission requirements and admitted student rates determined by the Higher Education Council and the Higher Education Accreditation Commission.

Marketing Plan Objectives:

- 1- To increase numbers of international students from 40,500 currently studying in Jordan, to 70,000 by the year 2020.
- 2- To increase the number of international students in Jordanian higher education institutions annually by 25% of their total current number.
- 3- Attain a minimum of 25% of foreign students from the total students enrolled in the higher education institutions during the four forthcoming years.
- 4- Raising awareness and knowledge among foreign students about the higher education merits in Jordan, and creating interest in the academic programs and educational services that are available in Jordanian higher education institutions.

Marketing Plan's Core Principles: The following are the most important core principles for the success of the marketing plan:

1- Introduction of a foreign student affairs directorate in the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in which all interested public and private universities are represented. The directorate will be assigned with the following tasks and capacity:

Attraction:

- Introduction of a uniform electronic portal for admission of international students in order to facilitate access, application procedures, selection of university and program and completion of all admission procedures at the selected university, as well as entry procedures to Jordan.
- Development of an integrated executive central marketing plan with a given schedule for the attraction of foreign students to all internationally competitive programs specific to the requirements of the targeted countries.
- Studying and determining the most significant factors that contribute to the attraction of international students and addressing what could be done to improve a more attractive educational environment.
- Establishment of a committee or executive committees composed of the admission and registration managers to be in charge of participating in the marketing of universities, attending exhibitions and workshops and other student-attraction governing activities.
- Elaboration of a multilingual e-manual on the higher education institutions and having it connected to the MOHE website. The manual should clarify merits of higher education in Jordan (why Jordan) and respond to inquiries of international students.
- Support and assistance to the promotion of higher education through organizing or taking part in education exhibitions and conferences held abroad.
- Studying the universities' needs and reporting on numbers of potential enrollments of international students in each university, depending on the enrollment capacity of programs; in addition to establishing mechanisms for promotion and student attraction in a central and organized manner.

- Forming delegations and making visits to meet with officials in certain countries forb broadening the scope of recognition of Jordanian universities, adoption of their school programs and establishing communication channels between the universities and these countries.
- Forming delegations and making visits to foreign country institutions; meeting with officials therein; establishing agreements for the attraction of students and taking advantage of the scholarships granted to students in certain countries.
- Enhancing the role of university service offices to attract students to Jordan and make available all necessary information to this end.
- Reaching out to student registration offices in target countries.
- Convening meetings, lectures, workshops, and any other similar activities with the participation of higher the education institutions.
- Communicating with officials in the ministries of education and target schools in the foreign markets; providing them with all literatures, publications and directories relating to the Jordanian higher education institutions for the attraction of students.
- Invitation of educational and academic delegations from Arab and foreign countries to visit Jordanian universities.
- Identifying 3-5 internationally competitive disciplines with the help of Jordanian universities- that cater for the Jordanian quality and accreditation standards and are internationally ranked, have a universal recognition or other factors that render them attractive to international students. Consequently, the directorate creates a road map for marketing the identified disciplines in markets that have a need for such disciplines.
- Seeking out the various states that have dispatch plans in order to market the outstanding disciplines in the Jordanian universities so to diminish intersection of Jordanian universities in competition for students of these countries.

Services

Single Window Services:

