



Internationalising education: How Mauve can support the education sector

A step-by-step guide to helping
universities go global

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As Dr. Graham Love, Chief Executive of Ireland's Higher Education Authority (HEA), states in his foreword to the report 'The Internationalisation of Irish Higher Education':

The concept of 'international education' is not a new one. For over 1,500 years at least, scholars have travelled the globe in pursuit of knowledge and experience. This appetite for higher learning [...] has been a feature of academic life in the estimated 25,000 higher education institutions currently in the world. ¹



In today's increasingly connected world, reputable educational establishments frequently operate partnership networks, overseas campuses and/or knowledge-exchange programmes. The commercialisation of the education sector compels universities to maintain their competitive advantage in much the same way as organisations in the for-profit sector must. This, combined with the significant increase in enrolments over the last 30 years, a decrease in mobility costs, and an easing of logistical complexities has created a competitive global field for universities. ²

According to the Higher Education Handbook of Theory and Research, some methods of internationalisation currently employed by universities include “developing a global curriculum, hosting international students and scholars, promoting study abroad programs, and establishing cross-border partnerships.” ³

Despite the easing of barriers to global mobility in recent years, universities still face challenges with international hiring or relocation situations – their unique structure and funding models demand careful planning and partnerships that can meet their specific needs. At first sight, mobilising and hiring staff internationally can seem like an overwhelming task; but by asking the right questions, consulting proper experts, and completing the appropriate research, your university can build an efficient global assignment programme.

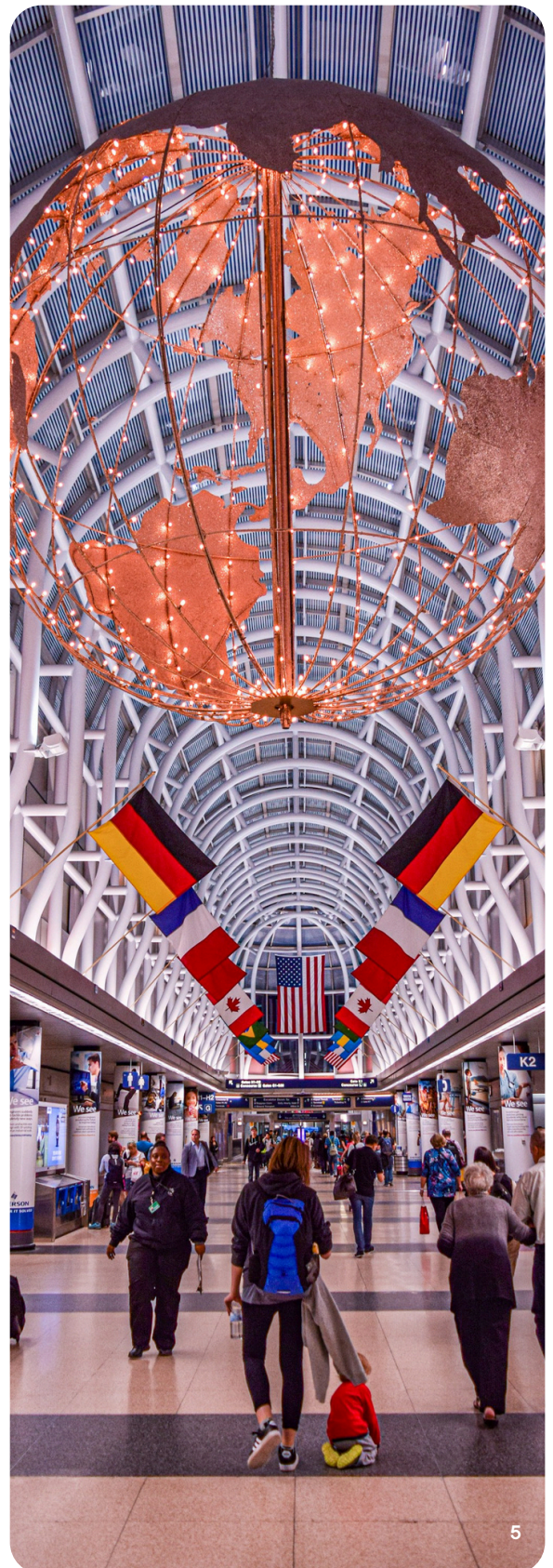
Going global: the unique needs of the education sector

Operational characteristics

Educational establishments cannot be treated the same way as traditional corporate businesses when it comes to global employment. Structure and processes often differ considerably not only between universities, but also between faculties within universities. This can make the management of global assignments complicated for the uninitiated.

