



artevelde university college ghent

MEMBER OF GHEENT UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION

# Framework Document

## Internationalisation@arteveldeuniversitycollege

*“33% mobile students & 100% mobility of the mind”*

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## 1. Introduction

In the past, the internationalisation policy of many higher education institutions focused mainly on 'student mobility' and, by extension, staff mobility. In recent years, however, the international dimension has become increasingly important in our university college. In five years' time, the number of students undertaking an international study or internship has doubled, the number of incoming students has risen considerably every year, an increasing number of lecturers went to teach at host institutions, the first English-taught study programme was established, course units focussing on diversity and interculturalism were created, etc.

Internationalisation is more than mobility. But what exactly does it mean? In this vision statement, we would like to define **what** we mean by 'internationalisation' at Artevelde University College, **why** we want to work on this and **how** we will do so.

## 2. What Is Internationalisation?

At Artevelde University College, we follow the definition of Hans de Wit et al. (2015)<sup>i</sup>. He defines internationalisation as follows:

*'The intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions, and delivery of post-secondary education, in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to society.'*

Hence, according to de Wit, internationalisation is **a process** where the international dimension (focus on different countries), the intercultural dimension (focus on diversity and different cultures) and the global dimension (focus on the bigger picture, worldwide) are introduced in all sections of the university college.

Internationalisation is therefore a matter for all stakeholders. It is **a cross-cutting theme** which is found throughout the organisation, both vertically and horizontally, and which affects all processes of the university college.

In that sense, internationalisation is also **a culture**. That culture is reflected in the strategy, structures, education, research and services, HR policy and partnerships of the university college. Each act is viewed from an international and intercultural mindset.

### 3. Why Focus on Internationalisation?

As defined above, internationalisation is not an end in itself but rather a means/a lever to strengthen the core missions of the university college (education, research and services). The Flemish Education Council (VLOR or *Vlaamse Onderwijsraad*) states that, given the social developments, the mission of higher education must essentially be (re)considered from a global perspective and internationalisation must be a fundamental premise of higher education in Flanders<sup>ii</sup>. After all, according to this advisory body, international cooperation in the field of education and research as well as sending students abroad and receiving foreign students, both lead to new insights that stimulate higher education and scientific research in Flanders.

Because the world and the government expect us to, but even more from the conviction that our university college is a social enterprise that wants to ensure a maximum quality of its core processes, we, at Artevelde University College, consider internationalisation as a lever to:

1. reinforce the professional identity of students and staff;
2. improve the quality of our education;
3. enhance the quality of our research;
4. facilitate our social mission;
5. shape our appreciative organisation;
6. optimise our quality management;
7. intensify our international profile.

## 4. How to Realise Internationalisation?

At our university college, the process of internationalisation is integrated in our strategy, HR policy, education, research, services, integral quality management and in our sustainable international partnerships. The CIGE ('Center for Internationalization and Global Engagement') of the American Council of Education talks about 'comprehensive internationalisation' when internationalisation is interwoven in the various sectors and processes of the university college.

Figure 1: Comprehensive internationalisation<sup>iii</sup>



### 4.1 Through Vision and Strategy

Internationalisation is a cross-cutting theme that is incorporated in the mission of the university college, the strategic institutional plan, the strategic programmes and projects, the study programme plans and the policy plans of offices. This way, Artevelde University College expresses an **institutional commitment**, being that it wants to devote time, space, people and resources to work on a planned and integrated internationalisation.

## 4.2 Through Leadership, Structure and HR Policy

Internationalisation is important to the management of Artevelde University College. Investments are made in an **internationalisation office** and **internationalisation officers** in each study programme. An internationalisation **forum** serves as a consultation structure in which various involved parties prepare policies, help implementing policies and share expertise.

All staff members (both the teaching and technical staff) contribute to constructing the international network of the university college. They strengthen the international mindset of the organisation and set a great example for students. The ambition is to embed internationalisation in the HR policy of the university college.

