

## Internationalisation Strategy

### **1. Heidelberg University of Education – an Educational Institute with an International Outlook**

Heidelberg University of Education views itself as a globally oriented educational institute. It is active in research and teaching in the field of education at international level and trains people for professions in the educational sector – no longer only on the regional labour market, but also on the transregional and international markets. By expanding its horizons in this way, PH Heidelberg is responding to the requirements of a globalised world and a highly diverse society. This will ensure that PH Heidelberg is able to continue playing an active role in the development of society in the future.

An international outlook and diversity are guiding principles which are crucial to education today: the concept of education implies an interest in, and recognition of, the large range of different cultures and lifestyles in our global society. As a university of education, PH Heidelberg recognises its particular responsibility in this area and possesses the necessary teaching and research skills to play a key role in the higher education system of the state of Baden-Württemberg and Germany.

The situation in schools reflects our society today, which is made up of a vast array of different cultures. In future, people from migrant backgrounds will have a far greater impact on our society's potential for growth than ever before – and not just as a result of demographic change. The proportion of people from migrant backgrounds working in skilled positions within educational institutes does not correspond to the proportion of people with migrant backgrounds in the population overall. Teaching staff from migrant backgrounds are, however, important multipliers in the process of promoting intercultural understanding and have a major impact as role models on the development of children and young people from migrant backgrounds. All educational institutes thus urgently require educationalists and teaching staff from these backgrounds. As a university that trains teachers, Heidelberg University of Education must actively target students from migrant backgrounds and subsequently provide them with better training, support and supervision.

Those responsible for equipping children and young people to be mobile in a globalised world must receive the appropriate training. The curricula at the PH must include meta knowledge – about migratory flows and their impact, for example – and, most importantly, social and intercultural skills, such as mindfulness, flexibility and empathy.

Education today must have an international outlook. In order to succeed in our globally networked world, it is essential to develop an understanding for different cultures and intercultural communication processes. Building international ties makes it possible to discover and learn from good educational practices and research in other countries.

All this will only be possible if PH Heidelberg integrates an international dimension into everyday university life. This should also include encouraging students to consider the option of working outside Germany and giving them the skills necessary to do so. The traditional slogan for teacher training – “From the region – for the region” – will become less and less valid as it is replaced by an approach with a stronger European and global outlook.

## **2. Internationalisation strategy**

Heidelberg University of Education recognises the potential of an international approach for its profile and development and has thus made it one of the university’s guiding principles. It views internationalisation as a process which requires more than just the support and supervision of the university’s management: everyone connected to the university must put this concept into practice and help develop it.

Over the next five years, PH Heidelberg aims to introduce and promote an international approach on all levels of the university. This includes its management, faculties and subject areas, as well as its central facilities and administration, and equally affects research and teaching, the development of curricula, the creation of partnerships with foreign universities and institutions and the university’s exchange and funding programmes. Heidelberg University of Education is able to make use of its existing networks and draw on many years of experience in these areas and with a variety of European and international mobility programmes.

Heidelberg University of Education is aware of the expectations of many external investors: namely, that a clearly defined internationalisation strategy is often a prerequisite for securing funding for research, teaching and study programmes in an international context. This strategy therefore aims to clearly illustrate steps taken by the university to develop its profile and ties at international level.

### **2.1 Internationalising research**

PH Heidelberg intends to place greater emphasis on research and raise the public profile of this field by developing core research areas. An important aspect in this will be to internationalise research areas that are required for Masters and postgraduate programmes.

To this end, the university is taking the following **measures**:

- Within the scope of the strategic internationalisation process, the university will make greater use of programmes such as DAAD, the Humboldt Foundation and the Fulbright Trust to invite international researchers working in PH Heidelberg's core areas to become visiting lecturers and researchers. In turn, researchers at our university should use these programmes to gain impetus from abroad, build international networks and publicise their work more intensively at international level.
- PH Heidelberg's budget will continue to provide funding for conference trips abroad to all researchers who make an active contribution (speeches, poster presentations) to an international congress.
- A separate fund will be available to provide a limited amount of financial support to international symposiums at PH Heidelberg, which are primarily financed by outside funds.

