



HOCHSCHULE MAINZ
UNIVERSITY OF
APPLIED SCIENCES

The Internationalization Strategy of Mainz University of Applied Sciences for Studying and Teaching

Resolution

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1. Mission and Vision

1.1 Mission

The mandate of universities of applied sciences is to prepare students for professional pursuits that require scientific and academic insights or methods in their practice. They accomplish this by teaching using application-oriented methods; they conduct applied research and can execute development projects¹. In their endeavors, universities of applied sciences also have the responsibility of fostering international, and in particular European, collaboration in the field of higher education and exchanges between German and foreign universities, and to especially take the needs and concerns of foreign students into consideration while doing so².

As a place where societally relevant innovations take shape, Mainz University of Applied Sciences focuses on the future in its scientific, academic, business, and community environment in accordance with its mission statement, while placing students at the center of its actions³. A progressive discourse emerges as a result of the interaction between teaching, research, transfer, and business activities. In the process, Mainz University of Applied Sciences has a direct impact on its local surroundings. At the same time, however, the University is aware that the context of its actions in a globalized, mutually interdependent world also calls for a global perspective, in terms of both the education of its students and all other areas of activity in which it is engaged. Studying, teaching, research, and transfer are inherently international. Activity is not limited to the constraints of country borders; contexts and interdependencies should not be reduced to a local level.

When looking at the execution of its mandate, it becomes evident that Mainz University of Applied Sciences needs international approach. Internationalization is not an end in itself; it is a means of fulfilling its responsibilities as best possible to be competitive in its areas of activity. Mainz University of Applied Sciences is firmly convinced of this, and welcomes the fact that nowadays students generally need to be prepared for a professional reality where they must be able to skillfully take a well-founded and broad view of the world. They must be able to comprehend the complexity of international competition, and they need the tools to perform at their best in globalized labor markets. Mainz University of Applied Sciences aims to teach not only classic curriculum content, but also a mindset that gives its graduates advantages when entering their professional careers, enabling them to help shape a future all of us enjoy living in. In this context, interactions and exchanges are an important key to local and global togetherness, both now and in the future; exclusion, isolation, and intolerance, in contrast, do not contribute to a viable future.

¹ https://mwg.rlp.de/fileadmin/mbwwk/Service_Sonstiges/Entwurf_Hochschulgesetz.pdf, Section 2 (1), page accessed on 03/06/2023 (only available in German)

² Cf. *ibid.*, Section 2 (6), page accessed on 03/06/2023

³ Cf. <https://www.hs-mainz.de/en/about-us/our-philosophy/mission-statement/>, page accessed on 03/06/2023

As a European university, the actions of Mainz University of Applied Sciences are guided by the values of the [Treaty of Lisbon](#). With this, Mainz University of Applied Sciences shows its commitment to respecting the human dignity of all individuals. The University advocates the free movement and mobility of people and academic and personal freedoms, which include respecting the right to privacy, freedom of expression, freedom of information, freedom of thought, freedom of religion, and freedom of assembly.

Further, Mainz University of Applied Sciences stands for equal opportunities, diversity, and the equal treatment of all members of the University. Mainz University of Applied Sciences supports its members in practicing and internalizing these values so they can fulfill their role as global citizens.

With an unambiguous, explicit position, International Mainz University of Applied Sciences is more than a place for teaching and learning. The University represents a liberal value system and endeavors to communicate a forward-looking worldview to its students as well, ideally preparing them to embark on their professional careers.

As part of its internationalization strategy, Mainz University of Applied Sciences strives to create the best possible conditions to fulfill its responsibilities. The following content should be viewed as a strategy that focuses on study and teaching. An additional sub-strategy focusing on research and transfer is also planned in the next step.

1.2 Vision: Mainz International University of Applied Sciences in 2030

The vision for Mainz International University of Applied Sciences describes a state that Mainz University of Applied Sciences hopes to have achieved in internationalization in the future, fulfilling its mandate to the best possible extent. It provides an outlook of a future reality that gives Mainz University of Applied Sciences an advantage in terms of studying and teaching, one which the University is working toward as part of the implementation of its internationalization strategy:

- 1 Mainz University of Applied Sciences is an international hub in the heart of Europe, open-minded and characterized by an innovative spirit. From this position, the University maintains a clear and open outlook toward an interdependent and globalized world it is actively connected to. Its sharpened international profile ensures its visibility, and its approach helps shape the world.
- 2 People of all cultures and backgrounds contribute to the make-up of this place. They study, teach, work, and live here. Everyone has the opportunity to succeed here, without experiencing discrimination.
- 3 Mainz University of Applied Sciences educates people with a global mindset. Its students are open-minded, they possess intercultural skills, and they have the necessary tools to succeed and find their place in international labor markets.

