



BUILDING
AN **ENHANCED**
INTERNATIONALIZATION
STRATEGY IN
LATIN AMERICAN
HIGHER
EDUCATION
INSTITUTIONS

Guidelines and
Recommendations



DHIP
Developing HEIs' Internationalization Policies



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

PISA
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PRESS



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tel. +39 050 2212056 / fax +39 050 2212945

e-mail: press@unipi.it

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DHIP, “Developing Higher Education Institutions’ Internationalization Policies”, is an Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE) project which brings together universities from three Latin American countries (Argentina, Colombia, Paraguay) and three European Union countries (Italy, Portugal, Spain) in a joint effort to use peer support and strategic planning to enhance internationalization as a key requirement for the 21st century. The present volume shows our findings for the use of other institutions in other countries as well.



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The DHIP Consortium

UNIVERSITÀ DI PISA	UNIPI	Italy
UNIVERSIDAD DE LA IGLESIA DE DEUSTO	DEUSTO	Spain
UNIVERSIDADE DO PORTO	UPORTO	Portugal
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UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE QUILMES	UNQ	Argentina
UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LANUS	UNLa	Argentina
UNIVERSIDAD DEL CONO SUR DE LAS AMERICAS	UCSA	Paraguay
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FUNDACION UNIVERSITARIA EMPRE- SARIAL DE LA CAMARA DE COMER- CIO DE BOGOTA	UNIEMPRESARIAL	Colombia
UNIVERSITA DEGLI STUDI DI SASSARI	UNISS	Italy



These guidelines and recommendations are the result of a co-creation process. Latin American partners contributed by providing examples of the practices implemented during the life of the project DHIP. European partners were responsible for the coordination of the data collection and for drafting paragraphs and coordinating chapters, according to the following subdivision:

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As project leader UNIFI coordinated the overall activity.

1. Chapter 3, sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.3: Olga Khokhotva

Section 6.1: Judit Cano Corbella and Ainhoa Jorquera Cascón

Part B, chapters 1 and 2: Sergio Caballero Santos, June Oribe Iriondo and Jorge Piñera Álvarez.



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The DHIP Project in a nutshell

DHIP stands for “Developing Higher Education Institutions’ Internationalization Policies”.

The DHIP project is co-financed by the European Union Erasmus+ Program, in the frame of its Key Action 2: Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices, Action Type: Capacity Building in Higher Education. It started in October 2018 and should finish in Fall 2021 (with an extension accorded because of the COVID-19 pandemic). Six different countries are involved: Italy, Spain, Portugal, Argentina, Paraguay and Colombia.

The general objectives of DHIP have been to foster the development of the international dimension of Higher Education in a flexible and sensitive way, adapted to the needs of its diverse partners, but also encouraging a holistic approach to the transformations necessary in our rapidly changing world.

As the project summary recites:

“Worldwide, HEIs launch international initiatives, announcing their ambition to become ‘global educational institutions.’ A look at what is happening shows that often these initiatives have a marginal impact. In recent years, several universities in Latin America have undertaken ambitious internationalization programs which have delivered less than satisfactory results. It is clear that there is a significant gap between internationaliza-



tion efforts and concrete outcomes. The starting point of our project is a holistic idea of internationalization. The standard and widely accepted definition of internationalization as ‘the process of integrating an international dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of the institution’, does not capture in our view the essence of a process whose ultimate goal is to integrate the institution into the emerging global knowledge production and transfer (research, learning and teaching) network, while enhancing its relevance for its own students and territory. Our definition emphasizes the HEIs’ need to become an integral part of the world’s knowledge and learning/teaching system, not only to benefit from it but also to contribute to its development. This rationale calls for change in existing structures, operating modes and mindset to allow the institution as a whole (staff, students, and future employers) to contribute to the emerging global knowledge and learning network. The project foresees joint elaboration of strategies and roadmaps for each partner, using cutting edge techniques and tools, including those created in the Tuning Latin America and ECHE Principles. The result foreseen will be the increased ability of the Latin American partners to start and manage their internationalization process effectively, enhancing mobility and quality, and thanks to carefully planned dissemination and twinning, improve the performance of other HEIs in the region and the EU.”

Now, having implemented the project, we wish to share our methodologies, tools and results with other institutions and interested parties.



The IEP methodology

A central tool of DHIP has been the IEP, the “Internationalization Enhancement Plan”. The IEP has guided and facilitated the development of an individualized strategy for each institution involved in the project, allowing it to be followed, monitored and updated as needed. The IEP has proved its worth, and we have shared it in other countries as well.

The IEP approach was elaborated at the beginning of the project and reflects the basic orientations of the partnership. First, it is co-created, using the knowledge, experience, inputs and points of view of both the Latin American and the European partners. Second, it is flexible: there is a general template, which provides inspiration and guidance for each institution in developing its own internationalization enhancement strategy and, on the basis of its specific aspirations, situation and context, its own roadmap for doing so. Third, it is based on a peer-support method: sharing, comparing and improving among equals. Fourth, it makes it possible to give substance to the idea of a higher education institution where internationalization is not an ‘extra’ but pervades all university activities, while refusing the idea the ‘one size fits all’. Finally, it is conceived in general terms, which make it a useful tool for any higher education institution, at any stage of internationalization, and in any country of the world.



Co-creation of the template:

While the general idea was part of our project from the proposal stage, the precise way it would be articulated into sections and subsections was the result of our discussions during the first phases of the project. In the end, it came to include 7 general sections in a logical order: starting with the overall university strategy, then taking up the international services; mobility and the institutional international culture; the modernization of teaching, learning and assessment and the shift to competence-based student-centered learning; research services, opportunities and orientations; outreach and the third mission; and finally, visibility and sustainability. Each section, in addition to the subsections, has numerous suggestions or hints about what to review and where intervention might be useful, as well as a structure for defining the steps to be taken and the timescale.

Flexibility in using the template:

When the template was finished, after being broadly discussed and shared, in Spanish and English versions, the responsibility passed to each of the partner HEIs, who elaborated their own version, on the basis of their situation at the beginning of the project, their orientations and resources. Although all institutions followed the general template, the resulting institutional IEPs were quite different in detail. In our opinion this is a strength and important feature of the IEP. Each Institution took into its own hands the responsibility for its choices and for developing as ambitious an internationalization policy as it thought possible, evaluating all input factors. This has meant that each institution has taken ownership of the reform or enhancement process, making it inner-directed rather than imposed from outside. It is also important to point out that the IEP process was the



result of an internal debate in each university, with the participation of all the relevant stakeholders in the internationalization process.

Peer support attitude:

The peer support aspect is central to DHIP, in a specific way. Our consortium was formed on purpose of institutions both very experienced and active in the international sphere, and others having little or no experience. This 'mixed group' was not understood however as the experienced instructing the others on what to do, although of course their knowledge and input constituted a valuable resource. Rather the purpose was to share experiences and to achieve new insights and momentum by putting into a collaborative context institutions of different types - in different countries, with different hinterlands, excellences and areas to be developed - in order to create a higher level of understanding for all partners. Thanks to this format of 'peer support' (as opposed to 'peer learning') the partners have all benefited from the IEP experience and, surely, will continue to do so.

Coordinated internationalization in all sectors:

Another central feature of the IEP approach is the idea that internationalization does not mean simply having an international office, and perhaps increasing the number and competences of its staff: although this of course may also be needed and useful. Rather, our approach is holistic, in the sense that we believe that all sectors of activity and all individual stakeholders will profit by being able to connect their activities to the international dimension: they too will need certain new competences, but most of all the stimulus that derives from looking at their activities in a wider and more interconnected framework.



Sharing the methodology:

DHIP has found that its approach has been fruitful. Some planned activities have been difficult or impossible to carry out during the pandemic, but for us, as for everyone, with the unexpected challenges there have been unexpected insights, and also solutions which may be useful in the future.

We hope, and believe, that the present **Guidelines and Recommendations** can be useful for others, not only as a record of our own experience, but also for the concrete and practical suggestions which they can use in their own context. The **IEP Template** itself has already been shared in other countries, where it has been adapted to the needs of the user HEIs in their own pursuit of excellence in and through internationalization. It is included at the end of this volume and we invite others to use it.

Part A

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS' INTERNATIONALIZATION POLICIES AND SERVICES





Higher education institutions' internationalization policies and services

The first part of these 'Guidelines' regards the activities undertaken and the insights gained with respect to how to foster a realignment of all sectors of our universities according to an international perspective. As clarified in the preceding remarks regarding the IEP, this has not meant proposing and carrying out the same changes in each institution. Rather, it has involved a process in which peer support and networking have been important, but in which each institution has adapted the general methodology to its own needs.

The first steps have been to make a complete review of the general strategies and policy documents of each institution, involving all stakeholders; the second to take a close look at the existing international office and related academic services; the third to look at mobility and the international institutional culture; the fourth regards the modernization of learning, teaching and assessment, aiming at a transformation in the direction of output-based programs, student centered learning, learning outcomes and measurement of the learning process in terms of the student time



required. The next sector to be reviewed and a strategy developed was research, with a close look at the existing capabilities and the potential of the research and innovation sectors to profit from internationalization. The same review, consultation and reformulation process was carried out also with guard to the possibilities of enhancing synergy with the surrounding territories (outreach), visibility, and sustainability.

For each of these pillars of institutional activity and development each HEI defined its own roadmap, defining the steps to be taken in each sector and the timescale for each planned change, formal or informal. Our experiences, in the form of lessons learned, Principles, guidelines and real-life examples, are described in the following pages.



1. Internationalization policies

1.1 Internationalization as a part of a quality learning system

In the past, internationalization and the international aspects of Higher Education Institutions' life was considered an 'extra', a marginal or nearly marginal factor. International offices were small and their activities limited to the occasional foreign guest or student seeking enrolment. In recent decades globalization has progressed rapidly as have the technologies that allow our interconnected world to function - with regard to the economy, politics, and culture: higher education has gained new dimensions and taken on new roles in order to serve its stakeholders in the changing context.

Active and proactive universities were the first to realize that they would have to begin to act on a broader scale. They would need to be attentive to changes beyond their national area of reference. They would have to update their learning/teaching offer and in many cases learn to compete in a global higher education market. They would begin to look at worldwide rankings, and discuss whether it was appropriate to try to improve their rankings, and how. They would need to meet challenges outside of their direct control, and also learn how to take up the new opportunities offered.

How universities reacted to the new challenges and the new opportunities depended and depends on their internal culture, their territorial placement and role, and their ability to generate a strategic vision of their future, and take steps to implement it.

The central function of the DHIP partnership has been to create a space for sharing the understandings and perspectives of universities having very different previous experiences: some having given notable contri-



butions not only through their own institutional structures and policies, but also in elaborating, with their colleagues, the tools needed for international cooperation on a vaster plane. Others until our project started had not registered the need to interact internationally with the same intensity. Through the formulation of their IEPs all partners have benefitted by bringing out into the open and discussing frankly, with each other and with their own staff and students, how to construct a more incisive long-term internationalization policy. Both those with decades of experience and those that are taking their first steps now have profited by developing individual workplans that cover all the main sectors of university activity, aiming to weld the various sectors into a cohesive whole, in which internationalization is not an 'extra' but an integral part of their core mission.

Principle 1. Internationalization is not an optional 'extra' for 21st century higher education institutions

The unprecedented speed of communication in today's world immediately connects every institution and potentially every individual to the impact of processes going on and choices made in other countries. Advances in scientific research and education cannot be separated by national or local borders. Universities must equip themselves to look beyond their traditional borders and interact with other educators, researchers and educators around the world.

Principle 2. An internationalization enhancement process should involve all components of a university in a discussion of the paths to take, the challenges to address and benefits that may accrue.

If the enhancement of the international profile of an institution is to follow the holistic DHIP model, all academic components as well as authorities and territorial partners need to be informed of the objectives of and the reasons for undertaking the project, and be able to give their own contri-



bution to planning it and achieving its aims.

Principle 3. Universities have a broad role to play, not only sharing broader knowledge of worldwide developments with their own stakeholders.

Although the immediate reference groups maybe local (own students and staff, own community) regional or national, and certainly enabling an international perspective and facilitating international interaction of these people and organizations is essential, higher education institutions are also called on to give their own contribution to the realization of a more interconnected world. They can contribute to the understanding and realization of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); they can contribute to the goals of the UNESCO Global Recognition Convention, both by stimulating its acceptance and use, and providing transparency and quality of their own offer. They can contribute with their research, educational programs, and own practice to the realization of the SDGs, and a sustainable world.

Examples

For UDES internationalization is a strategic axis depending directly from the rector's office, and is structured according to an internationalization policy that integrates the mission functions, research, outreach, teaching, and two transversal functions which are mobility and bilingualism. The fundamental purpose is to promote regional, national and international visibility and contribute to the development of solutions to social problems, and train professionals with a global vision.

UNIEMP: As a result of the DHIP kick-off meeting in Mendoza Argentina, where a SWOT analysis was performed, Uniempresarial built its plan containing the analysis of each guideline regarding its internationalization policy, in order to establish lines of action to align its institutional regulations and practices to improve various internationalization processes using



a holistic approach. The objective was to develop and integrate the international dimension within the structural and cultural components of Uniempresarial using the “Internationalization Enhancement Plan” to improve its potential for global interaction. The impact has been the consolidation of its Policy document with the vice-rectorates, research and entrepreneurship areas, allowing its articulation with institutional policies and approval. Already from 2015 to 2018 we registered an increase in mobility from 1 to 58, strengthening our network of partnerships, mainly with the Universities of Porto, Pisa and Sassari, and also increasing the number of collaborative projects with partner HEIs, notwithstanding the pandemic.

UPN: In order to strengthen the overall internationalization process, among the other tasks of public Higher Education in Colombia, the National Pedagogical University (UPN) has updated its Academic Statute in 2019 (Agreement No. 010 of April 13, 2019). The new Statute addresses four fundamental issues to promote Internationalization:

- a- Integrate in the Study Plans components, cycles, learning environments and sets of problems, which articulate the curricular perspective in correspondence with the Principles of integrality, flexibility and interdisciplinarity; fundamental Principles in strengthening Internationalization of the University.
- b- Declare the possibility of establishing, for undergraduate and / or graduate programs, agreements with other universities in order to promote double degrees and develop joint programs through agreements with national or international universities legally recognized in their own country.
- c- Decisively encourage the learning of a foreign language and define support strategies offered to students. In this sense, the Foreign Language Training Committee is formed, which coordinates and monitors the offer of courses in foreign languages for undergraduate programs. This committee is made up of foreign language professors from the Department



of Languages (attached to the Faculty of Humanities), as well as professors from the Language Center (attached to the Vice-rectorate for University Management (VGU), and the Vice-rector in charge of promoting extension and social outreach of the University), and also the Academic Vice-rector. Furthermore, it provides that each academic program of the University, with the guidance of the Foreign Language Training Committee, will establish, depending on its study plan, the number of levels and the number of credits that the respective levels of Foreign Language will have.

Likewise, undergraduate programs should strive for the development of communication competences in a foreign language: to do this they are urged to formulate reading and support materials in a foreign language in the different academic areas and develop different training strategies (courses, seminars, meetings, internships and exchanges) that can help to strengthen those competences.

d- The last aspect corresponds to the recognition and homologation of academic components or subjects that have been studied and approved by undergraduate and postgraduate students in higher education institutions, both national and international.

2. The University, through the Agreement 035 of October 8, 2020, has adopted the new Institutional Educational Project-PEI-Annex 2, which integrates into its lines of action the “Strengthening of the national, intercultural and international character of the University”. Thus, it not only recognizes the context of plurality and multiculturalism that characterizes Colombian society; It also recognizes the interaction with the different organizations, communities and the intercultural character that defines UPN.

In this sense, the University assumes its role as an educating community that expresses its openness with respect to the challenges of a globalized and culturally diverse planet, thus requiring flexibility in its curricula



and projects. Furthermore, it enhances its international character, based on academic cooperation agreements for the mobility of teachers and students; and promotes the recognition of the University - at international level - through links with peer institutions, collaborative projects and interactions with different cultures and contexts; linking to academic and cultural networks; and the pedagogical leadership that it must always exercise. All this, of course, while recognizing the impact of information and communication technologies (ICTs) as a way of expanding the projection of the knowledge produced at the University.

3. In its Institutional Development Plan 2020-2024 - PDI - Annex 3 the University establishes the Internationalization of the Curriculum project, made in order to promote a model that incorporates international, intercultural and global dimensions in learning processes.

For the development of this project, during 2020 a team of 8 teachers was formed, comprising a teacher from each Faculty (Fine Arts, Science and Technology, Education, Physical Education and Humanities), the coordinator of the Inter-institutional Doctorate in Education, the Director of the Postgraduate Department and the head of the IRO. During that year, and so far in 2021, the process leading to the construction of guidelines for the Internationalization of the Curriculum (CI) at the UPN has continued to move forward.

UNLa: UNLa created and formally approval the Design Commission for the Internalization Proposal of the National University of Lanús within the framework of the ERASMUS + DHIP Program, which lead to the elaboration and formal approval and execution of its IEP. The academic internationalization process was incorporated in the Pluriannual Plan of the National University of Lanús 2020-2025 in order to promote recognition of trajectories, subjects and academic proposals with other institutions.

UNQ: Although UNQ has aimed to enhance its international relations



since its creation (in 1989), it was only at the beginning of this century that this aspect became an active and structured internationalization policy. This is present in the objectives and work programs of the various governing teams that have succeeded each other since then and it is reflected in various institutional documents.

However, the DHIP Project has had, since 2018, a positive catalytic effect on the internal reflection process on how UNQ had been working on these issues. For example, between 2018 and 2019, an in-depth self-assessment and planning was carried out, with the participation of all relevant stakeholders and it concluded with the preparation of a Strategic Plan for Internationalization, associated with the IEP DHIP, thus updating the previous plan. These documents also became a part of the general institutional self-evaluation process, within the framework of the procedures of the National University Evaluation and Accreditation Commission's (CONEAU).

Based on the institutional decision to strengthen internationalization processes, a policy was developed to promote the international visibility of UNQ. This objective was achieved through participation in international university networks, in educational fairs and in cooperation projects.

With regard to participation in networks, UNQ is very active in the Union of Universities of Latin America and the Caribbean (UDUAL) and in 2019 it joined the Association of Universities Grupo Montevideo (the most important Latin American higher education network in South America).

Regarding international fairs, UNQ has been active in NAFSA, EAIE and FAUBAI for more than ten years.

Finally, the UNQ has developed a proactive policy regarding participation in international projects, whether with local financing (PIESCI-SPU), international (ERASMUS, Horizon 2020, 100,000 Forts in the Americas) or mixed (ARFITEC, ARFAGRI, INNOVART).



All these actions are complemented by the signing of bilateral agreements with universities from different world regions.

With regard to geographic priorities, there is a preference for relations with universities in Latin America and Western Europe, but this is not an obstacle to opening new windows of opportunity in the United States, Central and Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia.

1.2 Strategic vision and Internationalization

Vision is a change agent within organizations. Changing trends compel organizations to constantly review and re-evaluate their actions, programs and processes. The expectations of the academic community and other stakeholders make it necessary to adjust visions and strategies on a regular basis. Today, Universities better understand the importance of change and recognize that an effective strategy can only be implemented if different units and departments share a common view and agreed objectives. International trends show that international degree courses are becoming more and more popular and in greater demand. As demand grows, so do students' expectations towards the teaching offer. Language barriers are among the main reasons why international recruitment is not always easy, whether for public or private universities. Providing materials in foreign languages may be an effective strategy to promote international recruitment, as is encouraging language literacy among staff members. The connection with diplomatic institutions may streamline the recruiting process. However, we must also keep in mind that universities can serve as bridges between the international context and the local context. Therefore, developing an international strategy includes building close collaboration with local stakeholders and taking their needs and orientations into count for mutual benefit.



Principle 1. In order to define a strategic vision on internationalization, a formal document to specify the general University internationalization strategy has to be created, and all university components must be involved in the process.

For an institutional point of view, developing a common internationalization framework document within the university as a whole (including all Departments, Faculties and Research Centers) has proven to be a key component of success. The mere affiliation with international projects and programs, such as national scholarship funding schemes or EU-funded initiatives, does not carry much added values if university staff is not aware of the impact that a particular program can have in shaping institutional activities and how it can contribute to creating a shared narrative among academics, students, and stakeholders.

Creating a Mission and Vision section might serve the purpose. Explore and highlight how access to international schemes may strengthen the role of the University at the local level, why looking “outside” is imperative for understanding the “inside” of a region, to build on the experience of others and to avoid unnecessary common mistakes in the management of international activities and the development of international courses.

Principle 2. The creation and promotion of international degree courses, including courses held in English or other foreign language, double degrees, joint degrees is one of the most important steps towards internationalization.

The creation of international double or joint degrees is far from being a simple exercise, a formal routine. It is a hard process that includes considering the actual needs and requirements of the job markets in both countries. However, once the goals are clear and the teaching staff is available, developing international courses offers unprecedented opportunities to



create to stand-alone learning environments: an “external” environment consisting of agreements, exchange programs, incoming mobility flows, international conference to participate in; but also an “internal” environment, consisting of incoming students, guest/visiting professors and additional services to be launched to meet the needs of the new incoming student population.

Also, consider adopting a credit transfer system to promote the recognition of joint and double degrees in all partner countries. An example is SICA (*Sistema de Créditos Académicos*). Also tools such as the Diploma Supplement or the CAT (*Complemento al Título*) are useful tools to reach harmonization. These tools are part of the 6x4 UEALC (European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean Common Space for Higher Education).

Principle 3. When building an international course, the teaching staff is encouraged to consider providing learning materials in foreign language to help deepen the understanding of a specific subject by non-native speakers.

Evidence has proven that this approach (incl. the chance to take an exam in English as a *lingua franca*) improves the expectations of students and the feedback provided to the course. Also consider organizing hands-on workshops to facilitate the teambuilding with resident students and awarding extra points for those who make themselves available to cope with the poor language levels of incoming students. External programs, such as “buddy projects” managed by student associations, have proven to be effective in improving the educational results of incoming students. The aim is not to incorporate foreign students and turn them into “native” students, but to tear down the barriers which may prevent the creation of a properly intercultural and cross-dialogue environment.

Principle 4. While considering soft skills development for the staff and students involved in the internationalization process language skills



stand out as the most important skill to consider.

Language skills are critical (like any other soft skill) and a poor knowledge of the main *linguae francae* (including English and French) might pose a threat to the smooth development of international courses. Consider students' language skills in the recruitment phase and promote foreign language courses among students and professors to facilitate dialogue with partner institutions. National governments and regional organizations often offer funding to support language literacy, that is also extremely important to facilitate the publication of scientific papers on internationally renowned journals.

Consider developing a training program dedicated to the teaching staff to facilitate the development of international courses held in English or other languages and also to increase the chances of the teaching staff to improve their careers and find additional job opportunities.

The increase of the number of scientific publications on international journals has often a positive impact on the University as a whole, in terms of national funding and project evaluations.

Principle 5. Strengthening external relations is an important part of national governmental diplomatic strategies.

Make sure you contact the Embassy of your countries based on the potential target country. Also consider that academia is a field that is still mostly based on one-to-one relations: consider developing an in-house communication awareness-raising campaign to involve the most pro-active professors and researchers who are exposed to international activities.

Embassies and Consulates are an interesting source of information to pinpoint the target audience that may be most interested in your organization and avoid wasting time and resources in international student re-



cruitment fairs. Try to match the organization of your promotional events with those organized by Embassies: “national days” are a good chance to showcase your strengths and involve your students and staff. Strategy can be directed in such a way as to support and be supported by one’s country’s policy objectives.

Principle 6. In order to create a common program of scientific and didactic collaboration, to elaborate a joint work program and exchange programs for students and teachers, the definition of international framework agreements is necessary together with a fund-raising strategy.

Experience has proven that promoting the signing of international agreements without a sound basis for the collaboration may prove to be an administrative burden and hinder, rather than support, the internationalization of university environments. Try to focus on multidisciplinary collaborations to underpin an agreement with an individual potential partner to minimize the risk of the cooperation coming to an end if the only contact point (an individual professor, researcher, manager...) is no longer available or reconsiders the collaboration. Also consider exploring collaborations with countries which are officially included in the diplomatic strategies of your Ministry of Foreign Affairs: remember that diplomatic relations are often steered by financial investment or the internationalization of major undertakings; since such investments might also require the training and education of local workers, it might become an opportunity for universities to develop market-sought Higher Education and Training and find more public/private partners for the development of international courses.

Principle 7. Among the informal practices which may boost the internationalization of the institution, consider including multicultural elements in official University events

Internationalization also means inclusion and accepting the differences as



something which may enrich us. For this reason, when organizing important official events, which may also have an international appeal, it is very important to include elements that represent the culture of the partners belonging to our international network. Making sure that certain collaborations put their mark on and take place among the elements that represent our identity, thus creating a common and open identity. It could be that certain images, sounds or music, the representation of a logo, a flag, or a specific hymn can be a first step that demonstrates the importance of acceptance and inclusion.

Principle 8. Along with scientific research and education, Universities' third mission is to spread culture and share the research results outside of the academic context in order to enhance the social, cultural and economic growth of the territory: the third mission must be included in the general strategy.

In an international perspective, it is most important to create a sound “third mission” network to support spin-offs, local network, incubators, social “extension” projects, etc.

The connection between the University and the local fabric must be at the core of its extension strategy. Local undertakings need employees with industry-valued skills and knowledge if they are to meet the expectations of the market. Professional and continuing education goes well beyond the traditional university setting.

Focus on accommodating the educational and professional development of the workforce and students through a variety of program formats and settings. Try to generate knowledge outside the academia to the benefit of the social, cultural and economic development of your area.

Consider launching “service” dissertations/theses which focus on local issues pinpointed by the local communities and seek effective solutions to



solve them. This will bring students into contact with society and society with academia, improving the interaction between the two.

Principle 9. An approach which considers the University third mission amplifies the critical importance of research collaboration.

Such an approach combines the resources and insights of diverse researchers, to seek better solutions for common problems. In this perspective, it boosts international collaborations to actively build and enhance your research capacity and create new knowledge that is essential for the growth of local communities, thus addressing the local symptoms of global-scale problems. Finally, by boosting cooperation it functions also as a successful support in the strategy of international visibility of research results.

Examples

Within the internationalization strategy it is important to underline how in the IEP implementation, the LA partners of the DHIP Project have recognized important aspects of this tool. In the report of the Universidad Iberoamericana, we read that it helped to develop other sort of strategies such as the determination of possible alliances; while in the report by the University of Lanus in Argentina we read that in this framework, the awareness about internationalization achieved by the participation of the University in the DHIP Project had direct impact on the institutional multi-year Plan. As far as the Colombian partners are concerned it is mentioned in the UDES report that the development of a strategic internationalization plan has become part of the Institutional Development Plan.

Generally speaking, most of the LA partners have had a positive experience in the promotion of their institution at an international level in particular thanks to the development of international agreements and communication events through social media campaigns (i.e. the participation to the Erasmus Days 2020) and new international sections in the websites.



