



HU INTERNATIONAL ORIENTATION GUIDELINES



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1. INTRODUCTION

The world at large is already well represented within our HU community: more than 100 different nationalities work and study at the HU. Together, we work on issues related to our profile: quality of living together in the urban environment. These issues play an important role in the Utrecht region, as well as in many other places around the globe. It is therefore valuable, sometimes even necessary, to exchange knowledge and experience about this, to collaborate with other regions and to learn from each other. In implementing our 'HU in 2026' ambition plan, we cannot only focus on our own region, and we must embrace the international aspects of education and research.

The international perspective provides different insights, from which we and our partners benefit. The standards in the disciplines for which we train our students are international, because disciplines are not confined by national borders in terms of content. We incorporate this international perspective into our education and research. This does not only involve qualifications and contributing to social challenges, but personal development as well. We educate citizens who are able to participate in a globalised world, i.e. global citizens. This can be achieved in many ways, such as through the exchange of people, knowledge, skills, experience, or perspectives. With the guidelines, we describe how we, at the HU, can jointly ensure that further international orientation benefits the HU community, the quality of our education and research and society.

International Orientation

Throughout the rest of this document we use the term international orientation and not internationalisation. This is a conscious choice, because the latter term implies that the HU would be striving for substantial growth in the number of international students and English-language study programmes. That is not the case. There will be no such growth targets. Moreover, not every study programme or discipline benefits equally from an international orientation. The degree and manner of international orientation varies greatly within the HU, even though there is a belief that every study programme and every discipline benefits from a certain minimum international orientation. That nuance is not evident when the term 'internationalisation' is used. The term 'internationalisation' can also give the impression that more is always better and therefore risks becoming an end in itself, rather than a means to achieve other ambitions. In this document, we make it clear that an international orientation touches on a wide range of subjects, with which the term internationalisation is less likely to be associated. Think of interculturality and diversity, but also of the international aspects of regional issues that our education and research often focus on.

University of Applied Sciences

Both nationally and internationally, the HU presents itself as a University of Applied Sciences (UAS). That is how we indicate that we conduct applied and practice-oriented education and research and that we try to connect education and research as much as possible, in close collaboration with professional practice and society. The use of the term UAS is also important for international orientation, because it is a recognisable label that opens up a world of like-minded educational and research organisations around the globe, with which we can collaborate, present ourselves internationally as a knowledge institution and demonstrate our importance for European research and innovation programmes.

Cross-Border Societal Challenges

Regionally, we can ideally expand our innovative knowledge ecosystems in which we jointly come to new and applicable knowledge that is also nationally and internationally relevant. Here, the Sustainable Development Goals¹ (SDGs) provide a compass for working with regional and international partners on cross-border, mission-driven challenges². Our areas of expertise are in sustainability, health & well-being, education and digitalisation.

Process Description

The development of the HU International Orientation Guidelines started in 2019. In the run-up to 'HU in 2026', the HU's current institutional plan, a representation of knowledge centres, institutes and services came up with the vision 'We train and prepare student for a global world' (2019). Whereas in 'HU in 2020' the HU's international orientation was left to individual study programmes, the new institution plan, 'HU in 2026', has a more international orientation partly based on the vision 'We are training for a global job'.³

The five HU ambitions as defined in the institutional plan have been elaborated in the International Orientation Narrative⁴ to show how international orientation can help in the realisation of the ambitions. In this document, the narrative has been further detailed on behalf of the Executive Board, outlining goals and requirements to realise the ambitions of the HU. The key question in this matter is: how can the international orientation - of education, research and services - and the international narrative concretely contribute to the realisation of the HU's ambitions as described in 'HU in 2026'?

Chapter 2 first sets out the HU's ambitions from an international perspective. Next, in Chapter 3, those ambitions are translated into more concrete goals and requirements within the organisation. These goals and requirements are accompanied by a fictional illustration: an example of what the HU might look like in 2026.

For this detailing, colleagues were consulted and informed through employee panels, directors' days and consultations. Input and feedback was collected and processed and resulted in the various (intermediate) products, which resulted in these guidelines by mid-2022.

