

Overview of Internationalisation at Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences (WUAS)

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1 Internationalisation at WUAS

1.1 Introduction

In September 2016, in a letter to parliament, the Dutch minister of education, Jet Bussemaker, singled out Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences as a good example of an institute with an unequivocally international character. In Bussemaker's letter, addressed to Parliament's House of Representatives (Tweede Kamer), she states that "internationalisation must become the norm". The 13-page letter is an update on her vision statement from 2014 about internationalisation in Dutch higher education for the period until 2025.

Extract from the letter (in Dutch): "*Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences is bijvoorbeeld nog een stap verder gegaan en heeft over de hele linie een internationaal karakter. Ik zie dat internationalisering dus ook op een waardevolle manier onderdeel kan uitmaken van het profiel van een instelling. Bij Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences heeft 2/3 van het management een internationale achtergrond, is 50% van de docenten en medewerkers van internationale afkomst en studeren 75% internationale studenten uit meer dan 70 landen.*"

(Translation): "*For instance, Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences has taken (internationalisation) one step further by creating an international character across its whole organisation. This leads me to see that internationalisation can be a valuable part of the overall profile of an institution. At Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences 2/3 of its management has an international character, 50% of the teachers and staff have international origins and 75% of its students are international, coming from more than 70 countries*"¹

Bussemaker's complete letter to Parliament, entitled "De waarde(n) van de wereld - Voortgangsbrief over de internationale dimensie van ho en mbo", can be found here: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/binaries/rijksoverheid/documenten/kamerstukken/2016/09/19/kamerbrief-over-de-voortgang-van-de-internationale-dimensie-van-ho-en-mbo/kamerbrief-over-de-voortgang-van-de-internationale-dimensie-van-ho-en-mbo.pdf>

In 2018, WUAS was awarded ECA Accreditation for Internationalisation and given a special characteristic 'internationalisation' for its bachelors IBA programmes. See **Appendix 030G**, ECA Accreditation Report Internationalisation.

1.1.1 Executive Management (the Board)

WUAS is owned by a family trust foundation that is administered by family members who represent British, Swiss and Chinese nationalities. WUAS has one Dutch board member, and also has strong relations with Austria through one of its board members.

Only having an international management is not a 'go straight to start' card for internationalisation, however it brings advantages. An international management team means that the organisation is led by people who have an open mind, who are more open to diversity, who have experienced what it is like to live in a foreign country, study and work in a foreign country, and integrate and assimilate in order to achieve a career.

WUAS's chairman Peter Birdsall was an international student at the Dutch Windesheim University of Applied Sciences, where he studied education in the early 1990's. WUAS's CEO, Maggie Feng, came to the Netherlands as an international exchange student from

¹ The figures used by the ministry of education were taken from 2014. In 2016 WUAS reached 89% international students and in the past 5 years (2011-2016) the nationality count stands at 103.

Beijing and completed a Bachelor's degree at the IJsseland University of Applied Sciences in Deventer, before completing a double MSc in Facility Management from the UK University of Greenwich and Saxion University of Applied Sciences.

Tim Birdsall, who manages the corporate training and consultancy at WUAS, and will form part of the management team in Vienna, has 20 years of experience in the corporate consultancy world, working with many of the world's best known corporate brands in many sectors in many countries.

Karen Penninga is part of the executive management team, and holds Dutch nationality. Karen is based in Apeldoorn, and brings the Dutch perspective to the daily management of WUAS and its programmes. Through her understanding of the Dutch laws and regulations of higher education, taxation, employment law and immigration she helps guide the international management team in the running of the institution, for whom the experience is international in itself.

1.1.2 The Advisory Board

Currently the Advisory Board has been developed into a six-person team of paid advisors, and most are Dutch, albeit with extensive international experience, one is a German alumnus. When the Advisory Board was originally formed it was to help WUAS grow its national reputation within government circles and business networks in the Netherlands. This was clearly necessary due to the international management of the university as well as the process of acceptance and understanding in order to allow WUAS to gain the trust of national stakeholders. Since 2017 WUAS has started the process of transforming the Advisory Board to the next stage, in which it will be more diverse (at least two female board members), more international (at least one non-Dutch board member), and more academic (at least one academic member).

1.1.3 Continuity of WUAS and its international principles

In 2013 careful thought was given to the long-term continuity of WUAS and this was structured in the statutes of the Advisory Board, who would become a Supervisory Board, appointing the Executive Board in the future. This to ensure that the principles of the institution are upheld and its international identity and outlook protected.

In order to maintain the internationalisation of its character and its programmes, WUAS has embedded 'internationalisation' into its 'DNA', through appointing international programme managers, creating international English-taught programmes and recruiting a diverse international mix of students. WUAS has also established clearly functioning international partnerships, engaged in international research projects and stimulated international mobility of its students and staff.

