

Action Plan for Internationalisation at the University of Agder (2022 – 2026)

UiA educates global citizens. Both students and staff are aware that they are part of the global community and that their choices have a global impact. Internationalisation in the broadest sense is crucial for the University of Agder to succeed in achieving the goals set in the university's strategy. The vision Co-creation of tomorrow's knowledge must be realised not only regionally and nationally, but also internationally. The university's values: trust, respect, openness and academic quality must characterise our attitude towards international staff, students and partners. Furthermore, an international mindset is crucial for the academic culture we want to characterise our institution: academic freedom, sustainability and diversity. International cooperation will also help strengthen the work within the interdisciplinary priority areas.

Internationalisation will contribute to higher quality in the university's study programmes through collaboration with international partners, mobility and a broad range of study opportunities open to international students. Furthermore, internationalisation will contribute to UiA's students gaining access to global perspectives through their education. The action plan supports the goals and activities expressed in UiA's Erasmus Policy Statement 2020–24. International collaboration is a prerequisite for high quality research. This action plan must be seen in the context of the faculties' own research strategies; the university's forthcoming action plan for research, artistic development work and innovation; the action plan for equality, inclusion and diversity; and the university's language policy guidelines, all of which contain measures that are relevant to internationalisation, but which are not duplicated here.

This action plan deals with goals and measures on an institutional level to support the internationalisation work that is carried out by the individual faculties and the Teacher Education Unit. The faculties have drawn up their own strategic plans and plans for EU cooperation for the same period as this action plan. The plan is based on the goals within the four priority areas of the university's strategy and supplements the faculties' own plans. The plan also clarifies how the participation of the University of Agder in the European university alliance FORTHEM will contribute to the university achieving its goals. Measures where FORTHEM is particularly relevant are marked with FORTHEM in brackets. This in no way precludes cooperation with partners outside of FORTHEM. The internationalisation of education, research and artistic development work are linked, and therefore the action plan presents 4 overarching themes with goals, sub-goals and prioritised measures.

INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS

GOAL: UiA's internationalisation activities shall contribute to the increased visibility and attractiveness of the university for international, national and regional partners. UiA will use its international network in the development of research, artistic development and innovation collaboration and educational quality.

MEASURES

- Evaluate existing institutional partners (universities, institutes, networks and organisations) with a view to strengthening or possibly ending the collaboration
- Use the EURAXESS network actively to increase participation in international research projects
- Connect international partners within exchange/internship placements with research collaboration and vice versa, in order to strengthen the link between research and education and contribute to increased internationalisation through the existing links to international partners
- Develop a campaign aimed at ambassadors accredited to Norway to promote UiA and the region
- Organise events where academic staff can build connections with international research clusters, companies and organisations
- Participate in international research and education projects
- Create opportunities for international students and PhD students to gain experience in companies and organisations in the region through internship placements, projects or other activities (FORTHEM)
- Develop more courses/programmes in collaboration with international partners, including summer schools and further education offers (FORTHEM)
- Create an interdisciplinary FORTHEM FOR UiA team to contribute to the positive development of the alliance

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

GOAL: As part of the students' education, UiA will highlight global and international perspectives.

MEASURES

- Organise an interdisciplinary workshop series to exchange experiences on the integration of global perspectives in study programmes
- Support the faculties that wish to introduce international certificates to highlight the students' international competence following the model of the nursing programme
- Investigate priorities for cooperation with countries included in the Panorama strategy and the Global South
- Involve SAIH, Scholars at Risk and Students at Risk in communicating global challenges
- Make use of visiting researcher grants and staff mobility systematically and strategically
- Expand the offer of preparatory courses for outgoing exchange students to increase the students' cultural understanding and benefits from a stay abroad

STUDENT MOBILITY

GOAL: Achieve the long-term goal proposed by the Norwegian Parliament of 50% mobility, increase the proportion of international students on degree programmes offered in English, and increase the opportunities for international experience for all students at UiA.

Sub-goal: Ensure high quality and relevance in the offer to outgoing and incoming exchange students

MEASURES

- Offer foreign language courses for students planning an exchange to non-English-speaking countries (FORTHEM)
- Further develop opportunities for students to take internship placements abroad as part of their degree (FORTHEM)
- Expand the offer of Norwegian courses available for incoming students so that as many as possible can participate

Sub-goal: Increase the number of outgoing students (a 15% increase each year)

MEASURES

- Establish an ambassador scheme for students who have been on exchange
- Increase digitalisation, which includes the use of the Erasmus Without Paper network, the European Student Card and the Online Learning Agreement to streamline processes related to mobility
- Facilitate short term mobility and virtual exchange to give more students international experience
- Lobby with other institutions for the Ministry of Education to also count shorter stays and virtual exchange towards achieving the target of 50% exchange
- Pilot active exemption from student exchange in strategically selected study programmes
- Strengthen communication of exchange opportunities
- Promote exchange opportunities as part of recruiting students to UiA

Sub-goal: Increase the number of incoming exchange students (a 15% increase each year) and degree students (goal: 50% international students on programmes offered in English)

MEASURES

- Assess accommodation options for international students
- Assess the offer for international degree students and exchange students in the follow-up of the strategic study programme review
- Set up a service team that handles targeted recruitment and admission of international degree students (from recruitment to arrival)
- Establish a scheme where international students can act as student ambassadors for UiA at educational institutions abroad
- Develop individual courses taught in English that can be collectively included in different study programmes (at least 30 credits each semester)

DEVELOPING THE WORKING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

GOAL: Internationalisation at home should contribute to a good learning environment for all students at UiA, as well as contribute to a good working environment for all employees. Refer to the Action Plan for Equality, Inclusion and Diversity, the Action Plan for Communication and

UiA's Language Policy Guidelines for additional measures.

Sub-goal: Use internationalisation strategically for skills upgrading among academic and administrative staff.

MEASURES

- Increase staff mobility with partners through existing internal, regional, national, and international means (FORTHEM)
- Systematise PhD mobility, so that young researchers, especially, can undertake an international research placement, either at an international research institution, educational institution, or another relevant establishment (FORTHEM)
- Actively use staff mobility as part of career development (FORTHEM)
- Follow up the measures in UiA's HRS4R strategy (human resource strategy for researchers)

Sub-goal: Attract and retain highly skilled international students and staff who also want to remain in the region

MEASURES

- Review the structure and organisation of international work at UiA with a view to suitably implementing the measures in the action plan
- Review external websites in English on UiA.no with regard to language, quality and division of responsibilities
- Develop and market events that attract Norwegian and international students and staff
- Involve the student societies in the inclusion work and collaborate with them on international activities (FORTHEM)
- Recruit more international alumni and keep in regular contact with alumni living abroad
- Work systematically to raise UiA's ranking in international ranking systems where UiA is already assessed
- Develop a mentoring scheme for international employees without Norwegian connections
- Further develop cooperation with regional actors to attract and retain international employees