## **2.2. Internationalising teaching and research staff**

Heidelberg University of Education aims to increase the number of teachers with international research profiles/teaching and research experience in an international context and the number of international visiting professors and lecturers.

To this end, the university is taking the following **measures**:

- In future, Heidelberg University of Education will advertise professorships and positions for young researchers in relevant international Internet forums/newsletters in English.
- Appointment processes will place greater emphasis on experience abroad, foreign language skills and research and teaching profiles with an international focus.
- When negotiating their contracts, applicants must be able to illustrate how they will use the university's existing concepts and partnerships to boost its international profile.
- More lecturers at PH Heidelberg should be able to teach abroad. This requires unbureaucratic procedures which enable teachers to apply for programmes run by the EU, DAAD and other organisations. Heidelberg University of Education will recognise periods spent teaching abroad as part of short-term programmes in order to give all teachers – including teaching staff with heavy workloads and young academics – the chance to take part in international dialogue. Existing projects, such as the training project funded by DAAD from 2010 to 2012 in cooperation with the Universidade Pedagógica de Maputo in Mozambique, should serve as models for future activities.
- In addition to their research leave, lecturers may also teach abroad for a whole semester if, in return, teaching staff from foreign institutions with equivalent qualifications come to Heidelberg University of Education and teach corresponding courses. In order to aid the international mobility of lecturers, the university will provide advisory services and language support.
- The university will recognise services provided by lecturers to mobile students and colleagues, such as the supervision of university partnerships. The contribution of lecturers to the process of internationalisation will thus form a relevant part of reports on their performance.

- The self-evaluation reports required from professors on the W salary scale should also always include statements on their contribution to the internationalisation of Heidelberg University of Education.
- The university aims to increase the proportion of international visiting lecturers taking part in short or long-term lectureships. To this end, it aims to make particular use of the funding and support offered by the Fulbright Commission, DAAD and the Alexander von Humboldt-Gesellschaft.

### **2.3. Increasing the number of students from migrant backgrounds**

The proportion of students from migrant backgrounds has risen significantly on all programmes. The teaching profession must be presented as an attractive career opportunity for people from migrant backgrounds. In future, students from migrant backgrounds should receive targeted advisory services and supervision at the start and during their studies.

To this end, the university is taking the following **measures**:

- The website of Heidelberg University of Education also displays photos of people from migrant backgrounds.
- Heidelberg University of Education is developing an image campaign for the teaching profession and the university's programmes which targets prospective students from migrant backgrounds.
- The university is identifying prospective students early on and providing them with information on the options available at PH Heidelberg. Heidelberg University of Education plans to cooperate more closely with schools in the region with the aim of organising joint events with school headteachers, representatives of the Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts, the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs and the Council for Foreign Residents.
- The university is cooperating with teachers from migrant backgrounds. It has designated educational ambassadors (successful graduates from migrant backgrounds) who will promote the teaching profession.
- One of the university's structural measures includes setting up a service for prospective and current students from migrant backgrounds to provide them with guidance when selecting programmes and subjects and to monitor their progress during their studies. The goal is to significantly increase the number of students from migrant backgrounds who successfully complete a degree at Heidelberg University of Education. The university is developing a welcoming environment for this target group.

**Individual measures:**

- networking with regional bodies representing foreigners;
- organising events for students from migrant backgrounds who need help improving their knowledge of German, with their academic work and preparing for examinations;
- developing a peer-mentoring programme with student tandems;

- establishing a discussion group to provide students from migrant backgrounds with advice on issues relating to visas, work permits, health insurance and their studies (excluding specialist courses);
- training educational ambassadors to be coaches for students;
- providing further training to boost the intercultural awareness of student advisers.

## **2.4. Developing programmes and curricula**

We are systematically internationalising the curricula of all new programmes, programmes which are designated for re-accreditation and the new teacher training programme launched in 2011. All programmes will thus be reviewed to establish how their content is geared towards an international audience and to what extent they adopt a global perspective, at least in selected areas. This concerns not only subjects and subject-based didactics, but also education studies, psychology and sociology. International specialist literature should be integrated into the curricula, particularly of basic educational science courses. It is essential to considerably improve opportunities for students to spend time abroad and acquire intercultural and foreign language skills. In future, internships and student exchanges abroad should be the norm rather than the exception for all programmes.