UPN, in the framework of the DHIP project and through the University Steering Committee, approved the implementation of the Strategic Internationalization Plan - IEP - Annex 4 on April 1, 2019. The IEP defines institutional objectives in relation to 8 specific priorities:

- The institutional international strategy.
- International Offices and academic services.
- International mobility and internationalization of the institutional culture.
- Modernization of learning, teaching and assessment programs and practices.
- Research Offices and internationalization strategies and strengthening of research capacities.
- Synergies with the territorial context.
- Visibility.
- Sustainability

The Institutional Development Plan 2020-2024 - PDI - Annex 3 formulated its “Objective 6: the National and International Network University” as a guide for efforts to enhance the leadership of the UPN as the lead institution for learning and teaching, for the production of knowledge in the fields of education, pedagogy, didactics and associated disciplines.

Through actions developed in the National Projection and Internationalization Program in two ways, actions have been carried out that promote both the institutionalization of internationalization - through the PDI Projects Guidelines for the internationalization of the curriculum and Internationalization Policy -, as well as the strengthening of output-based processes, the expansion and consolidation of inter-institutional relations and all those actions that make it possible to continue positioning UPN as an



international reference for the training of educators.

UNIEMP implemented a transversal internationalization strategy. Within the framework of the DHIP project, internationalization was developed as a transversal and integral process that contributes to the strengthening of our institution and the DUAL model of education.

UDES implemented a diagnostic document of the Institutional Development Plan and developed a strategic internationalization plan articulated with the Institutional Development Plan.

The objective is to strengthen UE's internationalization through its insertion in the international and intercultural dimension, with its three substantive functions and administrative processes. This in order to optimize quality processes and improve the profile of the institution's graduates through international competencies.

The current impact is the awareness of the importance of internationalization for learning processes.

The expected impact is an understanding of internationalization as an inherent component of the curriculum. This is strengthened with internationalization actions at home and international mobility for the academic community. The process suffered a slowdown due to the COVID-19 emergency.

An important practice has been that of the management of the IEP (Internationalization Enhancement Plans) whose objectives include "To contribute to institutional quality and continuous development of EU's academic community through the establishment and consolidation of global competencies generated from international and multicultural aspects concretized through internationalization programs and initiatives."

UNLA has included the vision of the Internationalization of the University in several articles of its Statute, a founding document, which will set the



course for future actions. These definitions are aimed at integrating the international with a Latin American perspective into the curriculum and promoting cooperation with international organizations. Moreover, integral internationalization has been incorporated as a strategic objective in the Pluriannual plan of the National University of Lanús 2020-2025. This document was prepared with the participation of all areas of the University: they worked in commissions on the different axes, strategic objectives and action lines that will guide the actions of the University in the next 5 years. In this framework, the awareness about internationalization achieved by the participation of the University in the ERASMUS + DHIP Project had direct impact on institutional multi-year Plan. This plan was approved by the University Assembly¹.

Among the informal implementations, UNLa indicates the promotion of the participation of authorities, teachers and staff in internationalization activities, the incorporation of the International vision in events and meetings with exchange students and UNLa students and the realization of activities with regional actors and honorary degrees to relevant figures of the regional international context.

UCSA in May 2019 published, by Rectoral Resolution, its Strategic Plan for Internationalization (IEP). Furthermore, it is relevant to mention the implementation of the Double Degree in Business Administration with the University of Jena (Germany), although unfortunately the project has suffered a delay due to the COVID-19 emergency.

For several years UCSA has participated in International Research Networks. Difficulties have arisen, however, with regard to the internationalization of degrees programs because of the lack of linguistic competences on the

1. [http://www.unla.edu.ar/documentos/Plan%20Plurianual%202020-2025%20Publicaci%C3%](http://www.unla.edu.ar/documentos/Plan%20Plurianual%202020-2025%20Publicaci%C3%93n)



part of both teachers and learners, as well as delays due to the pandemic.

UNIBE uses the IEP as the main source of actions for IRO, it is considered as an official document approved by the University's authorities. There has been a formal institutional resolution that approves the IEP (Internationalization Strategic Plan). At UNIBE the IEP helps to develop other strategies such as the determination of possible alliances. These are focused on the realization of international agreements and organize social extension projects with a cultural diversity approach. A Cultural Week is organized by the Department of student services with the collaboration of each faculty, during this week students must complete and present a research project they made about a country and its culture and costumes. They believe that International seminars should be part of the curricula; however, due to the lack of language skills and to the cost foreseen by the linguistic center, the development of lessons or activities held in a different language could not be realized.

UNCUYO has created a Commission to establish the new Internationalization Plan for 2022-2030.

Another main lines of UNQ's internationalization process is academic mobility. Although the central objective of these mobilities (of both teachers and students) is the individual academic and cultural experience, UNQ is concerned with taking advantage of the presence of international students and staff on campus to generate spaces for intercultural reflection. Examples of these activities are presented below: a talk given by a visiting professor from a Turkish university on the migration crisis in the Eastern Mediterranean; and the realization of an exhibition about the Day of the Dead made by a Mexican student.

The issue of agreements that are signed and are not executed is a matter of concern. In general, this occurs due to lack of funding or because the agreement is set up through personal initiatives of professors (from UNQ or



the partner institution) without being embedded in the academic structures. Naturally, the COVID pandemic also abruptly threw UNQ into a new context. Clearly the responses of HEIs around the world when faced with lockdowns and institutional closures has been virtualization. Given that UNQ had extensive experience in education using new information and communication technologies, it was reasonable to assume that it was better equipped to meet the challenge than others. And, without a doubt, it faced it successfully thanks to the commitment of teachers and administrative staff.

But as far as student mobility is concerned, it was not easy for UNQ's international relations office to go from face-to-face to virtual mobility: it was necessary to adapt rules and procedures, which practically took up all of 2020. Only in 2021 can we hope to mobilize again a significant number of students, as we did before the pandemic

With regard to the third mission, many activities (mainly those related to social articulation itself) suffered a significant stoppage during the pandemic. This was the result of decisions related to compliance with temporary isolation, which resulted regulations at the national level that did not allow such actions to be carried out. This did not affect technological linkages, which could be maintained through the use of various ad hoc platforms.

UAA created a document containing the International Relations policies of the institution: this has made it possible to monitor specific lines of work. In addition, it designed the strategic plan for Internationalization (IEP) that details the different facets of internationalization: learning/teaching, research and extension. Teaching and research activities are carried out with foreign institutions according to the recommendations of the academic authorities of the different university faculties. There is currently a negotiation under way with the Technological University of Antioquia for the



development of academic collaboration in two master's degrees, applying COIL methodology and mirror classes, and defining a possible double degree in two master's degrees in finance.

In UAA we show the flags of all the countries involved in each activity. In pre-pandemic times, cultural activities, such as presentation of social activities, an international food fair with the participation of foreign students, could be organized. UAA was able to carry out the meeting of international students from 9 Latin American and European countries. We note that mobilities must have financial support for the students because otherwise, in the Paraguayan context. Unfortunately, there is little interest from foreign universities to carry out official joint degrees. A lack of linguistic competences on the part of teachers and students makes it challenging to present work or develop joint subjects or courses in two languages.

1.3 ECHE Principles and the connected opportunities

The Erasmus+ program has provided, through its KA107 action, a good opportunity for structured mobility for students, early stage researchers and academic/administrative staff between Latin American and European countries.

In order to propose a mobility link successfully some rules must be followed. One is that in order to receive Erasmus funding the European partner must have obtained the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE); another is that the non-European partner must comply with the ECHE Principles. These Principles have to do with the transparency and quality of the mobility experience, and the proper use of the tools. European partners must apply for the Charter; they must show that its Principles



are included in their institutional strategy, and that they actually apply the Principles and use the tools in the prescribed way. There inspections and monitoring actions by the National Erasmus agencies to check on whether the Principles are followed.

All the instructions about how to apply the ECHE Principles and tools are available on the European Commission website. There is also a self-assessment tool on line, with which an institution can evaluate whether it is compliant with the ECHE Principles, and try to improve its score. The monitoring guidelines are also available, so that institutions can understand where they fall short, implement and measure their improvement².

Principle 1. ECHE Principles apply to Erasmus mobility with European partners.

Compliance is not monitored for non-European partners except in a general way. Still, institutions must guarantee that they comply with ECHE Principles, and the reporting by the European partner for the KA107 mobility should show that there is compliance.

Principle 2. It is important for non-European HEIS to understand the ECHE Principles in order to be able to apply them in substance to their Erasmus mobility.

The ECHE Principles, although defined for Erasmus countries, are also intrinsically useful elsewhere, whether or not the institutions involved wish to participate in Erasmus projects or mobility.

Principle 3. It is useful to familiarize staff and students with the ECHE Principles: although clearly not applicable in toto to non-European HEIS, the annotated version may provide a good basis for discussion and of

2. https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/applicants/higher-education-charter_en





transparency and quality in managing mobility.

Since the ECHE Principles apply to ensuring quality mobility in general, and the annotated version gives detailed pointers on how to do so, they can be useful to inform procedures and practices in non-European countries too.

Examples

UNCUYO has a system to follow up mobilities and ensure the quality and transparency, compatible with the ECHE.

UE has developed student and faculty mobility processes in harmony with the ECHE Principles, allowing positive and impactful results within the framework of the DHIP project.

1.4 Policies for outgoing /incoming mobility

Principle 1. Mobility participants, whether staff members or students, should be prepared to take their role as culture bearers in several directions: as ambassadors of their own culture, institution and country, as interested and sensitive learners about the host culture, institution and country, and finally as interpreters and sharers of their experience on their return.

Participants in a mobility scheme should be clearly informed that the experience entails a role as culture bearers or ambassadors, and before departure they should be given opportunities to reflect together on how to carry out this role. Specific workshops should be offered before mobility takes place to sensitize the participants about how to adapt to the language, manners and culture of the hosts, politely and with respect, while also being able to communicate about their own language, manners and culture.

They should also be informed clearly about the expectations on their re-



turn: that they will contribute the knowledge and understanding gained to others, and help to advise future mobility candidates, and evaluate and give suggestions for improving the experience.

Principle 2. In the host institution incoming mobile staff or students need to find an informative and supportive environment that offers them possibilities to interact socially as well as academically with the local community.

Host institutions should make available ample information beforehand about what support (orientation, social activities, buddies) and also info sheets about living in the host city/country. Accommodation should be arranged in such a way that students of the same country know how to find each other and meet, but that normally they live with local people or people in mobility from other countries.

Incoming visitors should be welcomed and have individual support: their arrival treated as special, with news items on the institutional website, events, tours, presentations for students and staff encouraged.

Principle 3. When faced with a context of crisis (e.g. pandemic, natural disaster, terrorist attack) home and host institutions need to have already a predefined plan on how to communicate and support their incoming or outgoing students and staff.

Home and host institutions should assure to keep emergency contacts in their databases and keep a close contact with their students in times of turmoil. Also there should be a mobile phone available for cases of emergency that should be kept with one of the members of the team.

Ideally, an emergency budget and a contingency risk plan should be kept as in contexts of catastrophe usually there is the need to support financially the more disadvantaged students in cases in which there is no in-



insurance coverage guaranteed.

Nevertheless, the HEI should be very careful, assure a fair and equitable distribution of aid not to benefit any mobility participant in detriment of others.

Examples

Efficient communication is extremely important for a successful implementation of mobility in general. Most of the LA partners have in place instruments such as mobility guides and set up informal communication channels to stay in touch with incoming students and staff:

The Universidad del Cono Sur de las Américas (Paraguay) International Relations Office applies a Mobility Guide, prepared having as basis, good practices obtained through the mobility program MERCOSUR funded by the European Union (March 2011).

The Universidad Nacional de Lanús (Argentina) has used chat groups with the Mobility Coordinator to ensure a fluent and effective communication with the outgoing and international students. Additionally, it was used peer to peer follow up to cases that are facing specific issues.

Crisis communication is also important to prepare an emergency plan. During the 2020/2021 pandemic the partner HEI in LA activated a series of measures to counteract the effects that confinement and restrictions to circulation had in their international community:

UNLa concentrated its resources on the immediate attention of community needs to hinder the impact of the pandemic. Regarding international mobility, all efforts were concentrated in following the international procedures for repatriate individuals and guarantee the academic continuity of students.

- An ad-hoc regulation and procedure were put together to guarantee the continuity and accreditation of the subjects taken during 2020 by incoming exchange students. This regulation had the participation,





consensus and approval of the management areas of the University (Academic Secretary, Secretary of Legal Affairs) and the 4 academic departments.

- Digital data collection forms were developed for student applications, among others, which facilitated the systematization of information in the pandemic context;

UAA paid special attention to students from disadvantaged groups for example by lending computers;

UPN set up different actions to promote the well-being of their students who were developing international academic mobility processes and activated state contributions to support eleven (11) international undergraduate students who had just a partial scholarship.

Some institutions also started offering (or planning) online/virtual courses open mobility to overcome the challenges with having groups in classrooms:

UNCUYO and UNIBE have virtual classes (*clases espejo*) provided by international professors and allows virtual exchanges for students.

UCSA: During the pandemic even if there was no physical mobility, it was implemented with the participation of students (online) classes developed by foreign teachers.

For UNLA, virtual mobility for students, teachers and researchers is still a pending subject but the HEI is making efforts to put in motion a mobility strategy compatible with the pandemic context.

Principle 4. It is vital that each institution documents the experience of past and present mobile staff and students, to spread the word and encourage future participants drawing a line that connects all through mobility.



Transforming the individual level of the mobility experience into something broader and more lasting is not automatic. Students especially, but also staff, consider their experience a personal one, and when they graduate or achieve higher academic levels they will no longer be automatically engaged in the activities designed to enhance their cultural contribution.

To document and share the experience for the coming generations of mobile participants, current incoming students and staff can be asked to record brief videos describing their experience and impressions on arrival and, then, how their perceptions have changed by the time of their departure. Returning mobility staff and students, can also prepare texts or podcasts about their experience, how they dealt with the challenges they met, and the new understanding they achieved, to be made available on the institution's website.

Principle 5. Appropriate support must include preparation before the mobility, support and organization of networking events during mobility and preparing for reintegration after mobility. The HEIs should also closely monitor the Academic Recognition processes.

In order to achieve the greatest benefit from each mobility, the individual experience must be supported in every phase. Higher education institutions must have a solid structure to support individuals throughout the whole experience (both incoming and outgoing).

Close monitoring of academic recognition starting with the preparation of the learning agreements to the actual process of academic recognition is concluded and the courses followed abroad integrated in the students' academic profile. Coordinating units (across departments/faculties) use streamlined procedures on how to respond institutionally to requests of Academic Recognition.

Principle 6. Incoming staff and students are a valuable resource and can



help to advise future outgoing mobility candidates and prepare them for their experience. Host institutions should get their feedback on how the intercultural impact they produce and experience can be strengthened.

Cultural sessions can be organized by the IRO, if possible matching people going to and coming from the same institution or country, in order to share useful information not only of an academic or scientific nature, but also about values traditions customs and ways of life, with a view to facilitating better interpersonal understanding.

Where necessary special language training will be offered to mobile incoming and outgoing students and staff.

Principle 7. Upon return, there should be an evaluation of the quality of the mobility period in terms of support received by home and host institution. It should also be evaluated the level of satisfaction with other specific aspects of the experience that concern participants well-being.

When mobile staff or students return to their home institution, they should be asked to evaluate their experience (through online questionnaires) focusing not only on their academic experience but also on the support provided by the home and host HEI including opportunities for social and cultural interaction. The participants should also be given the opportunity to contribute for improvements through open suggestions and indicate if they would recommend the experience to their peers. In case there is a scholarship involved, it would also be a good moment to understand if the amount was sufficient to cover for all the expenses during their time abroad (including travel).

The results should be carefully evaluated and used to improve the institutional support in the future, the results can also be included in the final reports of the department.





Examples

There are many issues around the quality aspects to be implemented, besides academic quality that include priority matters such as academic recognition, establishing a minimum number of credits per semester or having monthly meetings to identify potential difficulties, social integration is also a fundamental aspect to be monitored. Some institutions in LA organized social events and mentoring groups to support the integration of international students/staff:

UAA implemented a buddy system with students who returned from mobility to help newly arrived foreign students in everything they need. Presentations were held during the courses with international student to explain how the city works and give them some useful advices. Visiting professors have joined ongoing classes to interact with UAA students.

At UNQ when in-person gatherings are possible, social and sports meetings are held periodically in which mobility students are sought to integrate with native students. An example is the “asados” (barbecues) in which not only mobility students are invited, but also native students who are close to them to carry out a mobility experience. Another example was soccer games organized around the visit of a delegation of students from an American university to the UNQ campus, where they stayed for two weeks.

Principle 8. The mobility experience is valuable not only for the individual involved, but also for the community of destination (host institution), and return (home institution). The mobile person (student or staff member) can contribute to international and intercultural understanding especially if appropriately supported.

Mobility, whether of academic or administrative staff or students, requires many resources, in terms of national, institutional and personal initiative,



time and expense. Although it is widely seen as an advantage for the future career of the mobile person, its benefits can be broader, for the individuals involved, their institutions and their communities.

In order to achieve those benefits specific planning and preparation for intercultural exchange are necessary. For example, through agreements with the local municipalities to visit local schools and share the experience, organization of cinema sessions about the countries of origin of incoming participants (particularly the less known).

Principle 9. The strategic role of mobility should be recognized institutionally and a systemic approach of the benefits of international mobility should be implemented centrally with impact in the whole institution.

While the expertise and professionalism of international offices is necessary to support mobile staff and students, it is not sufficient. If only those professionally responsible for mobility programs are involved and informed, the benefits of mobility will remain at the individual level.

The entire academic community is responsible for making incoming and outgoing mobility meaningful, and not only on a scientific or academic level. The intercultural importance of mobility should become a central part of the overall institutional strategy and planning.

Principle 10. Activities involving both (prospective, present and past) incoming mobile students and staff and those local students and staff should be regularly and frequently programmed in order to integrate and mutual benefit both locals and mobile participants.

Usually, it is not so common for locals and international students (mobile students who are passing by) to mingle or to group in some contexts. Sometimes due to language barriers, others for cultural differences or because the groups sometimes are already formed and for the newcomers



is harder to be included.

This can have a particularly negative impact academically when international students find it harder to participate in group work, or to be given responsibility within the tasks assigned in class. Professors should be sensitive to this challenge and take the lead in forming the groups and assign specific tasks to specific people if doing collaborative work. They should also encourage and empower the international students to maintain their different identity and present it as a strength, not a weakness, in front of the class. The future of work implies integrating multicultural teams so it should be within the mission of the university to prepare their students to embrace otherness.

Examples

The organization of cross-cultural courses and activities (cultural, social or sportive) act as catalyzers for internationalization at home. Some of the Latin American DHIP partners organized activities that allow the transfer not only of the scientific knowledge but also the diverse cultural richness of mobile students and staff to their local academic community.

UAA organized courses / talks / workshops taught by international students, native English speakers to members of the UAA academic community. Then international students were invited to participate in recreational spaces: sports / breaks / events.

UPN carried out actions related to internationalization processes at home, to contain the pandemic effects: these, through the use of technological tools, allowed academic collaboration between institutions and peer researchers. They enabled experiences of socialization, international and intercultural exchange within the larger community, emphasizing relations with Latin American and Ibero-American countries. Some concrete examples:



- In the second semester of 2020, the proposal, design and implementation of 3 Summer Courses with the Educational Network of Regional Action and Knowledge (REDUCAR) was advanced, which linked students and teachers from more than 5 institutions and 5 countries: Dominican Republic, Honduras, Mexico, Argentina and Colombia. In the first semester of 2021, this offer was expanded to 5 courses in total, this time linking one more country in our design: Ecuador.
- The development of two international collaborative online learning projects (COIL – explained below): 1) *The memory of things and practices: School material culture and daily life in Argentine and Colombian schools*, which put students and teachers in dialogue from the UPN and the National University of Córdoba-UNC, Argentina. 2) Short Interdisciplinary Course on *Virtual Ethnography: Leisure, Gender and Right to the City*, which linked students and professors from the UPN, the Autonomous University of Ciudad Juárez (Mexico) and the University of Ibagué (Colombia).

UNQ offered spaces on campus for intercultural reflection. A couple of examples of these activities: a talk given by a visiting professor from a Turkish university on the migration crisis in the Eastern Mediterranean; and the organization of a show related to the Day of the Dead (Día de los Muertos) by a Mexican student.

1.5 Developing efficient internationalization fund-raising strategies for Higher Education Institutions

The importance of having a mobility experience is such that higher education institutions when striving to internationalize must try to find ways to support the maximum feasible numbers of mobile staff and students, incoming and



outgoing. Normally the greatest burden will be to find ways to support outgoing mobility, because the costs will fall largely on outgoing students (travel, visa, subsistence in a different country). The HEI will also need to support incoming staff and students, offering its educational and research structures to them free of charge, and also providing support services.

In some cases, national or other public funding can help, but most efforts will go to obtaining funds from international projects. And the university itself will probably need to supplement what it obtains with some of its own funds.

Although providing mobility opportunities to academic, research and administrative staff and students will require dedicated efforts and resources, and also some strategic expenditure particularly at the beginning, the benefits will be relevant in the long run.

Principle 1. To obtain support for mobility, a vigorous initial input in terms of investigation of the opportunities will be essential.

To initiate a mobility program it will be important to be able to support a certain number of mobilities. Although in a pilot phase there may be a few scattered experiences, for example for research staff, attending conferences or participating in stages in another country in the course of their activities, a level of funding which can justify a systematic approach and the development of the necessary know-how and services is essential. To kick-start a mobility program, all existing contacts should be explored and exploited, in order to build a database of possible sources and programs. Networking partners, such as those in DHIP, can give ideas and advice.

Principle 2. The Principle of inclusion must guide policies toward funding mobility. Mobility should be equally possible for students or staff members notwithstanding differences in their level of private resources.



If funding is not sufficient to cover all mobility costs, the mobility efforts will tend to support a select few, not selected necessarily on the basis of their merit, or their suitability as intellectual and cultural ambassadors to another country. All possible sources of support should be investigated. For example, if there are public funds available for supporting economically disadvantaged students at their studies, it can prove possible for them to receive the same or greater support during their period abroad. Special categories of learners may require special rules: for example, workers or students with young children can benefit from short mobility experiences, intensive courses or summer courses, where they would not be able to leave their families or their place of employment for a longer period of time. Extra support for students with disabilities should also be provided as necessary. Here too, there may be specific sources (associations, public funding) that can help.

Principle 3. Erasmus opportunities can be useful to fund some mobility opportunities, but all possible sources (local, public, private, regional, national, international) need to be explored and taken into account.

In Europe, mobility means Erasmus and Erasmus means mobility: it is often said to be the most successful program of the European Commission - which we may add has only soft influence, and no legal competence in the area of education. It is fortunate that the Erasmus program has made some mobility funding available through the KA107 action for international mobility with non-European countries. Unfortunately, the number of mobilities between European and Latin America funded through Erasmus is not large. The KA107 provides only for mobility between Latin America and Europe, and not within the region itself or with other world countries. For this reason, other funding sources must be explored systematically.

Principle 4. According to the status of the individual HEI, or that of the



country, regarding its financial autonomy, certain sums may need to be earmarked to supplement what is obtained from external sources.

Sometimes (maybe even often) scholarships or mobility grants are contributions to the expense necessary to participate in a mobility experience, even choosing (as is usually necessary) the lowest cost options available, for example for travel and subsistence. Nonetheless, it is to be kept in mind that in a mobility program non-monetary factors are equally essential: the availability of a hosting institution for example, and of a framework for the certification and recognition of the mobility. In some cases, the HEI itself should foresee a top-up to make it possible to utilize even partial funding opportunities.

Examples

UCSA has been able to access other sources of financing for internationalization through its participation in international cooperation projects. In the last three years, UCSA has participated in three projects financed by the Erasmus+ Program, which have allowed mobility of teachers, and purchase of equipment.

UNCUYO has received International funds from Erasmus+, BAYLAT, RISE and CAF.

UDES Through membership in internationalization networks and programs, it has been possible to access financing funds and mobility scholarships. For example, we have obtained funding from PAME, Iberoamerican Scholarships, PILA and BRACOL. We have a discounted tuition policy for outbound mobility students in order to facilitate inclusive uptake.

UPN: In the second semester of 2020, the International Cooperation Agreement No. 2020-0452 of September 25, 2020 between ICETEX, the French Embassy in Colombia and the UPN was signed. Thanks to this



it was possible to finance the mobility of two UPN students to the University of Toulouse-France, to develop studies in the ‘Master in teaching, education and training (MEEF) and training (PIF) teaching abroad course’. The resources obtained covered air tickets, international medical insurance and costs of stay for 5 months for each of the students.

Within the framework of the Institutional Development Plan 2020-2024, UPN formulated and approved the Investment Project “Teaching and Student Mobility” through which investment resources were allocated from the National Budget, in order to promote mobility of students and teachers, as well as the development of institutional academic events that enable the participation of international academic experts.

UNIBE: Funding at this point depends on companies’ policies and the economic situation surrounding most government institutions does not make easy to find financial support



2. Designing or re-designing the internationalization services and processes

2.1 Re-designing the administrative processes for internationalization

The implementation of the Internationalization Strategy of a Higher Education Institution requires sound policy-related decision making, but the creation of a practicable and viable action plan requires a great effort also to find the right solutions in administrative terms and for 'paperwork'.

The reorganization and redesign of administrative processes is not a merely formal streamlining exercise, but a tangible way to pursue policy objectives in the most effective way. National policies may suggest or require the adoption of good practices, such as the paper-to-digital transition, but international dialogue may have a two-fold benefit: it may promote streamlining, but also the development of brand-new processes and positions, such as an official Delegate for International Programs. Mutual understanding is also facilitated by the sharing of organizational information, vision and strategic documents, outlining the short and mid-term goals set by the whole academic community.

Principle 1. There is no doubt that the digitalization of administrative processes and the implementation of projects focusing of paper-to-digital transition will also help in the redefinition of administrative processes in the internationalization strategy, but this step should follow a certain method in order to result in a smooth risk-free transition.

Digitalization is often presented as an obvious way to go for all public administration across the globe. Replacing a paper-based workflow by a



digital one is a quite desirable transition, since it enshrines the values promoted by several international organizations, leaving “no one behind” by facilitating the exchange of data instead of documents. Both students and clerical staff need to process loads of documents, which may be heavily reduced by embracing the technological transition. However, the national strategy to reduce the number of services available only in physical form must be accompanied by a sound and well-structured methodology to train staff accordingly and also consider carefully which services must continue to be kept in physical form at all costs. Remember that digitalization may also entail a greater gap and depersonalization of relationships between the institution and the students. So, even if the paper-to-digital transition is most of the time worth pursuing, consider carefully the use and value of paper-based bureaucracy to prevent frauds and minimize the risk of document forging.

Principle 2. In the framework of re-designing the administrative processes for internationalization, the appointment of an official delegate for International programs is important.

From the institutional point of view, the appointment of a delegate dedicated to international programs is meaningful: it tells the university community that your university pays great attention to openness and international dialogue, and that there is a sound structure to pursue the objectives spelled out in the International Vision and Strategy Document. The position awarded to such delegates may vary from an official appointment as Vice-Rector/Vice-President, to a more informal “Contact person for international project”. This is quite a hands-on position, so it is important to consider selecting either a proactive member of the teaching staff or the Head of your International Relations Unit, or in any case, a person who is exposed on a daily basis to external partners and students.



