

ERASMUS+

Declaration on international higher education policy

Internationalisation in the university profile: guidelines

The Hochschule Niederrhein (HSNR for short) sees itself as a university with a strong regional focus in teaching and research. However, it also recognises internationality as an indispensable feature of its educational mission. In line with its mission statement "Overcoming Borders", it sees its task as further developing the international mindset among students, professors and staff and promoting a favourable climate for international activities even more strongly. Small and medium-sized companies in the region are now also operating internationally and need employees who are able to operate competently in international contexts for their business activities. In order to meet these labour market requirements, the HSNR is pursuing a multi-pronged internationalisation strategy that prepares students, lecturers and employees alike for these changed circumstances.

1. **Internationalisation of the degree course portfolio:** With over 80 Bachelor's and over 20 Master's degree courses, the HSNR offers a wide range of courses that meet the special needs of people with caring responsibilities in the family or chronic illnesses, for example, by offering flexible courses. As a university of applied sciences, the HSNR focuses in particular on dual and part-time study programmes as well as on further qualification opportunities that are aimed at students in a wide variety of life situations through low-threshold opportunities to develop international skills. One of HSNR's primary concerns is the further expansion of international degree programmes and English-language modules in its own portfolio in order to strengthen international mobility and competence. With its range of degree programmes, the HSNR meets the needs of the economy for well-trained academics and researchers; its graduates are excellently prepared for the European and global labour market.

2. **International mobility:** The HSNR strives for active participation in all projects and fields of action of the ERASMUS+ programme. It places a particular focus on the expansion of mobility opportunities and the removal of access barriers for target groups with difficult mobility potential. Together with selected partners, it plans to develop joint degree programmes and expand its international networks within the scope of educational partnerships, sym- posia or projects. International mobility and transnational teaching activities offer students and teaching staff at the university the opportunity to acquire specialist, intercultural and language skills locally or abroad.
3. **Cooperation with international partners in research and teaching:** In research, the HSNR works closely with the neighbouring Netherlands and other international partners. The HSNR's R&D activities in regional and international projects benefit local companies and businesses as well as local and international students and teaching staff. Research-related stays abroad are financially supported on application as part of the internal research funding programme "International Exchange of Researching Scientists".

Fields of action for internationalisation at the HSNR

The university places the above-mentioned general guidelines for internationalisation at the forefront of its efforts. The following section presents individual core areas that play a key role in translating the guidelines into concrete measures.

Internationalisation on site

International students, who enrich the study environment and campus life, are part of the internationalisation on site. Foreign graduates are also an important link between German companies and production sites worldwide. The focus of efforts to increase internationalisation on site is therefore on English-language Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes, for example in the Department of Economics, which also appeal to international students and offer German students low-threshold opportunities to gain international experience through integrated and pre-structured mobility windows. To promote student exchange but also to improve the language skills of its own students, the Executive Board also agrees with the departments that modules totalling 30 credit points will be offered in English.

International mobility for students

The HSNR attaches particular importance to promoting the mobility of its students on Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes. The very practice-oriented Bachelor's degree programmes all include practical phases that can be used for studying abroad. Students should be motivated to do an internship or study abroad through early information, interesting cooperation partners, good counselling and support.

For less mobile students, the HSNR offers one- to two-week seminars with selected partners abroad, such as International Tax Week, intensive programmes with Scandinavian partners, a postgraduate course in Vic- timology in Dubrovnik: International Tax Week, intensive programmes with Scandinavian partners, a postgraduate course in Vic- timology in Dubrovnik, a joint Master's module with Pamplona, as well as two-month internships in Bangladesh for students in the textile sector.

The Master's degree programmes open up further opportunities for mobility for students. The HSNR sees its task here as finding more partners with suitable study programmes. Cooperations also open up the possibility of international doctoral studies for Master's graduates. Doctoral projects are already being supervised in the UK and the Netherlands.

Double-degree programmes

The Department of Textile and Clothing Technology has been offering a double degree with Tiangong University in China in the Textile and Clothing Management (TCM) Bachelor's degree programme since 2014. The Faculty of Business and Economics offers further double degrees, for example the German-French Bachelor's and Master's degree programme in International Marketing with the Université de Haute Alsace in France and the Bachelor's degree programme in International Business (D-Finnish). The double degree programmes are a core element of internationalisation at the HSNR and are to be continuously improved and consolidated.

International mobility for employees

The HSNR promotes the exchange of employees in research and teaching. Mobility is fully supported and recognised both ideally and financially. It is an essential part of promoting international expertise, knowledge of foreign higher education and science systems and exchange on current trends and topics in administration, teaching and research. As part of staff development, employees have the opportunity to participate in further training at a university partner. The necessary language skills can be acquired directly at HSNR. Staff in the student and examination offices receive regular training in subject-related English in order to better support foreign students.

Overall, the Hochschule Niederrhein wants to offer students and employees attractive partners in terms of subject matter and at the same time be an attractive partner for guests in the context of international cooperation.

International co-operations and projects

The HSNR has cooperation agreements with over 100 Erasmus partners and over 30 other universities worldwide. These active co-operations are to be maintained, as they are an expression of the partners' shared interest in the further development of teaching and research. New contacts are specifically established in countries where the university is not yet represented in order to enable students and researchers to expand their international competences worldwide. In addition to maintaining its long-standing cooperation with partner universities in other European countries, the HSNR is also specifically focussing on non-European countries when establishing and expanding its partnerships. A particular focus of the university is the expansion of co-operations in regions that are of particular scientific and strategic interest to the subject areas (e.g. Asia in the field of textile engineering).

Finally, the HSNR's internationalisation efforts are also expressed in numerous international projects in teaching and research, e.g. in the form of seminars and symposia. New projects will focus in particular on current topics that are of central importance for the future development of the economy and society, e.g. sustainability, health, food, work ethics, inclusion, social responsibility and others.

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