WUAS has established '*internationalisation*' as one of its three 'pillars', together with '*diversity*' and '*ethics*' on which to continue building its quality system.

1.2 Overview of internationalisation

1.2.1 Programme Management

WUAS programmes are managed through its schools, and its IBA programmes are offered through the School of Business and the School of Hospitality & Tourism.

- Dr Abdul Rauf, the Dean of the School of Business is originally from Pakistan and has studied in the Netherlands at the University of Twente as an international student.
 - is main programme director for the IBA programmes
 - has contributed to leading recent international publications in his specialisation of HRM
- Esther Gitonga-Bakker, MSc, the Dean of the School of Hospitality & Tourism, is originally from Kenya and has studied at the University of Wageningen as an international student and is currently completing her PhD there.
 - WUAS lecturer Dr Saskia Harkema, is a joint supervisor of Esther's PhD, which is focussed on Sustainable Tourism.
 - Amongst other research activities, Esther is an active member of EuroChrie and has attended the conferences in past years, last year presenting a Poster of her research at the conference in Budapest.

1.2.2 International Accreditation

To emphasise its international character WUAS decided to have its programmes accredited and validated through different international systems and varying standards. Apart from its 'national' NVAO accreditation, its IBA programmes were accredited by the German, Austrian and Swiss organisation FIBAA in 2012. The IBA programmes have also been validated by the University of Brighton, following UK standards, allowing students in certain specialisations to gain a double degree if certain pathways are followed, and allowing all IBA graduates direct access to relevant University of Brighton MSc and MA programmes.

In 2017, WUAS has become a member of the international business school organisation AACSB and is preparing to start the international AACSB accreditation of its School of Business.

In 2018 WUAS has also become a member of the AMBA Development Network and has started its AMBA accreditation process.

WUAS also encourages its faculty to participate in international accreditation panels and the VP Academic Affairs, the Head of the Business School, and some teaching staff have taken part in accrediting panels and validating committees in the past years, which allowed them to gain valuable insights into structures, processes, and practices of universities elsewhere.

1.2.3 International Student Body

The international student body at WUAS is the highest in percentage density of all institutions in the Netherlands. In 2018, 89% of the approximately 850 students registered during the year were not Dutch. Many of WUAS' Dutch students also have international backgrounds.

In the past 5 years students have represented just over 100 different nationalities.

WUAS advertises extensively throughout the world, attends international student recruitment fairs, and works closely with the Nuffic, and Netherlands Education Support Offices (NESO) across the world. WUAS provides extensive additional support to its students with regard to internationalisation and the requirements of a multinational and cultural student body:

- All students are given a diagnostic English Language test, based on the academic writing module of the IELTS curriculum.
- Additional Academic English is provided as part of the bachelor's preparation programme (for students with a lower score than 6 in the IELTS test), and these classes are open to all WUAS students. Students who have not achieved an '6' in their diagnostic test at entrance for academic writing are asked to follow the classes and will be re-tested in the following block.
- ESL: attention is given throughout the programmes to the development of a student's English language skills and not only in ESL related lessons, however aspects of presentation and academic writing are continuous themes throughout the modular programme.
- International students require support in areas that they may have had less skills and competencies developed in their previous education than local students, and therefore, all students are invited to join the support modules offered throughout the year as part of the extra-curricular modules offered in the IBA programmes:
 - English Language for Work Experience
 - IT, Office Software & Automation
 - Work Experience Preparation Module
- Within various modules, and students look at many aspects of intercultural thinking and communication, and also areas such as study habits and critical thinking, that will have an impact on their studies.
- Twice a year, an Intensive Dutch Course is offered to help international students integrate in the Netherlands. This is open for Master and Bachelor students.
- It is WUAS' aim that graduates can both operate within any international environment, and use the international focus gained from the programme to excel within their home environment.
- Many international students return home or go to a third country to work after graduation.
- Those who stay find jobs under the term 'knowledge migrants', often in international companies, in the Netherlands.
- All bachelor's students are provided with a Process Tutor from the very start of their studies. Master students are allocated a Study Advisor. This person supervises and advises the student throughout their study time at WUAS and holds bi-annual appraisal meetings in which a student's study progress and ambitions and worries are discussed and documented in an updated study agreement.
- In the bachelor's programmes, from the stage of 160 EC, the start of Phase 3, each student is also allocated an Academic Supervisor, who will specifically supervise and support the elements of academic writing and applied research in the last part of the programme, including work placement and leading up to the final project. The Academic Supervisor works to a strict timetable regarding the development and submission phases of the Work Placement project and the Final Project, for which they are first or second marker. The other marker is always an external marker, initially anonymous, until the final presentation.
- Master students are allocated an Academic Supervisor from the moment that their Research Proposal is established.