Principle 3. Internationalization is not only about teaching and learning. It is also about creating a new approach to organizational management, understanding how partner universities work, which documents they need, and which processes they are required to follow.

For this reason, it is very important to involve administrative and technical staff in international activities, including exchange visits and on-side shadowing. Since most of the administrative problems are connected to document compliance and “ticking strict checklists”, a deep understanding of how partner universities work is quite advisable. Consider applying to mobility grant schemes to facilitate exchange visits and a closer collaboration with foreign institutions, including contact points at foreign Embassies.

Principle 4. Other good practices which may be useful for the redefinition of administrative practices in an international perspective are the sharing of information sheets and a communication campaign developed by national or international organizations.

The creation of easy-to-read info-sheets (or dedicated and easily accessible universities web pages available at least in English) is also a good practice to be shared with partner institutions. Faculty contact points are often hardly found on institutional websites. For this reason, consider using a single helpdesk/contact point to streamline communication and redirect requests to the right persons in your Departments/Faculties. Since internationalization is also connected to the permeability of the social and entrepreneurial fabrics of each area, consider collaborating with national (Ministries, NGOs, broadcast companies...) and international organizations to raise awareness on the benefits of exchanging information to facilitate activities and speed up processes. Consider adjusting the approach of the campaigns published by the European Union regarding the “external window”.



Principle 5. Developing and implementing an Internationalization Enhancement Plan (IEP) with short and mid- term goals is important to orient, guide and operationalize University internationalization strategies

Planning an IEP involves defining the main areas to internationalize (i.e., international relation office and academic services, mobility, academic programs, research, visibility, etc.), detailing the activities and actions foreseen to meet mid-term and long-term goals for each area of internationalization, establishing indicators that are specific, measurable, achievable and time bounded. It could be useful establish an internal monitoring unit for the IEP implementation which includes representatives from each area to internationalize and with the main function of regularly mapping the status of the activities, propose adjustments if needed and monitor the achievement of the goals. Economic resources for the implementation of the IEP should also be foreseen to make it operational.

Examples

Among the suggestions of the LA partners of the DHIP Project, a relevant issue in the paper-to-digital transition is the lack of a national regulatory framework.

Based on the EU partners' experience, the transition has become more and more relevant and accompanied by the development of secure and user-friendly digital tools.

Consider becoming a champion of digital transition in your country, highlighting how the new approach could speed up processes, save resources (minor investment to print, manage, and store printed documents) and fight the illicit forging of paperwork. The transition also facilitates the harmonization of administrative procedures, thus promoting the creation of a regional higher education area (e-g., within the Mercosur area or even the whole South/Central American regions)



Therefore, in a nutshell, moving to an electronic document management system improves data quality, operational efficiency, the standardization of processes, the availability of real-time data, better data access, better integration, and an improved collaboration among HEIs.

By Presidential Decree No. 2902 of 1994 approved Agreement 076 of 1994, issued by its Superior Council, UPN's internal structure was approved; This structure creates and defines the Interinstitutional Relations Office (IRO) as “a support unit of an advisory nature to the Rectorate, especially with regard to the definition, promotion and execution of international programs of the University; as well as the execution of cooperation actions aimed at seeking academic, technical and financial assistance from international entities and foreign governments for University programs.”

In this sense, and to ensure constant updating of the IRO, UPN has defined its Internationalization Plan annually, to integrate and update the lines of work or action carried out by the Office of Interinstitutional Relations. For the first semester of 2021, 4 lines of action have been defined:

- Institutionalization of Internationalization: This line of action is aimed at promoting actions that, in a reflective, critical and grounded way, strengthen the identity and institutional projection that UPN has been consolidating around Internationalization. This in consequence with the Institutional Educational Project (mission, vision and line of action ‘Strengthening of the national, intercultural and international character of the University’); with the proposals of the National Projection and Internationalization program in two ways (PDI 2020-2024), and in response to the current demands and challenges that the national, Latin American and world context poses for the pedagogical universities of the region.
- Mobility Management: this line of action seeks to promote mobility,



participation and academic exchange of teachers, researchers and students (incoming and outgoing) in international activities in face-to-face or virtual mode.

- Inter-institutional and international cooperation: this line aims to manage and promote relations with universities, institutions and academic communities at the local, national and international levels through different cooperation mechanisms.
- Dissemination and institutional positioning: Through this line it is intended to generate dissemination, diffusion and institutional positioning strategies that allow the knowledge produced by the University to be made visible.

UNIEMP redesigned the Internationalization Office changing it into an Interinstitutional Relations Office, which now integrates international management with graduates. This improved and increased support for the area given its growth. They plan to redesign the IRO to make it into a Direction of International Relations (DIR) that integrates Alumni with the objective of including their professionals in the international services offered by the institution. The objective is to impact not only students but also alumni with the university internationalization efforts, carrying out consolidated processes of greater equity and integration. Through the Direction of International Relations with support personnel they expect to generate greater results in internationalization indicators, greater institutional visibility and impact of international management in the business community and among foreign partners and co-forming companies.

UDES redesigned their Internationalization website. They reorganized the administrative process for the signature of agreements and the establishment of a road map. They also restructured the strategy for the development of agreements, giving priority to non-Spanish-speaking countries.



UNLA worked on adjusting personnel tasks in relation to the categories designated to the area. They incorporated ordinary meetings with technical teams. Finally, drafted internal documents on administrative procedures to develop international projects.

UCSA has strengthened its international office with the implementation of the IEP in May 2019, which had impact on the entire Academic Community: 2,500 students, 200 teachers and 100 staff members. The resources involved are human, technological and financial. COVID-19 created delays in the execution of the plan.

In addition, the participation of all staff members has been sought in the training activities of the Erasmus+ DHIP Project, which has also contributed to strengthening administrative procedures (September 2019) with an impact on 100 staff members and human resources.

UNIBE established through the IEP many actions, processes and mechanism that were not established as standard procedures before. They already had an international office, which has been organized according to the IEP. The IEP strategies have complemented the university function manual. Matters regarding sustainability remain under study because of the uncertainty of COVID-19. UNIBE underlined the lack of a National regulatory framework to support paper-to-digital transition. Among informal activities, they organized cultural seminars for the staff and underlined the importance of having new staff for the ORI with specific functions.

UNCUYO implemented the fusion of the Secretary of Research and Postgraduate Studies and the Secretary of International Relations.

UNQ moved forward with the idea of forming an internationalization commission, made up of a representative from each of the four academic units, plus UNQ's International Office. Two of the units appointed their representatives, but the process was slowed down by the COVID pandemic.



In order to promote an international culture, UNQ defined and implemented an improved communication and information policy, for which UNQ's institutional website and the International Office's own social networks are currently used. An average of ten news items are published monthly, including internal calls, dissemination of events and opportunities for international programs, projects and scholarships. Progress was also made in generating direct information channels about the possibilities of internationalization with each area and department of UNQ on the basis of meetings with different actors from each of them in response to requests from international actors (other institutions or external agencies).

The accountability processes corresponding to nationally financed projects have been simplified, which significantly facilitates their management.

The International Office's digitization of its mobility management system, both incoming and outgoing, is pending. This task was started in 2019 in conjunction with UNQ's systems area. Unfortunately, in this case too, the pandemic slowed down the implementation process. Although it must be recognized that, in this case, the delay predates the pandemic.

UAA refers to activities such as:

- Collaboration between inter-faculty members
- Design of promotions with the communication department to give visibility to mobility and scholarship programs.
- Use of PR tools to disseminate international information

They have worked jointly with the Communication Department to promote international academic activities or available scholarships. They have acquired technological equipment for staff in contact with international students and / or internationalization activities and strengthened the Research and Projects Directorate in managing international cooperation projects.



2.2 Setting up or re-designing an IRO

IROs are traditionally responsible for all the University's international activities, with the exception of student recruitment. However, the latest developments in international programs require IROs to improve their capacities more and more and adjust their role according to the visions and strategies developed by the University governance. Such adjustments sometime require the creation of a formal/informal collaboration network within the University, in an effort to bridge a capacity gap. Recruiting specialized staff may prevent failure at different levels; if investment is not possible, tapping into internal Human Resources seems to be the only way to secure an effective administrative action, by using in-house calls (transfer of existing personnel). The creation of a department dedicated to international project design might be an opportunity for the university to create a sub-community characterized by diverse skills and members who are eager to be engaged in new international collaboration scenarios.

Principle 1. A successful practice implemented in several universities is the creation of a widespread network for the management of international programs together with the creation of a decentralized cross-departmental structure to promote the participation of students in international programs.

Involving student administration staff in the network is a plus since credit mobility tends to be the most common type. The network has a hub-and-spoke structure:

- 1) A coordinating vice-rector for International Mobility
- 2) An IRO, also managing staff mobility
- 3) A faculty committee, including:
 - a. Reference professors (one for each macro-area)



- b. Faculty administrative contact persons serving as help-desk
- 4) A supporting student association.

All of them from the “University Committee for International Mobility.”

This structure has proven to be effective in the management of mobility flows.

Principle 2. One of the most common reasons for the failure of setting-up an international relations office is the lack of funds necessary to recruit specialized personnel.

Since several funding schemes support universities for the creation of services to provide better services to international students, several universities are now applying for funds to regional, national, and local programs. The schemes which fund mobilities are therefore quite useful to create a dedicated network of trained professionals who can support faculties in the management of an increased international mobility flow.

Principle 3. In the financial impossibility of increasing the staff for the creation of an international relations office that supports the actions established by the internationalization strategy, it is possible to evaluate internal options within the institution with a minimum expenditure of funds.

The first option could be the relocation of personnel who has qualifications suitable for the role but is assigned to other positions. This is possible through an in-house call within the institution in which the required qualifications and skills are highlighted. Once the staff has been recruited and the qualifications have been assessed, the next step would be to provide internal training courses to compensate for any lack of knowledge and skills.

Principle 4. Within the IRO organization, in particular, from a financial point of view, considering the creation of a department focusing on international project design is strategic, in order to participate in international calls.



The creation of an office specialized in the development of international projects will give the institution higher chances to gain access to funds for the development of internationalization activities. Dedicated staff may facilitate the participation in different calls, thus increasing the possibilities of success. Regional and national institutions often support universities in this effort, since the increase of external funding may have a positive impact on national allocations.

Principle 5. Once a full operative IRO has been organized, it is very important to provide staff with updated ICT equipment and formal/informal training.

International relations must be kept active with a continuous monitoring of joined activities and creation of new ones. It is impossible to carry out common activities at a distance without having up-to-date equipment. Among these tools, an updated website, possibly translated into a vehicular language, and the possibility of organizing a communication campaign using the most popular social media is vital. Formal training is a plus, since official qualifications are also important for employees in view of better career opportunities; however, consider organizing sharing sessions when trained employees share their expertise with others to fill the knowledge gap within a Unit. Also consider a benefit scheme for the employees who make themselves available to train colleagues. These activities may also contribute to facilitate teamwork and find “hidden talents” within your organization.

Examples

Most of the difficulties of the DHIP Project partners related to the set-up or to the re-designing of an IRO are referred to the lack of funds for recruiting professional staff. Here below some suggestions in order to overcome this problem:

- Run a thorough analysis of the human resources available in your



institutions, based on a holistic approach. Reorganization is not some esoteric pursuit, but an activity like any other, similar to organizing a meeting, launch a new research program, or the publication of a scientific paper.

- Start by defining the benefits, the costs, and the time needed to deliver it. Remember that costs are not just wages, but they also include the “human” cost of change and the disruption change can create.
- Consider involving teaching staff as capital in the project, using their expertise, collecting information on staff’s career expectations, and the experience gained by staff in previous reorganizations.
- Spread the idea that change is not a one-way move, that a reassignment is not a punishment for poor work performance, and that change brings new opportunities for professional growth.

UPN, as part of the initiatives carried out within the Office, annually agrees on objectives with the IRO staff and establishes functions aimed at improving the processes developed within the Office.

During 2020 and 2021 in the Internationalization of the Curriculum and Internationalization Policy projects, the lines of action and management on which the Office works are being reviewed and adjusted, in order to improve and guarantee an adequate management of internationalization that can implement the lines and strategies declared in the Policy, which results in mainstreaming Internationalization in the University’s missions of teaching, research and social outreach.

This pressurizes the University to incorporate permanently the Institution-ization of Internationalization in a direct and well-articulated dialogue with the different academic units of the University: the Faculties of Fine Arts, of Science and Technology, of Education, of Physical Education, of



Humanities, Postgraduate and Doctorate. However, it is important to clarify that the redesigning the functions and profiles of the IRO cannot be done autonomously by the IRO and the Rectorate, but rather requires for their implementation their approval as part of the organic restructuring that the whole University has been discussing, and which we hope will be implemented in the coming years.

UNIEMP redesigned the web page of the International Relations Office (ORI) as a virtual space of the internationalization area that concentrates information of interest for students, teachers, partners and other members of the academic community. The objective is an institutional virtual space that promotes internationalization by increasing visibility and international recognition. Likewise, it promotes coherent and relevant mobility actions for students, teachers and administrative staff, generating impact on institutional international culture. The current impact has been the access to information for more than 800 students, 34 teachers, graduates and academic community while the expected impact is to increase contact with community that allows access to internationalization information. There has been a proposal for the redesign of the IRO by a faculty member participating in the University of Pisa conference. It was an interesting proposal but failed to reach decision makers within the institution.

UDES worked with the vice-rectorate of research for the mobility strategy for high-impact research purposes. They redesigned the online application process for outgoing mobility of students and professors. Efforts to recruit new administrative staff have not been successful: the budget investment for the administrative operation of internationalization is limited, and requests for new personnel have not been approved.

UNLA set up the change implied by having a new office coordinator, a responsible for international projects and a new mobility officer. A committee



of authorities evaluated the profiles according to needs. New informal work ties with academic departments that made it possible to streamline actions related to academic mobility, international projects and agreements. An internal committee of research internationalization was recently formed.

UCSA has started staff training programs in order to develop skills in areas such as project design. There is a new member in the IR office, who has been supporting internationalization activities since January 2020. Several academic awareness events on the importance of international exchange have been held.

UNIBE: Mobility was possible before the pandemic and included international forums (Costa Rica) and mobility for research (Canada and Portugal). They hired new personnel who work together with other departments (research, student services) and have a more highly trained team. They relocated the Directorate of International and Interinstitutional Relations as an independent office and created an interdepartmental work team for joint actions with the Student Welfare Directorate and the Research Directorate. The staff, however, did not respond with enthusiasm to the training in foreign languages for staff.

UNCUYO realizes an organization in two main areas, International Relations and Research and Postgraduate Studies and two transversal areas for Finance and Communication.

UNQ has formed a specific team to identify opportunities and present project proposals in response to international calls: there is a center at the IRO but with elements from the various departments and schools, depending on the specific requirements of the call. There was an update and modernization of the computer equipment of the UNQ International Relations Office, with funds from the DHIP Project.

A positive effect of the pandemic and virtualization was to encourage





training activities, multiplying the training offer available for the staff of international relations offices. Indeed, many activities that previously required the transfer to another city or country became available online, at low cost or completely free of charge.

This allowed all UNQ international office staff to receive intense training in internationalization good practices during 2020. Furthermore, in many cases IRO-UNQ staff were exhibitors at events held virtually thanks to numerous bilateral agreements or in networks and projects in which the UNQ participates (or to which it was invited).

We mention separately, because of its relevance, a specific example.

Within the framework of the sociocultural events planned by the Project, the UNQ promoted the participation of the DHIP Project in the International Fair of Higher Education Argentina (FIESA), originally scheduled to be held in March 2020, in the city of Mar del Plata. Participation implied the presence with an institutional stand and the financing of Betty Leask's participation in FIESA. Leask, one of the world's leading experts on issues of internationalization of the curriculum, promised to give a conference and a workshop during the event. But the pandemic arrived and FIESA was suspended. For this reason, it was agreed with Leask to hold a cycle of four videoconferences on the internationalization of the curriculum (an initial conference open to the general public and three workshops for a group of 16 Argentine universities). Held between September and December 2020 and with the participation of 400 people, it was a success.

Furthermore, for Argentine universities, it was the first time that the issue was raised as a necessary institutional policy. It is noteworthy that each university that participated in the workshops did so with a team made up of officials from the area of curriculum design and the area of internationalization.

Another noteworthy point in the same sense is that the Ministry of Edu-



cation of Argentina (co-founder of the activity) committed to launching a call in 2021 to follow up on the issue within universities, including financing of concrete actions.

There is also an example of an activity which was not fully accomplished. At UNQ we understand that the success of an internationalization policy lies in having the active involvement of the teaching body. We consider that teachers are those who actually implement policies and that the role of the International Relations Office should be that of facilitator of the process.

Based on this premise, the office has maintained in recent years (and even during the pandemic) policy of encouraging participation of teachers interested in internationalization activities. The result is positive, as many have come. But this task must not be neglected, as there will always be more teachers to encourage and more opportunities to spread the news about.

In UAA, the redesign of the IRO was not a priority because the personnel available was already adequate for the activities. They have carried out “Infodays” to raise awareness about the importance of academic exchange, online internationalization courses with foreign universities and have promoted the participation of IRO staff in the meetings of the teaching staff of the different faculties.

2.3 The need for efficient mobility services

In an internationalization strategy individual mobility is probably the first concrete activity that can be developed. First steps are finding appropriate mobility partners and if possible programs that can fund or help to fund mobility experiences. Ideally not only students, but also academic, research and administrative staff should be included. In order to develop the mobility opportunities the personnel of the International Offices





themselves should also participate in staff mobility, as this will help them to understand in concrete terms what is involved, and will also allow them to build bonds of mutual understanding and trust with their colleagues in other countries: the key to making international programs work effectively.

As mobility develops, the International Office should be able to take over most of the organizational, financial and administrative activities necessary to underpin the program. This will free the academic staff to devote themselves to strategic activities including developing mobility networks, finding good partners, and promoting joint activities.

Many mobility services can be transferred on-line in order to smooth the operations of gathering, conserving, and elaborating statistically the necessary documentation. Nonetheless, the backbone of efficient mobility services will be efficient and well prepared staff, who have the administrative, linguistic and intercultural competences necessary to ensure that organizational matters are taken care of, but also that adequate attention is paid to ensuring the quality of each mobility experience and its valorization (as discussed under point 5.3, below).

Principle 1. Mobility of staff and students is the first building block of internationalization. To ensure that it provides a strong foundation, the service must be smooth and efficient.

At the beginning of the development of an internationalization process, motivated individuals can be involved in personal mobility experiences, which may be complicated to organize: it will be time consuming to find partners, locate funds, understand the legal and practical constraints, learn how to document the mobility, and how to organize incoming mobility.

The first mobility experiences will have a cascade effect, in that a group of informed and motivated people who have had a mobility experience will be able to suggest ways to improve support.



As time goes on, it will be both possible and necessary to employ people who have the necessary competences to manage the mobility flows: not to the detriment of personal contact, which will always be a key factor in successful mobility, but in order to make the nuts and bolts of the mobility experience easier.

Principle 2. The personnel that provides the support to the mobility service must have the appropriate competences, including knowledge of the opportunities available, ability to maintain contacts with mobility partners, linguistic and managerial competences-

If the mobility program expands physiologically as internationalization progresses, having a competence and proactive international office will be necessary. The personnel employed must be able to interact intelligently and supportively to develop further the network of partnerships and to deal with any problems that may arise. They will constitute the first line of intervention if problem solving is required.

Principle 3. On-line systems for managing mobility can be very helpful, although they must be complemented by personal contact and provision for support and counselling.

Many activities can be implemented on line. Information about mobility opportunities can be communicated through an interactive website; information about partners and their programs, about financial arrangements, and about formal requirements such as visas, travel arrangements and so forth can be made available in this way. Care must be taken that the website or on-line information and management system is kept up to date, that users have an alternative method (a help or contact link) to communicate with the people responsible for the mobility service is essential.

The on-line system should also be geared to provide clear, accurate and attractive information about the opportunities offered for incoming mobility.



As the one-line system develops, it should be able to assist individuals who are exploring opportunities for mobility in an ever more complete way. Eventually financial aspects (grants), records (transcripts), quality feedback and grade conversion may be managed on line.

Nonetheless, mobility candidates, incoming and outgoing, should also be able to find personal, face-to-face information and support when needed.

Examples

UCSA: Mobility support services have been organized through procedures incorporated in the European Union's MERCOSUR Mobility Program.

UNCUYO has created its own online support service to apply for the student mobility program and the procedure are well established now.

UDES: Mobility monitoring and follow-up services are supported by the internationalization leaders of the academic programs. A 'frequently asked questions and answers' document was established on the website to minimize unnecessary telephone, e-mail, and office visits.

UNIEMP: Our international services comprise the generation of mobility calls and counselling to participate in internationalization activities. They address the construction, publication and dissemination of mobility opportunities with international partners for students and teachers, with which they develop international competencies. In addition, accompaniment is provided in the processes before, during and after international mobility. We aim to integrate all members of the academic community to the mobility offers.

UPN: There is a professional person in UPN's IRO in charge of student mobility issues and another in charge of teacher mobility issues. The application processes for the different mobility calls that the University opens semester by semester are currently done online and by email. All the calls, as well as the formats and procedures that apply to student and



teacher mobility are published in the IRO section of the website that can be consulted at www.ori.pedagogica.edu.co.

It is relevant to note that these calls are sent directly to deans and department heads of the different undergraduate and graduate programs for direct dissemination among their students.

UNLA: A student mobility regulation was designed. It includes conceptual definitions, a map of actors and a procedural flow chart. Many of the concepts were inspired by the IEP process. Approval is pending.

Our support service is multiplatform. We use every tool that we can: social media, mailing lists, phone calls, WhatsApp groups, meetings, digital forms, UNLA's webpage. That is only possible with an enormous commitment from the person responsible for mobility, who follows every student face-to-face. Some additional services are under development such as International Tutors, Buddies Program, a Collective Cultures Program, and an Ambassadors Students Program.

The formalization of procedures that facilitate the management of outgoing and incoming student mobility gives transparency and predictability to actions. However, these procedures were not yet known to all the relevant actors.

UNIBE: In our case all the information about mobilities is found on the university's social media accounts and the calls for applications too. Most of the students do not visit the webpage, however, they still call on the university phone line or send emails directly to the International Relations office.

UNQ: The international office has the digitization of its mobility management system, both incoming and outgoing, is still to be accomplished, as mentioned elsewhere in this text: this task began in 2019 but unfortunately, the pandemic slowed down the implementation process.



3. Developing transversal skills

Principle 1. 27 generic competences had been agreed upon for Latin America higher education graduates within the Tuning project (Beneitone et al., 2007). The development of those competences requires reflecting on the definition of the competence, i.e. what it means for a student to acquire a certain competence. It involves clearly defining student's intended learning outcomes across the university curriculum and study plans for each degree program and each course module.

To assist in defining generic competences several instruments could be employed, including A. Sanchez/M. Poblete Ruiz, *Competence-based Learning* (2007) as part of the Tuning project (Beneitone et al., 2007) where the definition of each competence is provided alongside the proposal of a marking scheme to assess this competence according to three levels of mastery. This instrument could be a useful tool to facilitate the inclusion of competencies into the university policy and practice. Other valuable instruments include Bloom's *Taxonomy of Learning Objectives* and Marzano's *New Taxonomy of Learning* (Irvine, 2017), as well as the *Tuning Guide for formulating degree program profiles* and the CALOHEE publications (www.calohee.eu).

Examples

Uniempresarial has carried out a thorough SWOT analysis to inform the internationalization plan reflecting the internationalization guideline and the Objectives of the internationalization policy to improve various internationalization processes using a holistic approach. Internationalization policy, consolidated in the Policy Document elaborated in partnership with the vice-rectorates, research and entrepreneurship areas, was developed based on the global competencies generated from international and in-



tercultural aspects and reflected the following strategies: International Relations, International Mobility and Internationalization at Home. Within the framework of the DHIP project, internationalization was developed as a transversal and integral process that contributes to the strengthening of the institution and the DUAL model of education. The mission statement of the Internationalization Enhancement Plans is as follows: “To contribute to institutional quality and continuous development of EU’s academic community through the establishment and consolidation of global competencies generated from international and multicultural aspects concretized through internationalization programs and initiatives.”

3.1 Language skills

Principle 1. Ability to communicate clearly and effectively one’s ideas, knowledge, and feelings in speech, using a variety of linguistic devices to convey thoughts and ideas clearly and precisely to the target audience, including the selection of appropriate vocabulary, provision of powerful and memorable examples or metaphors to communicate complex and ambiguous ideas, avoidance of cumbersome phrases, repetition and ambiguities is an essential competence attributed to qualified human resources in the age of increasing digitalization and automation of labor (OECD, 2019).

To facilitate the development of students’ oral communicative competence a shift from teacher to student-centered learning is required. A student-centered approach to teaching and learning stipulates a major transformation in the ways students engage with the curriculum, teachers and students’ roles, and approaches to assessment and evaluation. Students must be provided with opportunities to actively engage in the process of their learning and take responsibility for the achievement of the learning outcomes. The role of a teacher must transform into that of a facilitator



guiding students through providing resources, planning effective ways of engaging students with the content and ensuring continuous assessment including constructive feedback. For example, such teaching approaches could be recommended: engaging in group work and discussions, critical analysis of literature, assignments to support the development of research and academic writing skills, oracy, and eloquence. Specifically, to address the development of students' oral communicative competence alongside other generic competencies such as teamwork and co-working, critical thinking and reasoning, and intercultural competence, the experience of using peer-facilitated self-study groups could be a valuable insight for educators in the context of higher education (see Adriansen and Madsen, 2013). Another valuable insight could be drawn from the experience in implementing pedagogical literary gatherings (known in Spanish as *tertulias literarias dialógicas*) in a variety of contexts for promoting students' critical reading skills, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication (see García-Carrón *et al.*, 2020).

Principle 2. Effective writing serves as a space to generate new knowledge and ideas, facilitate understanding between people, and help establish an effective working culture. Written communication competence is considered a key skill for 21st-century graduates.

To write effectively students must be provided with a variety of opportunities to practice and advance their written communication skills. First, it is essential to ensure that students are exposed to high-quality written materials through training sessions, workshops, and academic readings. It is essential to instruct students on academic styles, effective rhetoric devices, and the structure of effective written communication through study sessions, training opportunities, workshops, etc. It is imperative to raise students' awareness of academic integrity and plagiarism through a variety of communication channels. To assess students' written compe-



tence in university settings, the Tuning project *Proposal for Assessment of Generic Competences* (2007) could be employed.

Principle 3. Internationalization of higher education involves a broad set of policies and practices including students' inbound and outbound mobility, academic mobility of staff, participation in international projects, internationalization of the curriculum, joint publications, international collaboration, etc. Communication with international partners and collaborators often involves the necessity to speak a foreign language.