### **4.2.1 Recruitment and Promotion**

For recruitment and promotion, the international and intercultural orientation of employees is taken into account.

### **4.2.2 Performance Reviews**

During performance reviews, staff mobility and international cooperation are encouraged and explored.

### **4.2.3 Incoming and Outgoing Staff Mobility**

As an innovation-oriented organisation, Artevelde University College promotes incoming and outgoing staff mobility. To this end, it reduces potential barriers and implements new frameworks and initiatives that facilitate and disseminate these international activities. One of the focus areas is how staff mobility can be included in the responsibilities of the staff members.

### **4.2.4 Professionalisation**

Professionalisation is being organised on the development of international and intercultural competences. Language trainings are on the increase. The possibilities for staff mobility are regularly communicated and explained. Staff members receive assistance when applying for staff mobility.

Implementing the international dimension in the leadership, the structures and the HR policy provides us with an added advantage in becoming 'the employer of choice'.

## 4.3 Through Education

The educational concept (2015) of Artevelde University College outlines three objectives we want the students to achieve through the education we provide: professional development, personal development and development into global citizens. Together these comprise the professional identity of students. Internationalisation in education acts as a lever to strengthen the professional identity of students and lecturers. Working on internationalisation within the core mission of education is a means to develop international and intercultural competences which students need to function in a globalising, multicultural and sustainable society. Below, we describe how we shape internationalisation in our education.

### 4.3.1 Learning Outcome

At Artevelde University College, we introduce the intercultural and international dimension in all curricula through learning outcomes. In the Artevelde University College working group '21st century curriculum', the following general working definition of the learning outcome 'world citizenship' was presented:

*'The PBA possesses the skills to deal with diversity on a psychosocial, cultural, economic and philosophical level, locally as well as nationally and internationally, and according to the context in which he finds himself. He has linguistic skills and demonstrates a global commitment. In his personal and professional path, he creates (social) strategies to increase international and intercultural involvement and solidarity, and acquires expertise with attention to the international context. He develops his own framework of values in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and thinks and acts within its context with respect and understanding for himself and others.'*

The ambition is for all departments to translate this learning outcome to the context of their own study programmes and to integrate it in their learning outcomes, learning objectives, contents, activities and test methods, and guidance methods. We want **100% mobile minds** among our students. This means that we want all our graduating students to have a mobile mind; that they, as global citizens, possess the right mindset and skills that allow them to take different positions/angles and to handle complex social challenges wisely, with respect for others and for the planet.

### 4.3.2 Learning Objectives

The learning objective 'global citizenship' is translated into concrete learning objectives for each study programme. The existing model on the ICOMS (the international competences)<sup>iv</sup> serves as a guideline to formulate these learning objectives in each study programme. The ICOMS are a cluster of competences relating to:

- *Personal growth*: independence, cooperation and networking, self-confidence, flexibility, openness, creativity, a clear picture of the future and emotional stability.
- *Intercultural competence*: appropriately and effectively managing the interaction between people who, to a certain extent, represent different or diverse affective, cognitive or behavioural orientations to the world.

- *Language skills*: foreign language skills at level B2 of the Common European Framework for Languages on four language skills (speaking, listening, writing, understanding) and language strategies.
- *International involvement*: the active social involvement of students at local, national and international level.
- *International expertise*: job-specific international competences. This relates to internationalisation and interculturalisation of the study programme contents and of the professional field.

### 4.3.3 Learning Pathways

After determining the learning objectives on the level of the study programmes, a learning pathway for international and intercultural competences is developed in every study programme. At the same time, it is rendered visible for students and lecturers which course units offer learning opportunities on internationalisation and at which level these competences can be achieved (elementary, broadening/deepening, complex/autonomous). We refer to the internal policy document '21st Century Curriculum'<sup>iv</sup> which describes how study programmes can shape learning pathways relating to cross-cutting themes, how students can be made more responsible for their own learning process and how they can create a culture around this. This policy document promotes well-thought-out curriculum design with room for sufficient optional courses and attention to learning outside the curriculum.