Student Mobility

WUAS encourages student mobility through

- International work placements
 - Even though a large majority of IBA students are actually studying abroad, WUAS encourages students to carry out a work placement period in another (third, not home) country, and arranges excursions to other countries, for instance the UK and China.
- International study abroad semesters – in the past 3 years, at partner institutions in Germany, France, United Kingdom, Spain and China.
 - Note – for many WUAS students, who are studying abroad, the Netherlands is already an international destination, however still many go to a third or fourth country in their study careers.
- In 2016 students had the opportunity to visit both Kenya as part of Project Weeks.
- All students are offered a Project Week Excursion to Shanghai China and Master Students can attend a study week in the UK.
- Starting in 2017, WUAS also offers its bachelor's programme in Vienna. The curriculum will be planned and timetabled exactly in the same way and same timescale as on the home campus, allowing students the possibility to spend a semester or a year at the other international campus.
- Bachelor's Hospitality Management students have the opportunity to spend a semester at the University of Brighton, UK.

Activities outside of the curriculum

WUAS encourages its Students Union 'SWIFT' to organise regular events outside of the learning structures, which bring together the diverse cultures and nationalities in events that are organised. The Dutch Chinese Student Union also has leading members studying at WUAS and they organise events too. Recent events in Apeldoorn have included, bowling event, football tournaments, intercultural food events, other sports events. WUAS has a good relationship with one of the bars in Apeldoorn where regular drinks evenings and live music, are held.

It should be noted however, that ensuring an enthusiastic out-of-school events programme remains a challenge:

- Membership of SWIFT differs from year to year, as does the enthusiasm to organise events.
- Many students don't live in Apeldoorn, and some have part time (weekend) jobs and other commitments elsewhere in the country.
- Many students are studying hard and because there are 8 examination and submission moments throughout the year, they don't feel they have time or inclination to attend many non-education related events.

WUAS will continue to find creative ways of bring its internationally diverse student body together outside of the classroom.

In November 2017, WUAS held its 30th anniversary Gala, a large event at which students were invited to show off their cultural diversity, mixing with a large number of friends and relations of the institution, including local politicians and a number of Ambassadors who represented some of their student's countries. Nuffic and NVAO were both present at the event which was held in the City Hall, sponsored and supported by the Mayor and Municipal government of Apeldoorn. This event, supported by side events throughout the year was an important milestone for students and their families and friends to show off the internationalisation of the university.

In recent years, WUAS has also aimed at organising an annual event, for instance, in the past years WUAS has organised an African Business Event, which was an event with guest speakers from industry and NGO's to which all students were invited together with many business and company relations of WUAS. The event ended with a networking drink, bringing students and external organisations together. Similar events are planned with a focus on Asia and on South America.

1.2.4 International Faculty

Around half of WUAS faculty are not Dutch, and in the past 3-years faculty have represented around 30+ different nationalities.

- WUAS works with a team of University of Brighton lecturers on its joint-taught modules and dissertation supervision for double degree tracks.
- WUAS encourages the employment of faculty with international backgrounds and, if possible, international origins.
- Many faculty members have taught for longer or shorter periods abroad, some have extensive experience on international projects and international research projects.
- During the regular Teacher's Meeting and in the Teaching & Learning PGCert curriculum, WUAS encourages that attention is given to the concept of teaching in an international classroom.
 - With the introduction of the new University of Brighton PGCert award, WUAS and UofB will increase the workshops on delivering to an international classroom.

Staff Mobility

WUAS encourages staff mobility, through supporting its lecturers to attend conferences, teach on international summer schools, and participate in international accreditation panels, also;

- Throughout the year its visiting staff from the University of Brighton are teaching on MSc and IBA programmes in Apeldoorn. From 2017 this was also the case for the bachelor's EBA in Amsterdam.
- Quite a number of WUAS teaching staff, who teach on regular modules throughout the year, are 'fly-in' staff – current examples are Dr Alexander Bauer, from Vienna, Dr Gilbert Silvius, also from Vienna, and finance lecturer Muhammad Ashfaq from Germany, and hospitality lecturer Paul Fyn from Switzerland. Although these lecturers teach throughout the year at WUAS, they also teach at other institutions in their home countries.
- WUAS and the University of Brighton arrange bi-annual faculty visits to the UK with the aim of collaboration meetings between 'buddy' teachers.
- The Vienna Campus will see a greater amount of faculty mobility as teachers spend periods of time teaching in different locations.