2. Strategic Goal 1

2.1 Goal definition: Sharpening our profile as an international and forward-thinking university

To be able to fulfill its teaching and learning responsibilities in the best possible way, Mainz University of Applied Sciences has sharpened its international profile by late 2030. Its excellent local and international network, its close cooperation with the business community in the area of internationalization, its clear stance, and its consistent commitment to internationalization make it the most forward-looking university of applied sciences in the Rhine-Main region in terms of internationalization.

2.2 Measures to achieve the goal

- 1 International network: More strategic orientation of the international network. Establish globally networked, multidisciplinary international higher education alliances for issues related to the future. The actions of these alliances are transdisciplinary and dedicated to clusters of globally relevant topics.
- 2 International network: A greater focus on geographic priorities taking networking goals into consideration. In doing so, the University will cover high-demand outgoing destinations for students, regions focused on by local partner companies, joint research projects, or attracting international students. Based on this, it will develop regions where it would like to put a particular emphasis on networking.
- 3 Local network: A joint focus on the need for skilled professionals and more intensive collaboration with companies in the region in internationalization, to make use of synergies and strengthen the location, under consideration of the DAAD's position paper on recruiting international students as valuable skilled professionals⁴. Joint recruitment of international talent by means of collaborative international marketing and recruiting activities with partner companies. A greater focus on international students in the implementation of practical experience formats and obtaining professional experience in all degree programs
- 4 Local efforts: Improve perception as a driver of internationalization by being more active in the surrounding city environs. More active involvement in international projects and more active positioning for the international and open-minded character of Mainz and the region. Clearer communication of the international profile to prospective students from the region to ensure they know they can obtain international experiences at Mainz University of Applied Sciences and study at a forward-looking location.

⁴ Cf. https://static.daad.de/media/daad_de/pdfs_nicht_barrierefrei/der-daad/daad_2023_perspektive_fachkraefte.pdf, p.12, page accessed on 03/08/2023 (only available in German)

- 5 Guidelines: Mainz University of Applied Sciences clearly prioritizes networking and international collaboration opportunities. However, with regard to the risks of collaboration in regions where liberal values are less prevalent institutionally, the University will develop guidelines for collaboration under complex conditions. By doing so, it addresses the development of increasingly changing international academic collaboration regarding the underlying conditions as the global political situation continues to dynamically evolve. Here the University is also responding to the recommendations of the German Science and Humanities Council on internationalization⁵ and is guided in drafting these guidelines by the DAAD's specifications and guidelines⁶.
- 6 Internationalization and sustainability: Mainz University of Applied Sciences focuses on global sustainability issues and particularly supports content-related activities with partner universities regarding sustainability topics. In the area of mobility, Mainz University of Applied Sciences expressly supports the CO₂ tax for air travel and pays this tax annually. Further, it supports virtual mobility as a (more) sustainable form of collaboration, and communicates university-wide that not all interactions in internationalization can take place using physical mobility. As part of the Erasmus+ program, the University also welcomes Green Travel as a form of travel eligible for funding, which it actively communicates to all Erasmus+ program participants.

3. Strategic Goal 2

3.1 Goal definition: International campus

To optimize the conditions for success for international students and provide all its students with diverse opportunities for international exchanges and get-togethers, Mainz University of Applied Sciences intends to further internationalize its structures by 2030. The character of being an international university will work its way through all areas of the University like a common thread up to then. With this, the University aims to ensure that international students and faculty from around the world are valued and welcomed. At Mainz University of Applied Sciences, they are viewed as strategic target groups who are multipliers for a period of study or a teaching stint in Mainz, who bring foreign language skills into everyday studies and teaching, who contribute to "Internationalization at Home" in their interactions with German students and faculty, and who, with their individual perspectives and backgrounds, make an important

⁵ Cf. <https://www.wissenschaftsrat.de/download/archiv/7118-18.pdf?blob=publicationFile&v=2>, p.7, page accessed on 11/13/2022 (English summary of German version: https://www.wissenschaftsrat.de/download/archiv/7118-18_Summary.html)

⁶ Cf. https://static.daad.de/media/daad_de/pdfs_nicht_barrierefrei/infos-services-fuer-universities/center-of-competence/documents/daad_kiwi_compass_no-redlines_2020.pdf, page accessed on 03/08/2023 (only available in German)

contribution to the development of an international mindset among all members of the University in a university-wide exchange. Mainz University of Applied Sciences endeavors to keep the number of students on a consistent level without being forced to depend on the low-birth-rate German age groups. By sharpening its profile and optimizing its international structures, the University aims to appeal to very good students – regionally, nationally, and ultimately globally.