- Coordinate with relevant parties inside and outside of Jordan, to facilitate entry visa procedures for international students and their next of kin, if required, and to facilitate their entry and residence.
- Coordinate with the Jordan Tourism Board, Ministry of Interior and universities to facilitate international student entry procedures; picking them up at the airport; designating an officer to accompany them, and offering them tours to discover Jordan.
- Control and follow-up on issues of foreign students; help resolve their problems, in particular those relating to validation and equivalency of certificates and others.
- Facilitate transition and student exchange between Arab and foreign universities.
- Follow up on any problems faced by international students in universities such as violence amongst students, traffic accidents and so on; and expedite disposition of cases with the courts.
- Follow-up with the universities, through international student offices, to keep an eye on students' academic and problems and to resolve them in an effective and efficient manner.
- 2- Provide an annual report on total activities conducted and present it to the Higher Education Council in the presence of the university presidents.
- 3- Identify the required financial and logistic provisions to carry out the marketing plan, with the contribution of the universities and the Ministry.
- 4- Reconsider the international students' admission legislations in Jordanian universities in terms of admission rates, facilitation of admission and equivalency and validation requirements in coordination with the Higher Education Accreditation Commission. Furthermore, the revision should be perfected in such a way as not to affect the quality of higher education outputs, nor affect Jordanian students designated seats and in conformity with international standards used in ranking international universities.
- 5- Provide material and non-material incentives and awards to the universities that meet the annual target proportion of international students for the sake of creating competition among the universities.
- 6- Encourage universities to upgrade their technical side for the attraction of international students, through:
- Development of the universities' websites, which represent their primary technical status.
- Development of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool relating to direct student services at the university and building ongoing relations with them.
- Development of (Online Application) systems.
- Development of Content Management System (CMS) to enhance university enrolment applications.

Proposed marketing methods to attract international students:

The proposed marketing methods are divided into two kinds:

- Traditional methods
- Electronic methods

Traditional Methods:

A- Adoption of attractive logos and marketing brands, through the drafting of a number of academically and promotionally attractive logos; have them approved by the Marketing Unit or Committee and the top management of the institution; outlining duration of use and in light thereof to be placed on all university official publications to create a commercial academic Brand of the university.

The most significant features for any eligible educational institution to be a leading academic and commercial brand are:

- The superb academic level of faculty members, teaching methods and educational outcomes.
- Excellence in the scientific research field.
- Internal quality assurance systems in the university and achieving international quality certifications.
- Special services rendered to the students; achievement of satisfaction and meeting their needs.
- Taking the lead in the technology field and the development of many programs and regulations that support and improve the teaching efforts and services.
- Ability to consolidate academic relations, achieve international accreditations and obtain advanced international classification to the laid out programs.
- Capacity to establish endowments (Waqfs), to attract investment, and to obtain the funding that is necessary to the university's growth and development.
- B- Preparation of publications, pamphlets and documentary films: They should at least be prepared in both English and Arabic, and contain clear information, to be distributed to the recognized and credible media in target markets.
- C- Participation in the marketing campaigns of the Ministry of Higher Education that will be coordinated between all public and private higher education institutions in Jordan for implementation in the target markets.
- D- Conducting press conferences with the newspapers, academic oriented regional and international television channels and magazines, focusing on marketing by highlighting teaching methods and programs of universities, and their outstanding technical capabilities. Furthermore, the Ministry will publish a list of these magazines and channels on the Ministry's website.
- E- Hiring educational and travel agencies to represent universities in marketing and attracting students.
- F- Hosting a number of cultural attaches and ambassadors of international countries: through inviting them to visit higher education institutions in Jordan and providing an overview of Jordanian higher education. During their visit, they should be introduced to all educational institutions and available academic opportunities as detailed in the flyers that will be handed to them.

G- External marketing visits: the external visits should be accurately planned to visit some of the facilities in target countries, with the aim of marketing the higher education institutions and their respective programs and coordinating them under the umbrella of the Ministry of Higher Education.

H- Participation in educational, academic and tourist printouts and directories that publish about Jordan under the sponsorship of the official authorities. A special directory entitled "Study in Jordan" relating to the higher education institutions, tourism, shopping, business, etc. in Jordan should be developed.

I- Collaborate with Jordanian cultural attaches, offices and the diplomatic missions abroad to attract students. The Jordanian government has officially sponsored these offices and missions, and example would be the educational attaches of the Ministry of Higher Education within the Jordanian embassies abroad.

J- Cooperate with international student graduates to talk about the university or to attract their friends and pals (in return for granting scholarships to these graduates to pursue their higher studies at the same university). The graduates will be asked to express their success stories in that educational institution in order to bring to light the benefits of enrolment in the institution as an international student. In addition, video testimonials and special pages should be established on the website, with special emphasis on the reasons behind studying in Jordan and the positive impact on their lives.