### 4.3.4 Working methods

International and intercultural competences can be achieved in different manners. Artevelde University College focuses on a continuum of initiatives that range from limited to intense cooperation with foreign partners. These are described in the quick sheet 'Educate together, add value together? Constructing a network'.<sup>v</sup>

### Outgoing Mobility

Traditionally, outgoing student mobility has been the obvious way to achieve international competences. Europe sets as a standard that at least 20% of the graduated students must have had an international experience. Flanders aims even higher and speaks of **33% mobile students**<sup>vi</sup> who achieve at least 10 credits abroad. Artevelde University College strives for 33% of mobile students and encourages study programmes to incorporate **mobility windows** in their curriculum. Mobility windows are predetermined spaces in the curriculum that enable for mobility to be structurally incorporated. Mobility windows may differ, depending on the type of education, and can be applied for studies as well as for internship, and for both incoming and outgoing mobility.

### *Incoming Mobility*

If we send students abroad, we also like to receive students here. We achieve this through the development of **exchange programmes** (exchange through English-taught semester programmes) and **degree programmes** (English-taught bachelor programmes). The university college wants to attract more international students in the future. Therefore, the university college will focus on increasing the number of English-taught degree programmes and the development of **joint programmes**. It becomes even more interesting if Flemish students enrol in these English programmes as well. Then the international classroom becomes real and students as well as staff members from departments and offices are confronted with interculturalism on a daily basis. Such initiatives can promote intercultural learning, stimulate the incoming and outgoing mobility and provide excellent students with more opportunities to follow **honours programmes** in an international context.

### *Internationalisation@home*

It is not required to start up international mobility in order to achieve international and intercultural competences. Different forms of internationalisation@home provide good alternatives. Beelen and Jones<sup>vii</sup> define internationalisation@home as follows:

*'Internationalisation at Home is the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments.'*

The focus is on the integration of international competences in the contents, activities, study materials, evaluation methods, research and services in the different study programmes @home. Depending on the region, our Flemish society is diverse to hyperdiverse. This provides many opportunities to develop intercultural competences. The proximity of the practice field even makes this very efficient, e.g. intercultural local research or services projects involving students, incoming staff mobility, international classrooms, Skyping with students/lecturers from partner institutions, inspiring international examples or international sources in the study materials, international experiences from fellow students and staff members, etc.

#### **4.3.5 Guidance Methods**

Achieving international and intercultural competences must be properly guided. Students are not less influenced by prejudices because they went abroad or cooperated in an intercultural project at home. Sometimes the opposite is even true. At Artevelde University College, such learning opportunities are framed by **coaching** where students can share their referential frameworks, thoughts and actions with each other and with lecturers before as well as after their intercultural experience.

#### **4.3.6 Assessment Methods**

International competences can be tested in various manners and are graded in a uniform and internationally exchangeable manner. We refer to the policy documents 'Testing policy at Artevelde University College'<sup>viii</sup> and 'Evaluation framework at Artevelde University College'<sup>ix</sup>. In general, we find that it takes some time to achieve international and intercultural competences and we advise a **process-based approach**.



## 4.4 Through Research

In practice-oriented research, knowledge is universal and challenges in professional field and practice are analogous to those in an international context. Internationalisation of research not only implies international contacts between lecturers/researchers and students, but also mobility of knowledge and data. Research occurs mainly internationally, in European and worldwide consortia between knowledge institutions, companies and social profit organisations. The international research dynamics are not only supported and facilitated by the transnational financial flows for research, but are also required to analyse 'common wicked societal problems'.