Higher education institutions must provide opportunities for students and staff to master foreign languages. For examples, apart from the traditional university language training centers and language training courses, to facilitate foreign language acquisition a university could include the teaching of curriculum in the second language of instruction or providing students with opportunities to carry out course activities requiring the application of another language, as well as offering degree subjects in other languages, virtual mobility for students and academic staff. Also, it is important to explicitly emphasize and promote the existing university services and mechanisms to support foreign language learning as well as explicitly focus on the value of engaging and consuming such services for students and academics' careers. It is also recommended to develop mechanisms of accreditation and validation of foreign language skills.

Principle 4. Given the growing worldwide role of English as an international language, the language of science and technology, the experience of teaching curriculum subjects through English as a medium of instruction (EMI) could be considered for fostering students and staff's foreign language competence.

Adopting EMI at a particular study course or a bilingual degree or program is a highly challenging endeavor. Not only using the EMI method in



classroom teaching and assessment implies training the university teaching staff with high proficiency in English in how to effectively employ the method itself, but it also requires a complete shift in the university linguistic infrastructure and adopting English as a medium of communication between university teaching and administrative staff and students. The recent publication *English-Medium Instruction and the Internationalization of Universities* edited by Bowles and Murphy (2020) could become a valuable source of guidance for the policymakers and university administrators when deciding to offer academic degree programs in English.

Examples

UNLa has assured that developing foreign language skills is mandatory and free of charge for every student. Staff members also have mandatory training in language skills. Within the University regulations, it is compulsory for staff to have completed and approved at least two levels of English in order to carry out their work, which implies a constant and continuous increase and updating of the staff's language skills.

Uniempresarial has been addressing second and third language acquisition through a basic foreign language course.

UNCUYO has appointed a Secretary of Linguistics Studies that offers language courses for the UNCUYO and external communities every semester. The university also has worked out agreements with the language assistants from Fulbright, British Council and the French Embassy in Argentina who collaborate in language chairs with input on their culture. It also offers the TANDEM program through which UNCUYO students have an opportunity for language exchange with students from other universities. Additionally, it promotes the FranMobe program for students who wish to study in France.

UAA offers courses on Oral and Written Communication in Spanish for all



undergraduate majors and Spanish Language for Communication majors.

UAA held Writing and Expression workshops in Spanish for UAA officials, the purpose of which was to improve writing and effective communication and thus improve the performance of the participants. It was free, remote with relatively good participation.

UAA offers a variety of language for specific purposes courses, including the Guaraní language for Business, Guaraní for Computer Science, Guaraní for Lawyers, Guaraní for Health Sciences, Guaraní for Communication, Guaraní for Sports, English for Business, English for Informatics, English for Lawyers, English for Health Sciences, Fundamentals of the English Language, English for Communication. At the end of the undergraduate degree, the university also organizes the Language Proficiency Exams: Spanish Language and English Language.

In 2020, UAA launched the Hiperaula Project, a non-formal program fostering collaboration between the Guaraní mother tongue teachers and the Spanish mother tongue teachers. Within the project, the learning process was mediated through the interaction in both languages.

UPN formed the Foreign Language Training Committee, which coordinates and monitors the offer of courses in foreign languages for undergraduate programs. This committee is made up of foreign language professors from the Department of Languages attached to the Faculty of Humanities, as well as professors from the Language Centre. Likewise, it is defined that each academic program of the University, with the guidance of the Foreign Language Training Committee, will establish the number of levels and the number of credits that the respective Foreign Language levels will have according to its study plan. Likewise, undergraduate programs should strive for the development of communicative competence in a foreign language, for this, it is urged that they formulate readings and



support materials in a foreign language in the different academic spaces and develop different training strategies (courses, seminars, meetings, internships, and exchanges) that promote the strengthening of the aforementioned competence.

UPN through its Language Centre offered the Foreign Language Training Seminar designed to meet the need for training in foreign languages for teachers to enhance their communicative competence for their professional performance and connection to the international academic world. The seminar was offered to students and teachers in English and French and included a training program consisting of four levels of virtual training, requiring the attendance of 5 face-to-face sessions per semester. Also, Portuguese was offered in the face-to-face mode, through the Institute of Culture Brazil-Colombia (IBRACO).

To ensure the continuity of the foreign language acquisition, UPN has established the Foreign Language Training Committee with a specific body in charge of coordinating and monitoring the offer of courses of foreign languages for undergraduate programs, and at the same time designing the Foreign Language Training Plan. Through this plan, the University offers four selective academic courses which allow students to receive foreign language training in English and French at level B1 following the Common European Framework of Reference. Each course has 3 credits and an hourly intensity of 5 contact hours per week and 4 hours of student independent work, which results in 9 hours of dedication per week and corresponds to a total of 80 hours per academic semester.

UPN has signed an agreement with the Global Teaching Partners for the university's professors and graduates academic and cultural exchange with American school children and young people. This partnership aims to strengthen university students and staff's language skills and compe-



tencies in other languages.

UPN has become partners with the French Embassy in Colombia, which gives the UPN undergraduate students the possibility to apply for a scholarship to learn and/or improve the French language at the French Alliance of Bogotá.

UDES has established a language center and signed an agreement with Berlitz for language training of the academic community. It also offers English training courses for students up to B2 level, and English and Portuguese conversational student clubs.

UDES has been working on the implementation of the English language teaching methodologies and pedagogies in the classroom to promote reading, development of classroom and lab workshops.

3.2 Intercultural skills

Principle 1. The current COVID-19 pandemic reminded humanity of how interconnected the world is, how interrelated and interdependent societies are. It is needless to say that in increasingly diverse and multicultural societies it is imperative to acquire skills of peaceful and mutually respectful coexistence.

The social responsibility of a university lies not only with developing students' disciplinary-based knowledge but also preparing its graduates for a life in a rapidly changing, culturally diverse, globalized world. Thus, it is essential to include diversity and interculturality into the HEIs policies and practices.

One of the ways to develop students' intercultural competencies is through outbound and inbound mobility programs. However, there is no guarantee that a student simply exposed to the international and in-



tercultural experience will become more interculturally aware. Studies suggest that international students often tend to socialize with students from a similar culture and find it difficult to find friends in the host country. Thus, it is essential for universities not to take the development of intercultural competence for granted and expect that it will just somehow magically develop itself, rather the HEIs should purposefully plan and integrate strategies on how to assist international and local students in advancing with their intercultural competence before, during and after their international mobility. This could be done through a wide range of activities offered to all students within the idea of “internationalization at home”, “comprehensive internationalization” or the internationalization of the curriculum. To foster intercultural competence, Leask (2015) suggests a range of strategies in the context of formal curriculum: using case studies exploring international contexts, engaging students in group work in diverse groups of peers, designing study materials encouraging students to seek international perspective, explicitly making the international and intercultural component subject to assessment reflecting students’ final grades, providing students with constructive “feedforward” and feedback on how to achieve the desired learning outcome as well as informing students on the quality of their performance and suggest constructive guidance. To define and assess students’ intercultural competence in university settings, the Tuning project *Proposal for Assessment of Generic Competencies* (2007) could be employed.

Principle 2. In the context of internationalization of the curriculum, the enhancement of students’ language skills and intercultural competence needs to be addressed holistically and should be embedded in various courses and activities offered at the university. Thus, students must be offered opportunities to immerse themselves in the foreign language and cultural acquisition in both formal and informal settings.



Students could be provided with opportunities to practice their language skills as well as develop interculturality in informal settings within the university cultural fairs, cultural nights, pen-pals initiatives, or letter exchange initiatives with peers or scientists around the world (Madden, 2019) as well as international mentoring or buddy programs. For example, the Deusto Garate International Festival could provide an insightful framework into how to integrate multiculturalism and plurilinguism into university social life. Another example is the mentoring buddy program offered within Aarhus University (Denmark) which suggests ways to accommodate and actively include international students in community and university life.

Principle 3. In the context of the current COVID-19 health emergency, undoubtedly, technology has expanded and extended possibilities for collaboration and made internationalization at home more accessible to all students and university staff. Nevertheless, students and university staff might lack information about the available learning opportunities, or funding opportunities.

The universities need to buffer the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic by providing students with opportunities to continue their studies as well as activities related to academic mobility through virtual spaces. The university must be responsible for informing students and staff about the available learning and funding opportunities through various channels of communication, including a website, blogs and other digital media tools. For example, digital tools could be employed to arrange students and staff's virtual mobility, guest lecturers from around the world, virtual conferences and collaboration, etc. Students also need to be encouraged to exercise a proactive attitude towards their learning, development, and growth, and seek opportunities and share with others.



Examples

UNLa is an active partner of ERASMUS+ PROFIC, Professional Development in Intercultural Competence in Higher Education Institutions. Within this project, several workshops, conferences and activities were carried out and are in current progress. The program involves Academic Secretary, Cooperation Secretary and representatives for all academic departments. Additionally, exchange students participate in different complementary activities, one of them is the Social Community Program. There is also a professional specialist in tourism who provides information and a range of cultural activities informally and at the request of mobility students. For example, different kinds of meetings such as barbecues or social exchanges are held during the stay of mobility students.

UNLa has established a Peer Tutor Program which provides specific tutoring for students, in case it's needed. The Program has a dual purpose: on the one hand, the accompaniment, guidance and necessary help to incoming students from a tutor who travelled the same mobility path. On the other hand, to encourage and strengthen advanced students in their professional, human and academic development, thus promoting the possibility of starting a career as teacher-tutor at the university for those interested.

Based on the good practices discerned from the MERCOSUR Mobility Program, UNQ developed the Mobility Guide for international mobility that provides guidance to students willing to undertake mobility. On its official website, the National University of Quilmes provides useful information including the university news, mobility and scholarship opportunities, study programs and projects.

UNIEMPRESARIAL has developed the multicultural scenario of internationalization at home and of the curriculum. For example, various actives



have been developed to connect local students with a guest country (Germany), including the promotion of the country's culture (language, dance, gastronomy), academic opportunities (conferences on scholarships and calls), and bilateral relations with Colombia (talks or discussions with representatives of the country).

UNCUYO organizes an International Fair where every incoming student presents their culture through meal preparation, games, dances, etc. Another initiative is the Global Passport, which is an online cultural program that features talks from speakers from the university, partners, embassies, language institutes and the community in general.

UNCUYO provides students with counselling before international mobility. For example, through the Program "I am International" (*Spanish: Soy International*), the outgoing students are informed about the Argentinian culture. Through the Program "The World of Friends" (*Spanish: Un Mundo de Amigos*), the National University of Cuyo assigns every incoming student a buddy that is a student from the same department. After the mobility, for example, the outgoing teachers are required to share their experience at the Dissemination meeting.

UCSA holds an annual event called "Jornadas Académicas" through which it informs its students about the international experience and provides guidelines. It also organizes the Annual Sports Tournament for the students, staff and the university personnel to ensure inclusion, integration and collaboration.

UNLa has developed a database system to track and share international funding opportunities, which is shared through the university's communication channels.

UAA focused on developing intercultural competence by introducing the following subjects into the Education Science degree: Commitment of the



Teacher and Inclusive Education. The subjects were linked to interculturality, to strengthen those competencies established by UNESCO, such as respect, empathy, the openness of ideas, curiosity, risk-taking, flexibility and tolerance for uncertainty/ambiguity. The university has also been involved in curriculum adaptation for vulnerable groups and the indigenous community and intercultural programs for marginal populations.

UPN has consolidated the institutionalization of academic mobility through regulations that integrate actions described in the procedures: International Student Mobility; Mobility of Foreign Students at UPN; National visiting students at the UPN and in the International Student Mobility Manual.

UPN, within the framework of the Educational Network of Knowledge and Regional Action (REDUCAR), has advanced the proposal of the Summer Courses that open the possibility of developing collaborative projects with students from 5 more countries (Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Argentina). This initiative aims to establish an intercultural dialogue with teachers from different countries.

UNIBE has developed the Cultural Week Project in which students are required to research the culture and costumes of a different country and prepare a presentation.

UDES has organized the Global Village Country Showcase Event.

UAA aims at enhancing the interpersonal relationship between students of two or more cultures through exchanging experiences during sports activities within the institution, free time during recess, or coffee breaks.

To assist students' access to the internet in the time of the pandemic, UAA provides personalized attention to low-income students through, for example, computer loans.





In order to mitigate the impact of the pandemic, UPN through its Inter-Institutional Relations Office carried out actions related to internationalization processes at home that, through the use of technological tools, allowed academic collaboration between institutions and peer researchers. This in order to enable the participation of our community in experiences of socialization and international and intercultural exchange, emphasizing relations with Latin American and Ibero-American countries.

3.3 Co-working and other soft skills

Principle 1. Teamworking is viewed as a key skill of 21st-century students and as one of the most valuable competences in the current context of the digitalization and automation of the labor market (OECD, 2019).

Research indicates the increasing awareness of employers of how effective co-working is linked to higher organizational performance and innovation (Casper, 2017). Thus, higher education students must be equipped with teamwork skills for employability and successful integration into the job market.

Team working is tightly linked to other skills such as decision-making skills, organizational and management skills, communication skills, leadership skills, and pro-active attitudes. The Tuning project (Villa Sánchez and Poblete Ruiz, 2007 (eds.)) offers a valuable tool for defining and assessing teamwork competence as well as suggests pedagogies to facilitate the development of this competence in the university settings. These pedagogical approaches are very similar to those offered as part of the student-centered approach, including students' active learning and taking responsibility, self-directed learning, experiential learning, dialogical teaching, and collaborative learning, and critical thinking strategies. An-



other valuable insight could be drawn from the research paper by Casper (2017), which, underpinned by the Tuckman model, provides insights on the approaches facilitating the development of students' effective teamwork skills in the context of higher education. The paper concludes that such pedagogical approaches as group projects, jigsaw collaborative learning strategies, mnemonics, and experiential learning, among others, could reinforce co-working competence and facilitate students' smooth transition from the university to labor market.

Examples

As part of its Internationalization Plan, the Uniempresarial has integrated complementary activities into the curriculum with open participation for all students and other academic communities such as fairs, webinars, academic events, mobility processes, cultural activities and virtual interaction. For example, to support networking among students of different universities through the language of gastronomic culture, a biannual cooking workshop has been planned. Apart from that, the Uniempresarial management has been working on establishing partnership ties and alliances with the companies of the Bogota Chamber of Commerce, Ascolfa, Cladea, Colombian-German Chamber of Commerce, among others.

UNIEMPRESARIAL has developed policies, regulations, codes of conduct and management codes that include the component of equity, good treatment and respect.

UNCUYO offers a training program in Social Protocol and Public Image in the Digital Age for the community and ORI staff which focused on Soft Skills Training.

UAA aims at raising environmental awareness and social responsibility. It has been supporting the group of young people from the Orquesta de Reciclados de Cateura, Cateura community, which is located next to the land-



fill. The Orchestra is world-famous, playing musical instruments made from the recycled elements found on the garbage dump.

UAA has been involved in the planning of academic activities led by international teachers in different subject areas; developing the conference cycles that promote knowledge and academic communication between different actors in the teaching-learning process; organizing a series of conferences, in collaboration with the Nestlé company, aimed at improving the soft skills of university students, such as communication when conducting a job interview, or CV writing, among others; facilitating the participation of university students in a business leadership course in different areas (marketing, international trade) through an agreement with the Caene Foundation of Peru.

UNIBE has offered webinars for students and staff on soft skills development: Teamwork and Stress Management in Times of Crisis.

UNIBE offers the Institutional Program of Continuous Training in Soft Skills, which includes the Entrepreneurship Program (“Programa de Emprendimientos Geniales”) which tackles the current national context demands to create new companies and start-ups that would revitalize the economy. The Program focuses on the development of entrepreneurial skills and promotes the paradigm shift from graduate-employee to graduate-employer, thus meeting the challenge of successful transition from the university to the workplace. The Entrepreneurship Program is a curricular innovation that employs the methodology of “project-based learning” and “action research” with the objectives to equip the undergraduate students with knowledge and skills linked to entrepreneurship, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and cooperation.



3.4 International funding opportunities for research and education

Principle 1. Governance - Securing international external funding for research must be recognized as a priority, thus should be part of a wider institutional strategy and stated in the institutional planning documents (strategic plan, internationalization strategy and other policy/strategic documents)

Nowadays international external funding is becoming one of the main sources for Higher Education Institutions (HEI) to guarantee autonomy regarding the public funding and to assure even higher quality in research and education activities. Therefore, HEIs should set up a Research Strategy, as well as develop and implement their action plan towards research funding and internationalization.

This is a key part of the institutional efforts put in recognizing the excellence of the research activities developed by the scientific community in the whole research ecosystem, by valuing and stimulating the effort developed in the creation and dissemination of new knowledge, in raising external funds for scientific research activities and in the production of scientific publications.

Also, at a governance level, a well-defined plan to structure an office (e.g. research support office, projects office) responsible for boosting this area - e.g. how to identify funding sources, interacting with the funding donors, supporting research teams applying for funding, etc. - should be considered as one of the institution's priorities.

Principle 2. Research ecosystem - Applying for international competitive funding for research requires deep knowledge of the research and innovation stakeholders and performance



Usually, HEIs operate in complex systems, either internally and externally. In order to be in good position to apply for competitive funding, either local, regional, national or international, HEIs should identify and be able to describe their research ecosystem in its different dimensions (research staff, research structures/labs, research areas, research performance monitoring, etc.). Collecting and updating “facts and figures” on research will be useful. That information is key to outline the institutional research capabilities and direct them towards potential funding opportunities of interest.

Another successful way to support and mobilize the research ecosystem is to set up a working group to reflect on trends and ideas around funding and research to jointly discuss opportunities (national and international), develop ideas and share experiences for better research support and project fundraising activities. The group should bring together representatives from all faculties and associated research institutes, mixing academics and technical support staff.

Principle 3. *Research support* - The implementation of a research funding strategy in the HEI demands a specific internal structure fully dedicated to search and secure funding and implementing a set of practices that can better support this activity.

For some institutions, revenues from external funding can be their main source to support research and infrastructure, which makes it particularly important especially for the HEI research units. Even if teaching staff and researchers are the usual recipients and coordinators of these funds, if they are not involved in the design and evaluation of the actual internationalization strategy for research, their involvement will be “responsive” rather than active and strategic.

HEI wishing to actively be involved in applying to international funding programs/actions for research should have a dedicated support office.



The team should be providing support to 1) research activities (more focused on recognizing and fostering excellence in research within the institution) and 2) projects to secure funding. The latter should be composed by specialized staff in different framework projects life cycle: from identification of funding opportunities and proposal writing. Usually, the International Office has also a specialized team of education project managers dedicated specifically to Erasmus +.

Principle 4. *Support tools* - The mapping and dissemination of funding opportunities is the responsibility of the dedicated administrative office for support to research and should assure that the targeted-audience has easy access to this information.

The office that supports research projects should map international funding opportunities regularly and organize information in an easy and practical way. Ideas to organize information may include the development of mindmaps for international funding and a dedicated platform for funding opportunities dissemination.

Both, research and international office (for education projects) should liaise to articulate the dissemination activities, such as send out, regularly, communications (mailing, events) to encourage participation in international activities, mainly participation in academic mobility and exchange programs, securing external funding, development of collaborative research and development projects, participation in international scientific partnerships and networks, joint publications.

The same office should also organize info sessions for the scientific community and disseminate international funding opportunities (general and directed dissemination).

Principle 5. *Training* - In order to improve skills and give more autonomy to the staff that deals with research activity and projects (teaching and



research staff as well as support staff), offices that provide support to funding research should promote capacity-building activities

Another dimension of the range of services offered by the office that supports R&D and projects (usually located in the central administration of the University) is to organize training sessions for the scientific community by raising awareness and develop skills of the academics and technical staff involved in research projects in the local units. These training sessions have as goal to promote excellent research and to provide technical training in project management and application writing of internally funded schemes. Possible themes focusing on research funding: how to find funding opportunities, how to develop project proposals and collaborative projects, etc. Other research-related themes may include:

- Introduction to internationalization,
- Understanding the institution's internationalization strategy,
- Internationalization at home initiatives / activities,
- Developing international research relationships or projects,
- Publishing in international journals,
- Research internationalization dimensions,
- Research internationalization support structures,
- Research internationalization influential factors,
- Research internationalization measures (metrics),
- Development of joint international initial training-research networks,
- Establishment of international cooperation agreements framed by research activities (projects, publications, etc.)

Examples: _____

UAA strengthened the Department of Research and Projects and the man-



agement of projects for international cooperation. It organized several trainings on research methodologies to academics and students that did not present the expected results in terms of scientific production by the participants. Possibly the mistake was in planning that did not contemplate follow up indicators of the research work done until the end of the course.

- The strategic internationalization plan was designed and includes details of the different sectors to internationalize: teaching, research and outreach.
- The teaching and research activities were defined with foreign institutions under the responsibility of the academic coordination of the different faculties of the university.

UCSA has applied to several calls for projects that supported research and education with funding through training of staff in mapping funding opportunities. With UCSA participation in international projects, the international funding was assured and guaranteed follow up to the execution of activities. There is staff specifically dedicated to support the funding requests (since March 2011). These aspects impacted 500 students, 50 academics and 20 staff members.

UNIBE funds national funding sources through calls for applications and the National Council of Science and Technology. The international Relations office director is responsible to monitor funding possibilities.

UNLA's International Relations Office developed a database system to track and share international funding opportunities.

UNQ has a specific team dedicated to research and project proposal of international calls, located in the IRO, but with elements from different departments and schools, according to the needs.

UPN in the recent past did not have a person to identify this type of opportunities. In 2021, the office was restructured and the tasks were changed



among the staff to include within these the specific task of identify, systematize and disseminate opportunities for international and national cooperation. The goal was to consolidate an *opportunity observatory* that can be updated permanently and that benefits all the academic programs of the university. Nonetheless, this strategy is very recent, as it has been implemented since February 2021, and the results are not evident.

3.5 Management of International projects

Principle 1. A Project Management team should integrate staff members with the right profile, with a clear commitment towards the achievement of institutional goals and backed by management bodies with expertise in the field.

The profile of the staff members of a project management team is essential to ensure a correct and efficient implementation of the projects and related processes. An academic background in social sciences is usually a plus, and soft skills such as creativity and problem solving, time management and ability to work under pressure, team-working, positive attitude and communication skills are absolutely essential. It is also crucial to ensure a permanent update on the “hottest topics” of internationalization and Higher Education by regularly attending conferences, webinars, seminars, etc. and by reading publications and articles on relevant topics. All of this should be sought-after by the responsible management bodies supervising the team.

Such management bodies should have a double valence: they should be part of or close to the institution’s top governance and therefore ensure involvement in international projects from a strategic institutional perspective; but also close to the project management team, which executes activities on a daily basis. In this sense, it is advisable to appoint



a Vice-Rector or Pro-Rector for the area and a Director or Coordinator of the office/department/unit that can effectively liaise the institutional strategy with the practical involvement in international projects.

Principle 2. Ensure accuracy and transparency in the financial management of projects to be able to assure an effective management of funds.

All HEIs wishing to get involved in international funded projects should have a financial office team integrated in such a way that it can provide close assistance to the project management office to allow a transparent and efficient management of projects. This team must be responsible for ensuring that the project complies with all the funding rules as established in the contractual documents signed with the funding entity, that the institution gathers all necessary supporting documents required, and that it is able to demonstrate in a clear and traceable way the financial execution of the granted funds. On the top of it, it must also ensure complete respect for the national laws and consequently errorless auditing processes.

Principle 3. Accuracy in the achievement of activities and the correct planning of results is essential.

The team should be able to identify priorities and milestones ahead of time, defining tasks while organizing the work. These priorities should be realistic and attainable though. Prioritizing with respect to a specific timeline makes individuals more secure in carrying out their tasks and allows deadlines to be met more rigorously. Identifying milestones in the project-planning phase will help the team to identify if the activities are on schedule. Recognizing milestone achievements is good for the motivation of the team and to maintain the accuracy of procedures on a daily basis.

Principle 4. Smooth and permanent communication among all projects' partners and among the different team members of the institution that are involved in the project's implementation and management is essential.



The team should be in permanent contact, being either through short weekly briefings, monthly meetings or regular chats online to allow a smooth communication among all involved parts. This is equally important when referring to the communication between different project partners. In order to ensure that activities and results are completed as planned and smoothly, constant communication is essential and also the most appropriate means must be used according to the type of information conveyed - email, platform for info or documents exchange, telephone, chat, formal meetings, etc.

Principle 5. All international projects must be quality-driven

The management team must analyze what is the most adequate methodology to follow in a certain project. A very useful one is the Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle (PDCA), which looks for continuous improvement. This is a four-step model for implementing change and is one of the most used tools to ensure project planning. It encompasses:

- Plan: There is the recognition of the existence of an opportunity and the planning of a change.
- Do: It includes the testing of the change through a small-scale study.
- Check: It foresees the review of the test, the analysis of the results, and the identification of the lessons learned.
- Act: It foresees the need to take action based on the learning acquired through the study.

If the change did not work, then the cycle will restart including corrective measures. If proved successful, these shall be incorporated in the new proposed methodology.

Principle 6. Use of free project management tools

Universities do not need to invest time and resources to develop a web-



based platform to manage their projects. Nowadays, there is a large number of free of charge tools that constitute a fundamental support to the overall projects' management and to some particular spheres of a project's implementation. Some examples are Redmine, Trello, Slack.

Examples:

UCSA has several international projects in addition to DHIP, which are managed by other academic units specially trained according to the theme of each project with the monitoring of the International Relations Office. Currently, the Academic Coordination, the Quality Assurance Department, the Academic Area of Engineering and the Academic Area of Business Sciences are involved.

Besides IRO's Director, UNLA office has a specific person exclusively dedicated to the executive coordination of all projects. In addition, there is a person in charge of the internal administrative coordination. The organization matches the institution's tree, having a direct involvement of Academic Secretary and Cooperation Secretary at the decision-making stage.

UDES Projects are managed by the Directorate of National and International Relations, the Quality Assurance Department and Institutional Planning.

UNIBE has a structure, on which each project has a designated group, with a responsible person assigned, who coordinates the projects and organizes monitoring meetings regularly.

UNCUYO participates in several other international Projects. There is no common project manager for all of them, but for financial aspects, the responsible entity is the Administrative Direction of the IRO.

UNIEMPRESARIAL is currently working on a consulting project for Autónoma of Paraguay University with the purpose of creating a Technology Transfer Office -OTRI- "INNOVA-Lab-UAA".



4. Effective communication in an international perspective

Effective communications are essential for brand trust and the Higher Education Institutions are not an exception. Hence, Communication is a big part of what builds their reputation, and fundamentally universities, rather than working on their brand (controlling the message through their own media/channels), should work on their reputation, which is earned, grounded on what others say about the institution, based on shared perceptions.

Therefore, it is crucial to assure effective communication adapted to the different targets, both inside the academic community and outside, connecting the institution with external and relevant stakeholders within all areas of activity.

4.1 How to engage the academic community: different strategies for different targets

Principle 1. Have a communication strategy and contents - website, social networks - adapted to different publics, target groups and generations

Institutions must be aware that, despite students being the main target group, they are not the only ones searching for information along institutional channels. This being so, institutions must work, together with their communication departments, on visually attractive and user-friendly platforms that are clear, simple and contain useful information that is easy to access.

Institutions also need to actively disseminate the information they produce, either through email or through social media, in order to ensure the



information reaches the highest possible number of people.