1 <https://www.sdgnerland.nl/de-17-sdgs/>

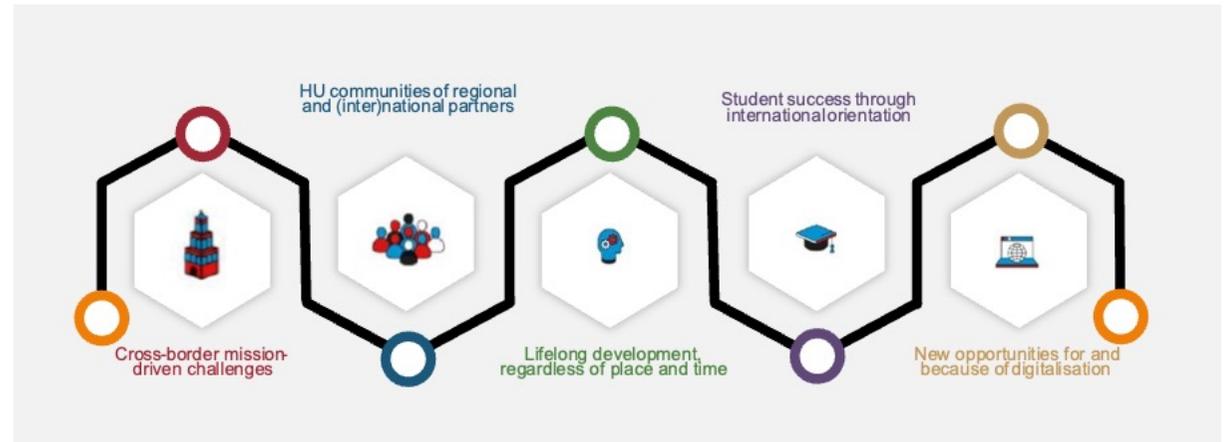
2 <https://husite.nl/duurzaam/duurzame-hu/onderwijs-onderzoek/>

3 <https://husite.nl/gointernational/wp-content/uploads/sites/287/2020/12/0-Visie-Internationalisering-HU-brede-werkgroep-2019.pdf>

4 <https://husite.nl/gointernational/wp-content/uploads/sites/287/2021/01/Narratief-basis-1.0-1.pdf>

2. AMBITIONS

Based on our institutional plan 'HU in 2026', from an international perspective we have specified the requirements to realise the five ambitions mentioned. In doing so, the International Orientation Narrative was started and further specified in guidelines in terms of goals and requirements.



1. **Cross-border mission-driven challenges.** We are working on mission-driven challenges which do not vanish at country borders. Many of these challenges require a coordinated, international approach. International collaboration can also be of great value when seeking solutions for local or regional issues. It is therefore important that we contribute to mission-driven challenges and international research agendas with our education and research.
2. **HU communities of regional and international partners.** We are building strong and lasting relationships with international partners. We actively participate in networks that are often connected to the international professional profiles we are training our students for. We are developing as a reliable, international collaboration partner and we are training students who are able to work in the Utrecht region and everywhere else in the Netherlands, but also in other places in the world.
3. **We are becoming a knowledge institution where learning and research can take place regardless of place and time (or age).** This includes personalised learning based on a differentiated range, in a way that matches the needs, desires and interests of students and the professional practice. This may mean working in places (and at times) other than the home base. We also provide opportunities for HU employees to professionalise, in line with the needs, and we ensure alignment with global knowledge development. Part of this is internal and external knowledge exchange with our international colleagues, partners and (international) networks.
4. **We achieve student success through students developing international and intercultural competences during their studies.** We enable students to acquire competences that are indispensable in our globalising society, to make a meaningful contribution to society and professional practice. Not only do students develop professional and research competences, their studies also contribute to the development of global citizenship and an international professional outlook.
5. **We enable our students and employees to fully participate and shape a (digital) learning and working environment in which national borders play a less important role.** We seize opportunities that a digital learning and working environment has to offer, such as increased international collaboration, digital connectivity and the exchange of knowledge and information. We enable students and employees to connect with the rest of the world and gain digital competences that are needed to do so.



3. GOALS AND REQUIREMENTS

In this chapter, we elaborate on the ambitions by setting goals and setting out the requirements for achieving these goals. By way of illustration, examples have been included per ambition to connect the sometimes abstract character with practical situations that can be considered. The goals listed aim for departments/teams/ study programmes/research groups/services to collaborate and to determine what this means for them.