Example: <http://www.wittenborg.eu/wittenborg-university-lecturer-dr-saskia-harkema-now-also-teaching-company-executives-paris.htm>

1.2.5 International Programmes

- All WUAS programmes are offered in English.
- WUAS does not offer any programmes in Dutch.

- IBA and MBA programmes are accredited by agencies representing (at least) two different European countries, AACSB (US) accreditation is being started in 2019, as is AMBA (UK).
- WUAS programmes include modules related to international marketing, international management, intercultural and diversity aspects, and these themes are also integrated in Project Weeks, the work placement and the final project.
- All bachelor's students follow at least one 2nd foreign language in the programme, foreign languages are open to master students as well.
- All programmes are described, credited (ECTS) and documented in a manner that conforms to European higher education standards, and the degree is accompanied with a clear Diploma/Degree Supplement conforming to European standards.
- The Final Qualifications reflect the international character of the programme, and show students' knowledge and abilities. The Aims and Objectives reflect the international character of the modules, and are in line with the Final Qualifications.

Focus of modules

The focus of modules is by nature international – many international teachers cannot teach from a Dutch perspective, and 89% of students cannot learn from a Dutch perspective. The international classroom itself creates an international focus in modules, whether it comes from international case studies, or students and staff comparing systems, methods, processes, from a multinational and intercultural perspective.

Programme management encourages all teachers to regularly update their material, their teaching methods and their interactions with students to reflect an international perspective and outlook.

International Literature

All literature in all programmes is English and written for an international audience. Programme management ensures that chosen literature reflects international (at least European) viewpoints where possible, by choosing international or European editions. Journal articles and other materials are also chosen from an international perspective.

1.2.6 International Support Staff

Around 50% of all education operations and student support staff at WUAS are international or have an international background. This includes education process management, the Graduation & Examination Board, student tutoring, work placement coordination, the marketing & communications department, also many in the admissions team including the registrar are international staff,

1.2.6.1 Training for internationalisation

WUAS supports its staff to be trained, and follow workshops and conferences when necessary, that often reflect the international nature of the university. For instance, WUAS staff attend meetings of Dhenim, the association of international marketing and recruitment of Dutch universities, meetings of Nuffic for diploma recognition, of the IND (Immigration Service) regarding changes in the visa application process, or obstacles for mobility.

1.2.7 International Partnerships / Memberships

The current important international partnerships included first and foremost the University of Brighton, with who WUAS has a strategic alliance. WUAS currently works with the School of

Sport & Service Management, the School of Education, and the Brighton Business School. The partnership has been formalised in its current form since 2009, however the first MoC was signed in 2006.

More information on International Partnerships and Memberships is available at **Appendix 092G**.

Current events in 2019 to promote the IBA and MBA and MSc programmes, and partnerships include trips to present at fairs and workshops in Moscow, San Paulo, Mexico City, Singapore, Istanbul, Berlin, Seville, Ho Chi Min City, whilst visiting possible partners in Beijing, Shanghai, Wuhan. A very recent development is a trip to take place in March 2017 in which WUAS will lead a trade mission with the Province of Gelderland and the Municipality of Apeldoorn to establish partnerships with at least two further universities in China. In autumn a full trade mission of regional companies, businesses and government will visit the same region, facilitated by WUAS.

WUAS is a member of EAIE (attends with a stand) and EuroCHRIE / ICHRIE (institutional membership), ACCSB (Membership since 2017), and since 2014, WUAS has attended ICEF workshops around the world (international recruitment and partnerships).

1.2.8 International Research Projects

WUAS' main participation in international research projects has centred for the past three years on the GREAT Project. WUAS was a leading partner in the research presenting

See: <http://greatproject.eu.com/>

Also:

<http://www.wittenborg.eu/wittenborg-research-team-excited-be-part-eu-funded-great-project-final-policy-conference-taking.htm>

http://www.wittenborg.eu/sites/default/files/wittenborg/pdf/downloads/000_University%20Information/005_Wittenborg_University_GREAT_Project.pdf.pdf

WUAS is currently participating in a number of applications for international research, however its current project is being carried out with the University of Twente (EFRO).

A number of WUAS academics are involved in international research projects, or presenting research papers internationally, for instance in the area of diversity and refugee crisis, ICT, or in sustainability (Dr Teun Wolters).

Examples from the web:

<http://www.wittenborg.eu/sparking-awesome-ideas-wittenborg-lecturer-part-jury-european-youth-award-2015.htm>

<http://www.wittenborg.eu/empowering-refugees-netherlands-through-education-wittenborg-universitys-dr-saskia-harkema-about-her> and <http://www.facesofchange.online/>

<http://www.wittenborg.eu/dr-saskia-harkema-teaching-kosovo-post-conflict-area-eastern-europe.htm>