To this end, the university is taking the following **measures**:

### ***International programme content in modules***

- The course module descriptions will specify binding objectives concerning internationally oriented programme content, acquisition of foreign language skills and periods spent abroad.
- By integrating their core research areas into the curriculum, international visiting lecturers (e.g. Erasmus STA, Fulbright professors) can, for example, add a global perspective to programme content. The university is able to build on the experiences and successes of the Erasmus programme and the DAAD's Eastern Partnerships programme.
- Events on internationally oriented research projects which require intensive preparation over a limited time period (e.g. students preparing congresses) can be integrated into programmes and credited to modules.

### ***Periods spent abroad***

- All programmes offer the opportunity to spend time abroad and the university fully recognises all academic achievements during this period.
- Students taking foreign language courses are required to spend at least three months in the target language country.
- Study and exam regulations must be formulated in a way that enables students to qualify for scholarships and the Bafög grant to study abroad.
- The existing short-term internship scheme will remain in place. All other periods spent abroad should last a minimum of three months in order to be eligible for scholarship funding. Students will have the option of spending up to two semesters abroad.

### ***Recognition of academic achievements***

- The university guarantees recognition of the academic achievements of students studying abroad. The tried-and-tested instruments of the Erasmus Programme (learning agreements, transcript of records etc.) will be extended to document time spent abroad outside the scope of Erasmus.
- Students will receive certification and recognition of foreign language and intercultural skills acquired on courses and during periods spent abroad: these achievements will be credited to modules.

### ***Guidance for students***

- Students will receive guidance to prepare them for their time abroad, as well as supervision and support after they return. The university will draw on the experiences of the International Office's cooperation with the faculties and the teaching staff responsible for international partnerships (Erasmus Coordinators and Senate representatives).

### ***Internships with an intercultural focus***

- Internships will be developed in regional institutions to raise awareness of intercultural experiences and enable students to acquire intercultural skills. Diversity and an international outlook are viewed here as potential educational advantages rather than "problems".
- Practical intercultural experience gained by students in educational occupational fields is no longer considered to be a mere complement to their studies; it is recognised by the university as an integral part of their professional training. Acquisition of these skills is stipulated in the module handbooks.

### ***Courses in English***

- Visiting lecturers and the commitment of the teaching staff at PH Heidelberg will enable the university to increase the number of courses taught in English on all programmes and in all subject areas. This applies in particular to Masters and other postgraduate programmes. Compact courses, such as summer schools, will also be developed, offering specific programmes taught in English.

### ***Language courses***

- Language courses are offered free of charge to all students on teacher training courses. The language courses prepare students for their time abroad and train the language skills of undergraduate and postgraduate students. The university will draw on the expertise gained from the courses offered by International Office.

### ***Intercultural training sessions***

- Introductory and preparatory seminars featuring intercultural training sessions will be organised free of charge to prepare students for their studies and internships abroad. These seminars will help train the intercultural skills of undergraduates and postgraduates in preparation for time abroad. The university will learn from the experiences of the International Office's courses.

### *New teaching methods*

- It is necessary to develop new teaching methods based on (partially) virtual structures to enable learning across borders and provide access to learning resources. This will allow the university to offer more seminars in cooperation with international partners. Heidelberg University of Education is able to draw on the experiences of various faculties and subject areas in this regard.

### *Certificates of academic achievement in foreign languages*

- After consultation with examiners, students may take examinations or submit coursework in languages other than German. They are strongly encouraged to use this opportunity.

### *Documentation of academic achievements*

After completion of their degrees, all graduates of Heidelberg University of Education receive a diploma supplement containing a transcript of records in both German and English. Students will be provided with a transcript of records during their time abroad to ensure they are placed in the appropriate academic stream. The university plans to purchase the necessary software.

## **2.5. Internationally oriented Masters and PhD programmes.**

The goal of the university is to improve the ability of its graduates to work internationally and to attract more foreign students, particularly to its Masters and postgraduate programmes.