Cross-border mission-driven challenges	
International orientation	<p>We are working on mission-driven challenges which do not vanish into thin air at the border. Many of these challenges require a coordinated, international approach. International collaboration can also be of great value when seeking solutions for local or regional issues. It is therefore important that we contribute to mission-driven challenges and international research agendas through our education and research.</p> <p>Our work is based on the 'healthy and sustainable living (together) in an urban environment' profile and we have designated the following areas of expertise (focus points): healthy together, sustainable together, digital together, learning together. This is what our education and research is based upon.</p>
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We relate to the state-of-the-art of international knowledge development in education and research. The knowledge base of our entire offer is therefore by definition internationally oriented. • We collaborate with international partners with similar and/or complementary profiles, where contributing and acquiring knowledge are equal goals. • All education, research and projects within this can be linked to at least one of our four areas of expertise and, in doing so, to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). • In research programming and educational development, international social challenges and agendas are given a central place, alongside regional and national ones. • Internationally, we present ourselves through our areas of expertise. • The percentage of our European applications, of which we are the leading organisation, is growing, which gives us the opportunity to position ourselves more clearly as a full-fledged international partner. • Before 2026, the HU will be organisationally capable of being a leader of at least one Horizon application. • We actively contribute to the regional Utrecht Talent Alliance through the training of international talent.
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time and resources for active participation in sector-specific international (professional) networks and knowledge networks. • Knowledge of and coordination on commitment to international (European) agendas and grant programmes, both in education and research. • Supporting/facilitating European project applications and project management (including through the Research journey). • Active international profiling and visibility from our areas of expertise, mission-driven challenges and practice-based education and research. • Professionalisation of tutors- researchers regarding international collaboration. • International offer (English-language) matching the labour market demand.

International HU in 2026 example/illustration:

Bjorn is a teacher-researcher in the field of lifestyle and health. It is important in his position to participate in a European platform where fellow researchers, companies and policy makers join forces. On the one hand, this allows him to build a solid international network, from which he can learn how his subject is dealt with in other countries and with which he can act jointly to acquire European funding. On the other hand, through the platform, he can influence European policies and research programmes, for example through position papers. The HU has a budget available for participation in this type of European domain-oriented platforms that provides for both member fees and hours to play a significant role within these platforms. In addition, the process of booking affiliated conferences and meetings on-site, from travel and accommodation to claiming other costs, is clear to Bjorn.

HU communities of regional and international partners

International orientation	We are building strong and lasting relationships with international partners. We actively participate in networks that are often linked to the international professional profiles we are training our students for. We are developing as a reliable, international collaboration partner and we are training students who are able to work in the Utrecht region and everywhere else in the Netherlands, but also in other places in the world. We value long-term relationships and transdisciplinary collaboration, with active and committed partners. Together, we develop and share knowledge and experience. And we enable our students and employees to build and maintain international partnerships and professional networks.
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Every study programme and research group has at least a sustainable network of relevant European partners.• Together with our regional partners, we work on local challenges of which we share the results in our international networks and vice versa.• Education, research and service employees gain inspiration and experience through collaboration and benchmarking/comparison with the international HU community.• Through our internal networks (e.g. HU international specialist groups (Kerngroepen Internationaal)), we know how to find each other on relevant topics.• International students and employees feel at home and safe at the HU.
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time and resources for maintenance of international networks and partnerships.• International visits for conference/partner/benchmark is part of individual and team professionalisation.• Regional and international relationship management/stakeholder management at central and decentralised levels, supported by a (CRM) system.• Good facilitation of exchange of teachers, researchers, support staff and students.• Active, international profiling via www.internationalhu.com.• Investing responsibility for organising exchange of international knowledge and experience.• We offer HU activities that are accessible to everyone and contribute to the community feeling.

International HU in 2026 example/illustration:

Jacqueline works on diversity and inclusion for the HU. There is a lot of information exchange between the Dutch universities of applied sciences on how the organisations can execute the best possible inclusion policy. But Jacqueline actually also hears best practices from foreign universities and how they deal with issues that arise in an organisation with a lot of diversity, both in the student population and among employees. Eager to learn from other cases, she asks her director to make contact with four universities of applied sciences in other countries. First she establishes digital contact and sets up a number of meetings. At two universities, she organises a site visit.

We are developing into a knowledge institution where learning and research can take place regardless of place and time	
International orientation	<p>This includes personalised learning based on a differentiated range, in a way that matches the needs, desires and interests of students and the professional practice. This may mean working in places (and at times) other than the home base. We also provide opportunities for HU employees to professionalise in line with the needs, and we ensure alignment with global knowledge development. Part of this is internal and external knowledge sharing with our international colleagues, partners and (international) networks.</p> <p>We share knowledge and experience both in the classroom and on the work floor as well as on-site, using both physical and online forms of working. Our organisation and its professionals have the tools and knowledge/experience to shape and implement this.</p>
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For students, both new and leaving, we offer the possibility of international, flexible (short-term/blended) forms of education. • HU developments surrounding 'lifelong learning', such as part-time education and a flexible range, are also considered from the perspective of potential international participants. • For a fee, external international students and professionals can participate in certain international components of our study programmes. • A professionalisation range on internationalisation is available, in-house or externally, matching the needs of our employees. • Benchmark activities with our local, regional and international partners are part of our quality assurance in the learning organisation.
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent English-language education modules. • Online content, at all levels, available to you at a time and place of your choice. • Professionalisation range for employees on internationalisation. • Vision on quality assurance including benchmarking activities with partners. • International orientation to one's field of work is part of the interview cycle (RGW)/PDCA. • Adequate facilitation and support for employees and students that suits working and studying independent of place and time. • International recruitment.

