



Karlstad University's Action Plan for Internationalisation, 2020-2023

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Introduction and aim

This action plan presents measures aiming to concretise and specify the University's internationalisation efforts. The action plan corresponds with the six strategic goals decided by the university board for the years 2020–2023, which are based on the three success factors identified by the vice chancellor in relation to the strategic goals for internationalisation. The action plan should be seen as support for deans, department heads, unit heads, programme directors and international coordinators. The action plan shall harmonise with the university's environmental policy (RB 137/18), as well as with the management and staff policy. It is also important that the university's internationalisation efforts conform to the internationalisation objectives for higher education, issued by the Ministry of Education and to the directives for education and research established by the EU.

The aim of internationalisation efforts at Karlstad University is to promote quality in education, research and the university administration. It is essential that internationalisation is a clear and integrated part of the university's education and research. There need to be various forms of cooperation to meet the demands of students as well as university staff.

The university's international cooperation requires different forms of efforts in different regions, but the overarching objective is that every single partnership must involve a reciprocal and active exchange of students and staff. The foundational principles embedded in our internationalisation efforts are to attract qualified staff and students from the whole world and to make visible the university through high quality research and education, nationally and internationally.

Improved conditions for outgoing students

It is important to maintain a balance in the university's exchange agreements of incoming and outgoing students. More courses offered in English are needed to attract incoming exchange students, which is also a requirement for obtaining exchange places at partner universities for outgoing students. The university shall offer favourable conditions for outgoing students to conduct some of their studies abroad as part of their degree programmes.

Improved conditions for incoming students

Every year Karlstad University receives hundreds of students on exchange agreements. Agreements are possible because the university offers courses taught in English. Maintaining a high rate of exchange activities therefore requires monitoring and following up course offerings in English. Over time, the university should establish a consistent and reliable course offering in English.

The majority of exchange students apply for courses in English. As a rule, exchange students wish to study courses in English for at least a whole semester. In some cases, students from Nordic partners need to take courses in Swedish at the university. The

primary ambition is still to promote opportunities for exchange students. At present, there is no decision to market the university to non-exchange students, so called free movers. This action plan does not include any measures regarding this student category.

One of Karlstad University's six overarching strategic objectives is to present a high degree of internationalised activities serving to strengthen the quality of education, research and administration through various types of meetings and partnerships. This is concretised through:

- **Extended cooperation with selected foreign universities and other organisations to increase student and staff mobility**
- **Extended relevant course and programme offerings taught in English**
- **Closer international research partnerships**

Prioritised measures till the end of 2023

Extended cooperation with selected foreign universities and other organisations to increase student and staff mobility

- **Measure:** Identifying at least three partner universities (at least two in Europe) suitable for student exchange in each degree programme based on our established international contacts.
Responsible: Deans, Head of Office for Student Affairs
- **Measure:** All degree programmes shall offer the opportunity to students to complete some of their studies abroad. Information should be provided at an early stage of degree programmes. Information on programme home page should clearly state when it is possible to study abroad in the course of study, what students are expected to study in the exchange semester, and where to turn for further information about exchange studies.
Responsible: Deans
- **Measure:** Actively following up and taking advantage of student experiences of studying abroad by providing opportunities in courses and programmes for returning exchange students, practical placement students and other students with international study background to share their experiences to fellow students in an appropriate way.
Responsible: Deans, Department heads
- **Measures:** All graduates at Karlstad University shall be given the opportunity to develop their international understanding and/or intercultural competence. To make this possible, the faculties shall initiate virtual mobility cooperation. Examples of such measures are on-line guest

lectures or group work with students at partner universities, thus facilitating international study without travel.

Responsible: Deans, Department heads

- **Measure:** Enabling staff to acquire international experience and competence by providing international professional development initiatives in several areas, for example, language training.

Responsible: Deans, Department heads, HR Director, Head of Office for Student Affairs, Head of Student Support

- **Measure:** Making room in the staffing plan to enable international exchange periods with a view to maintaining and developing relationships with relevant university partners.

Responsible: Deans, Department heads, Administrative heads, University Director, HR Director

- **Measure:** Providing regular information on opportunities to gain international experiences.

Responsible: Head of Office for Student Affairs, Head of Student Support

- **Measure:** Requiring proficiency in English for all new recruitments. The level of proficiency must, however, be related to the duties of each position.

Responsible: Deans, Department heads, University Director, HR Director

Extended relevant course and programme offerings taught in English

- **Measure:** There are specific partnership agreements in several of the university's subject areas. In the cases where such agreements are in place or in progress, the subjects shall provide courses in English of at least 30 ECTS credits a semester, distributed across the study periods. The courses are to be joint courses with Swedish-speaking students to increase integration and contribute to internationalisation at the university.

Responsible: Deans, Department heads

- **Measure:** Reviewing the grading system for courses taught in English to facilitate incoming students' exchange semester at Karlstad University.

Responsible: Vice-Chancellor

Closer international research partnerships

- **Measure:** Actively deepening the university's participation in international networks and partnerships that in various ways contribute values to courses and programmes and can generate external research funding.
Responsible: Vice-Chancellor, Deans

- **Measure:** More researchers/research groups should apply for funding from the Horizon Europe programme compared to applications for Horizon 2020 funding.
Responsible: Vice-Chancellor, Deans

- **Measure:** Strategic investments regarding senior researchers, i.e. international Fellowship programmes, and strategic investments regarding junior researchers. i.e. the Innovative Training Networks.
Responsible: Deans

- **Measure:** Actively ensuring that the university introduces an infrastructure aiming to support the establishment and management of international networks, partnerships and projects. Examples of areas in need of support are issues related to funding, law, contracts, GDPR, ethics, data management, and recruitment to EU projects.
Responsible: Deans, University Director

Follow-up of action plan

In connection with the internal operational dialogues, the measures above are continually followed up. In addition, a workshop will be arranged in the spring of 2021 for the purpose of sharing experiences of how the implementation of the action plan is taking place and progressing. In the spring of 2024, a follow-up and evaluation seminar of the measures carried out in 2020–2023 will be arranged.