

HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht International Orientation

Narrative

At **HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht**, some 40,000 people of more than 100 different nationalities work on and study the societal challenges of today and tomorrow in one of the most competitive regions in Europe. We develop competencies, knowledge and solutions that are needed for and in the professional practice. Over the past 25 years, we have trained 150,000 **innovative professionals** and put our research on the map; this makes us one of the **drivers of social change**. We make an important contribution to the **development of the professional practice** and participate in an **open, fair and sustainable society**. The world is our playing field: we contribute to solutions to local and global challenges at both regional and international level.

An international orientation is inextricably bound to the role we, as a University of Applied Sciences, wish to fulfil in society with our practice-based research and education. This is reflected in our ambitions.

- Based on our profile, 'quality of life and society in our urban environment', we work on **mission-driven challenges** set out in the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. To that end, our key focal points are **sustainability, health and well-being, education and digitalisation**. These tasks are border-crossing and they demand cross-border cooperation. We wish to further develop our international expertise and capacity needed to work on innovative solutions. We can learn by applying international perspectives to similar local challenges.
- This can only be achieved in close collaboration with networks of reliable and complementary partners. The social assignments are characterised by their complexity and demand a trans-disciplinary, smart and creative approach. The **HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht community** is ready to meet the challenge of realising the world of tomorrow in collaboration with our **regional, European** and other **international partners**.
- It is more important now than ever before to **continue to learn and develop**, as well as to acquire new skills for the future, regardless of time and place, and to keep up with and develop those skills. Knowledge development happens worldwide and professionals are continuously monitoring developments in their work and research fields to be able to work with state-of-the-art information. This makes an international orientation indispensable in our education and research.
- We enable our students to develop into global citizens and to acquire competencies that are indispensable in a globalised community that contributes to a **meaningful and successful** society and professional practice. An innovative professional has **interpersonal competencies, intercultural sensitivity and an international orientation**.
- The **digitalisation of society** lowers the threshold for broadening the horizon of education and research. We use digital options to facilitate internationalisation 'at home' and to develop closer cooperation in European research. **Digital resources** also play an increasingly important role in the acquisition of competencies in the field of substantive knowledge sharing and in the form of cooperation and connection with international partners.

In short, international orientation is in the DNA of our society and is therefore an inseparable component of our education and research. We have partners all over the world with whom we exchange knowledge, experience, students and personnel. This is a continuous process of joint education through bachelors, masters, minors and summer courses, research projects, virtual exchange, work placements and honours projects. This process is facilitated by the application of international knowledge and experience in our literature. So, the question is not *whether* we need to internationalise our education and research, but *how* further extension of our international orientation will benefit the entire HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht community.