International HU in 2026 example/illustration:

Imre has a Virtual International Cooperation Project (VIS) with two international educational institutions: one in China and one in Australia. A self-chosen theme related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) takes centre stage. Imre has also involved a Vocational education institution (ROC), because there is intensive collaboration on the SDGs with this particular education institute at other times as well. For training and advice on the development of the VIS, Imre can turn to experience experts in this area. Because the institutions participate from different time zones, part of the project has been prepared in English and made available on a digital platform that all participants can access. There are carefully scheduled moments where everyone has to participate online. In addition, work can be carried out in subgroups at self-selected times and with a working method of their choice.

We achieve student success through students developing international and intercultural competences during the course of their study programme

International orientation	<p>We enable students to acquire competences that are indispensable in our globalising society for making a meaningful contribution to society and professional practice. Not only do students develop professional and research competences, their studies also contribute to the development of global citizenship and an international professional outlook.</p> <p>Students view their future profession from a global perspective and possess the intercultural and international competences to relate to global developments in their professional practice and a diverse context. The diversity of our own HU community provides a safe environment to develop these skills. Our inclusive and accessible university of applied sciences ensures that every student and employee feels at home.</p>
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All students and employees gain international experience at home or abroad.• There is room in every curriculum for professional and personal development that contributes to global citizenship and an international vision on the specific professional field. Intercultural competences and international collaboration form the foundation for this.• Everyone matters. The diversity of our HU community (students and employees) flourishes and we utilise this for student well-being and their success. This is documented in a Diversity & Inclusion ambition plan.
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offer for and focus on professional and personal development on global citizenship and an international professional vision.• Gaining international experience is available and accessible to all. This can be at home or abroad, suited to the study programme and the individual student.• Adequate facilitation and support of employees and students, suited to the activities at home and abroad.• Diversity and Inclusion Ambition Plan and its implementation.

International HU in 2026 example/illustration:

Lucy is a third-year mechanical engineering student at the HU. She has almost completed her bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering. Over the past three years, not only has she learned how to be a good mechanical engineer in her own region, but also what the different international perspectives on her profession are and what that means for her profession. What major, international developments is her profession part of? What does it take to also be able to work within a large multinational corporation? Through information on this during her classes in Utrecht, as well as through work placement/exchange abroad, she has developed a good idea of such an international view on her profession. During the process she has also built an international network and has learned to express herself well in English, both socially and professionally.

We enable students and employees to fully participate and shape a (digital) learning and working environment, in which national borders play a less important role	
International orientation	We seize the opportunities that a digital learning and working environment has to offer, such as increased international collaboration, digital connectivity and exchange of knowledge and information. We enable students and employees to connect with the rest of the world and gain digital competences that are needed to do so. In blended forms of collaboration, physical and online exchanges alternate to build and maintain lasting relationships. Secure and people-oriented digitisation is based on international collaboration. Our employees are equipped to collaborate optimally, digitally and internationally.
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every study programme has an integrated virtual or blended international programme component to facilitate internationalisation@home. • Our digital facilitation offers a good and secure way of online collaboration besides physical international exchange. • Our services are equipped to provide services, regardless of place and time. Language and national borders are a challenge like any other. • Every employee and student feels digitally competent to collaborate internationally.
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classrooms with facilities for hybrid education, research and meetings. • Technical support and instructions available in English. • Adequate service provision suited to collaboration with other countries, systems and time zones. • Help and support in finding the ideal tools in the collaboration with (international) partners. • Professionalisation offer for digitisation and online international collaboration. • General communication towards students, employees and partners is available in an accessible bilingual format.

International HU in 2026 example/illustration:

Richairo works at a company in the Utrecht region and is enrolled in a part-time accounting study programme at the HU. As part of the programme, he works with students from Canada, as part of internationalisation@home. Given the time difference, this requires Richairo, sometimes individually, sometimes in groups, to connect with his collaboration partners in Canada at irregular hours. He and his fellow students can stay at the HU until late for meetings, and if they run into ICT problems (connection, video, sound, etc.) someone is available for support, even late at night. A toolbox is available to help make decisions in online international collaboration, providing information on matters such as different digital platforms, apps and tools, each with their pros and cons, related to the countries/regions with which they collaborate.



4. INFORMATION AND CONTACT

For Information and the documents as mentioned in previous paragraphs go to:

<https://husite.nl/gointernational>

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