Principle 2. Ensure the institution uses effective (digital) communication tools to attract prospective students

Apart from the official webpage and the institutional emails, institutions must adopt new ways of communicating with prospective students. Together with the communication department, institutions must design a strategy, based on social media, to attract students. It is advisable to conduct an analysis of the most successful social networks among the target groups the institution is aiming at.

Additionally, the institution must adapt the contents - more formal, more informal - according to the network used (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter) in order to ensure that the information is diversified and at the same time coherent. It is important to have a unit/designated person to keep networks duly updated.

The provided information must be straightforward, attractive and of easy access to keep prospective students interested and engaged.

Principle 3. Use the pandemic as an opportunity to update/improve the way of communicating with students

It is undeniable that the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the processes of institutions going digital to an unprecedented degree. Although this is a very positive outcome, it also comes with drawbacks. Students, both current and prospective, are more distanced and institutions need to think of new strategies to make students feel listened to and supported (with social distancing considering the current reality).

Nowadays, also thanks to the channels at our disposal, events like the COVID-19 pandemic create an opportunity for institutions to fine tune their communication assets. Institutions need to be pro-active and provide



effective contact channels for their academic community and prospective students. Channels that were not very common before, such as text message, apps, or social media, are now widely used to reach students.

Institutions must be more informal, clear and direct in order to ensure students are engaged, giving them their own space. A digital space should be provided so that students can address their expectations, dreams, doubts, fears and concerns and also provide their insight on aspects they think are satisfactory and others they think should be improved. A clear strategy is key to face these new times, and it is only successful if the students feel that they are part of it.

Principle 4. Provide clear instructions whenever the HEI promotes a procedural activity (e.g. calls for applications, competitions) and capitalize on alumni to add insightful content to communication channels

Institutions expect that the mobility of students and staff highly contribute to the development of a multicultural learning community and to its internationalization.

Besides providing applicants with clear guidelines and procedures for the smooth preparation of their application and mobility, available in the HEI official language and English, the website sections, promotion material, publications and presentations related to internationalization should contain excellent and updated visuals as well as interesting content and infographics. It is also of the utmost importance that HEI foresee the organization of various events with incoming/outgoing students/staff to document and collect content for promotional material (images, videos, testimonials).

Principle 5. Institutions must be inclusive spaces and adjust their communication to include vulnerable students/staff

The Universities of the future will be inclusive and promote an environ-



ment that embraces difference. In order to provide equitable support to different needs Institutions should prepare specific information for vulnerable students or students with special needs and ensure the most suitable infrastructures for their welcoming. Students must feel they are part of the institution and have a clear understanding of which services and infrastructures (canteens, medical services, language courses, cultural activities, sports centers, etc.) are adapted to their conditions.

Examples

To have a well-defined strategy to receive, welcome and integrate students/staff is very important for the successful implementation of the mobilities. LA institutions have implemented several activities and procedures that ensure students feel welcomed and at home.

For UAA extracurricular activities integrate the component of university tradition, given that international students can easily integrate in the traditional academic life by taking part in these activities (San Juan, San Valentin, Camba Kuá, beginning of studies, end of studies, traditional parties). This institution attempts that there is a cultural fusion that invites the foreign students to “integrate by learning” about the cultural assets of Paraguay through their peers from this country, who proudly show them the cultural patrimony they can benefit from.

Principle 6. Create synergies to organize welcoming activities and activities that engage the students with their host institution/city/country

The organization of events in partnership with the City Hall and other local authorities in order to create events and initiatives specially designed for mobility students is a very good practice and allows a diversification of events and activities to offer to these students. Activities such as cultural visits to the city's historical landmarks are a very good initiative so that students feel embraced by their host city during their mobility period.



Principle 7. Do not forget staff. Adapt the communication to include staff and create contents specially designed for staff

The institution must promote regular meetings with staff from the same unit - working groups - in order to fine tune procedures, work together towards the implementation of activities relevant for the institution and keep track of the important deadlines and events.

Staff exchanges are very important in terms of developing new skills that can be key for strengthening the cooperation between institutions. Institutions must check the staff mobility opportunities and disseminate them among staff members and also create in their staff members the curiosity to look for opportunities to enhance their curriculum and, at the same time, contribute for the overall improvement and modernization of the management structures of the institution.

The organization of/participation in staff trainings is also very relevant, given that staff members can be in contact with a wide range of staff belonging to HEIs from all over the world and share best practices, strategies, procedures and tools in several areas, bringing several benefits for all the involved parts.

Institutions must ensure they keep track of the staff mobilities and their outcomes, by implementing questionnaires and mission reports which staff members must fill in/present upon the conclusion of the mobility period. The participation of staff members in dissemination events is also very important, so that their peers are aware of the benefits of undertaking a staff mobility abroad and of participating in international staff events.

Examples

The great majority of the LA partners bet on the development of their staff members' abilities, providing them with opportunities to undertake a mo-



bility period abroad or to participate in international staff training events. Institutions also promote internal events specially dedicated to staff:

UNCUYO: Seminar of Good Practices of Internationalization of the Curriculum - May 2021 - aimed at both academic and administrative staff (IRO). Universidad Nacional de Cuyo invited 2 regional universities to also give their insight on the activities put in place in these institutions that can be considered as good practices.

Uniempresarial took part in the staff training organized by U.Porto. This visit, focused on strengthening relations and work on the constitution of an internationalization area at Uniempresarial, also sought to collect information on how to formulate internationalization projects. This institution is now interacting with representatives of 11 institutions to develop international and intercultural competencies and the colleagues attribute these prolific interactions to the participation in the international staff training mentioned above.

During 2020, the pandemic situation provided possibilities for attending webinars, in which faculty members and staff were very much involved.

Principle 8. Have a well-defined emergency plan, adapted to the different publics (students, academic and administrative staff and researchers in a mobility context)

The first step is to define what a crisis situation is and then define the target groups (students, academic and administrative staff and researchers who are currently in a mobility). The location of the event (home or host country; home institution or host institution) is also important to foresee in order to define the plan to follow in case there is an emergency. The next step is to list the types of emergency/crisis situation that are part of the plan (accident, natural disaster, political instability, insurance issues, outbreak of a disease, suicide, terrorism, etc.). After this, one should list all



the steps for the management of a critical situation: **a)** take a pro-active approach and focus on prevention by anticipating the crisis situations that can occur; **b)** define a permanent structure/body for crisis management (vice-chancellor, IRO, Faculty director, communication office, etc.) and provide emergency contacts; **c)** define who is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the Crisis Management Plan; **d)** describe who the internal and external members can be in a crisis situation; **e)** define an action plan that is as comprehensive as possible - “detection before crisis occurs” and “detection of crisis once it occurs” and the corresponding steps can be a good way of defining a complete emergency plan; **f)** promote workshops among the academic community so that the involved bodies are aware of this plan and are able to implement it in case of need.

It is also important to have postcards ready to send, such as condolences, get well soon (these materials can be prepared by the institution’s communication department), so that the communication with the involved parts can be as swift and immediate as possible, as well as cohesive.

Principle 9. Alumni are an extremely important resource for the institution

Welcoming alumni back to where they were once happy and making sure they maintain their affective connection to their *alma mater* can be an excellent tool to promote the image of the institution in several spheres. To make tools available for alumni (e.g. alumni portal) with tailor-made information and also provide benefits for these former students (e.g. connect with former peers, enhancement of curricula through contact with networks and enterprises) ensures they feel that they are an important piece in the construction of the future of their institution, and that they can promote and represent it abroad.

Alumni who live abroad can play an important part as the contact point for the reception and integration of new and recently graduates in the



country, as well as in the establishment of a network of contacts for students/staff/researchers who study/work in the city/country.

To work with alumni in the organization of events specially dedicated to the reception and welcoming of students/staff/researchers is also a great advantage when it comes to the promotion of the institution and the benefits of being part of it.

Example

UAA is currently collaborating with one student who has recently returned from the mobility period abroad in order to support newly arrived international students with their integration in the host institution/city.

4.2 Dealing with the world: connecting the institution with local/national/international actors

Principle 1. Higher education should offer the potential to support *glonacal* (global, national, and local) development. Communication with the stakeholders involved in higher education represents a major step in establishing competitive advantages.

External communication in higher education involves a wider audience than internal communication, as it encompasses all the messages the HEI sends out world and to the environment in which it operates. HEIs need to be aware of the importance of identifying stakeholder needs and finding the necessary means to meet them. There is immense potential for communication with stakeholders. Therefore, a number of academic stakeholders need to be considered as the main communication potential of universities: current and potential students, their families and relatives, local community, society, government, management team of higher edu-



cation institutions, local authorities, current and future staff, and targeted international institutions.

Examples

UDES participates in the regional internationalization roundtables and the different academic networks in the country and at the international level, where the challenges of internationalization are discussed and strategies for decision making are exchanged.

For UNCUIYO, Local Government has supported university events like the International Fair and the Global Passport. UNCUIYO seeks to participate in different international funding calls together with the local government.

The participation of UNLA in this project allowed strong engagement of the National Ministry of Education due to their active participation. Besides, initial meetings were held with Provincial education authorities so as to begin with the creation of a province international education program. *Camino a FIESA conference* and FIESA webinars were the widest engagement activities. DHIP project was shared with most of Argentina's National Universities, in addition to National Education Ministry among other public entities, national and international stakeholders.

UPN participates in the State University System (SUE) that integrates the 34 public universities in the country. It currently holds the presidency of the SUE-Capital State University System, which is part of the five Public Universities of Bogota.

Principle 2. Universities are important hubs for their local area, and connected with this, their social and cultural influence places them right at the heart of the community. Communication with local bodies is therefore fundamental for mutual benefit.



Universities must dedicate appropriate time and resources to identify possible commonalities between their institution and local institutions. Agreeing on the commitment of the university will create reciprocal engagement and give impetus to the process, which may mean building the collaboration structure and identifying internal advocates. Joint ventures between universities and their local community have proved their effectiveness in promoting extremely positive dynamics both ways. Some good examples are:

- the collaboration with city halls and local museums to organize joint events and facilitate access to cultural spaces and events,
- close relations with local Erasmus Student Networks so as to increase and diversify support services to mobility students,
- organization of workshops with the involvement of municipal authorities (such as the police regarding safety and safe procedures and behaviors),
- promote activities with primary and secondary schools to raise awareness of diversity and sensitize the younger generations towards cultural differences, etc.

Examples

Contact with targeted local stakeholders can yield the greatest benefit for all the actors.

As the participation in certain projects where UCSA is involved requires articulation with local actors, partnerships have been established and collaboration agreements have been signed with public, private and non-governmental institutions.

UNIEMPRESARIAL has participated in the academic event “Colombia as a tourist destination for socio-economic development.” This event was



developed with the aim of making allies aware of Colombia as a tourist destination, which would result in inbound mobility.

Principle 3. Communicating an image is a strategic challenge. The proper image of a University must be forged over time and, therefore, communication must continually target many different kinds of concerns, namely through the media.

Universities must approach local, national and international media seriously for self-promotion. Communications must inform important decisions, mobilize staff and maintain value, and provide support and reassurance. The purposes of communication vary depending on whether it is to address a professional audience, reach a mass audience, communicate with the media, engage in dialogue with businesses, or communicate with stakeholders in international markets. These objectives will need to be defined, articulated and shared, and different approaches and skills will be required to tailor the message precisely to the target audiences. This is all the more important as all actors are permanently exposed to a variety of influences. The changes that affect the world of education often have major implications that require universities to be flexible and able to respond quickly, appropriately and effectively. Universities must continue to undergo changes geared to reality and adapt themselves, taking into account the scope for action, methods of cooperation, new forms of governance to be implemented, particularly in decision-making processes, and increasing professionalization.

Principle 4. Social media in higher education has become an essential tool in almost every institution's communication strategy, being currently used by the majority of Universities around the world.

Through the power of Social Media, namely by using various networks and attractive content, universities are using their accounts not only to





attract students, interact with current students, and stay connected with alumni, but also with parents, journalists, professors, and other educational institutions. Being attuned to their target audiences is crucial for universities' digital communications, as it allows them to build their social media messaging to target the different profiles of those who follow them. Universities should also analyze their different communities and find out which social media channels they are most active on. Once the different audiences are identified, universities can develop a social media approach to interact with each group.

Examples

UNIBE: Information about the projects the university is involved in are available on the website and social media accounts. Furthermore, during the project UNIBE presented DHIP to the academic community, and there is also a section dedicated specially to the DHIP project

As UCSA's internationalization website is currently in development, the visibility of the project is achieved through the University's different social networks, with impact on the academic community and institutions with which it collaborates

Principle 5. International cooperation and integration in international networks and associations play a significant role in fostering successful collaborations with different geographical regions.

It is widely recognized within universities that international education and collaborations prepare learners for life in a global world by enhancing their experience and knowledge, foreign language competence, employability, productivity and social responsibility. International partnerships between universities are beneficial to all, for the staff and students and the world at large. The pace of internationalization is growing rapidly, with unfettered channels of communication and inexpensive travel. Universities around



the world are already trying to take advantage of the opportunities this presents by forming global partnerships and cultivating relationships with other institutions. In doing so, the win-win situation that the partners can be seen in the perspective of “brain circulation” and sharing of knowledge and best practices, in the sense that they really making a tangible difference to the parties involved. These also are the benefits of participating in international networks such as EAIE, FAUBAI, AULP, EUA, EUF, IAU and research networks. University partnerships offer a huge number of opportunities for students and staff. In addition to research opportunities and cultural awareness, institutions can offer international experiences, including study abroad programs and staff exchanges. In terms of teaching, the benefits include curriculum development and degree programs that are created in collaboration with partner institutions. Once universities have established a viable institutional partnership, they need to find ways to build on the initial relationship both vertically and horizontally. For example, a relationship initiated by complementary faculty research interests can be expanded to include jointly taught courses and the development of a professional dual degree program. It might be a good starting point to explore opportunities for teaching and research collaborations in other areas, faculty and student exchanges, recruitment of international students, co-hosting of research conferences, development of an alumni chapter, fundraising initiatives, a study abroad program portal for this region of the world, and dual or joint degrees.

Examples

UCSA is joining various international networks as well as research projects that are supported by the National Council of Science and Technology as they are in line with the country’s 2030 Development Plan. Working meetings have been held with other actors in the State to discuss issues of internationalization, scholarships, and academic issues.



Informally, DHIP was presented to the participants of current UNLa international networks such as Study BA, RUNCoB, RedCIUN, FAEI and NIEA

Indeed, the three Argentine Universities (Lanús, Quilmes and Cuyo), have a relevant participation in RedCIUN (the network that gathers all the international offices of the more than fifty public Universities. Furthermore, the three universities have coordinated this network in some moment of the recent years: Quilmes in 2010 and 2011, Lanús in 2018 and Cuyo in 2021.

Cuyo and Quilmes are also members of the “Asociación de Universidades Grupo Montevideo” (AUGM), one of the most important networks of South American Universities.

Both Lanús and Quilmes have an important participation in RUNCOB network, which gathers the international offices of public universities in Buenos Aires Metropolitan Area.

The two universities also are very much involved in the “Study in Buenos Aires Program”, an initiative from the government of the City of Buenos Aires.

Finally, the two universities are part of the “Foro Argentino para la Educación Internacional.”

Principle 6. International students, prospective students and Alumni are key players in the dissemination of information about their Universities in their home countries/localities, and society and provide strategic links to the business world.

The current global crisis is having a major impact on the higher education industry, and nowhere is this more evident than in international student recruitment. The global slump has plunged education management into uncertainty, especially as it faces questions about the future of international student mobility. As stated elsewhere in this document, no university can claim to be truly global without an active strategy to recruit and



retain the highest quality international students. To ensure that international students get the most out of their educational experience, universities must consistently engage them from arrival through graduation, with particular attention to ongoing educational support and mentoring, as well as appropriate information and training for faculty and administrators on how to interact with people from other countries and cultures. It is especially important that faculty become more sensitive to the diverse learning styles of students from other cultures. International students can be the best ambassadors when it comes to universities going global.

Alumni can also play an important role in media coverage for educational institutions. Their work and achievements contribute to the overall reputation of the university. However, it is often challenging for schools to maintain close relationships with their alumni and manually track their news stories. Many institutions use Meltwater to automatically retrieve all articles that mention their alumni. Keeping alumni up to date on press coverage can also become a new tool for building a stronger alumni relations strategy. Tracking such news also allows the university to showcase the important achievements of their alumni.

Principle 7. It is widely perceived that studies presenting the rankings of the best universities are a powerful promotional tool.

Most institutions strive to be highly ranked, among the top schools if possible. However, these rankings are sometimes questionable. The pressure of rankings can be destructive and place the university in a position that is at odds with its basic mission. However, rankings can be very useful if they measure things that are measurable, and they can be useful if they are based on objective indicators and stable methodologies. Institutions need to be competitive in national and international educational markets and thus are called to perpetually demonstrate their excellence. To this



end, they must communicate continuously to improve and promote their image. Universities must also demonstrate that the status they claim is justified, and they must promote their policy choices while maintaining the credibility of their reputations. These new imperatives require them:

- to organize constant monitoring of the internal and external environment in order to decipher even the smallest signal and make clear the desires, expectations and demands of the new actors and stakeholders;
- to mobilize their staff and focus all their energies on the new challenges of change and the vision that embodies the common project, to ensure that objectives, initiatives, messages and values are communicated in such a way that they are understood and shared by the educational community;
- to forge connections of a new kind with the media, ranking agencies, interest groups, and other influential networks to ensure that these relationships are as beneficial as possible and to anticipate potential problems.

Principle 8. Digital Communication can provide effective external communication

Several universities spent part of 2020 adapting their educational model to a world where face-to-face classes are no longer an option. But it wasn't just face-to-face classes that were lost. Many, if not all, of the personal connections that keep students engaged and successful in higher education have also suffered. While much teaching focused on the conversion to distance learning, academic professionals in areas such as tutoring, advising, and financial aid had to figure out how to provide distance student support. Meanwhile, plans and details were changing daily, and keeping students informed was another challenge brought on by the pandemic. Universities need an effective communication plan to keep stu-



dents informed and involved in these critical decisions. In addition, student relationships with faculty and academic staff are more distant than in the past, requiring strategies to engage students with minimal, if any, face-to-face contact. Successfully addressing both challenges require a sound understanding of the possibilities of digital communication. Digital communication - email, text message, app, or social media - is of value for capturing student voices and demonstrating caring.

Examples

UDES: Through membership in internationalization networks and programs, it has been possible to access financing funds and mobility scholarships. For example: PAME, Iberoamerican Scholarships, PILA and BRACOL. This funding has allowed UDES to apply a discount tuition policy for outbound mobility students. In articulation with the Vice-Rectorcy for Research, a mapping of international calls for proposals and funds is carried out. UDES has another Erasmus+ project - EQUAM LA - which main purpose is to enhance Quality Management and recognition in Latin America Universities to underpin the Latin America Higher Educate space. This project is managed by the Directorate of National and International Relations, the Quality Assurance Department and Institutional Planning.

UPN - Within the framework of State University System, UPN participates directly in the ORI-SUE-Capital network, a network through which different actions are proposed for the internationalization of the Universities and the promotion of undergraduate and postgraduate student mobility, which were previously isolated and are now set up in a call that already had a pilot test in the first semester of 2021, and will be renewed in the second: this after evaluation and upgrade.

Principle 9. Universities need to maintain sustainability to continue to function especially during crises. Thus, they need to find innovative ways



to maintain their sustainability and not to lose their competitive advantage.

Universities must meet their own core obligations (teaching and research) while continually adapting to a new set of situations and challenges, such as maintaining standards of excellence, raising the financial resources they need to maintain their independence, and managing partnerships with other institutions on a new scale. At present the world is going through a pandemic, COVID-19, which is having a tremendous impact on the four pillars of organizational sustainability, namely the human pillar, the social pillar, the environmental pillar, and the economic pillar. During the pandemic COVID-19, the success of higher education depends on how universities deal with the crisis by considering the four pillars of sustainability as mentioned above. Information communication must be quick, accurate, and consistent in order to be useful and help organizations maintain sustainability. Therefore, communication, especially transparency in communication, is an important aspect of crisis management. University administrations are forced to revise their crisis management plans and make changes to their sustainability communication strategies. Openness and transparency in communication and the ability to quickly adapt to changing crisis situations will help universities improve in the near future. HEIs need to “act quickly, think innovatively and work collaboratively to mitigate the impact of this challenge.”

Principle 10. As public spending for higher education in many cases decreases, especially in time of crisis, universities must identify alternative paths for funding.

Strong universities with a greater autonomy and accountability will be better able to play their full part in responding to a changing society and its demands and in contributing to the achievement of a globally competitive Higher Education and Research Area. Public investment in Higher



Education has been decreasing and Universities have been forced to find alternative ways of funding its activities. Costs of universities' activities are rising and hence the financial sustainability of their missions is certainly the primary issue of concern for universities in the 21st century. International funding schemes are major drivers in the development of full costing in universities.

Principle 11. It is useful to draw upon the expertise and experiences and engaging fully local immigrant or diaspora communities

Immigrant communities can be motivated to bring their rich expertise and know-how to the learning, discovery, and engagement missions of the institution. The rich mosaic of immigrants offers universities a natural resource that they often underestimate. Immigrants' perspectives on their country of origin are unique in many ways and would certainly enrich the learning experiences of students at universities. A global university will eagerly utilize the valuable resource of immigrant communities and sponsor lecture series and conferences that draw on the experiences and insights of these communities. Most importantly, immigrant communities can play an important role in our quest to achieve foreign language proficiency for all students. Whether as adjuncts to foreign language instructors or as instructors themselves, immigrants with the necessary language and teaching skills can be a logical and cost-effective ways to meet staffing needs.

Principle 12. Promote faculty research as a means of strengthening universities' link to society

Higher education institutions published research revealed to be one of the foremost popular topics within the press. Whereas every university has its own research position, the promoting team may cooperate with the teaching staff in order to determine new approaches of research in response to current trends. Communication units should then strive to promote the



research work of its teaching staff, for instance by distinguishing journalists with interest in the researched topics and by customizing their approach. Additionally, it is vital to share the results of the university campaign with the teaching staff, so that their accomplishments may be celebrated. Besides, it would also help them to perceive the public opinion about their publication.

Examples

UCSA has submitted several projects so as to support research and education with funding, through training people in monitoring funding opportunities. With UCSA's participation in international projects, international funding has been approved, and the implementation of the activities being monitored by designated university administrative staff.

4.3 Promoting internationalization activities

“The institutional strategy must establish clearly the goals and actions towards a global university³, and consider the communication dimension as a key and a driving factor to promote its internationalization activities successfully.”

Principle 1. Placing and communicating the university as a global institution requires comprehensive internationalization.

Internationalization should be included in the strategic plans of all departments, colleges, and schools within the university, with clear goals to attain and monitoring assessments within those goals for its teaching and training, learning and engagement missions. Examples of good practices to reach comprehensive internationalization include a diverse staff and student body, fostering the ability to overcome cultural and linguistic

3. “Road Map to the Global University”, William Brustein, 2007.



boundaries, and preparing students to work effectively in international environments.

Principle 2. Staying global: universities should make sure they are following the trends and international agenda(s)

Higher Education is a driving force for societal change and it is of the utmost importance that the institutional strategy embeds the international trends and agenda(s). This kind of approach is essential to the communication strategy of a global university. For instance: even though higher education institutions are under no legal obligation to adopt the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), many universities have chosen to do so. Universities are expected to contribute both to their local communities and to the global community, as well as to prepare their graduates with a high-quality education and global awareness. To give a meaningful and effective contribution to the SDGs, the leadership and governance bodies must make sustainability a priority in their operations, and hold themselves accountable - and again, communicate the commitment, the strategy, the actions to attain each goal and the results achieved.

Principle 3. Making global academic partnerships an institutional priority

In today's world, the Higher Education Institution must be engaged in cross-border education and have academic partnerships with foreign partners, otherwise it is not global. However, these partnerships must evaluate carefully to make sure that no valuable, or even scarce, resources are wasted, without effective benefits for the institution. When creating a partnership with a foreign institution, it is essential to discuss in advance the terms of the collaboration, based on a win-win situation.

Once you have constituted a sustainable institutional partnership, the institution must also reflect how to develop and build upon the initial relationship. A good starting point could be the mobility of students and staff,



and then evolve to a more mature collaboration, exploring the possibilities of teaching and research collaborations in other fields, recruitment of international students, co-sponsoring of research conferences, development of joint projects and fundraising initiatives, and dual or joint degrees.

Principle 4. Internationalizing the curriculum is crucial to assure that all students receive, during their degree program, training in global competences and a distinctive added value when communicating what the university has to offer.

Integrate international and global aspects into all degree programs or other aspects of the educational offer to ensure that all students, regardless of their social-economic background, have the training and competences to work in international contexts. Internationalizing the curriculum in an effective manner requires a change of the mind-set, and early intervention at the time undergraduate programs are designed (or redesigned), with the aim of combining both disciplinary expertise and area/international studies in an integrated way (not just area studies or isolated disciplines). It is developing a comprehensive curriculum that will train the students to become globally competent professionals, entrepreneurs and critical thinkers, in a very demanding global labor market.

Principle 5. Reducing obstacles to education and exchange abroad are crucial to promote international opportunities.

Many barriers, such as financial issues, curricular differences and low language proficiency often hamper the decision to go abroad. When communicating the opportunities, the university should be able to focus the message on the positive aspects and advantages that can be offered to make education abroad accessible and affordable for all students. However, the number of available scholarships from international funding schemes are often not enough. If learning or training abroad is considered a priority,



then it should be perceived as such and funded no differently from other academic priorities and the university can create internal mechanisms to increase the support needed and ensure that more students access the opportunity.

Principle 6. Promote a holistic approach to the international student experience and make the most out of “Word-of-mouth”

No institution of higher education can aspire to become truly global without an active strategy to recruit and retain the highest-quality international students.

Ensuring that international students will make the most of their educational experience requires us to engage them consistently from pre-arrival to post-graduation with special emphasis placed on continuous educational support and mentorship. Moreover, is vital to provide adequate information and training for teachers and administrative staff on how to interact with people from other countries and cultures. It is particularly important that in global classrooms teachers become more sensitive to the different ways students from other cultures learn. Our international students can serve as our best ambassadors as we strive to become a global university. Indeed, implementing a holistic approach to the international student experience will highly contribute to the development of a multicultural learning community and to its internationalization.

Principle 7. Making research more international and more visible through the most adequate communication tools and channels.

Globalization has favored international research and boosted the development of new tools oriented to interactivity, thus supporting the internationalization of research through ready access to technology by teachers and researchers. Technological change in communication, such as email, access to the Internet, and the increasing availability of online journals has



highly contributed to boost the international research and its promotion. Additionally, systematic software with accurate analysis features, massive online data storage and collaboration platforms became more and more available to support international research collaboration, at a reduced cost for institutional budgets.

In further support of the international dissemination of research, advances in technology have also led to new opportunities to communicate research outputs, using research communication tools such as articles in academic journals, papers released at international conferences, authored books, edited books, research reports, professional articles written for newspapers and magazines, and even registered patents.

Principle 8. Time. It takes time to develop the strategy to become a global university and to communicate it effectively.