On the internal operational side, each department/faculty often manages their own resources, agendas and requirements. Multiple departments and faculties can be involved with one case, and as such, there can be many points-of-contact. The roles universities need to fill, such as faculty staff, post-doctorates and so on to fill, and the timelines they must work to, are determined at departmental level and can differ considerably. The funding for projects and positions may also come from multiple sources.

In addition, educational establishments need to consider international payments and transfer of funds. The university may have stringent requirements relating to cross-border payments due to money laundering rules in their constitutions. Foreign exchange rates and associated bank charges can cause potential monetary losses if paid to local bank accounts.



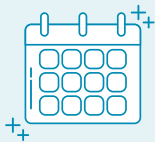
Assignment level variations

Individual position requirements



- Research staff, who are often engaged on fixed-term contracts
- Faculty staff, in permanent roles
- Professors on academic tenures
- Students pursuing post-doctorates
- Students studying on scholarships

Length of assignment



- While some positions may only require employment support for a single semester, other assignments will see staff seconded abroad for many years.
- For example, Mauve Group employed one professor for an Ivy League university who only taught summer programmes in South Africa. He was engaged on a fixed term contract to compliantly enable the short assignment length.

Location



- It is common for university or research staff to move around frequently, sometimes requiring access to multiple countries within one assignment.
- Mauve Group supported a research team led by a notable professor with an archaeological excavation project in Ancient Thrace – a region now spanning three countries, all of which they required access to. We supported the team with employment in Greece, whilst assisting with business visas or short trips to the required countries.

Employment Legislation



- Employment laws differ considerably from country to country, and state to state.
- It is crucial for employers to comply with local laws, no matter how complex.
- The goal of the employer should always be to ensure the employee works in compliance with local laws while achieving the objectives of the assignment.

There is rarely a “one-size fits all” approach to global mobility



Mistakes in global employment usually stem from a lack of understanding of the specific circumstances of the project at hand or from applying a time or cost-saving solution that is not appropriate. As there is very rarely a “one-size fits all” approach to global mobility, take some time to weigh the situation up properly, speak to experts and ensure you have a well-rounded view beforehand. The following questions will be helpful in gaining a better understanding:

Pre-assignment questions to ask

Location

Where will the individual be located?

From a duty of care and compliance viewpoint, what is the stability of that location?

Nationality

Where is the individual from? This could raise further questions about visas, tax liability, etc. and is therefore an important consideration.





Relationship

How is the person connected to your educational institution? Are they a temporary hire and will they be offered another position with your institution once the original project is complete?

Timescale and scope

What type of work will the individual undertake at the planned location and for how long a period?

What are the commencement and completion dates?

Legal, HR and contracts

What type of contract suits the assignment – fixed term, permanent, part-time? Is the individual considered a contractor or a full employee? If you are unsure about the legal definition of the person's role, take the 20-Factor Test to confirm – this can be supplied by a Mauve Group representative.

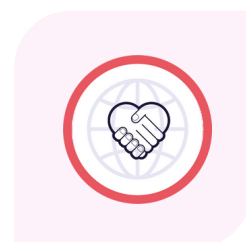
Look at local labour laws – are your HR practices and standard terms acceptable in the country of work? What does local legislation say about performance, disciplinary, and termination procedures?



If a charity is registered in multiple countries, it is still required to follow the laws of each country – there is no one centralised governing legislation that will override local law. Some countries require all branches to act in line with some laws of that country – for example, global educational institutions wishing to establish branches in India must adhere to a set of regulations imposed in 2023.

Tax, payroll and payments

- Where should the employee be paid?
- What is their salary?
- Are there any bonuses, rewards, or expenses due? Do these align with the expected salary levels or legislated in the future country of work?
- Will payment for their assignment come from your organisation, a local branch or a third party? The possibility of fluctuating exchange rates should be considered and if payments will be made to or from a local bank account, consider the logistics of this and any losses which may be incurred as a result.
- Where do they pay tax and social security?
- Are you creating any tax liabilities locally through your chosen solution?