Internationalisation of research is one of the cornerstones in the strategic institutional plan of Artevelde University College. It makes it possible to apply locally developed skills and expertise to solve cross-border issues, and to exchange and join expertise, data and insights internationally. It is also a manner to import global diversity and new knowledge into the university college. Further we substantiate the nexus research-education by integrating intercultural views and experiences in the student offer. The international dimension of research is linked to the essence of the activity in itself, i.e. experts who meet worldwide to achieve the best result and thus generate knowledge.

To this end, international actors and partners ought to know what Artevelde University College stands for, they must find their way to the expertise of our staff members and have a desire to involve them in the challenges they want to accept. Vice versa, Artevelde University College must know its partners abroad, and proactively search for research opportunities. In international research, co-creation can be taken literally, research always generates new knowledge, in this case through cross-border cooperation.

Internationalisation of research can occur in various manners.

### **4.4.1. Knowledge Sharing**

Knowledge sharing is a crucial condition to support the internationalisation of research. It starts with internal knowledge sharing: as many lecturers are involved in internationalisation, an optimal exchange of communication and information on research in the departments and university college is required. The most important information flows are on which research projects are ongoing in the departments and in the university college, who has which expertise in the university college and who is involved in current research.

However, external acquisition and sharing of knowledge is relevant as well. It is important to have information on which expertise, which track record in research and which vision on research (possible) international partners possess. Therefore, internal knowledge on international partners must be gathered and shared in a structural and systematic manner. The Internationalisation Officers and Research Officers are key figures to do so.

#### **4.4.2. Benchmarking**

The outcome of benchmarking with other university colleges, including foreign institutions, is twofold. Knowledge institutions can learn from one another in the field of policy and organisation of international research. Apart from that, institutions learn to know each other's expertise thoroughly, from which research cooperations can arise. It is important to select benchmark partners strategically.

#### **4.4.3. Joint Research**

To do research in an international partnership is the most direct and intensive form of research internationalisation. There are three ways to do so. The first is through co-financing, where the university college provides part of the financing through funds for project-based scientific research, and the international partner(s) provide an equal share. That way, two or more international partners cooperate in joint research. The second manner is to participate in an international consortium that acquires external means, in most cases this will be research financing from the EU. The third manner is an intermediate form, where the university college uses funds for project-based scientific research to contribute to the shared co-financing that is requested from certain external funding channels.

Active participation in internal research is enriching and contributes fundamentally to capacity building. However, it requires a large investment that can only be realised through co-creation between all internal involved parties (offices and departments).

#### **4.4.4. Joint Knowledge Valorisation**

Practice-oriented research is not possible without valorising knowledge. Valorisation stands for all possible forms of unlocking expertise: through publications, communication, knowledge sharing, processing research in teaching contents and practices, initiatives of service provision for the professional field and society, etc. Many forms of valorisation are ideal for international cooperation. The most accessible forms of international cooperation on valorisation consist of the joint publishing and exchange of expertise and knowledge. This can be a continuation of joint research, but it does not have to be. Common interests and expertise are a sufficient basis to cooperate on knowledge valorisation.

#### **4.4.5. International Networks**

Good international relations are the cornerstone of research internationalisation. The strongest international consortia are constructed around partners who already knew each other before. Therefore, it is important to address current strategic relations of departments and offices proactively and to explore these for research opportunities. Visits to foreign partners in the context of international internships, benchmarking activities, international weeks at the university college, participation in international conferences, etc. are all opportunities where possibilities for joint research can be explored.

It is very interesting for departments and lecturers to take an active role in international networks or associations. Active membership of those networks is a good way to invest in contacts and relations.

## 4.5 Through Social Services

The university college has a social mission, locally as well as worldwide. The world is characterised by diversity, globalisation, digitisation and ecologic challenges. The structural partnerships with local and international partners help the university college, the departments, the lecturers, staff members and students to take on a **social engagement**. It is our ambition to extensively have students and staff members participate in diverse community service learning projects nearby and worldwide. Further we focus on attracting staff members from the entire world to learn from each other through short training initiatives and to participate in mutual capacity building.