Building a global university road map will surely accelerate progress towards a sustainable and competitive international institution of a high standard. The core elements for the global university are already within reach for most institutions, and they just need to take some steps to start combining them. However, “as is the case with all big buildings, the global university will not arise overnight” and working on an effective communication plays a major role on the process. Always deliver a message that represents the institution’s values, mission and vision, and be consistent. Every communication, whether internal or external, should feel personal, inviting, adapted to the target you want to reach and, most importantly, authentic, to ensure that a common understanding and even a sense of belonging are attained.



5. Creating a multicultural social environment

5.1 Students and staff members in mobility as culture ambassador (organization of events with local students and staff members)

At a first level, in an internationalization strategy, mobility can be considered a key: individuals participating in mobility schemes benefit intellectually, not only in their academic or research areas, but also more generally as they come into close contact with other ways of thinking and other intellectual and cultural traditions. Research staff will elaborate new ideas about their work through contact with researchers in other countries. Administrative staff will gain new insights through observing and participating in similar work in other national contexts. Students will understand their study areas better when they see the subject matter addressed through different approaches. In many cases linguistic competences will be greatly enhanced through the ‘immersion method’.

We may say that providing and promoting mobility experiences can always be a meaningful first step in an internationalization development plan. During the COVID pandemic, unfortunately, it has been almost eliminated, except in virtual form.

Nonetheless, while waiting for, as we all hope, the pandemic to weaken, and for physical mobility to again become possible, it is important to work to ensure that those precious opportunities can yield their full benefits for our institutions. This means planning and organizing concretely ways that the benefits of mobility can be enhanced, not only for the individuals concerned, but also for the broader community, not only academic.



Mobile individuals, both incoming and outgoing, can share their experiences in fruitful ways, if their entire path, before, during and after mobility, is fully supported.

Principle 1. The mobile person (student or staff member) can contribute to international and intercultural understanding especially if appropriately supported.

The mobility experience is valuable not only for the individual involved, but also for the community of destination (host institution), and return (home institution). In order to achieve those benefits specific planning and preparation for intercultural exchange are necessary. It is the responsibility of higher education institutions themselves to organize effective support in order to ensure that their mobile students and staff become effective culture bearers.

Principle 2. Appropriate support must include preparation before the mobility, support and wide opportunities for interaction during mobility, provisions for debriefing and continuing sharing after mobility.

In order to achieve the greatest benefit from each mobility, the individual experience must be supported in every phase, but in final analysis, higher education institutions must also plan strategically their support for individuals in order to achieve great value for the whole academic community. This means connecting the dots, and being sure that they stay connected over time. Services need to be organized to prepare students and staff to go abroad, backing up the knowledge and aspirations of each individual with careful attention to preparation, to support them while they are abroad (stimulating them to stay in touch and supporting them in case of difficulties), and to obtain, share and utilize the new understanding they bring back.

Principle 3. Optimizing the impact of each mobility experience is the



task not only of the international relations services but rather of the institution as a whole, and aims to create multiple situations in which positive sharing can take place in all directions.

The entire university community is responsible for making incoming and outgoing mobility meaningful, and not only on a scientific or academic level. The understanding achieved by mobile persons should be widely shared, and to accomplish this the valorization of intercultural achievement should become a central part of the overall institutional strategy and planning.

Principle 4. Linguistic preparation for the mobility experience is of obvious importance for ensuring a successful mobility experience in terms of intercultural development. It should be integrated by knowledge of the country and the academic system and also by specific training for how to participate with respect and empathy in another cultural environment.

Where necessary special language training will be offered to mobile persons, incoming and outgoing. Where possible, persons who have returned from mobility as well as appropriate academic and support staff will hold meetings or workshops on the host countries and cultures, in order to prepare the mobile persons for the reality they will experience.

These workshops should also aim to alert the participants to the need to build their capacity for empathy and develop their intercultural competences to prepare them for the mobility.

Principle 5. On return, there should be structured paths for evaluating the knowledge gained and impressions received with the home institution and sharing them with colleagues (students and staff) on a long term basis.

When mobile staff or students return to their home institution, they should



be asked to evaluate their experience (through on-line or written questionnaires backed up by interviews) focusing not only on their classes or teaching/research experience and on the support (orientation, counseling) offered to them, but also on the opportunities for social and cultural interaction, and their suggestions for improving the preparation offered before the mobility. The results of such debriefing should be carefully evaluated and used to improve the institutional support.

Principle 6. Activities involving both (prospective, present and past) mobile students and staff and those who have not had the opportunity should be regularly and frequently programmed in order to encourage the spread of information and intercultural outlook.

Without special planning, the persons in mobility will mainly have contact with those close to whom they live (for example in student dormitories or faculty residences, and with the people they meet in their classes for students, and colleagues from the department or faculty where they are hosted. To achieve the maximum benefit from each mobility it is advisable to plan events that gather people in mobility from across the institution in order for them to interact with the other persons in mobility as well as those who have already had the experience and other interested parties.

This may be done for example organizing series of informal meetings or extra-curricular seminars on the countries involved in the mobility, on their culture and customs, and their academic organization. The music, art and/or cuisine etc. of the home countries serve as attractive topics for events or interviews. Students may be asked to present posters or prepare podcasts.

For such initiatives to be effective, they need to become part of the general institutional planning, well publicized, and adequately supported in terms of venues and resources.



Examples

UNCUYO: Before outgoing students go on mobility they take a course called “Soy Internacional” [I am International] about Argentinian Culture. As regards incoming students we organize cultural interaction through our “Feria Internacional” (International Fair), which is a fair where every incoming students present their culture through meal preparation, games, dances, etc. We involve incoming students in our “Pasaporte Global” (Global Passport), which is a cultural program online that includes talks from speakers from our university, partners, embassies, language institutes and the community in general. On their return, mobility teachers hold dissemination meetings.

UDES: For our official academic mobility program, we have a roadmap to prepare the mobility of students, as follows: a. opening and publication of calls. b. dissemination and socialization of requirements and motivation. c. training to fill out forms, resumes, motivation letters. d. meetings and workshops on soft and multicultural skills to travel to a foreign country. e. meetings for the preparation of immigration and legalization documents.

UPN: Before our students start their mobility, the IRO holds a meeting to clarify concerns and prepare them for possible situations that may arise in their country of destination. This meeting allows us to deal with such issues as institutional identity and the mobility students’ role as bearers of culture, the importance of fulfilling their academic commitments so that their plan for recognition can be approved on their return, as well as issues associated with international medical insurance, transit between countries, and so forth.

UNLA: A systematic introduction to University and city life is shared with all incoming before the trip. They are also contacted with previous exchange students to prepare the experience. We hold a welcome day that



includes different kinds of activities every semester. Authorities make welcome speeches; there is a campus visit and all kinds of recommendations are shared. Every semester, many cultural activities are held at UNLa and among local former mobility students to welcome international students. An example is the 'tourism week', which also explores interculturality through regional food and traditions.

Mobility students join informally the work of sensitization and negotiation of the mobility reference to the socio-community programs carried out between University teachers and the surrounding vulnerable community. This interaction enriches both the mobility students who participate in the activity and the participants in the socio-community programs, thus expanding the intercultural competencies of both.

UNIBE: Special kits are prepared for outgoing international students before the mobility. Before the pandemic special welcoming activities involving traditional food were prepared when incoming students arrived to the university.

UCSA has induction procedures for foreign students, although not formally established. The Student Welfare Department together with the Bonding Department organize cultural interaction events for the students participating in the international mobility programs.

UNIEMP: When we launched and promoted our calls for student mobility, unfortunately interrupted by the COVID pandemic, we included preparatory talks on the socio-cultural issues faced in a mobility process. We aimed to sensitize students in mobility process about the different scenarios and emotions they will face when visiting another country. Spaces for interaction to resolve doubts and support students in the mobility process were provided.



5.2 Integrating students and staff members in mobility in the everyday life of the institution

Effective collaboration between the IRO and student associations contributes to creating a fertile environment to facilitate learning, social engagement and the creation of an external community, including students, teaching staff and local stakeholders.

Principle 1. The implementation of a successful incoming mobility services system involves different areas of the University and managing these mobilities means defining the roles of each unit involved.

The International Relations Office works in synergy with all the parties involved within the university. It is in charge for all mobility-related bureaucratic issues, and it is responsible for the launch of collaborations with Student Halls, Associations, NGO's, companies etc. It manages the Buddy Program in all its aspects. In a broader vision of international mobility that goes beyond the European context, it offers dedicated desks where professional staff that helps for visa purposes. It coordinates and supports financially the organization of local language courses to be offered to incoming students upon arrival and during their stay. It is the promoter and sponsor of most of the informal activities and events realized to involve incoming students and staff in extra-curricular activities.

Principle 2. Initiatives such as the “buddy program” are essential to bridge the cultural gap between incoming students and the resident university population, and to raise awareness among locals to stay tuned and always consider the difficulties which may arise when different cultures are exposed to each other.

A “buddy program” is a student-oriented initiative designed to help our international community with their cultural, academic and language inte-



gration. The launch of Buddy Desks in each Faculty/Department where former mobility students offer assistance to incoming (and outgoing) students has proven to be a very useful and successful solution. Buddy students participate to a call and receive a small grant to share their time, their experience abroad with the resident students and be a very important resource for the involvement of the incoming students in everyday life. Their mobility experience gives them a more structured ability to understand the needs of incoming students and give them the right support.

Principle 3. In EU contexts, the active involvement of student associations has proven to be a driving force in several international fields.

So much so that the European Union has decided to officially launch a funding scheme to support Student Associations in several fields (Higher Education, Youth Policymaking, Volunteering...). Several programs are already made available by local student associations to support incoming exchange students during the early stages of their mobility period. Student associations may also be funded by IRO or not funded (pursuing their institutional purposes). They serve as contact point with international students as they may support and assist incoming students to speed up the search for accommodation, provide a pick-up service at the airport upon arrival, give support for filling up forms and documents. Finally, their support in the organization and realization of social and inter-cultural events (Welcome Days/Weeks) is unparalleled.

Consider submitting to national institutions the launch of initiatives similar to those approved by the European Union and, if applicable, in synergy with the EU Contact Point in your country.

Principle 4. The Incoming student ombudsperson is not always present in universities but one that has proven to be a key figure for the integration of students is.



The Incoming student ombudsperson is appointed by the governing bodies to provide support to the «Guidance and Counselling» service in case of language/cultural barriers for all foreign incoming students temporarily assigned to the Institution. His/her scope of action is to make sure that all the academic and service-related activities devoted to foreign incoming students are carried out in a transparent and fair way. He/she reports to the governing bodies any failure, delay, irregularity, or risk of discrimination perpetrated against incoming students and may request the assistance of any bureau or department involved in a dispute.

Principle 5. With regard to the integration of incoming Teaching and Administrative Staff in the everyday life of the University, successful mobility management includes a day by day Visiting Program including both formal and informal activities.

Teaching Staff mobility is characterized in particular by the involvement of the teacher in the curricular activities such as holding courses, conferences, or seminars. On the other hand, the Administrative Staff is usually limited to work shadowing activities. Confining the visits to formal activities does not favor a proper integration. For this reason, the definition of a day-by-day visiting plan agreed upon with the visitors, which alternates teaching activities with informal activities, such as a visit to the University premises, libraries, or cultural centers as well as participation in social or sport events, results in a fruitful experience that both guests and hosts can benefit from. Moreover, should the mobility fall in period when the academic activities are in recess, the rotation of formal and informal activities may be provided by participation of the incoming Staff in International Workshops or Summer Schools.

Principle 6. The involvement of students in events connected with the social “extension” strategy in close connection with the local social, cul-



tural, and entrepreneurial fabric may be an interesting solution to broaden the integration of incoming students who are sometimes more reluctant to be involved in activities outside the educational ones.

Nowadays students are more inclined towards activities on social media which tend to “isolate” them. It is certainly useful to use the social media to promote activities that can involve them outside the curricular activities and improve their interpersonal skills. The creation of photographic and trekking events or archaeological campaigns, for example, will involve students in activities which may also be recognized as part of their learning program, but most of all it will increase their international sensitivity, improve their communications skills, and overcome language barriers more easily.

Examples

UPN holds meetings with students who participate in incoming mobility processes to offer a series of orientations that allow them to get to know the institution and the city. Additionally, the official in charge of student mobility maintains direct and permanent contact with them via email and cell phone. In dialogue with the ORI-SUE Capital Network, field trips have been carried out to link international students from our universities. Such is the case of visits to tourist and cultural heritage sites near the city. The program called “My Godfather at the UPN” was promoted and consolidated, which seeks to ensure that international students at the UPN have constant accompaniment, from a couple, during their stay. The program is articulated with the research hotbed of the Faculty of Physical Education - Vivir para Contarla - who, through the Degree in Recreation, generate various activities to promote the integration of visiting students both to the University and to the city and its surroundings.

UNIEMP supports the development of webinars, orientation talks and calls for student mobility and cultural fairs. Within the framework of the



training developed with the DHIP Project, webinars, orientation talks are developed for students to participate in the different calls, mobility opportunities. Likewise, cultural fairs are held for students and the rest of the Uniempresarial community. The focus is to involve students and other members of the academic community in integration activities and participation in internationalization processes.

The expected impact is the Sustainability of internationalization processes and activities and the COVID-19 effect has been moderate.

UDES: In the incoming student's program we have the following institutional activities:

1. Welcome breakfast with the participation of the rector, the Academic Vice-Rector, the Director of Institutional Welfare, the human development staff, the psychologist, the entire team of the National and International Relations Directorate, and the Communications Directorate. Also, the students who will accompany the visiting students during their stay participate to this event.
2. Tour of the university campus guided by UDES students who belong to the cultural guides program.
3. Tour and visit the city and the iconic sites

UNLA has a formal guidance teacher program, which implies the direct help of an experienced teacher for every degree program, in order to link students with the academic community. The Peer Tutor Program is another useful tool that provides specific tutoring for students, in case it's needed. The Program has a dual purpose: on the one hand, the accompaniment, guidance and necessary help to incoming students, by the hand of a tutor who has travelled the same path that the student will find in the course of their academic training and on the other, encourage



and strengthen advanced students in their professional, human and academic development, thus promoting the possibility of starting the career of teacher-tutor at the university for those who are interested. Different kinds of informal meetings such as barbecues or social exchange are held during the stay of mobility students and the IRO itself serves as a meeting/share point where incoming students usually spend time.

UCSA has mechanisms for integration with the academic community, holds different types of events, welcome to the university, and other activities. With the German students participating in the Double Degree Program with the University of Jena, a buddy-buddy system has been implemented so that they have a study buddy to guide them in everyday life both at the university and in the city. (March 2019)

Since November 2019, in order to strengthen the links between everyone, participation in the UCSA Annual Sports Tournament has been designed for the different academic levels (students, teachers, staff).

UNIBE When incoming students arrived to UNIBE before the pandemic special welcoming activities such as 8traditional food and music were prepared by the students of the program. The incoming students were accompanied by the IRO staff and an informal buddy system has been organized. The objective is for the incoming students to inspire home students to apply for future calls.

A very interesting Institutional Program for “University Social Responsibility” has been organized which represents a first step towards integration in an international perspective. The RSU Seminar is a proposal for curricular innovation in which, through the methodology of “project-based learning” and “action research”, students are trained to:

- understand the concept of social responsibility;



- develop analytical capacity of the national reality;
- develop conflict resolution skills;
- identify and know the SDGs with their goals.

After the seminar, all projects are presented in an open event for the community. The innovation of the RSU Seminar practice is that it promotes interdisciplinarity and transversality: it is a new curricular approach, as it is introduced as a subject within the semester of all undergraduate courses, a transversal and interdisciplinary perspective is proposed, which allows students to develop collaborative learning spaces with their peers from other careers, achieve integration between students from different disciplines. As one of the greatest current social difficulties is fragmentation and the lack of coordinated work between different sectors, because if from university training a cross-horizontal approach is already assumed with interdisciplinary integration activities, a paradigm shift is being achieved. The incorporation of the RSU Seminar has changed the traditional classes by incorporating a new constructive teaching/learning model. The social projects that are implemented as part of the RSU Seminar are executed also in other departments and localities. This means that learning goes beyond the classroom and beyond the usual context of the students, which allows them to realize a complete vision of the reality of their own country, which they will be able to share more easily with possible international students and in international events. Formal instance of training in SDGs: UNIBE understands in order to really achieve training in SDGs and that the 2030 Agenda with its goals must be worked systematically in the training process and not only in isolated meetings on an annual basis. Thus, the inclusion of the SDG approach as part of the curriculum is a true curricular innovation.

Another relevant activity is that of the realization of the Institutional Pro-



gram “Initiation in research” in which undergraduate students advised by teachers and postgraduate students must carry out a brief investigation, the results of which are presented annually at the Researchers’ Forum.

UNCUYO does not have a structured system for incoming students to become acquainted with academic community, but they have a program called “Un Mundo de Amigos” (“A World of Friends”) that assigns every incoming student a buddy who is a student from the same Department.

The UNQ has among its institutional objectives the link with the community in which it is based. As a result, it has an active policy of relations with civil society organizations, in training, technical assistance and extension activities.

One of these activities is the University Program for Social Incubation-(PUIS), which has been operating since 2013 within the scope of the Extension Secretariat in coordination with the Innovation and Technology Transfer Secretariat.

The PUIS works in the incubation of strategic associative socio-economic processes of economic appreciation, learning and socio-technical innovation for the strengthening of the Social and Solidarity Economy and the Popular Economy, through the construction of economic circuits with greater added value, the promotion of dynamics organizational self-management, the generation of frameworks of democratic governance and the promotion of social cooperation.

To this articulation, already novel in itself, is added an interesting international articulation, through agreements and participation in international projects (for example, the ERASMUS + INICIA Project). The result is the participation in the PUIS of teachers and students, both from the UNQ and international, and mutual enrichment.

Another point to be recognized is the teaching-research articulation that



could be carried out with another group of teachers (ERASMUS + K107) from Turkish and Polish universities. In the first case, the visiting professor, in addition to giving a conference for more than 200 people within the framework of the AGORA Education actions (cycle of conferences of the Education area of the Department of Social Sciences, in which the professors of the career did participate to their students in it), together with two accompanying professors, they held a series of meetings with different teachers of the department to generate synergies in key to joint investigations and publications. Teachers from other departments joined these meetings and later made it possible for them to visit the foreign university in reciprocity.

With respect to the Polish delegation, they held a series of activities, not only with the host area but with other areas such as the university library, or academic management spaces to learn about the institutional management format of the UNQ.

The third example also comes from the hand of an Erasmus + mobility in management of the Sports area of a Spanish university whose representative made a visit and participated in a long-distance race in the country.

In times of presence, social and sports meetings are held periodically in which mobility students are sought to integrate with native students. An example is the “asados” newspapers in which not only mobility students are invited, but also native students who are close to them to carry out a mobility experience. Another example was soccer matches organized around the visit of a delegation of students from an American university to the UNQ campus, where they stayed for two weeks.

In general, there is a tendency for mobility students to interact more with each other than with native speakers. This tendency is sought to neutralize with the practices mentioned above.



UAA has implemented the practice of accompanying a student who returned from her mobility to help newly arrived foreign students in everything they need.

They have scheduled visits to the courses with international students to explain how the city works and give them some useful advice.

Visiting professors have joined the ongoing courses so that they can interact with UAA students. It has implemented courses / talks / workshops led by international students for members of the academic community and has provided the opportunity for native English teachers to teach classes for members of the academic community. In addition, it has extended the invitation for international students to participate in recreational spaces: sports / breaks / events. Extracurricular activities integrate the component of university tradition, in this way foreign students are integrated into academic life - traditional (for example: San Juan, Valentine, Camba Kuá, the beginning of the year, the end of the year, or religious festivals with tradition) so that there is a cultural fusion that invites foreigners to join in to learn about cultural assets and nationals to proudly demonstrate the cultural asset. But UAA lacks the matrix of goliards - university students, which is what generates tradition and integration.

The nutrition career would support in integrate food and student since, upon arrival in the country, the food system is very different. Unfortunately, the COVID context prevented the activity of Paraguayan food classes for foreign students



5.3 Ensuring equal academic treatment and services

Ensuring equal treatment and services for those in mobility comprises more than just treating incoming students like all other students or staff, or ensuring that home students and staff have equal access to mobility opportunities. Both are base-line requirements for well-organized student mobility programs, but are not in themselves sufficient. And obviously staff mobility requires different levels of attention.

Incoming mobility: in fact, as developed in other parts of these Guidelines, incoming students will require special efforts, both in the home and in the host university, in order to prepare them for mobility. They will need basic information about the host culture and higher education system; they will require orientation, counselling and support to address academic work successfully in another system; they will need the necessary linguistic competences if they come from a country having a different language. In sum, work and sensitivity is required in order to ensure, to the extent possible, a level playing field.

In their academic work, Incoming mobility students will certainly profit by their interaction with different ways of learning, teaching and assessment, but they will also have to meet many challenges. Flexibility and common sense will be needed to encourage and support them, and grades will need to take into account that mobility students face difficulties, not least because their knowledge and competence base, whether 'higher' or 'lower', will certainly be different.

There are other aspects to be taken into account: for example, local students may have a right to free or lower cost public transportation, or facilitations in accessing museums, libraries, theatres or other public services. The host institution must be aware of these inequalities and try to find





solutions, negotiating as appropriate with local bodies and authorities.

A further question is that of equal participation in academic organisms of which students are a part. In this case too some provision must be made in order not to exclude the voice of the mobile students.

With regard to incoming staff (teaching staff, administrative staff, researchers) equal treatment in a general way is not normally feasible: the mobility periods will be brief and linked to specific activities. For example, the teachers will have in their mobility agreement requirements that they hold a certain number of lectures, seminars and discussion sessions with students. The hosting faculty or department will treat them as privileged guests for the time they are present. Similar considerations regard research or administrative staff, whose mobility periods will be carefully planned and will require the necessary attention by the hosting sector in order to derive the full benefits, including informal networking opportunities, from the incoming mobile guest.

In the case of outgoing mobility, it is essential that there be full transparency with regard to mobility opportunities. Calls must be public and well publicized; the award criteria clear and fair. They must also be applied transparently. There must be provision for monitoring and improving the selection procedures, including a mechanism for complaint and redress.

Principle 1. Incoming mobile students must be granted equal rights and privileges.

From a formal point of view, incoming mobile students must be treated like the institution's own students, notwithstanding the fact that they are only students for a circumscribed period and not for a full degree program. Since there may be specific privileges of students in the local community that are available only to citizens or local residents, the host institution must mediate and find solutions where needed to ensure fair



treatment of international students. It is to be understood that, in turn, their own outgoing students will be helped in the same way by their host institution, as reciprocity is a fundamental rule in mobility partnerships.

Principle 2. In evaluating learning by incoming mobile students common sense and flexibility are necessary.

Teaching staff and other students too should be aware that incoming foreign students will inevitably have different knowledge and competence sets, and will also be unaccustomed to the way learning teaching and assessment are organized in the host institution. Many of the differences they will experience and the challenges they will face will not be evident to the host staff and students. Creating situations where they can show their points of view and explain how they experience the host system will be beneficial for all parties. In assessing the achievements of the mobile students in their classes, reasonable and informed allowance should be made for the extra obstacles they face. Full and fair reporting to the home institution will help to ensure fair treatment on their return.

Principle 3. Selection of outgoing mobility candidates must be transparent and fair.

Knowledge about the opportunities for staff and student mobility must be communicated fully, so that all those interested can access adequate information to make an informed choice. Calls must be public and make clear the nature of the offer and the criteria for awarding the mobility opportunities. The selection must be carried out by a commission in a transparent manner, based on objective criteria.

Principle 4. To enhance inclusion, corrective elements can be introduced.

According to the orientation and the ethical Principles of the HEI in the criteria for selection of mobile students and staff, fair criteria for guaran-



teeing the participation of specific groups, such as those with economic or physical disabilities may be introduced. In this case also transparency and clear communication is key.

Examples

At UCSA we have students, teachers, and staff members who are part of the academic community with the same rights and services as nationals.

UNCUYO The IRO staff is qualified and trained to cope with students, teachers and staff from all over the world.

UDES To promote hospitality and equality in the academic community, professors, students, managers, and administrative staff, at the IRO we hold training meetings on cultural differences, differences in academic terms, internal requirements for enrolment and registration processes, and academic and cultural aspects so that we receive exchange students with the best services.

UNIEMP: All our policies, regulations, codes of conduct and management codes include the component of equity, good treatment and respect. All extra-curricular activities, such as fairs, webinars, academic events and mobility processes are open equally for all students and other components of the academic community.

UPN In general, it can be said that there is a good treatment within the University towards our international students, and their training experience at the UPN has been well valued by them. In a local-institutional context, there are no cases of exclusion or segregation of foreign students. However, strategies or programs that specifically promote this aspect have not been consolidated.

UNIBE: Even one is part of the University staff as Head of Practice and another as Director of Health Sciences



5.4 Organizing multicultural activities

To enhance the benefits of mobility programs for the host institution and the mobile individuals themselves, often activities that bring into contact different cultures in non-academic areas are very valuable. Such activities can give confidence and voice to incoming mobile individuals, who usually are happy to contribute. In such areas as art, tourism, music and cuisine there can often be sharing and learning about other countries and other cultures in an informal setting. Host universities, local bodies and students' associations can all usefully collaborate to valorize the contribution of their mobile guests in this way.

Organizing such activities should become a regular part of the HEI's mobility support. They should be communicated in such a way as to make clear that they are not an activity restricted to mobile students, but can be enjoyed by 'the more the better'.

In addition to its own activities the host institution can develop links with other organizations and with the local press/TV etc. in order to create opportunities for such multi- and intercultural sharing.

Principle 1. In order to give value and voice to incoming mobile students and staff, it is beneficial to organize informal activities emphasizing or showcasing their national or local culture.

Incoming mobile students and staff will have to address many academic and interpersonal challenges during their experience. Students will have more time to adapt; usually teaching, research and administrative staff are present in the host institution for relatively brief periods, and have less opportunity for general interaction. However, students are younger and less experienced, and may find the academic situation daunting. In addition to the support and counselling services mentioned elsewhere



in these guidelines, non-academic activities where students particularly can share knowledge of their own countries and culture can be reassuring and empowering for the incoming students, as well as benefiting the host community.

Principle 2. Such activities or events optimally are organized frequently and either focus on a particular country or involve several countries in a particular activity.

Events focusing on the culture or cuisine, or other non-academic aspects of other countries should be organized according to a time plan that takes into account the schedules of arrival of international students and/or staff. Since mobile individuals may be present for relatively short periods, the optimal time will be not immediately after they arrive, but somewhat later in their experience so they are better able to share. Separate events can be organized for each country, in order to provide more numerous occasions for interactions, and of course both students in mobility and the general student body should be invited and encouraged to participate. Also, students of the home university who have already had a mobility experience or those interested in a future experience should be involved.

Principle 3. The host institution should make every effort to collaborate with other local actors in organizing activities that showcase specific countries or regions, in order to involve the broader public.