3.2 Measures to achieve the goal

- 1 Establishing a welcoming culture and a place for diversity: Further development of support services for international members of the University. Focus on incoming degree-seeking students and counseling and support during the introductory period of studies, based on the recommendations for action of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research's SeSaBa project⁷ and the DAAD's position paper on educating international students as tomorrow's skilled professionals⁸. Beyond its intercultural character, Mainz University of Applied Sciences actively advocates and creates space for diversity as well. It continuously works on forms and structures to enable everyone to participate in university life as accessibly and equally as possible. To make diversity perceptible and concrete and to identify and exploit potential for development, the University supports a university-wide dialogue among all stakeholders involved with diversity.
- 2 Communication in German and English: To guarantee that there is no form of discrimination against non-German speaking members of the University, Mainz University of Applied Sciences ensures that the English language is used in addition to German in official communications to all members of the University. All relevant channels and files of communication are in German and English. This includes but is not limited to a completely English-language structure of the website, as well as emails, newsletters, and other relevant information to all members of the University. English explanations will also be added to signage and other information and communication channels at Mainz University of Applied Sciences campuses at least to a sufficient extent that non-German-speaking members of the University can easily find their way around. The focus toward expanding with English language versions here is based on the dominance of the English language around the world, as well as the feasibility under the assumption that members of the University can participate in everyday university life in the future if they speak either German or English.

⁷ Cf. https://static.daad.de/media/daad_de/pdfs_nicht_barrierefrei/der-daad/was-wir-tun/daad_sesaba_final_report.pdf, page accessed 03/08/2023 (Executive Summary p. 8-9 in English)

⁸ Cf. https://static.daad.de/media/daad_de/pdfs_nicht_barrierefrei/der-daad/daad_2023_perspektive_fachkraefte.pdf, p.12, page accessed 03/08/2023 (only available in German)

- 3 Target-oriented language teaching at Mainz University of Applied Sciences: When looking at the role language plays, the focus is directed in a needs-based manner toward the target groups that are expected to benefit from language instruction in the higher education setting and the related goals.

International non-degree-seeking students: German as a Foreign Language (DaF) offers students on beginner and advanced levels/international degree-seeking students: DaF offers with the aim of increasing the language level during their studies, combined with a clear appeal or obligation to improve their German language skills⁹/outgoing students: low-threshold language-learning opportunities in the most sought-after language regions (currently English, Spanish, French, and Italian)/staff: low-threshold opportunities to learn English that can be integrated into everyday teaching and work.

- 4 Internationalization of staff: In addition to providing support in acquiring foreign language skills, the International Office assists faculty and staff in planning and implementing study abroad programs that contribute to intercultural and language education.
- 5 Efficient structures and processes: In the area of internationalization, Mainz University of Applied Sciences strives to establish modern structures, processes, and offerings to help shape the very dynamic transformation process that universities are currently undergoing on many levels. Here in particular, the University uses digitalization to optimize processes and is developing an “International Office without paper” concept. Mainz University of Applied Sciences regularly reviews the structures driving the area of internationalization and critically examines them in terms of the strategic internationalization goals. This particularly concerns the structures of the International Office and the areas of language skills and proficiency, as well as the committees for internationalization, such as the Senate International Affairs Committee (SIA) and the Schools’ International Affairs Committees (FIA). The SIA views itself as an advisory body for internationalization, with the FIAs forming the foundation at the University’s three schools. The International Office views itself as
“The engine of internationalization.”
- 6 International student marketing: Mainz University of Applied Sciences is establishing central structures for the international marketing of the University to clearly address prospective international students as a target group and awaken their interest in

⁹ Cf. Jan Kercher, (translation): *Ideally, support for international students begins before they start their studies, with clear communication of the degree program’s language requirements and information on choosing reputable language test providers, and continues after they start with targeted language support.* <https://www2.daad.de/der-daad/daad-aktuell/de/81814-wie-man-den-studienerfolg-internationaler-studierender-forcieren-koennte/> (only available in German) and https://static.daad.de/media/daad_de/pdfs_nicht_barrierefrei/der-daad/was-wir-tun/daad_sesaba_abschlussbericht.pdf, p. 60ff, pages accessed as of 11/19/2022

studying in Mainz, and to significantly increase the University's findability and perceived attractiveness. This especially applies to the areas of external communication (website and social media, including video and photo communications), as well as the active recruiting of international students. Mainz University of Applied Sciences defines target figures for the number of international students as well as target regions.