## 4.6 Through Quality Management

Internationalisation enhances quality management at Artevelde University College through international benchmarking activities. **International benchmarking** is a reflective and systematic process. The ambition for the university college as a whole, every department and every office is to find best practices and to continuously improve its functioning through a comparison of its own characteristics, methods, performances and results with those of similar international knowledge institutions. The scopes of this comparison are the core processes (education, research and services), but also the conditional and supporting processes (such as finances, HRM, ICT, etc.). This comparative process is cyclical and has a long-term focus in the context of the strategic development of the organisation. The cooperation between organisations in the comparative process leads to mutual implementation of proper professional practices.

## 4.7 Through a Qualitative and Sustainable International Network

Partners in the international network can be research institutions, higher education institutions, civil society organisations and companies. The university college and its departments consciously choose to maintain this network. Higher education institutions abroad play an important role. Together they cooperate on the education of students in this international context.

Artevelde-wide, the university college invests in constructing partnerships with non-European higher education institutions and internship partners. With its leading position in the number of Erasmus mobilities, the university college looks beyond the known European mobility programmes and creates a qualitative offer, both locally and **worldwide**.

With certain partners, cooperation will occur in different domains simultaneously and from various departments and offices. These partnerships then gain a strategic character as they are unique in their realisation of the strategic goals. In its turn, Artevelde University College acquires an important role in realising the ambitions of its partner institutions. These partners are recognised in their strategic partnership through their participation in an international advisory board which provides direction to the vision and policy of Artevelde University College. Such strategic partnerships in Europe and

worldwide are made public. This way, Artevelde University College **presents** itself as a university college with a strong international mindset.

## 5. Conclusion

For Artevelde University College, internationalisation is not an objective in itself, but a lever to enhance the quality and innovation of its education, research and social services and to strengthen its organisation through benchmarking and profiling. Developing mobile minds, global citizens who can adopt different views/positions to solve the complex social challenges with respect for other people and the planet, is a central objective to us. '33% mobile students and 100% mobile minds.'

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<sup>i</sup> De Wit et al. (2015). *European Parliament Study*. Consulted on 3 May 2016 through

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<sup>ii</sup> VLOR. (2012). *Uitdagingen voor het Vlaamse Hoger Onderwijs in de 21ste eeuw* [advies]. Consulted on 2 June 2016 through

<http://www.vlor.be/advies/uitdagingen-voor-het-vlaamse-hoger-onderwijs-de-21ste-eeuw>

<sup>iii</sup> CIGE Model for Comprehensive Internationalization. [Website]. (2016). Consulted on 2 June 2016 through

<http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/CIGE-Model-for-Comprehensive-Internationalization.aspx>

<sup>iv</sup> Icoms [Website]. (2016). Consulted on 2 June 2016 through

<http://www.internationalecompetenties.be/nl/icoms/>.

<sup>v</sup> Dienst Onderwijsontwikkeling & Internationalisering. (2016). [Non-published internal document]. Quicksheet Gezamenlijk opleiden, Samen meer-waarde creëren? Ghent: Artevelde University College.

<sup>vi</sup> Departement Onderwijs. (2013). *Brains on the move. Actieplan mobiliteit 2013*. Consulted on 2 June 2016 through

<http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/beleid/ActieplanMobiliteit/actieplan2013.pdf>

<sup>vii</sup> Beelen, J. and Jones, E. (2015) *Redefining Internationalisation at Home*: In: Curaj, A. et al. eds. *The European Higher Education Area: Between critical reflections and future policies*. Springer.

<sup>viii</sup> Dienst Onderwijsontwikkeling & Internationalisering. (2016). [Non-published internal document]. *Toetsbeleid aan de Arteveldehogeschool*. Ghent: Artevelde University College.

<sup>ix</sup> Dienst Onderwijsontwikkeling & Internationalisering. (2016). [Non-published internal document].

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