The benefits of involving other actors are numerous. One is that the HEI in this way can show the community that it attracts students/staff from other countries, thus promoting its own image; at the same time, by sharing its international guests and its international competences it carries out a part of its broader role, reaching out to its local territory. Often Museums will be happy to organize exhibits that highlight a certain country or geographic area. If this is done in a coordinated manner, it is possible to en-



sure the participation by students and/or staff coming from that country or area, thus contributing to the success and interest of the event.

Principle 4. If the multicultural activities have a regular rhythm and a clear identity, they can become sustainable, attracting resources and collaboration.

Some international multicultural events or activities, such as annual ‘Fairs’ or gastronomic or musical events, art or photography shows, etc., can become reference points either within the university itself, or, optimally, in the local community, thus enhancing the perception of HEI’s international orientation as well as providing a useful service. If a successful activity is ‘branded’ with an attractive name and format, and repeated annually, it can become a fixture in the academic or local calendar, and can attract participation and resources from outside.

Examples

UCSA: Every academic year an event called “Academic Days” is organized where foreign students present their country and culture.

UNCUYO: We hold an International Fair “FIESA” and, as explained elsewhere, award a “Pasaporte Global”. We hold periodic events featuring another country and culture. For example, “India en la UNCUYO”.

UDES In the institutional welfare program and from the Vice Rector’s Office of Extension through the cultural program, we have institutional events in which we promote the participation of students and visiting professors, some of them are: “Coffee with art: Space for literature and reflection with invited writers”; art exhibitions: with invited artists; sports activities; theater, dance; walks along ecological trails.

UNLA: Every semester, many cultural activities are held at UNLa and among local former mobility students to welcome international students.





All knowledge mentioned is included as a daily basis of the institution's cultural offer. Some celebrations corresponding to other cultures are carried out informally within the Secretariat of Cooperation and Public Service (for example, the "Day of the Dead" with Mexican students) in order to make other cultures visible and involve the university community.

UNIBE: The degree program of Nutrition organized a food fair including cuisine from countries from all over the region. During the "Cultural Week" we developed a project in which student must research the culture and costumes of a different country and prepare a presentation. We have also found that incoming students are more willing to share about their country in informal contexts, such as meetings with other students.

UNEMP: Since we have a strong collaboration with a German institutions, we have developed joint activities with the Colombian-German Chamber of Commerce, Chamber of Commerce and Icetex. Our participation in the DHIP project has encouraged us in this direction. It allows us to participate in conjunction with other organizations in Bogota that are of interest to citizens and allow the academic community of Uniempresarial to be part of the training and growth processes of the community.

Furthermore, we aim at organizing cultural activities and virtual interaction, especially in the following sectors: International gastronomy; influencers, impact and responsibilities; and university world gamers.

To this end we planned a biannual cooking workshop to be held in 2020 (local phase) and 2021 (International Phase). Uniempresarial with the experience of 2020 as a pilot has wanted to link to the second phase to international students in interactive classes in Gastronomy; a conference, entailing a discussion about the role of influencers in society, comprising the three countries of the DHIP universities; a Gamers contest, with players representing each university, with awards. The aims are networking



with students from other universities through the language of gastronomic culture and debate; and strengthened relationships with students from other universities using the language of games.

We think that this will lead to the development of sustainable international cultural activities that will contribute now and in the future to the objectives of internationalization and the development of intercultural competences.

An example of positive adaptation to COVID from UPN: When there is face-to-face mobility, cultural and entertainment activities are organized that link both UPN students and international students regarding the differential cultural and gastronomic forms in our countries. In the case of virtual mobility, to which we have been doomed in the year of the Pandemic, international students - in addition to their training process - were offered the possibility of participating in a photography workshop that also links students from the UPN, through the research hotbed of the Faculty of Physical Education - Live to tell it.



6. The role of networking in the internationalization process

Internationalization is considered one of the most important sources of revenue and visibility for Higher Education Institutions nowadays and is one of the strategic pillars for those that aspire for international prestige.

The way towards Internationalization needs to be based on creating synergies with the global ecosystem, by establishing strategic partnerships, networking and participating in international initiatives, such as joint projects, international funded projects (research and education), mobilities etc. Furthermore, according to Munusamy, M.Miandy & Hashim, Azirah (2020), “Strategic alliances through networking is an important tool to establish relationships and to gather market information and recent development in the higher education internationalization worldwide.”

The development of networks through the engagement of different public/private stakeholders can systemically impact the whole Higher Education Institution, fostering the involvement with governments, academia and research institutions, industry and civil society.

In this chapter we will focus on the crucial role of the Third Mission in which the Universities foster their local, regional and national community networks through outreach projects.

6.1 Choosing international partners, making agreements, setting up joint and double degrees

Principle 1. It is important that the HEIs identify their current international partnerships



The HEI must analyze in depth its current number of partners, compiling a comprehensive list of all its partners worldwide, and indicating their co-operation status: whether they are based on mobility agreements or on other kinds of cooperation.

Examples

UNLA: An informal practice when selecting partners with whom to implement common actions arises from the dynamics of the academic departments and the ties already built previously. Teachers, staff and hierarchical staff establish individual ties with some potential partners, thus generating a bridge that will later be formalized in joint action agreements no longer between two individuals but between two cooperating institutions.

UNIBE: We analyze institutions with similar interests and areas of research to develop double degrees.

UCSA: We have established agreements with DHIP partners and proposed a cooperation project with UNIPI.

Obstacles related to the Principle 1:

- UAA: Lack of interest from partner universities to develop international joint degrees.
- UAA: The need of funding for international mobilities due to the country's economic context.

Principle 2. Potential partners must be analyzed and ranked

Once the first identification and categorization of partners is done, HEIs should start assessing its partners, looking closely at the links maintained between them both. Considering all, the different forms, durability, intensity, and capacity of cooperation, a ranking should be designed. The resulting list will include the top partners with whom the HEI interacts.



Examples

UDES: The strategy for signing agreements consists of prioritizing non-Spanish-speaking countries and institutions with which we have common study areas and interests in research, teaching, and extension.

Uniempresarial: We seek to develop internationalization actions in conjunction with institutions of recognized international prestige, as well as to participate in networks such as ACBSP, RCI, Icetex, among others, complying with the Principles that contribute to the accreditation and strengthening of international management.

Principle 3. Each HEI must design and implement a SIP policy

Based on the results described under Principle 2, when the ranking of partners is ready, it is time to start operating. Initially, the list of top international partners must be disseminated within the university, so that it reaches as many people as possible. It can then be used in order to establish partnerships for new projects: research and mobility agreements, and international projects of other kinds.

Examples

Uniempresarial: We practice the management and dynamization of international agreements and active participation in academic networks in order to promote internationalization processes and results.

UNQ has developed a structured international policy since the beginning of the 21st century. This policy is present in the objectives and everyday work of different government units, as can be noticed in institutional publications and documents. These actions are complemented by the signature of bilateral agreements with universities worldwide. There is a preference towards Latin America and Western Europe, although UNQ is open to different opportunities”.



UNCUYO: Our main strategy beyond the DHIP project is to develop double degrees with European Universities.

Obstacles related to the Principle 3:

UNQ: Lack of sustainability of the academic cooperation agreements established.

6.2 Connecting internationalization policies with the needs and vocations of the local production systems: identification of areas of international research

Principle 1. Liaise with national/regional/international research funding policy makers and agencies

Institutional proximity and dialogue with managing authorities of funding programs is key. HEI should put efforts into maintaining regular dialogue with the funding agencies in order to anticipate and keep up with the trends in priority areas (both consolidated and emerging) and funding for research and innovation. This puts an HEI in a better position to match research capabilities with funding priorities and opportunities.

Principle 2. Align institutional research priorities/activities with external research and innovation strategies' domain areas and agendas

HEI usually develop research activities in a myriad of areas. Aligning the institutional areas of research (at least some of them) to the research and innovation agendas is critical for HEIs to make sure that their research is helping to provide critical mass and key assets that contribute to addressing the regional, national or international challenges. For instance, in the EU, since 2014, to access EU structural funds, countries and regions



have to fulfill the *ex-ante conditionality* of designing and implementing the so-called research and innovation strategies for smart specialization (RIS3). The rationale behind the concept is that key areas of research are selected and relevant stakeholders - including HEIs - contribute to local economic growth by developing research and innovation activities while responding to the great societal challenges. Those challenges are usually defined by international organizations, such as the European Commission or United Nations (e.g. SDGs). Then, public authorities managing those funds at national and regional level set out priority areas aligned with such international policies and guidelines and many times make funding available to incentivize international research activities. So, in practice, HEIs can benefit by aligning research areas, as funding will be available for leveraging national and international research projects and collaborations.

Principle 3. Follow the quadruple helix Principle: academia, business, government, society

Identifying common needs and interests amongst different types of stakeholders is key. Then, working together towards those common interests in research and innovation activities becomes easier and provides critical mass for international collaborations. In recent years, the quadruple helix approach - involving different public/private stakeholders, namely governments, academia and research institutions, industry and civil society in multiple key sectors - has led to more open research and innovation collaborations and driven structural change far beyond the scope that any organization could achieve on its own, to research, innovate and experiment in real world settings. This has taken place regardless of the chosen configuration of local networks (quadruple helix approach or any other setting). Another potentially relevant configuration of collaboration relates to alliances between different HEIs. For instance, through the European Universities Initiative the EU has funded setting up thematic European



partnerships to strengthen education, research and innovation capabilities and responses to current global challenges. In short, HEI are encouraged to set up alliances with relevant external entities to perform research and innovation activities.

Principle 4. Be part of international research and innovation cooperation networks

According to the European Commission (EC) website⁴ dedicated to the Innovation and Research Strategy for 2020-2024: “International cooperation in research and innovation is a strategic priority for the European Union” as it “gives access to the latest knowledge and the best talent worldwide, business opportunities in new and emerging markets, and science diplomacy to influence and enhance external policy.” Summing up: the most effective way to solve societal challenges, such as climate change and hunger among others, is through research and innovation initiatives.

Working together reduces the global burden, pools resources and achieves greater impact. HEI may benefit from participating in European and other international networks (e.g. EU COST Actions, which fund researchers’ participation in networking activities) as they can increase the number of partnerships, and in turn, the number of international collaborations.

Examples

UCSA is working in various international cooperation networks, as well as research projects that receive the support of the National Council of Science and Technology since they are in accordance with the 2030 Development Plan of Paraguay.

4. https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/strategy/strategy-2020-2024/europe-world/international-cooperation_en.



UDES participated in the region's internationalization roundtables, as well as in the city's chamber of commerce, in the Colombian Internationalization Network, with which UDES submitted joint projects to national calls for proposals

UNIBE was able to involve local stakeholders and the Ministry of Education and Sciences in the HEI's projects. To prepare the IEP, a focus group was held with representatives of the public and private sector.

At UNLA has an advisory system for the development of social and productive projects: INNOVA. Certain survey objectives were established to deepen the links between local and international productive projects. In formal terms, the internationalization of the third mission was highly recognized in the multi-year plan and action plan for both 2019 and 2020, but the weakened social fabric due to the pandemic generated by COVID 19 and the economic crisis, implied reorganizing priorities to attend urgent social demands.

6.3 The role of public engagement in the internationalization processes

Universities have traditionally described their primary roles as teaching and research. Today, however, they almost universally add the 'third mission' to their agenda. This term has a broad valence of possible meanings. The third mission includes all activities that go beyond the former two or that connect the former two more effectively with their local, regional or national hinterland. Outreach can be understood as connecting with the immediate territory, with new social and economic interlocutors, and taking new roles. Historically this is not really a novel idea: many of the universities in our DHIP partnership were founded or grew with quite strong territorial mandates and remits regarding their broader role at the service



of society. Nonetheless, today the ‘third mission’ is much more explicitly addressed, and taken into account by university authorities, stakeholders and accreditation/quality assessors. This indisputably has fostered a stronger awareness of the many ways that HEIs can connect to those they serve, gather and provide information and ideas in order to enhance their connections.

The idea of “Third Mission” is considered both ‘nebulous’ and ‘ambiguous’: realistically speaking, it is still being defined, more by exclusion than by inclusion, and each HEI is pressured to look at new ways in which it can promote learning, research and development, as well as its societal role, in new and more meaningful ways. A useful synthesis and guide to existing publications on the subject can be found in L.Compagnucci, F.Spigarelli *The Third Mission of the university: A systematic literature review on potentials and constraints* in “Technological Development and Social Change”, December 2020.⁵

This aspect was the final one in our DHIP IEP template, which does not mean the least important, but rather one in which interpretation and the reflection of specific orientations and strategies needed to be elaborated according to the specific situation of each partner. It is section VI of the IEP: “VI. Synergies with the territorial context: Strengthening the international dimension of the Third Mission.”

Principle 1. Universities are uniquely placed to map the human and other resources of their hinterland and to foster positive solutions to challenges. They can further develop their role as leaders in the cultural, economic and social development of their local, regional, national context bringing an international perspective.

5. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0040162520311100?via%3Dihub>.



Some HEIs have a privileged relationship with certain public, territorial or professional bodies already. All of them can examine their context carefully to determine which might be their partners in building positive feedback collaboration: this might be for example through societal organizations or associations with whom inclusive learning programs can be developed, it might be with companies that could benefit from the university's research capacities; it might be with cultural associations or bodies where the knowledge available at the university can be of help, while the specific relations to the public and to society in general may help the university to formulate its programs and policies in a useful way.

In all cases, the third mission partners can benefit from the international dimension the university develops and also potentially contribute to it.

Principle 2. There is no single model for addressing the third mission. Universities should avoid emulating other universities and examine carefully their own context in order to interact with it in a positive manner.

Each university must develop its own strategy in consideration of its own strengths and the characteristics of its context. In an international perspective it can involve territorial bodies and stakeholders in both the search for appropriate international partners and in the definition of the research and learning teaching sectors that are most meaningful and potentially productive of mutual benefit.

Principle 3. The international aspect of the third mission is likely to be highlighted in coming years, as the universities realize the importance of their role in supporting sustainable development goals.

If so far in many cases the understanding of the Third Mission has focused on technological transfer and economic development on a local scale, the dimension of the challenges facing the world today and the need to deal with them at a global level will push universities to enlarge



their horizons and bring their strengths to bear on a broader range of issues, including sustainable directions of development, better use of local resources, enhancing their ability to contribute to reaching the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. International projects and networking will strengthen their ability to achieve relevant results.

Principle 4. International cooperation can provide inspiration and information in order to enhance this vital function.

At its simplest level the international dimension of the third mission can be pursued through connecting international projects and mobility of staff and students with local companies, cultural and economic activities. Incoming mobile students and staff can be involved in strengthening and bringing added value, in terms of knowledge, skills and competences, to the local milieu.

The selection of partners and projects for Third mission activities should not be haphazard: since resources in human and material terms are always limited, efforts should be directed in a focused manner on partners with whom interaction will be fruitful and lead to advances in the institutional strategy.

Principle 5. Outreach to social groups and categories not yet fully served by higher education is an important part of the Third Mission, and they too will benefit from an overall internationalization strategy.

Inclusive admissions policies and support for new learners of all ages can be an important way to build local prosperity and well-being. New categories of learners as well as the rest of the student body should be able to benefit from internationalization. Since for economic or family reasons single individuals may not be able to participate in mobility programs, universities should develop the international dimension of their learning environments in situ, so that non-mobile learners - as well as academic,



research and administrative staff - can benefit from it.

Examples

UDES: We involved the external sector - entrepreneurs, higher education networks, university networks in the region, and the internationalization offices of the local government, graduates, professors, students, and managers - in the development of the IEP.

UNLA: One of the most important agreements we signed with local stakeholders was the one with the Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires's StudyBA Program. It allowed us to invite Latin American students to our postgraduate program with full scholarships. It also helped us map the needs and interests of the region.

UNIBE: We are participating as consultants in the elaboration of the national internationalization strategy plan for the Ministry of Education and Science.

UCSA: as part of the International and Institutional Relations Network of Paraguay, it has established working alliances with the Ministry of Education and Sciences and the National Council of Higher Education (CONES) in order to collaborate in drafting the National Plan for Internationalization (March 2021).

UNCUYO: Although we have not signed formal agreements with them, we have invited local stakeholders to participate in projects with international funding.

UNQ has an active and traditional policy toward social and community organizations, as well as with local firms and enterprises.

Part B

IMPLEMENTATION OF LATIN AMERICAN REFERENCE CREDIT (CLAR)





Implementation of Latin American Reference Credit (CLAR)

1. Internationalization of the curriculum and student- centered learning

The CLAR system represents the relative complexity of the different curricular components and facilitates the assessment and comparison of learning results within different contexts of qualifications, degree programs and learning environments. It provides a shared method for the purpose of comparing learning between the different degree programs, sectors, regions and countries. At the same time, the advantages of the student-focused profile have been also highlighted. The CLAR system includes a definition of graduation processes based on competences and student-focused curricula which requires a shift of the traditional approach usually followed. This means that the CLAR's new approach focuses on the student, on their learning and on their capacity to learn (Tuning 2013, 19-20).



Principle 1. A shared understanding and adoption of the Latin American Reference Credit (CLAR) can help to build a common area for higher education in the region.

Having a common reference framework for Latin American institutions of higher education can provide the current system with greater flexibility, potential for collaboration, transparency and integration. Some adaptation and explanation may be needed so that the Latin American Reference Credit (CLAR) system becomes more understandable for students, employers and society in general. If a shared reference system is accepted at national level, it can help to shift the existing systems toward a student-centered approach, not only helping to agree upon and implement a system of a regional nature, but also to support modernization processes.

Principle 2. The Latin American Reference Credit (CLAR) can help to facilitate mobility among Latin American universities through a shared system that recognizes students' academic achievements.

In this sense, the adoption of a shared conversion method will facilitate reciprocal recognition of courses and academic activities carried out by mobile students. Hence, the CLAR can lead to an increased academic collaboration among Latin American institutions of higher education with the aim of favoring student and academic transfer and mobility among them.

Principle 3. While the traditional approach has always been focused on the transfer and acquisition of content that hence is input based and focused on the teacher's perspective, the Latin American Reference Credit (CLAR) is a system, which highlights the students, focusing on their learning and their capacity to learn.

The adoption of the Latin American Reference Credit (CLAR) will require understanding the education process from the students' standpoint and, consequently, changing the approach traditionally taken to what is known



as 'student-centered learning'. In order to do so, Latin American higher educational institutions will need to define a process based on competences and a student-focused curriculum by identifying the effective learning outcomes with which the student must be familiar throughout their training process. This shift will involve several changes in different areas, such as the role of the student, the role of the teacher, etc. the way in which educational activities and the organization given to knowledge are conceived and in the way of assessing learning.

Principle 4. The student needs to demonstrate a command of the competences proposed in the profile following a reflective and understanding learning process.

The assumptions that underlie new curricular consensus point today to the importance not only of learning or the acquisition of certain knowledge, abilities, skills and values considered basic or essential in a specific profession or area of knowledge, but also the conditions and stimuli required to ensure that the student is able to develop a significant and enhancing level of learning throughout a comprehensive training process. Only this will enable the future graduate to develop the capacity to constantly keep their knowledge up-to-date.

Therefore, it proves necessary to create spaces in time when designing the curriculum in order to search, reflect, internalize and consolidate knowledge that, by being integrated, mobilized and applied, will develop the competences demanded within the comprehensive training of the future professional.

Principle 5. The way in which educational activities and the organization given to knowledge are conceived and the way of assessing learning in the Latin American Reference Credit (CLAR) require changes in comparison to the traditional approach.



Nowadays, the cognitive, affective and attitude-related potential of the individual needs to be developed rather than being forced to adhere to rigid and homogenous curricular structures. Within this framework are promoted different types of learning such as tutoring, independent study, outings, trips and conceptualized work experience and research projects, etc. At the same time, the way of assessing learning should not just take the results obtained into consideration, but also the process that has been followed and the contexts in which it is learnt.

2. Background: credit systems in the world's macro-regions

Before going into detail about the qualities and benefits of CLAR, it is necessary to provide some background information on its significance, as well as other precursors in the European and Latin American contexts, and also the measures to integrate national and transnational credit systems. It is important to highlight that part of the data below has been collected by the National Tuning Centers, in the framework of Tuning Latin America project 2004-2007 and 2010-2014, with the support of Latin American partners.

2.1 The importance of the credit and credit reference systems

The proposal for an academic credit system is fundamental. Learning, teaching and assessment-based approaches are very important in what concerns the work demanded of students in order to attain the learning results required and, therefore, on how this is measured. Thus, student workload, teaching methods, competences, and learning outcomes are clearly



related to each other. However, the influence of other factors must also be highlighted. Indeed, the diversity of traditions, curricular design and the context, consistency of programs, organization of teaching and the capacity and attitude of the student also have a say regarding the time required by students to achieve such competences and results (Beneitone *et al.*, 2007).

Principle 6. The credit and the credit reference systems highlight the importance of taking into account the following: student time, the volume of work required to gain certain competences, and the weighted and realistic distribution of the learning activities included in the curriculum to avoid unnecessary prolongation of qualifications or repetition of courses.

A system of this type is based on the correlation of a number of elements and, hence, several elements need to be taken into account in order to adopt the system:

(1) The profile of the qualification, indicating the competences that need to be developed, (2) the learning results specified for each subject/module/period/course, (3) the educational activities that best ensure that learning results will be attained and (4) the time (measured in hours), based on the work carried out by the student who, as a general rule, will be required to carry out the educational activities deemed necessary to attain the results obtained from learning.

2.2 The European context

The ECTS system (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) arose from a project overseen by the European Commission between 1988 and 1995, and was officially implemented in most of the European Union countries that signed the Bologna Declaration, with the primary goal



of fostering student mobility in Europe and enabling the transfer of credits earned overseas. As a result, a credit-accumulation system has emerged, as has the expansion of a European Higher Education Area resulting from the gradual convergence of educational systems and the exploration of common ground between academic degree programs, in accordance with the Bologna Declaration's primary aims.

The European model is based on certain simple and widely accepted assumptions, such as the amount of work students are obliged to do in order to meet the learning goals associated with a particular course or program, which are linked to both learning outcomes and hours of real work. The model uses a traditional total annual load of 60 credits for a full-time student, which is equivalent to 1500 to 1800 hours per year. As a result, each credit adds between 25 and 30 hours to the student's workload, including both classroom and individual work time.

Credits cannot be gained until the necessary work has been completed and the corresponding learning outcomes have been evaluated, according to the European ECTS system, which is used to accredit students' progress in their training process. As a result, a full-time student who earns 60 credits will have completed his first year, and if she or he gets 120 credits, the student will be halfway through his 4-year training cycle (i.e., a degree program corresponding to 240; in others the first cycle is of 180 credits).

Credits are allocated to all educational components of a degree program (subjects, modules, classes, practical training, and dissertations, for example) and represent the amount of work required by each of them to accomplish their particular goals, or learning outcomes, in contrast to the overall amount of work required to successfully complete a year of study. That is, in terms of the amount of time it would take to complete all of the scheduled learning activities, such as class attendance, conferences,



workshops, independent and private research, practical training, project preparation, examinations, field work and field trips, internships, and so on (ECTS Users' Guide, 2015).

2.3 The Latin American context

The following has been taken into account based on the conclusions derived from the information gathered by the National Tuning Centers together with the help of some Latin American partners.

From the information collected, several conclusions can be drawn. First of all, there is no universally applicable and uniform system of academic credits in most Latin American countries. Second, that the standards used to determine credits vary widely in the few cases where they exist and, third, that as academic credit generators, pre-professional internships and independent activities are either not appreciated or have a very low value.

There is a variety of experiences available, each with a different level of depth and scope, which makes it difficult to harmonize the experiences. The following are just some of them:

Argentina: since 2016, a credit system has been underway. The established model is based on Resolution 1870 - E/2016 of the Ministry of Education, which establishes the creation of a National System of Academic Recognition in Higher Education (SNRA). This system uses a unit of measurement called Recognition of the Formative Pathway (RTF), which serves as a mechanism for the recognition of the formative paths taken by students in the different universities. One of the driving forces behind the SNRA is the segmentation and rigidity that characterize the Argentinian university system. In this sense, Marquina states that “an Argentine student had, until recently, more chances of carrying out a mobility abroad



that would be recognized on his or her return than between Argentine universities” (Marquina 2019, 26). Even the resolution itself places strong emphasis on the need to stimulate articulation between universities. In other words, it seeks to harmonize existing criteria within universities in order to facilitate curricular understanding and promote student mobility with a view to improving academic training.

In addition to this objective, the Resolution states that the SNRA should be compatible with similar experiences in other countries in order to facilitate international student mobility processes. In this sense, and based on international experiences, Article 8 states that:

With the aim of estimating a common guiding guideline within the framework of the National System of Academic Recognition of Higher Education in line with current international experiences, it is considered that, as a general rule, one academic year is equivalent to sixty (60) RTF units and that each RTF unit, depending on current legislation, represents between twenty-seven (27) and thirty (30) hours of total student dedication (Ministry of Education 2016).

The Academic Credit model developed by Argentina is centrally based on the model developed by the European Union. In this sense, the document prepared by the Ministry of Education presenting the RTF model states that “this way of quantifying training aims to change the focus of the work [...], in line with similar processes carried out in Europe with the ECTS or the Tuning Latin America project” (Marquina 2018, 15).

Uruguay: According to the UDELAR proposition, one credit is equal to 15 hours of work (including hours of class or equivalent activity, and hours of personal study), and they shall be calculated according to the estimated minimum credits per degree, the years of degree duration and annual credit options, which can be either 80 or 90 credits. For example, techni-



cians and technologists, 160/240 or 180/270 credits; four-year degrees, 320 or 360 credits; and five-year degrees, 400 or 450 credits. Progress has been made in reaching agreements on policies of expansion, diversification, articulation, and curricular flexibility, as reflected in the Decree governing Undergraduate Studies and other Tertiary Education Study Plans (Universidad de la República and Comisión Sectorial de Enseñanza, 2014).

Chile: As part of curricular reform, Chilean universities have adopted the STC credit system. Regarding the total effective workload, time allocated to all curricular tasks, both face-to-face and non-face-to-face, that must be completed in order to meet each subject's learning goals. Concerning the amount of time a student devotes to her or his degree, a year of full-time study, for example, is between 1440 and 1900 hours and, the normalizer allows you to assign a number of credits to each of the various curricular activities —60 annual credits with a cumulative annual workload of between 1440 and 1900 hours—. This is a one-of-a-kind program in that it is based on the student's total annual volume of work and employs a normalizer that are re-distributed across the program (Consejo de Rectores de las Universidades Chilenas, 2015).

México: According to SEP and ANUIES, based on the agreements where they are framed, four methods of denominating and measuring credits have been established:

- Tepic Agreement (1972): A degree program shall have a minimum of 300 credits and a maximum of 450 credits where the minimum duration for an academic semester is 15 effective weeks of classes. It is also worth noting that one hour of class-week-semester corresponds to two credits in activities that involve additional study or work from the student, such as theory courses and seminars, while one



hour-week-semester corresponds to one credit in activities that do not require additional study or work from the student, such as practical, labs, and workshops.