K- Hosting and organizing visits to students of regional and international schools inside Jordan and abroad.

L- Establish an alumni club and connect with them, pursue their workplaces, coordinate meetings between them and the international students and establish Student Associations in each university.

M- Promoting faculty members to market their disciplines/universities through lecturing in the regional and international conferences. Their scientific lectures should include slides showing the unique sides of Jordan and the higher education institutions.

Electronic Methods:

Given the Jordanian education institutions have high technical levels; the e-marketing is an important and affecting element, noting that it is a high cost though. Therefore, special emphasis shall be made on reducing marketing capital costs using these means by applying the following electronic methods:

• Development of the Homepages of the MOHE and universities' websites:

to accommodate marketing proposals and new programs, and to include forthcoming school seasons using flash technologies, PDF files and emanating windows, videos and students' impressions. Each Jordanian university will be asked to produce a short film on its website about its services, educational facilities and all competitive merits as an attractive institution to international students; easy access to the homepage and rapid response to inquiries, as well as analysis of the information and the questions and classification thereof.

- Creation of a link for online admission, and for receiving inquiries and responses electronically and physically. In addition, using Smartphone applications in accessing university websites.
- E-mail marketing:

Universities should activate e-marketing increasingly by making available: Online application links, instant links to the university website, (CRM) tools and Inquiries. Furthermore, they can set a certain number of online directories for informative ads about the university, which is often free and does not require frequent effort. They can also use any other CMR or marketing service-related matters such as advertising mail involving marketing slogans, expressive images and ads about the university programs.

• Inclusion of the universities websites in more search engines:

This is also a marketing supportive instrument and some technical expertise may be built on in this field or can be added manually.

Furthermore, advertisement through social media such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Google ads may help in achieving the following:

- 1) Access more clients and attract people who seriously look for information relating to the university and its publicity network.
- 2) Easily control the cost as payment is only made when the person clicks the university advertisement.
- N-Marketing through the current clients (students) of universities:

The current university students represent the most powerful e-marketing means. The current number of students in Jordanian universities is in excess of 40,000, and marketing may take place through e-mail to brief them on the new programs with the option to communicate the same to potential students.

O- Short Message Service (SMS):

At the time being, SMS method is a widespread method. Many companies, internet websites and technical programs provide SMS services in specific volume to the target people. Through this effective method, the number of target people and target party can be identified. Furthermore, certain numbers for specific periods can easily be identified based on cost, required period and volume of the sent message.

P- Advertisement application (free/reduced) on academic and educational websites, through an official application requesting support for publishing a university ad for free or for a discounted price. Provision of certain services that may be rendered as in return in this regard may be considered.

Q- Free online advertisements. There are certain commercial sites, service sites and publicity websites providing free publicity services and can be utilized for university ads to the target segment.

- R- Electronic forums: there is a large number of electronic forums, inter alia, commercial, scientific, youth and others.
- S- Commercial electronic means: to cooperate with the specialized commercial marketing institutions or those providing publicity services.
- T- Cooperate with the international publishing corporations that can be utilized by the universities as partners to attract students and to provide necessary information.
- U- Proposed fee and incentive policies:

the subscribed fee collected from the international students varies from one university to another and from one discipline to another, to attract those students we recommend that the higher education institutions should:

- (1) Provide a package price including the credit hours, registration fee and others.
- (2) Study the tuition of the similar programs in the higher education institutions in the neighboring and competitive countries; provide competitive prices.
- (3) Provide scholarships to the superior students no matter what the nationality is.
- (4) Consider segregation proposal between the tuition fee and registration fee in the university.
- (5) Provide special discounts to the countries or universities granting scholarships to a certain number of students.
- (6) Provide special discounts to the graduates who wish to complete their higher study at the same university.
- (7) Provide special discounts to the sons or grandchildren of graduates from the same university.
- (8) Provide discounts to the brothers enrolled in the same university.

Strategic partners involved in the plan implementation:

- Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research.
- Public and private higher education institutions.
- Higher Education Accreditation Commission.
- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Expatriates.

- Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities.
- Ministry of Culture.
- Ministry of Youth.

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