4. Strategic Goal 3

4.1 Goal definition: Help students become global citizens

In the year 2030, Mainz University of Applied Sciences is educating its students to become global citizens. By studying at the internationalized Mainz University of Applied Sciences, these students have an advantage over graduates of other universities when entering the internationalized and globalized job market.

Many of the political, societal, and economic challenges are global, such as climate change, dwindling resources, global health issues ranging as far as a global pandemic, and numerous other issues. Today, companies can hardly reduce their actions to a local context. They operate in globalized labor markets, with international competition. They have sites or close business partners all over the world and hire employees from all the regions of the world, who sometimes have to work online with their co-workers on diverse, interdisciplinary challenges. In addition to the many benefits, diversified labor market conditions in diverse teams also come with challenges. Students are best prepared for these if they view themselves as global citizens.

Definition of global citizenship

Mainz University of Applied Sciences defines global citizenship for the University as consisting of three main characteristics:

- a. Open-mindedness and intercultural skills, expressed in the recognition and appreciation of (cultural, political, language, personal) diversity and willingness to engage with it.
- b. A global mindset and competence in dealing with complexity, shown in the ability to understand the complexity of an interdependent world with its social, political, climate-related, and societal challenges and to tackle these challenges.
- c. Global involvement, i.e., the willingness to assume responsibility in a globalized world, to adopt an attitude based on a liberal understanding of values and the aspiration to help shape the world in one's own environment from this position.



4.2 Measures to achieve the goal

- 1 Expansion of English-language teaching: Particularly in the area of bachelor's degrees, a foundational English-language offering can be created across the board, enabling international exchange students in particular to take sufficient modules in all subjects, in the best-case scenario. The reference model here is the existing Bachelor of Business Administration, which guarantees a foundational English-language offering for international (and German) students at all times. Together with all three schools of the University, the possibilities to develop suitable offerings are being discussed, the set-up of which would be explicitly supported (in terms of curricular development and marketing/communication).
- 2 Development of English-language degree programs: Together with all three schools of the University, possibilities are being discussed to offer a double-degree program in English in all schools by 2030. The Master in International Business can serve as a reference model here. A collaborative exchange is encouraged to discuss the question of whether an expansion of the International Civil Engineering degree program or the implementation of an International Architecture degree program at the School of Engineering or an International Design master's degree program at the School of Design is desirable and feasible. Double-degree opportunities would give students the chance to earn international degrees, along with gaining international experience and intensive interaction with international students, offering them advantages in terms of their professional profile and skills when starting their careers.
- 3 Support for the internationalization of dual degree and vocational qualification programs: Dual degree and vocational qualification programs are a unique selling point of universities of applied sciences. Previously untapped potential can be developed by discussing the possibilities for gaining experience abroad with the dual degree and vocational qualification programs and providing needs-oriented support—for example, by making greater use of virtual and blended mobility—and by pursuing and testing the approach of developing international dual degree and vocational qualification programs together with international practical partners. In addition, we are working with the University's schools to analyze the extent to which dual degree and vocational qualification programs can play a significant role in international recruiting if international students are recruited from regions where partner companies have international sites or suppliers.
- 4 Enhancing traditional mobility formats: With the objective of regularly being the top performer of its own cluster in the annual benchmarking of the HSI Monitor¹⁰ with regard to outgoing mobility by 2030, Mainz University of Applied Sciences consistently engages in outgoing marketing. This ensures the University continuously reaches its students and informs them about the various personal benefits of studying abroad. In outgoing mobility, Mainz University of Applied Sciences focuses on Erasmus+ and the broad range of funding

¹⁰ Cf. <https://www.hsi-monitor.de/>, pages accessed on 05/06/2023 (only available in German)

opportunities that go hand in hand with it. The University annually submits applications for Key Action 131¹¹ and examines the possibilities of submitting applications for Key Action 171¹² each year. However, this focal point is only pursued with partner universities with whom we have already established an intensive and deep foundation of collaboration. The decisive factor here is a mutual double-degree agreement. In addition, Mainz University of Applied Sciences welcomes its students pursuing internships abroad. The University is committed to the Rhineland-Palatinate joint organization *EU-Servicepoint*, coordinated at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. There, students receive support in planning an internship abroad and can receive scholarships to do so. Continued participation in this joint organization and co-funding of the positions with overhead funds connects synergies, builds expertise in internship counseling, and leads to a set-up that benefits students.

