

## European Policy Statement

### **D1. Please describe your institution's international (EU and non-EU) strategy.**

Saxion University of Applied Sciences is one of the larger institutions of higher education in the Netherlands, with over 26,000 students. Saxion aspires to be an internationally-oriented knowledge institute, with a strong focus on the eastern region of the Netherlands, supporting an education and research agenda coordinated with our regional partners. Because of its geographical location Saxion attracts a relatively large number of German students. We achieve a balanced distribution by admitting German and international students to 'mixed classrooms', which is confirmed by NVAO. Saxion prides itself on its research and teaching ambitions in developing new technologies as applied in real life situations, hence we characterize our strategic profile as 'Living Technology'.

At the core of Saxion stands the capacity to deliver excellent education as a top applied sciences university with a broad range of excellent and solid bachelor programmes, both full-time and part-time. Meeting regional, sectoral and industrial demand, Saxion offers a range of (professional) master programmes. These master programmes bring students' knowledge to the top levels of professional practice, which is made possible by close alignment or collaboration with Dutch or European knowledge institutes at the level of curricula (credit) or degree programme.

The Saxion strategic profile 'Living Technology' is co-developed with the regional actors, confirmed in the themes and focus documented in the Smart Specialization Strategy Eastern Netherlands. Saxion practice oriented research puts the applicability of knowledge first, making the university act as a central hub between education, research, government and the business community. Our students are engaged as co-creators in partnership with companies and institutes. The close cooperation with regional partners effectively provides us with strong regional roots that we wish to connect internationally. Our research programmes, conducted locally, also take inspiration from societal challenges on the European level. Saxion takes initiatives and participates in research which contributes to key technical solutions.

Saxion maintains close relations with international partners, ranging from research institutes, universities and business, both in Europe and beyond. This way Saxion acquires and shares knowledge with a wide range of actors active in research, development and/or teaching. Saxion acts as a bridge between available knowledge in the world and the knowledge required in Saxion's working region. A fruitful match with our strategic profile helps to intensify or expand our international partnerships, leading to a network in most countries of Europe, more dense in Northern European and Eastern Europe countries.

Many of our students aspire to working in an international environment and succeed to a large extent. Internationalisation therefore has for years been a profile feature of Saxion.

A next step on this path contributes to the development of our international profile. With gradually more programmes addressing Living Technology issues within their curriculum, internationalization becomes priority, even as the graduates do not enter a pre-eminent international labour market. Increasingly, we guide international students to the local labour market via our career service 'Saxion Connect'.

Internationalisation aims to increase our appeal to talented (international) students, teachers and researchers on a European and global scale. The focus of internationalization shifts from quantity to quality. It has essential added value for the quality of education and research, through an international perspective the field of vision broadens and enriches knowledge. The Saxion strategy for internationalization has three broad objectives:

1/ 'internationalisation@ home' by which we mean: activities aimed at promoting an international focus, intercultural skills, linguistic skills, the mobility of students and lecturers, and participation in international projects and research. We enhance the international nature of education programmes by increasing student mobility as well as by extending the number of international programmes and programmes preparing students for international competencies.

2/ Saxion makes a concerted effort to be 'Bologna-proof', meaning that Saxion, among other things, applies European interchangeable and communicable standards and international standard service to international students and employees. Bilingualism is understood in this context, but it also concerns style and attitude.

3/ Saxion is in the process of building up international knowledge alliances to contribute to our positioning and enabling being active on an international scale. Thematic approach to knowledge act as a bridge between available knowledge elsewhere in the world and the knowledge required in Saxion's own region.

## **D2. organization and implementation of international (EU and non-EU) cooperation projects**

Saxion has as operational principle that internationalization, research and projects are academic responsibilities, to which the different departments and services are to contribute.

Projects therefor, of all kinds of nature, are implemented under academic leadership vested in professors or senior academic staff in the schools of Saxion. The schools or the research centres assume internal budgetary responsibility, for which dean level decision making is required prior to proposal submission. Development of partnerships, setting goals and objectives as well as defining the activities is done by these academics. The centres of research employ project staff to support the academics with documentation, budgeting, monitoring and reporting.

Projects with a large share of collaboration with business for valorization purposes, a highly distributed approach to innovation or a large component of entrepreneurship

development, are developed and implemented through the science park 'Kennispark Twente', of which Saxion is one of the key members.

The university has appointed the international project desk located within the international office as central service to provide a scouting and matching function and liaison with European programmes and partners. The international project desk disseminates information about the priorities, policies and annual workplans emerging from the European programmes in research and education. Since 2012 also structural funds are monitored for opportunities to enhance collaboration and innovation. The central finance department processes funding applications and develops recommendations to the Saxion board. Finance and Administration Service together support the administrative process enabling Saxion to transparently report and fulfill accountability requirements. Specialist knowledge on topics as varied as technology transfer, IP issues, project management, state aid, etc. are distributed over experts in the different desk and departments.

### **D3. impact of your participation in the Programme on the modernisation of your institution (for each of the 5 priorities of the Modernisation Agenda)\***

Saxion provides a broad, multi-sector array of education. Saxion Bachelor, Master and Associate Degree programmes are offered full time and part time. More than a quarter of enrolled students enroll after completion of vocational education, moving upward to associate or bachelor degree level. Saxion invests in study success through study counseling prior to and throughout study, addressing, not without obligations, student performance, attitude and pace of study.

Saxion ambition is that each single programme belongs to the best in its field, benchmarked at the national level through participation in student and employee surveys. Accreditation scores, excellent study results and student satisfaction are the main indicators through which quality is measured.

For each programme, professional organisations are associated to provide a vital link to the practice-oriented nature of our graduates. The intensive interaction with the professional field takes shape through practice-oriented research. A close interrelation between education and professional practice through applied research has become an integral adopted method of teaching, articulated as 'co-creation'.

Saxion increasingly enhances the international nature of education in Saxion by three measures: amending programmes to prepare students for international competences, increasing outgoing student mobility as well as by increasing international programmes to attract international students.

The quality of international mobility is to increase by building up international knowledge partnerships and alliances, offering students structured pathways, recognized programmes and education partners, enabling students to learn with an international

scope. Saxion has set itself the target of being 'Bologna-proof' and otherwise applying European standards.

Saxion supports an education and research agenda coordinated with partners in the region, in Europe and worldwide, as expressed by companies, institutes and government bodies. Saxion is a strong actor in the regional discussion on smart specialization and has acquired itself a strategic profile that will lead to an increased ability to deliver innovative professionals. The National government focus on knowledge-intensive sectors has been adopted to contribute to a strong market and export position of graduates. The dynamics moving Saxion from teaching university towards a broader based University of Applied Sciences will continue, leading to a unique profile in the diverse landscape of higher education in the Netherlands as well as Europe. The range of policy choices decided by Saxion governance has expanded into more areas with higher impact and importance.

Per consequence of the growing research portfolio, the number of different funding sources has expanded across the tripe helix at all levels of Dutch and European government. The Saxion strategy is to further pursue expansion of the portfolio.