Partners

- Does your university have any local partners who can assist with either advice or services? This may be a local university partner or a third-party specialising in local hire/HR such as lawyers, accountants, and so on.



Future plans

- Is this hire/relocation the gateway to more significant regional operations in the future? A temporary solution may need to evolve into a permanent one further down the line.
- Do you need to take steps to strengthen the organisation's position by establishing a branch or some other form of local entity? It could be more cost-effective to do so if operations are likely to become long-term.



Entity types and structure

- If you are considering setting up an overseas branch of your educational institution, think about the legal structure of your existing organisation and what this means for your expansion options.
- Can you register your institution in-country?
- How will you arrange the organisational structure and autonomy between the central organisation and the local subsidiaries?
- Do you need to change the scope of your organisation at home to include international practices?
- Is your existing entity incorporated or unincorporated – will your trustees remain at central level, or will you require trustees in each country?



Facilitating the global assignment

Global employment solutions providers play a vital role in facilitating the internationalisation of education. From providing employment options such as Employer of Record (EoR) services, to supporting visa and work permit application processes for academics and students going abroad; to supporting universities to offer competitive remuneration packages; to visiting academics, via salary benchmarking services, there are many ways in which these service providers can support.



Employer of Record - A third-party organisation specialising in global employment can provide a type of service known as Employer of Record (EoR). An EoR operates local entities in-country, allowing them to securely and compliantly manage the employment of your staff, while you retain control over the employee's day-to-day activities. EoR companies are well-versed in the local legal knowledge necessary to employ individuals and can navigate the local red tape on your behalf. They will take on responsibility for multiple requirements including local payroll and liaison with the authorities saving you time, expense and stress.

Global Business Expansion - If your operations are almost certainly going to be long-term or permanent, or there are a large number of individuals to be hired, it may be a more cost-effective route to establish a local entity.

This also depends on the individual circumstances of the project and location. There are many types of entity options in each country and without full local knowledge, understanding the process can be complex – a third-party expert supplier can advise on the best option.



Selecting the correct method

The method by which you choose to enable the assignment will depend greatly on the individual circumstances, as these may cause local employment, immigration and taxation laws to come into play. Look carefully at your answers to the questions above, seek expert advice, familiarise yourself with local laws and gauge which option is most beneficial to your assignment goals. These methods include:



Global Payroll - Engaging Mauve Group's Global Payroll service will allow your university to entrust all in-country payroll services to Mauve, who will ensure 100% tax compliance and timely remittance of salaries to your workers abroad. Mauve's local experts establish in-country payroll, including employee registration, with the local authorities.

In-house global payroll experts create and file comprehensive reports, as well as securely-held payroll records – which are accessible at all times. Mauve also keep abreast of all the latest updates to local tax regulations, incentives and can make any necessary changes.

Global HR and Compliance - Mauve Group's Global HR team ensure that workers on the ground have 24 hour in-country support. The team can support universities with policies and procedures, employee handbooks, performance management, absence management, employment factsheets, global mobility guidance, and the onboarding and offboarding processes.

The Global HR team can support universities by ensuring all labour practices, salaries, and contracts are compliant and in adherence with local regulations.

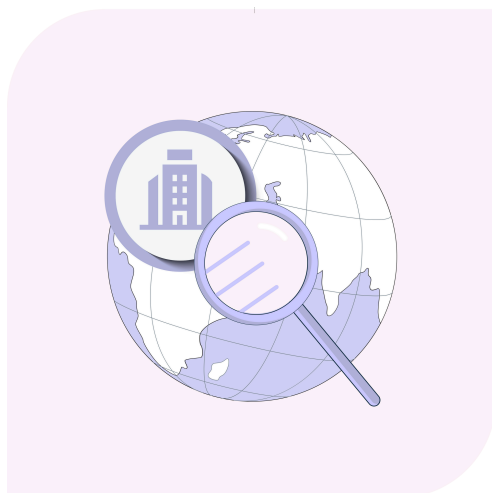
Mauve's HR team can also help universities establish equitable pay structures and reward schemes for their international staff.