- SEP Agreement 279 (2000): a minimum of 180 credits is needed to obtain the degree of associate professional or university technician, and a minimum of 300 credits is required to acquire a bachelor's degree.
- Agreement 286 (2000): Competencies earned through a variety of methods, including self-education, may be publicly acknowledged by the appropriate educational authority. It defines the requirements that will specify the general rules and criteria that will apply to the revalidation of foreign studies and the equivalence of studies, as well as the procedures by which skills corresponding to educational levels or school grades gained through self-teaching, job experience, or based on the qualification regime relating to training will be assessed.
- SATCA credits (2007): one credit equals 16 hours of study time, without distinction of academic periods, levels or types of study. At the same time, it establishes that 20 hours are equivalent to one credit in individual or independent learning activities, while the criterion of 50 hours equals one credit of supervised professional fieldwork is proposed. In order to accumulate and transfer academic credits, this measure assigns a numerical value to all student-learning activities contemplated in a given career (Secretaría de Educación Pública and ANUIES, 2007).

Colombia: Credits are well known and widely recognized in Colombia. Since 2010, one academic credit has been equal to forty-eight (48) hours of student academic work, which covers hours of direct instruction and hours of independent work that the student must assign to complete the



research activities, practical training, and other tasks deemed appropriate to meet the learning goals. 1 hour of teaching equals 2 hours of independent work. In general, each educational institution in Colombia assumes responsibility for the credit and works with it on an individual basis. University groups that have agreements that regulate student mobility, such as SÍGUEME, which is a program aimed at undergraduate students in all fields of study, promoted by several higher education institutions in Colombia to try to harmonize their systems in order to make student transfer processes easier.

Venezuela: Defines academic credit as the average amount of time a student devotes to the building of knowledge, including both face-to-face and independent work. It also suggests that two hours of independent work be set aside for each hour of instruction in this proposal, i.e. for every hour of teaching support, the student invests a minimum of 2 hours for independent work. The average of weekly student work time, on the other hand, is calculated to be between a minimum of 40 hours per week (5 days per week x 8 hours per day) and a maximum of 56 hours (8 hours a day x 7 days per week) (ANUIES, 2007), with semester regimes lasting between 16 and 18 weeks.

Ecuador: According to the ex-Academic CONESUP's Regulations of the National System of Higher Education, one credit in classroom instruction is equal to 16 chronological hours of independent student work, 8 successful chronological hours of blended learning, and at least 3 of the 16 hours must be face-to-face in distance courses. In 2019, the so called Reglamento de Régimen Académico de la Ley Orgánica de Educación Superior, fostered by the Consejo de Educación Superior changed the credit system in the country. Within this new system, centered on the student, one credit equals to 48 hours of student activity, taking into account all the activities provided in the syllabus. In addition, only 20 of those 48



hours will be in direct contact between the student and the professor.

Brazil: There is no unified credit system in Brazil. The Ministry of Education institutions in charge of the regulation of the higher education system count the hours of instruction. In this sense, a full-time year of university education equals to between 800 and 1,200 hours of instruction. Nevertheless, several universities use the credit system. In those schools, one credit equals 15 to 20 hours of theory, 30 to 40 hours of guided practice, and 60 to 80 hours of independent work under teacher's supervision. Some private colleges are starting to apply credits and place a premium on professional internships and student-led activities.

Paraguay: In 2018, the National Council of Higher Education issued Resolution 536/2018, which establishes the criteria for the implementation of a national academic credit system. This resolution establishes the National System of Academic Credits, which provides that an academic credit covers the hours of study, both supervised and independent, that a student needs to achieve the contents established in a Study Plan of an undergraduate degree. The value of a credit is equivalent to a minimum of 15 hours of work, with at least 12 hours of supervised work and at least 3 hours of independent work. Of the hours allocated to supervised work, a maximum of 20% is allowed to be supervised independent work, while the rest of the hours must be taken up by face-to-face class work.

Central America: Central American academic credit is defined as “the unit used to measure the intensity of student work (academic load) equal to 45 hours per academic (teaching) period, applied to an activity that has been facilitated, supervised, and assessed by the teaching staff, and may include face-to-face teaching hours (such as theory, practice, laboratory work, field work and interactivity). Semi-face-to-face hours (bimodal work), as well as student-led independent work and investigation,” ac-



According to the Central American University Council. The credit is equal to 3 hours of student work per week for 15 weeks in Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Honduras, applied to an activity that is supervised, reviewed, and approved by the professor.

Taking everything into account, the most common measurement is for one credit to equal to one hour of class for every 15 to 16 weeks of each semester, and two hours of independent work are computed for one hour of classroom instruction (between 45 and 48 hours per credit). The conversion of academic hours into credits not only constitutes the conversion of a number of hours to a credit, but it also signifies the conversion of a credit to a number of hours. Other qualitative criteria are linked to the relevance of each topic for a particular professional profile in this equivalence.

Examples

Concerning student mobility in Latin America, over the past few years, there has been some relative development. The program ESCALA Estudiantil and the MARCA as a reference for undergraduate student mobility have had a huge influence in MERCOSUR countries. In 2011, the MERCOSUR Mobility Program (PMM) was initiated as a public and private university program that covers students from non-accredited degree programs. In the Central American region and Mexico, the CSUCA-ANUIES program has enabled student mobility between the seven countries (Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, Costa Rica, and Panama).

After many successful bilateral experiences between Argentina, México and Colombia, The Board of Rectors of Public Universities from Argentina (CIN), along with the Associations ANUIES and ASCUN, from México and Colombia created a mobility Program called PILA (“Programa de Intercambio Académico Latinoamericano”). The Program has been growing since its creation and now it has a virtual version adapted to the pandemic situation.



Due to globalization, it is important to consider the strategic need for and benefits of a Latin American higher education region. Because of their diversity, Latin American nations face significant difficulties in trying to project a type of student mobility that crosses national, cultural, and social boundaries; in identifying a Latin American credentials system; and in reflecting on a common Latin American higher education area that should take into account both enhancement and/or renewal of training programs, as well as their reconciliation on a national and regional level. In recent years, several initiatives and declarations have been launched with the aim of fostering a common system of recognition of studies in the region. For instance, at CRES 2018 (III Conferencia Regional de Educación Superior) and the Convenio Regional de Reconocimiento de Estudios, Títulos y Diplomas de Educación Superior en América Latina y el Caribe (Buenos Aires, 2019) are good examples of these regional strategies.

2.4 Connecting national and trans-national credit systems: focus on CLAR & ECTS

By focusing on CLAR & ECTS the aim is to connect national and trans-national credit systems in order to adapt to the new challenges of today's society as a result of globalization, as well as to reinforce and increase intraregional and interregional mobility. The following ideas and guidelines are proposed to achieve these objectives.

Principle 7. Globalization and the demands for economic and social innovation, which are very evident in the world today, make it necessary to reflect on the strategic need for and the potential advantages of developing a common Latin American higher education area.

With their diversity, the Latin American countries face considerable chal-



allenges in attempting to project a type of student mobility that is able to transcend national, cultural and social borders. Greater obstacles are faced when reflecting on a common Latin American higher education area that should take into consideration both improvement and/or renewal of training programs and their recognition on a national and regional level. In this context, the adoption of the Latin American Reference Credit (CLAR) defining a Latin American credit reference would be an important step towards facing the challenges that the region is currently experiencing in this area.

Principle 8. The Latin American Reference Credit (CLAR) could be a key tool to strengthen student mobility at both intraregional and interregional levels.

Mobility has tended to be mainly associated with sending Latin American students to other countries in Europe, North America and Africa, and also the hosting of students from these and other regions in the world in Latin American classrooms. In all these cases, universities generally continue to use traditional ways of recognizing exchange studies (subject per subject, semester per semester) without having a mechanism at their disposal that could facilitate recognition of the studies completed.

In order to foster students' mobility both at intraregional and interregional levels, the adoption of a credit system similar to the ones already established in other world regions could be a very important factor so as to connect Latin America, as it would facilitate recognition and harmonization of the credit systems, ultimately fostering mobility.



3. Features of CLAR credits

The analysis of the different experiences described in Section 2.3 underlines that the main international credit systems generally have the following characteristics, which are found in CLAR credits as well:

- They are applicable to all sectors of higher education. They give greater flexibility to the higher education system and are able to articulate with other educational levels.
- They represent a way of recognizing the learning outcomes attained, thus, they have a reference value.
- They cover all forms and modalities of learning.
- They provide the job market with recognition of the level of training attained by the candidate (they lend recognition to their qualifications or skills).
- They address all education systems and recognize the multiple exits (Bachelor's/Master's/Doctorate).
- They enable transfer with other education schemes in other regions.
- They encourage student and career mobility between institutions in the same country as well as with institutions in other countries.
- They facilitate student-centered learning.
- They respect national and institutional academic autonomy, and therefore do not encroach on their powers (their competences), as they can be fully compatible with existing education systems.

In the definition of CLAR credits, student time is a central element. Student work time is considered to be associated with a range between 40



and 55 hours per week. The attribution of more time is not only unrealistic, but also ignores the necessary hours of leisure, rest and dedication to other spaces and social interactions that the student develops. Considering the number of 36 weeks of academic work per year and the range of weekly working hours (40 - 55 hours), the annual range of student working hours varies between 1,440 and 1,980 hours. Taking into account that the annual normalizer is 60 credits, and the annual range of hours is from 1440 to 1980, a CLAR credit does not have a unique value, it varies between 24 and 33 hours of student workload. In cases where the academic year is different from 36 weeks, the number of hours of student workload per week may vary as long as it does not alter the range of annual work established (1440-1980). Any variation in the number of weeks, and in the number of working hours per week, must ensure that the range is respected in order to avoid excessive variability in the CLAR.



4. Benefits expected from CLAR

In particular, and from the point of view of innovation and improvement, CLAR is expected to encourage and support curricular improvement in national systems, as well as their harmonization, allowing the transition towards student-centered curricula and quality-oriented learning processes. While a credit system alone does not guarantee access to quality, CLAR will help:

- To distribute in a balanced way the work to be done by academics and students in a degree program.
- To balance the relative weight of the activities of the different subjects according to their complexity.
- To reflect on the teaching methodologies and assessment strategies in order to optimize the time students invest in their learning.
- To serve as a reference for comparing degree programs (comparability and readability).
- To efficiently plan and organize the curriculum.
- To put the focus on the learner, leading him/her to assume responsibility for the process of acquiring learning outcomes and competences.
- To make the curriculum more flexible and holistically promote its integration.

In short, the CLAR will facilitate the accounting of the actual hours used by the student to perform their tasks.

In this sense, the design and implementation of a credit system like CLAR will encourage Latin American institutions to reflect on their curricula, on the workload assigned to the student, and on the learning outcomes.



5. Towards the implementation of CLAR: Argentina as a case study

The credit system proposed in Argentina (RTF) takes up the contributions of the Tuning Latin America Project in general and CLAR in particular, and unlike other proposals, it stems from the importance of disseminating and promoting the change of curricular paradigm and the development of quality programs, thereby favoring student mobility between the countries of the region. This definition of credit places curricular flexibility and quality improvement before the emerging needs of mobility and its corresponding recognition.

In the case of Argentina, since the creation of the credit system (RTF) in 2016, until 2019, 96 universities have adhered to the framework agreement. From there, work was carried out by career groups, convening institutional representatives for a technical discussion on study plans, comparing them, finding particularities and common aspects, and defining the paths to be agreed upon. This work was carried out in regional and inter-regional meetings, which concluded with the signing of specific agreements between all the institutions participating in the work in each career group on the agreed pathways (Marquina 2019).

From what has been worked on, it could be preliminarily concluded that the National Academic Recognition System proposed in Argentina was designed to imply a significant change in the understanding of higher education, to promote processes of innovation in curricular designs and institutional practices, favoring processes of intra- and inter-institutional articulation and dialogue, highlighting the value of acquired knowledge and skills as a central concern of the institutions, one of whose main functions is training.



The proposal for a credit system in Argentina is based, among others, on the postulate of extending the recognition treatment that the national system grants to studies carried out in other countries, as established in bilateral agreements or agreements signed by the educational institutions themselves, while safeguarding the quality of education at all times.

In the case of Argentina, it can be affirmed that there is progress in the definition and policy at national level, through the RTF, as well as in some disciplines, particularly those reached by the workshops promoted by the Secretariat of University Policies of the Ministry of Education, between 2017 and 2019, but when it is observed within the institutions, a certain weakness in the implementation is perceived. The policy promoted foresees the inclusion of credits in the curricula, and there is little reflection and allocation of credits by professors in the subjects they teach. This gap between the existence of a norm and its implementation is again mediated by the lack of mechanisms and resources to reach academics and bring about a real change in the way subjects are conceived, with a complete valuation of student work, giving each component of the curriculum a credit value and providing the possibility of recognition.

On the other hand, it also emerges from what has been analyzed that in most Latin American countries there is a favorable environment for thinking about the possibility of creating a framework of understanding about a credit system on a regional scale. This requires an approach that makes it possible to compare periods of academic study at different universities in different countries, to help students who, within the same country, change careers or university institutions, and to advance in bilateral or multilateral agreements on mechanisms and guidelines for the recognition of university degrees, both at the academic level and for professional practice.



It should be noted that despite the lack of a common system in the region, many institutions are working on the adoption of a credit system, taking into account the student's time, the volume of work required to achieve certain competences, as well as achieving a weighted and realistic distribution of learning activities in the curriculum, in order to avoid unnecessary prolongation of degrees or repetition.



IEP TEMPLATE REFERENCES CONTRIBUTORS



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FORMULATING A STRATEGIC INTERNATIONALIZATION ENHANCEMENT PLAN

In order to formulate the Plan, we recommend using the following table, based on the results of the Mendoza event, **adding and adapting according to the specific situation.**

Sector/subsector (General objective) / Specific Objectives	Initial situation (at present)	Desired situation in 1, 3 or 5 years (or sooner, as specified)
I Institutional international Strategy		
Develop, approve and publish a new and more incisive institutional strategy that supports all aspects of the activities of the HEI.	<i>The current strategic document covers all aspects of the institution's activities, but considers international aspects in a marginal and simplistic way.</i>	<p>By the end of 2019: <i>The (new) document sets out and articulates the overall strategy of the institution, but makes clear how the push toward a new international role informs the entire structure.</i> <i>It makes explicit the lines of action to be implemented, and also the general inspiration behind those lines and their future development.</i></p>
Examine the existing document and compare it to new needs and directions of development identified through DHIP	The document mentions only briefly the international aspects of the institution's activities, with generic statements of intention.	<p>Before the end of summer 2018: <i>On the basis of the aspects elaborated in DHIP and indicated in this diagram, add in draft the descriptions of the future lines of action.</i></p>
Incorporate new aspects on a provisional basis and give it wide publicity	Hasn't started yet	<p>Before the end of September 2018: <i>There is an articulated draft ready to be discussed, and it has been appropriately disseminated</i></p>



Stages:

- Review of the present situation (with reference to the questionnaire prepared for the Buenos Aires meeting).
- Carry out a SWOT analysis of the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats, involving the largest possible number of stakeholders.
- **Design the Strategic Internationalization Enhancement Plan**, aimed to improve the various aspects of the process of internationalization using a holistic approach.

As an example, we show a possible way of formulating the first point.

Activities (add lines as necessary)	High Priority To be completed before the end of DHIP (Yes/No)	Indicators	Person or persons responsible
Examine the existing document, identify the points to intervene	Yes	The working document; minutes of the local task force
If necessary, review the structure of the document to introduce structurally the new planned directions/orientations	Yes	Revised document	
Incorporate the new aspects provisionally	Yes	Revised document with new crucial points highlighted	
Discuss the new directions/orientations with all members of the institution	Yes	Minutes of meetings with academic components (including students)	
Discuss with external stakeholders	Yes	Minutes of meetings with interested external parties; number of people consulted	
Incorporate helpful suggestions	Yes	Revised document incorporating the changes made based on consultations with stakeholders, internal and external	
Refine the form of the strategy document	Yes	Improved document	
Present the finished document to the competent authorities	Yes	Document presented	
Publish prominently on the institution's website	Yes	Document published	
Prepare and consolidate a mechanism to review, update the strategy and republish it in the future, after the end of the project	Yes	Plan for the future approved that includes the schedule and responsible people	
Create a working group that includes people present at Mendoza meetings and other key people in the institution,	Yes	Working group documentation: group composition
Compare the existing document with the new directions	Yes	Working Group Documentation: Minutes and First Drafts	
Highlight new aspects	Yes	Draft with indications of key points for change	
Insert or indicate the new elements	Yes	Revised draft
rewrite the document incorporating them		Increased draft	
share the new draft		Draft shared appropriately for discussion	



Sector/subsector (General objective) / Specific Objectives	Initial situation (at present)	Desired situation in 1, 3 or 5 years (or sooner, as specified)
Discuss with all members of the institution and with external stakeholders, collect suggestions and incorporate them	Hasn't started yet	Before the end of November 2018:
Present the finished document to the appropriate authorities as necessary	Hasn't started yet	Before the end of November 2019
Post prominently on the home page of the IES website, and update as needed	Hasn't started yet	Before the end of April 2019: <i>The new strategy document is prominently posted on the home page of the institution's website</i>
II Institutional Offices and academic services		
Strengthen the structure of the International Office/s: Redesign the organization chart of the Office/s according to the various functions:		
<i>Cooperation and partnerships</i>		
Communications (internal and external and marketing)		
<i>International mobility</i>		
Reformulate overly structured regulations		



	Activities (add lines as necessary)	High Priority To be completed before the end of DHIP (Yes/No)	Indicators	Person or persons responsible
	organize a consultation within the university	Yes	Summary of discussions
	organize a consultation with the other stakeholders		Summary of discussions	
	Incorporate suggestions		New pre-final draft	
	Present final document to academic authorities	Yes	Final document presented
	Present the final document (if necessary) to other authorities (Ministry, government ...)		Final document presented	
	Do the necessary procedures to obtain approval		Final document presented	
	Publish the new strategy	Yes	Document published	
			New design according to the criteria elaborated in DHIP	
			Number and quality of people employed	
			Number and quality of new agreements made for service C and A	
			Quality and frequency of communications and print production, web, social	
			Number and quality of staff	
			Number and quality of mobilities carried out	



Sector/subsector (General objective) / Specific Objectives	Initial situation (at present)	Desired situation in 1, 3 or 5 years (or sooner, as specified)
<i>Streamline communication channels</i>		
Raise awareness of the areas involved in the processes		
<i>Develop printed and / or digital material of the institution in the strategic languages</i>		
Generate Training and Update Processes in Internationalization Areas at the International Office		
<i>Propose training spaces on internationalization strategies for the International Office team</i>		
Generate staff mobility		
III International mobility and internationalization of the institutional culture		
Strengthen the capacities of the different mobility schemes in the HEI members of the DHIP project		
<i>Design mobility regulations in its different schemes, taking into account the guidelines of the DHIP project, the nature of each participating HEI and the Latin American context.</i>		
Generate mobility schemes with DHIP partners		



Activities (add lines as necessary)	High Priority To be completed before the end of DHIP (Yes/No)	Indicators	Person or persons responsible
		Number and quality of staff	
		Number and quality of mobilities carried out	
		Number of attendees in the training processes;	
		Number of specific courses for interna- tionalization carried out	
		Percentage of International Office staff in mobility	
		Regulation with the mobility regulations of the NETWORK.	
		Mobility work plan	
		Percentage of the evolution of the mobility program	



Sector/subsector (General objective) / Specific Objectives	Initial situation (at present)	Desired situation in 1, 3 or 5 years (or sooner, as specified)
<p>Schedule construction</p> <p><i>First dimension (pilot): Staff Mobility</i></p> <p><i>Second dimension: Teaching-Researcher Mobility Scheme (to generate trust among HEIs).</i></p> <p><i>-Third dimension: Student Mobility Scheme</i></p>		
<p>Generate visibility policies in HEIs</p> <p><i>Establish internal and external communication guidelines, framed in the mobility regulations contemplated in O1.</i></p> <p><i>Design a mobility area on the university website where you can show the offers of each partner university</i></p> <p><i>Build mobility portfolio according to your capacity with each of DHIP partners</i></p> <p>Design reports of good practices, periodically exchanging joint experiences with partners</p>		
<p><i>Identify the most suitable areas to share good practices with partners</i></p>		



	Activities (add lines as necessary)	High Priority To be completed before the end of DHIP (Yes/No)	Indicators	Person or persons responsible
			Percentage of International Office staff in mobility	
			Publication of the decalogue of good practices	
			Implementation of good practices in the plan to improve Internationalization in HEIs.	



Sector/subsector (General objective) / Specific Objectives	Initial situation (at present)	Desired situation in 1, 3 or 5 years (or sooner, as specified)
<i>Socialize two or three good practices in the field of mobility of each partner HEI to build a decalogue for the improvement of internationalization</i>		
<i>Feedback and self-assessment</i>		
Project sustainability	Integrate the above goals into the International Strategy Plan	
IV Modernization of learning, teaching and assessment programs: Student-centered and competency-based learning		
Promote curricular internationalization focused on student learning		
<i>Establishment of a repository (unified common space) that contains guidelines, experiences and good practices on curricular internationalization based on the student-centered approach (learning).</i>		
<i>Encourage the adoption of the competence approach in the student-centered curricular internationalization process through the sensitization of the directive and academic bodies of the HEI.</i>		
<i>Encourage collaborative work between teachers in the framework of subjects applying face-to-face, blended or virtual modalities, and using technologies</i>		
<i>Promote spaces for learning a second language</i>		
V Research Offices and strategies of internationalization and enhancement of research capacity		
Increase reciprocal mobility of personnel linked to research		



	Activities (add lines as necessary)	High Priority To be completed before the end of DHIP (Yes/No)	Indicators	Person or persons responsible
			Amount of effective mobilities	
Learning, learning outcomes, and measurement of student workload				
			Number and types of spaces created and implemented	
			Number of participants	
			Number / percentage increase in mobility (in-out), based on 2017	



Sector/subsector (General objective) / Specific Objectives	Initial situation (at present)	Desired situation in 1, 3 or 5 years (or sooner, as specified)
<i>Create a content bank of strengths and priorities related to territorial development of each DHIP partner and place it on a digital platform</i>		
<i>Promote exchange opportunities at the level of teachers and personnel linked to research</i>		
<i>Promote exchange opportunities at the level of teachers and personnel linked to research</i>		
<i>Disseminate/publicize your international agreements</i>		
<i>Develop policies within your university to encourage exchanges</i>		
<i>Develop exchanges with partner HEIs according to the strengths of each one</i>		
Increase the presentation of collaborative projects to international calls		
<i>Prioritize participation in international projects with partner universities as institutional policy</i>		
<i>Create a bank of calls and disseminate opportunities within your university</i>		
<i>Advise and accompany the researcher in the process of submission to the calls</i>		



Sector/subsector (General objective) / Specific Objectives	Initial situation (at present)	Desired situation in 1, 3 or 5 years (or sooner, as specified)
<i>Share with partners and the co-operation opportunities that each you identify</i>		
<i>Appoint / designate a person in charge as a contact for funding requests</i>		
<i>Create an inventory of international contacts of each researcher at the member university</i>		
International postgraduate training		
<i>Carry out cooperation agreements with partner universities</i>		
<i>Develop reciprocal postgraduate short stays or internships</i>		
<i>Create a registry of the accredited postgraduate programs that each partner university has</i>		
<i>Develop a reciprocal postgraduate exchange program</i>		
<i>Offer free virtual courses in post-graduate programs to partner HEIs</i>		
<i>Implement a visiting professors program among your partner universities</i>		



Sector/subsector (General objective) / Specific Objectives	Initial situation (at present)	Desired situation in 1, 3 or 5 years (or sooner, as specified)
VI Synergies with the territorial context:		
Strengthening the internationalization of the Third Mission		
<i>Training in entrepreneurship for the creation of spin off</i>		
<i>Organize events between the university, communities, companies and organizations for the transfer and exchange of knowledge</i>		
<i>Create meeting spaces for the opening of the university to society</i>		
<i>Promote the participation of civil society organizations in research projects</i>		
<i>Train the university community in the "dialogue of knowledge" with the community</i>		
<i>Support the generation of patents and intellectual property</i>		
VII Visibility		
Increase the international visibility of research results		
<i>Invite partner universities to participate in open calls for scientific publications and / or artistic and cultural productivity</i>		



Activities (add lines as necessary)	High Priority To be completed before the end of DHIP (Yes/No)	Indicators	Person or persons responsible
		Number of Spin off	
		Number of events	
		Number of collaborations with organized society and companies	
		Number of journals	
		Number of publications	
		Number of products	
		Número de events	



Sector/subsector (General objective) / Specific Objectives	Initial situation (at present)	Desired situation in 1, 3 or 5 years (or sooner, as specified)
<i>Invite researchers to form part of the Evaluation Committees of the different research activities</i>		
<i>Create a Bank of Evaluators to contribute to the enrichment of the research processes of your partner universities</i>		
<i>Encourage publications with co-authors from partner universities</i>		
<i>Encourage publications in international co-authorship</i>		
VIII Sustainability		
Identify aspects of the work plan that will continue beyond the end of the project		
<i>Plans the resources, human and financial, to support these aspects and activities</i>		
Identify future actions that can be taken to improve and extend project results		
<i>Plan the resources, human and financial, to support these aspects and activities</i>		



Activities (add lines as necessary)	High Priority To be completed before the end of DHIP (Yes/No)	Indicators	Person or persons responsible





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List of contributors

UNIVERSITÀ DI PISA: Ann Katherine Isaacs, Francesco Marcelloni, Anna Maria Pulina, Maria Francesca Zuddio

UNIVERSIDAD DE LA IGLESIA DE DEUSTO: Olga Khokhotva, Judit Cano Corbella, Ainhoa Jorquera Cascón, Sergio Caballero Santos, June Oribe Iriondo, Jorge Piñera Álvarez

UNIVERSIDADE DO PORTO: Ana Paiva, Ana Reis, Ângela Carvalho, Liliana Norte, Luísa Capitão, Sara Martins, Sónia Pereira

UNIVERSITA DEGLI STUDI DI SASSARI: Tonito Solinas, Barbara Silveri, Laura Altea, Claudia Crosio

UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE CUYO: Jimena Estrella Orrego, Hugo Martínez, Cecilia Coria Esteves

UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE QUILMES: Nora Dari, Juan Luis Mérega

UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE LANUS: Guillermo Tangelson, Mariela Roscardi, Julián Farina

UNIVERSIDAD DEL CONO SUR DE LAS AMERICAS: María de los Ángeles Duarte, Clara Almada

UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA DE ASUNCION: Silvio Eduardo Becker, Jesús Martin, Laura Riquelme, José Flores Alatorre, Cristina Dinatale Ayala

UNIVERSIDAD IBEROAMERICANA: Sanie Romero de Velázquez, Eduardo Velázquez Romero, Hugo Speratti, Oscar Sosa, Rita Figueredo

UNIVERSIDAD PEDAGOGICA NACIONAL: Adriana Ariza Ardila, Ángela Rocío Valderrama Díaz

UNIVERSIDAD DE SANTANDER : Vanessa Ibáñez Delgado, Fabian Augusto Quintero Rojas,

FUNDACION UNIVERSITARIA EMPRESARIAL DE LA CAMARA DE COMERCIO DE BOGOTA: Jorge Mario Hurtado Rodríguez, María Isabel Prieto Maldonado



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