

HAN Erasmus Policy Statement



“Open up New Horizons” is the guiding principle of the HAN University of Applied Sciences. In the Institutional Plan (HAN Ambitions for 2016-2022 Learning and Innovation: working together in trust and confidence) the HAN has stated her mission and vision on her role in education, research and professional practice (“the triangle”). “Our mission is to qualify, socialize and prepare students for their future professional practice and citizenship. To provide innovation in a dynamic, increasingly globalized and complex society. HAN wants to create opportunities for people to grow as professionals and as individuals. To offer a springboard to a meaningful future”.

The University’s vision, mission and ambitions has been committed to the HAN Strategic Agenda for Internationalisation which states the following objective: “HAN is internationally recognized as an innovative higher education institute. Our graduates are well prepared for an international and intercultural work environment. The campus is characterised by an international climate, where foreign students are full partners and where multidisciplinary partnerships address social challenges from an international perspective in collaboration with the professional field”. This educational triangle approach implies that that lifelong development is part of our responsibility.

Internationalisation at HAN is not a purpose in itself. Internationalisation is incorporated into all our goals and activities. We see internationalisation not as a separate agenda, but as an integral part of all our education and research activities as well as related support processes (HR, ICT, marketing and communications, etc.). This should contribute to the university’s primary means; the preparation of students for learning, living and working in an intercultural society and an international labour market.

Our education is focused on training students to become self-confident, empowered individuals who look beyond borders and are equipped to innovate their profession. This requires an interdisciplinary perspective that stimulates learning and innovation. We aim for maximum personal impact and social innovation by facilitating professional learning communities that connect education and research, students, and the professional field. “Internationalisation at HAN is developing thanks to the mainstreaming over the last few years, resulting in the comprehensive internationalisation of our education and research. This may, for example, include facilitating and strengthening internationalisation at home and as well one of their spin-offs the international mobility for study and work placements.

For decades the actions under Erasmus (and the predecessor programmes) have been the most important vehicle for realising our international ambitions within the European educational cooperation. As stated above internationalisation and international collaboration has become an indispensable part of the academic quality culture and positioning. The actions in the European area which focus on mobility (student/staff), projects and research are the driving forces for establishing partnerships and networks. In which sustainable and innovative educational, organisational as well as strategic collaboration have taken shape. Key action 2 projects, often in relation with the stakeholders in the professional field have been the driving force behind this. Increasingly, the Erasmus actions contribute to the strengthening of the partnerships and the realisation of the European Education Area. The joint actions should preferably act as a catalyst for the development and innovation of our education. The new European agendas fit well in HAN educational principles which states “graduates will have learned to deal with the political and social dilemmas that society presents them with, to take responsibility for these and to link them with the existing and future professional practice”. They will be ‘global citizens’. In order to achieve this, our education will give more attention to a 21st- century interpretation of Bildung: entrepreneurship, collaboration, communication, critical and creative thinking, recognising moral dilemmas, being prepared to take informed risks, and acting with integrity in an intercultural and equal society”.

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As stated above the Erasmus actions are the most important vehicles for realising our international ambitions within the European educational cooperation. Based on our experiences of Erasmus+ 2014-2020 (and before) we express our commitment in continuation of and strengthening our participation during the new term 2021-2027. Although HAN focuses on the comprehensive internationalisation of its education and research, we have noticed a connection: the more attention of internationalisation of education the more interest is showed for a physical international experience by students and staff.

An international experience can contribute to personal and professional development and growth. Most HAN educational programmes subscribe this viewpoint. They offer an option and timeframe within the academic calendar in which students can travel abroad. As already stated in the former ECHE HAN still aims for 20% of all our graduates to have experienced a long-term study or placement abroad. 5% of our (non)teaching and research staff is internationally involved in knowledge sharing and exchange of experience as part of their own professionalization or job description annually. To realise these numbers, especially concerning student mobility, the actions under KA1 of Erasmus are of crucial importance. Regarding mobility the HAN endorses the European initiative for a more sustainable and environmentally friendly mobility policy. A new travel policy is afoot to simulate and convince students and staff to choose for alternative and sustainable means of transport. For the upcoming term HAN intends to pay more attention to students who opt for short international experiences and to examine how to combine this with blended learning opportunities, which are often developed as dissemination product within the partnerships of the KA2 actions.

HAN has innovation labs, research and expertise centres/hubs which are focusing on practice-based multidisciplinary collaboration and innovation of the professional world. Working together with national and international partners we develop and share knowledge and innovations in the professional field. This exchange acts as a catalyst for the development and quality improvement of our own education. In the present day several HAN centres are working in different Key Action 2 programmes (Partnerships for Cooperation and Innovation). Education and research are organised in close cooperation and as equally important focal points. In the coming years we have the intention, starting from its prioritized key areas; E-Health, Sustainable Energy & Environment and Smart Region, to examine the possibility to apply or to join a partnership for excellence- European Universities.

We choose an active participation in the European policy reform. HAN excels in terms of innovation, quality, intensity and impact in the links between education, research and the professional field. This expertise could be an added value and contributes towards the knowledge triangle. HAN is looking for tendering in its fields of expertise and especially where practical-based learning meet policy reform (Entrepreneurship, innovative traineeships, join move-on route tracks VET – HEI).