



Erasmus Policy Statement

International strategy

Internationalisation at our university aims at preparing our future agro-food professionals for the international working environment both within and outside the Netherlands, which they will encounter upon graduation.

We do so by facilitating our staff and students to orientate internationally. Our starting points are:

- To operate locally, Euregionally and internationally
- International profile, but not an international university
- Educational profile based on developments in the industries

Our so-called Learning Line aims at integrating internationalisation from the first study year onwards. Each study year, the Learning Line focuses on another phase:

- 1st year : AWARENESS; continuous attention for internationalisation, increasing notion
- 2nd year : APPLICATION; process of 'notion' to 'importance', substantive consequences of internationalisation on working environment
- 3rd year : PRACTICE; work placement abroad (mandatory), students' attitude and behaviour, confrontation with reality (real life)
- 4rd year : COMPETENT; ready for international working environment, transfer of knowledge/ experiences to younger fellow students

Spearheads are:

For students:

- To integrate international (English taught) modules in the curriculum
- To improve the quality of the international work placement
- To participate in international (graduation) projects from internationally operating companies

For staff:

- To attend international activities within the Netherlands and abroad
- To counsel and/ or operate in international (graduation) projects
- To enable lecturers to realise the spearheads as mentioned for students

The basic rule for our internationalisation strategy is: "Good education is internationally determined."

Reinforcement of the international orientation of our university of applied sciences is consistent with the increasing importance of international knowledge for the professional practice and quickly becomes a 'licence to operate'. Furthermore, the expansion of our international project portfolio contributes to our international positioning and creates opportunities for our students, staff as well as impulses for (international) cooperation.

So far, our university has been active in two kinds of projects; on the one hand, the 'classic' development projects directed towards capacity building, and 'business' projects aiming at international business development on the other hand. Virtually all our current international projects can be classified as the 'classic' type, whereas our study programmes, due to their focus on entrepreneurship and business, mainly correspond to the 'business' type. Therefore, it is required to extend the network linking to international business projects in favour of possibilities for traineeships, excursions and graduation assignments abroad, as well as the international exchange of staff and students. The projected strategy will be, to concentrate on a hybrid format for projects: demand driven from the industry but – when necessary- with a focus on capacity building within the domains of our specific disciplines.



By involving more lecturers and students and the extension of both our network and portfolio, international projects can be a catalyst for:

- Reinforcement of internationalisation in education;
- Increase of international inflow in the study programmes;
- Extension of the international business portfolio (projects, training);
- Reinforcement and linkage of our knowledge development in the field of internationalisation, e.g. through cooperation with universities abroad.

Our university of applied sciences concentrates here on Western regions, emerging economies and developing countries, as far as fitting within the following boundary conditions:

- Selectivity on countries or regions where development cooperation may lead to business development
- Definition of 'developing country' as maintained by the OESD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development)
- Fitting in the Safe Travel Advice provided by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The final selection of a country is made based on the following criteria:

- Locally active Dutch industry (demand driven)
- Our (positive) experience in country or region
- Possibility to cooperate with universities/ research institutes
- Possibility to recruit students (in first instance our student recruitment focuses on the United Kingdom, Germany, Indonesia and Brazil; selection is based on demographic data, supply of HEI, knowledge demand)
- Spearheads of financiers (e.g. selected sectors for investment by Dutch government)

Strategy for the organisation and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects in teaching and training

1. Cooperation with foreign HEI for education & traineeships
2. Proactive focus on projects related to int. business development; reactive on development cooperation projects, which will result in a hybrid form for development projects, and a business focus for emerging economies and the European Union.
3. Demand driven partner focus within our domain (companies/org. in the lead for country- or region selection)
4. Development of a suitable (international) partner network, e.g. by linking traineeships and projects and by participating in 'management groups' defining criteria for international projects.
5. Despite point 3: focus on a selected number of countries, based on:
 - Our experience(s) in the concerning country or region
 - Active (Dutch) industry
 - Student recruitment (e.g. through scholarship programmes)
 - Cooperation with universities
 - Spearheads of financiers (EU, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, FAO, Rabobank Foundation)

The coordination bureau of our university is currently mapping all expertise existing in-house, so as to react faster on demands from the industry and to assess the need for extra expertise. Furthermore, a protocol for efficient management of projects (assessment/acquisition) is being developed. Staff members are stimulated to participate in international projects, e.g. by offering them additional (language or other) training, by putting a sufficient number of hours at their disposal, by relieving them of other obligations within the university and by discussing their (international) ambitions in their personal development plans. Moreover, during the procedure of selection & recruitment of new staff members, international competencies/ experiences/ ambitions of the candidates are being taken into account.



Ambitions for the next phase:

- To involve more students in projects (traineeship/research)
- To develop int. module exchanges (minors) and int. Masters, in collaboration with international partners (EU/non-EU)

Expected impact on modernisation

- Our students will develop a strong international exposure in their domain, which will prepare them for the international working environment which they will encounter upon graduation. Furthermore, international experiences acquired during their studies will increase the 'employability' of our students.
- To increase both work pleasure and possibilities for personal development for our staff; transfer of gained discipline substantive and intercultural experiences, to education
- Long-term, active relationships with international companies, organisations and universities (leading, amongst others, to more possibilities for traineeships, study, research and graduation assignments)
- A financially healthy project portfolio
- To profile our university as a internationally oriented knowledge institute
- Further internationalisation of the individual study programmes (more English-taught modules, joint programmes with international partners, increase of number of guest lectures –both incoming and outgoing- etc.)
- Improvement of the quality of international traineeships (content of the assignment, local supervision and support, measurement of the extent to which the defined learning outcomes have been brought about as well as the extent to which intercultural skills and competences have been developed etc.)
- To impart social corporate responsibility to our students
- To cooperate within the so-called 'golden triangle' (government, industry and knowledge institutes) not just nationally, but also abroad