To this end, the university is taking the following **measures**:

- Masters programmes – like doctorates – will be structured in a way that enables students to obtain double diplomas (Joint Degree, Double Degree, Cotutelle). This requires the creation of specific partnerships and the strategic development of existing partnerships. Heidelberg University of Education has adopted the international equivalency agreement (HRK), facilitating the admission of highly qualified foreign applicants to postgraduate courses.
- PH Heidelberg's Masters programmes enable all students to spend the third semester of their course at a foreign partner university on request. To this end, the university is establishing strategic partnerships for all Masters programmes.
- Masters, PhD and professorial (Habilitation) theses can generally be submitted in English at Heidelberg University of Education.

## **2.6. University partnerships, exchanges and funding programmes**

The extent of a university's international outlook should be measured first and foremost in qualitative terms (suitability of partnerships, actual mobility and sustainability of the cooperation) rather than in quantitative terms (number of university partnerships).

To this end, the university is taking the following **measures**:

- PH Heidelberg aims to establish further partnerships in Europe and overseas that fit its profile.
- The university will continue to develop its partnerships in dialogue with partner institutions, taking a flexible approach which accounts for the specific interests of strategic partnerships. Students from partner institutions that do not charge tuition fees will be offered specially tailored courses (summer schools in return for a semester studying at their institution).
- PH Heidelberg will organise joint international symposiums with its international partner universities and publish the findings in English.
- In order to boost sustainable international cooperation, PH Heidelberg will expand its cooperation with Heidelberg University and with institutions in the Rhine-Neckar Metropolitan Region.
- Exchange and scholarship programmes (Erasmus, Comenius, Baden-Württemberg-Stipendium, DAAD programmes, Fulbright programmes etc.) are not only valuable support mechanisms for individual scholarship holders, but are above all key engines in the university's internationalisation process, which it uses in a strategic manner to foster the international dimension of its faculties, programmes and curricula and to promote the internationalisation of the university overall. The university takes into account each funding mechanism's specific profile and ensures that its backers receive the necessary publicity in various media and publications.

## **2.7. Internationalising the administration**

In order to put the internationalisation strategy into practice, it must be supported and facilitated by the administration. It is particularly important that staff in the administrative offices possess sufficient foreign language abilities (especially English) and intercultural communicative skills in order to communicate successfully with international partners.

To this end, the university is taking the following **measures**:

- Heidelberg University of Education is making use of and developing the existing options (Erasmus STT) and also offering its administrative staff further training (English courses, intercultural training sessions). The International Office is organising English courses specifically for this purpose. The courses take place outside of working hours and participation is free of charge. The International Office also offers courses for a number of other languages.
- The further training options for university staff offered by the Erasmus programme will be expanded in the new generation of the programme after the successful pilot phase running from 2008 to 2013.
- In future, job advertisements will particularly target applicants from migrant backgrounds.



## **2.8. Marketing the university at international level**

Heidelberg University of Education plans to increase the number of international teachers and students and boost the university's international profile. In order to achieve this goal, it is developing a global marketing strategy. This will require the strategic definition of particular target countries and regions.

To this end, the university is taking the following **measures**:

- All of the university's programmes – in particular its postgraduate Masters programmes and PhD programme – will be publicised internationally in cooperation with the relevant institutions and service providers (MWK and Baden-Württemberg International – BWI, Gate). PH Heidelberg is compiling the necessary information material in close coordination with BWI in order to market its programmes.
- In future, Heidelberg University of Education's website will place a far greater focus on attracting international students. The homepage will provide information on the university's foreign language services. Heidelberg University of Education will continue to present key information in English on its website.
- A separate page will list all of the courses taught in English at PH Heidelberg.

## **2.9. Support and evaluation**

Within the scope of its structural and development planning process, the university set up a working group to prepare the internationalisation strategy presented in this document and to actively support the university's process of internationalisation in the future. Heidelberg University of Education made a successful bid to undergo an HRK audit, which began in September 2011. The findings of this audit will be used to enhance the university's internationalisation strategy.

As of: June 2011

The internationalisation strategy was approved by PH Heidelberg's Senate and University Council in June 2011