Global Visa and Immigration - Mauve Group's team of experts in global visa and immigration can support educational clients to comply with visa, immigration, and residency rules in their country of expansion. In-house experts advise on the best immigration routes, and carry out corporate work permits, global visas, and residency applications. So, educational institutions can trust Mauve with the efficient and compliant transfer of employees.

Independent Contractor Solutions - If the scope of work is for a fixed term and meets certain criteria, independent contracting is another option for educational institutions. To be considered an independent contractor, the worker should generally contract to multiple clients, have their own equipment and should manage their own hours and activities. If they could be characterised as a full employee, there are heavy penalties imposed for misclassification as an independent contractor. Solutions like Agent of Record and Independent Contract Verification can ensure your contracting agreements are fully compliant.



Establishing a local entity - If your operations are almost certainly going to be long-term or permanent, or there are a large number of individuals to be hired, it may be a more cost-effective route to establish a local entity. This also depends on the individual circumstances of the project and location. There are many types of entity options in each country and without local market expertise, understanding the process can be complex – a third-party expert supplier can advise on the best option.

How Mauve can help

Mauve Group is an established global employment solutions provider, offering comprehensive and bespoke packages to organisations the world over – from NGOs, to businesses, to universities.

Mauve Group works in partnership with NACUBO (National Association of College and University Business Officers) and The PIE, a leading voice in the international education sector, connecting the professionals, institutions and businesses supporting international study. We are also a trusted partner to Universities UK International, a collective of 141 universities, working with the government and higher education sector to champion UK higher education.

We have longstanding relationships with a broad scope of educational institutions around the world, including Ivy League establishments, universities, colleges, schools, and professional development organisations. Some of our headline clients include Colorado State University, Teach for All, and CQU Australia.



Case Study

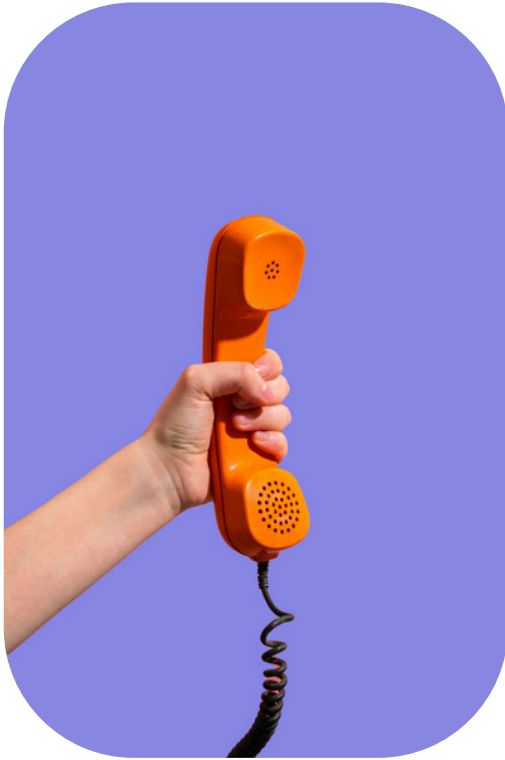
A major research university with one of the largest enrolments in the US was looking for a potential third-party supplier to support its global hiring programme. Their needs extended to a number of locations worldwide, including Pakistan, India and the UAE; the hires were a combination of local and foreign national workers carrying out a variety of activities across both the faculty and research workforces.

After winning a successful tender, Mauve and the university collaborated to gain full sight of the scope of work on these projects, evaluating each individual situation on a case-by-case basis alongside the local conditions in each country in order to find the most appropriate employment solution for the assignment programme's goals and resources. It was ascertained that Employer of Record solutions in each country would be the most efficient route.

Mauve carried out onboarding procedures for each staff member via Mauve's in-country entities, provided local contracts and enrolled them for compliant local payroll. Mauve also assisted with in-country office searches so that the university could establish local bases for their activities.



Get in touch



Contact Mauve today to find out how we can support your educational institution on your global journey.

Send us a message via the online [contact form](#) on our [website](#), and our team of experts will respond to you promptly.

With staff stationed around the world, in multiple time zones, we are ready and waiting to hear from you.

References

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5. Photo by [Engin Yapici](#) on [Unsplash](#)