- 5 Strategic use of virtual mobility formats: To make mobility as low-threshold an experience as possible, Mainz University of Applied Sciences strategically leverages the opportunities to enable virtual international experiences as part of enabling global citizenship. The University values working in international teams with virtual formats as a forward-looking form of mobility and, at the same time, as a reality in the professional world. The sooner students embrace this reality, the more they will benefit when they start their careers. By setting a strategic focus here, Mainz University of Applied Sciences is creating an educational advantage for its students. Mainz University of Applied Sciences welcomes and supports any form of virtual collaboration in teaching and, in cooperation with its partner universities, is open to all possible forms and formats. The University would like to emphasize three formats in particular, and implement them university-wide:
 - a) Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL). Mainz University of Applied Sciences aims to be one of the leading universities of applied sciences in Germany in COIL¹³. Since COIL is more complicated to initiate and implement than traditional instruction, Mainz University of Applied Sciences will ensure the appropriate support structures are available. These structures focus on staff and on methodological and technical guidance. They also consider the fact that good and trusting communication between teachers is a prerequisite for a successful COIL project. Accordingly, financial support is also provided in the form of an annual special budget for COIL coordinated by the International Office, which can be used to finance partner university visits by teachers for the initiation of COIL projects.

¹¹ Cf. <https://eu.daad.de/infos-fuer-hochschulen/programmlinien/foerderung-von-mobilitaet/de/>, page accessed on 05/06/2023 (only available in German)

¹² Cf. *ibid.*, page accessed on 05/06/2023

¹³ Cf. definition of COIL at <https://coil.suny.edu/>: “Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) is an approach that brings students and faculty together across cultures to learn, discuss and collaborate as part of their class. Professors partner to design the experience, and students partner to complete the activities designed. COIL becomes part of the class, enabling all students to have a significant intercultural experience within their course of study.” Page accessed on 05/06/2023



- b) Blended mobility. Combining virtual mobility with a short period of physical mobility broadens the spectrum of international mobility experiences. A short mobility period can also be put to good use in cases where a longer stay abroad is not feasible for students. Here, Mainz University of Applied Sciences would particularly like to establish blended intensive programs (BIP)¹⁴ under Erasmus+ Key Action 131. Along with this, there is also a possibility to use up to 20% of the Erasmus+ budget for international mobility, i.e., for regions worldwide. Part of this Erasmus+ budget will be used in the future to enable blended mobility for groups of students who have worked in a COIL project to visit the partner university, to hold a final presentation, for example.
- a) International Exchange Lecture Series (IELS). In the IELS, global classrooms are established, where teachers from Mainz University of Applied Sciences hold short lectures on joint teaching topics together with teachers from one or more partner universities. This creates a low-threshold intercultural exchange and offers a change of perspective. The format is being developed as a university-wide brand and, in addition to the added value for students, it is intended to strengthen the worldwide partner university network and improve the public perception of the University.
- 6 Strengthening transdisciplinarity in internationalization: To accommodate the necessity for employees to address transdisciplinary and intercultural issues in today's professional workplace, Mainz University of Applied Sciences also views internationalization as a transdisciplinary task. The University creates spaces for students from different disciplines to work in international teaching/learning settings on overarching issues of societal relevance. Topics related to the transformation of society and of global/cross-regional relevance are examined and responded to in a multi-layered, contemporary, and more in-depth manner. The focus on transdisciplinarity in examining overarching issues of societal relevance is particularly welcomed and supported in our international teaching activities.
- 7 Global Citizenship Certificate: In addition to multilingualism, which is gaining in significance in international work settings especially regarding international mobility (cf. Strategic Goal 2), the education of global citizens also enhances skills the University only teaches indirectly. By emphasizing and communicating the value of these skills, however, the University enhances them. Mainz University of Applied Sciences is currently establishing an additional qualification, the Global Citizenship Certificate (GCC), available to all students and intended to be a key component in enabling global citizenship. The GCC has five pillars: International mobility, virtual mobility, foreign language proficiency, engagement with international students, and volunteering. The Certificate is planned as a microcredential, as an incentive for students to increase their interest in topics related to internationalization.

¹⁴ Cf. <https://eu.daad.de/infos-fuer-hochschulen/projektdurchfuehrung/mobilitaet-von-einzelpersonen-> (only available in German) [KA131/blended-intensive-programmes-bip/de/79417-blended-intensive-programmes-bip/](https://eu.daad.de/infos-fuer-hochschulen/projektdurchfuehrung/mobilitaet-von-einzelpersonen-ka131/blended-intensive-programmes-bip/de/79417-blended-intensive-programmes-bip/), page accessed 05/06/2023