

Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

Stenden University of Applied Sciences has internationalisation as one of the three major pillars of its strategy for the future. The other two are Problem Based Learning as the mainstay of its social constructivist teaching and learning strategy, and Applied Research in line with the applied nature of the programmes. One of the fundamental learning outcomes of programmes at Stenden is that graduates are able to effectively apply their skills and knowledge irrespective of the cultural context. Internationalisation is seen as a quality enhancement of our programmes and research alike. Internationalisation activities are monitored and have been enrolled in the normal PDCA cycles that are part of our continuous improvement strategy. The domains within which Stenden deploys internationalisation activities include at home and abroad.

As one of very few institutions around the world these activities include not only staff and student mobility, but also programme mobility in the form of the establishment and development of International Branch Campuses (IBC's). This gives Stenden the added benefit of being able to have student and staff mobility to and from its IBC's, and not only with partner institutes. There are two important aspects of intercampus mobility that yield significant benefit for internationalisation. The first is that in our experience more students (2x-3x) avail themselves of intercampus mobility compared to traditional international exchanges. The second advantage relates more broadly to our programmes that are delivered at the IBC's. This is the so called primary internationalisation of the curriculum. This process occurs when staff from different campuses come together to discuss the further curricular development. Our programmes become more internationally informed and robust through this process. At our IBC's, mobile students can avail themselves of elective modules or of core elements of their programme. Elective modules take advantage of the opportunities that the locale of the IBC provides. These may be environmental features, geopolitical aspects, or cultural differences. Such variations give Stenden unique opportunities to develop programme components that are otherwise not available at the home campus.

Primarily the Schools of our institution drive the choice of partners for international educational collaboration, whereas individual academics will ordinarily seek out opportunities for international collaboration in research. The Schools are most acutely aware of the needs of their students in relation to professional development and the opportunities provided by potential partner institutes. The Senior Management of Stenden supports the Schools in this endeavour.

The types of student mobility collaboration Stenden carries out, and seeks to expand, include:

- Balanced semester-long exchange of students;
- Articulation of students from other universities into advanced stages of the first cycle programmes;
- Joint programmes with other HEI's in which Stenden students will spend part of their time at another institution;
- Short international excursions during their programme;

Staff mobility is encouraged and apart from intercampus mobility for teaching or research, staff can also avail themselves of:

- International conference, workshop, and short study program attendance;
- Participation in Intensive Programmes (Erasmus), guest lecturing or research activities with partner institutions;
- Staff also participate in short excursions with students;

Stenden has a number of double degree programmes in which the best of two separate programmes is available to students and where successful conclusion leads to the award of two degrees. Stenden also has programmes that are accredited by authorities other than those that function for the home campuses in the Netherlands. This is a result and necessary component of our programme mobility and expands our knowledge about accreditation.

Stenden seeks to provide international classrooms at all of its campuses. About 25% of our students herald from a nation outside of the campus where they are studying. In the Netherlands alone the student population is for about 22% international. Students come from more than 70 different nations. This situation, when coupled with a pedagogy that fosters cooperative group learning, produces ample opportunities for students to constructively interact with their colleagues from a variety of cultural backgrounds. We aim to increase the proportion of international students gradually during the current strategic period.

The current international collaboration occurs both within and outside of the EU. Stenden has no particular preference in terms of geographic location, but is primarily concerned with the advantages for its students and staff, and those of its partners, in establishing international collaboration. As such, we have activities that span all, but the Antarctic, continents.