



Ansbach University of Applied Sciences: Internationalisation Strategy

Current situation and strategic objectives

Ansbach University sees itself as a regional university within a globalised world. In higher education development planning, internationalisation is considered to be a key component of an institution's profile. The objective is internationalism based on need, both to ensure the competitiveness of graduates on the national and international job market and to enhance the appeal of the university as a study destination for eligible German and international applicants and lecturers from all over the world. To achieve this, a coherent and efficient framework should be created which embraces all aspects of study, teaching, research and administration. Internationalisation should be understood as both a process and a collaborative endeavour. To implement an internationalisation strategy, clear organisational and support structures integrated into all the study programmes are required as well as the engagement and commitment of everyone concerned. This includes the involvement of teaching staff and all official personnel (internship officers, programme directors, deans of studies) in activities abroad. An international dimension should be embedded in all areas of the university and mobility should be perceived as desirable.

Objectives in detail

1. To Increase the proportion of foreign students and mobile lecturers

A study-related stay abroad may not necessarily lead to more protracted studies, if mobility windows are integrated into the curriculum and placements are carefully coordinated with partner universities to minimise any loss of study time.

Measures

Comprehensive information about opportunities to study abroad and funding sources, in addition to assistance with planning, preparation and implementation; expansion of support and information services provided by the International Office and the faculties

- Foreign representatives in every faculty
- Attractive range of course-related study placements abroad
- Use and expansion of international funding programmes

- A clearly structured, universally valid and transparent system for recognition of learning outcomes in all faculties; mandatory accreditation every semester of course-specific ECT points accumulated at foreign partner universities
- Improvements to the framework conditions for international mobility (e.g., by integrating 'mobility windows' into the study regulations)
- Introduction of Joint degrees (with integrated year abroad) in partnership with international universities
- Increase teaching opportunities at foreign partner universities
- Introductory courses in selected languages to prepare German students for their stay in host countries

Quantitative and qualitative expansion of university partnerships

Strategic partnerships with wide-ranging, intensive fields of cooperation and lively exchanges at all levels should be given preference over a purely quantitative accumulation of partnerships lacking in any real substance.

Measures

- Maintain contacts with existing partnerships and initiate new university collaborations.
- Greater consideration to be given to 'quality' when establishing partnerships, i.e., the involvement of the faculties and expansion of course related collaborations
- Definition and selection of strategic partners, closer cooperation within existing partnerships
- Concentration on designated areas in North and South America, Central and Eastern
- Europe, Asia and in particular the PR China with a focus on specific regions
- Acquisition of new partner universities offering courses taught in English since it is taken for granted that students aiming for the open European labour market will have a good command of English
- Promotion of communication skills in a second foreign language. Expansion of cooperative ventures in Spanish and Chinese-speaking regions (with a view to future markets)
- Expansion of the "traditional" exchange channels in English-speaking countries with the aim of finding partner universities whose tuition fees can be met
- Acquisition of third-party funds for international collaborations
- Participation in international networks
- Organisation of international conferences at the university

2. Increase internship mobility

Straightforward recognition of internships abroad for the purposes of the mandatory internships to encourage students to gain experience abroad whilst also allowing them to complete their studies within the standard period of study. An increasingly

international working environment requires knowledge of typical national corporate cultures and this can only be acquired by experiencing 'real-time' conditions abroad.

Measures

- Active support for students seeking internships in foreign companies with the assistance of the Careers Centre
- Establishment of collaborative projects with foreign companies
- Engagement with business representatives both at home and abroad

3. Increase the number of international students

Higher education institutes with an international atmosphere are more attractive to highly qualified students whether for a full course of study or for a study visit. Furthermore, exchange programs such as ERASMUS are based on there being a balanced ratio of mobilities between partner universities.

Measures

- Increase the number of international students by making the university more attractive as a location in terms of the range of courses and supervision
- Improve advisory and support services, monitoring of study progress, individual assistance during challenging study phases
- Introductory events, assistance with finding accommodation and dealing with authorities, specialist support from tutors, cultural and regional events, regular meetings with other international students and fellow German students
- English website, expansion of the international website (e.g. 'study guide' in English)
- Easily accessible descriptions in English of the complete range of courses on offer ('course catalogue')
- Expansion of the "German as a foreign language" programme
- Provision of English-taught courses (Aim: 30 ECTS, course-specific and interdisciplinary)
- Participation in selected international university fairs
- Targeted selection of foreign students, focussing on highly qualified and well-prepared foreign students
- Accommodation of exchange students close to campus (student dormitories and private dormitories in the surrounding area, assistance with finding accommodation on the open market)
- Scholarships for foreign students with a good record of academic performance or extracurricular commitment

4. Internationalisation 'at home'

Creating a cosmopolitan atmosphere at the university through student exchanges and by engaging international guest lecturers, gives students who are not able to spend time abroad, an opportunity to gain international experience and intercultural skills on their home campus.

Measures

- English-taught courses, also for German students; introduction to specialised English communication skills, deepening of awareness of a more global perspective; side benefit: Increased attractiveness of the university for visiting students
- Broad range of foreign languages: English remains the priority, however, in view of globalised markets, it is imperative to promote communication skills in a second foreign language - preferably Spanish, Chinese or French
- Inclusion of "Intercultural competence" in the range of courses on offer
- Invitations to foreign lecturers for English-taught courses, expansion of the Language competence of German students (ERASMUS+, honorary contracts, "fellowships", visiting professor programme)
- Mobility of academic support staff to increase intercultural competence
- Language training for staff and lecturers