

Internationalization strategy

2025 - 2028



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Preface

Dear Sir or Madam,

With this strategy, our university aims to better align teaching, research, and administration with the demands of a globalized educational landscape. We place particular emphasis on strengthening the mobility of our students, integrating international perspectives across all areas, and expanding strategic partnerships. At the same time, we are focusing more on international students and establishing the necessary structural conditions – for instance, through multilingual infrastructure. In doing so, we not only promote the exchange of knowledge and cultures but also actively contribute to counteracting the skilled labor shortage in the region.

My special thanks go to those who have made significant contributions to the development of this strategy: Daniel Czerwonka-Schröder, Claudia Frohn-Schauf, Susanne Hannemann, Katrin Heymann, Karin Lehmann, Anna Mikhof, Daniel Schilberg, Semih Severengiz, Christian Thiel, and Marion Werthebach. Thanks to their expertise and support, we have been able to develop concrete measures to further adapt our teaching to the needs of a globalized labor market and to consistently integrate international perspectives into research and transfer.

The coming years will be focused on implementation. Step by step, we will achieve the defined goals and sustainably strengthen our university as an open and globally connected hub for teaching and research.

Kind regards,



Jörg Frochte

VP for Research, Digitalization & Internationalization

Guiding principle for internationalization

Bochum University of Applied Sciences sees itself as a globally networked and cosmopolitan educational institution that aims to prepare students for the challenges and opportunities of an increasingly internationalized world of work and research. Our mission statement is to be an institution that serves as a bridge between cultures, disciplines, and ideas, welcoming international students, researchers, and lecturers. Our campuses should not only be places of learning and research, but also of cultural exchange and mutual understanding. In our international network, cooperation with partner institutions that share our values is of particular importance.



Figure 1: The landmark Unicorn Gundam in Koto City, Japan, from the excursion to Japan by the Department M.

The Ruhr area has learned to deal with cultural diversity and to leverage its advantages. This diversity is also reflected in our student body. Many of our students are the first in their families to pursue an academic career. For these young people from families without an academic tradition, studying abroad represents a significant step. In the Ruhr area, a disproportionately high number of students rely on self-financing their studies. They are particularly dependent on financial support and relief for study abroad opportunities. The funding environment, ranging from Erasmus+ programs to the non-profit foundation sector, is especially strong for exchange destinations within the EU as well as with Erasmus+ partner countries. Therefore, as a university, we focus our strategic emphasis for international exchange on such European countries that offer strong funding potential for student mobility and share a common value system.

Through the systematic expansion of our international network and the strengthening of our global presence, we aim to provide students with an education that enables them to overcome cultural and linguistic barriers. The promotion of the English language as a lingua franca in teaching and research is a central element in this regard. International collaborations enrich our teaching and research.



Figure 2: Dezernat 3 from the air

An international orientation is essential to develop innovative solutions for global challenges – such as those outlined in the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Although Bochum University still needs to gain visibility in the international arena, the existing commitment of our internationally oriented staff and the established partnerships provide a solid foundation for the planned expansion. The targeted strengthening of our international mobility and cooperation programs will sharpen our profile as an attractive destination for international students, as well as for internationally minded educators and researchers, and will strengthen the regional economy through qualified, globally minded alumni from both home and abroad.

By implementing the step-by-step plan for an internationalized university by 2028, we intend to achieve a comprehensive integration of international perspectives and competencies. This will be realized through internationally oriented study programs, the enhancement of teaching in the English language, and the adaptation of our administrative and support structures to the needs of an international community. In line with the University Development Plan 2028 and in the context of the structural expansion through the merger with the University of Health, we are focusing on a gradual and targeted expansion of our international activities to prepare our students as best as possible for global demands and to establish Bochum University as a central player in the international education and research landscape.



Determination of location

Bochum University, located in the heart of the Ruhr area, the largest metropolitan region in Germany, is situated in a region with about 5.1 million people. The structural change that began 50 years ago with the decline of the coal and steel industries still results in an above-average unemployment rate of about 10% compared to the national average. Many of our students finance their living expenses independently, both during and outside of lecture periods. As a result, they often face particular challenges when participating in international exchange programs, as these require additional time and financial resources. The internationalization strategy for 2021 to 2024 was developed under the difficult conditions of the global pandemic and could only be partially implemented.

In recent years, study behavior has changed. This is evident in the decline of students in technical disciplines such as engineering, an aspect that was not fully anticipated in the original strategy. The University Development Plan addresses these areas of action and highlights them as central areas for improvement. It serves as the basis for the present internationalization strategy.



Figure 3: Overall view of Hochschule Bochum

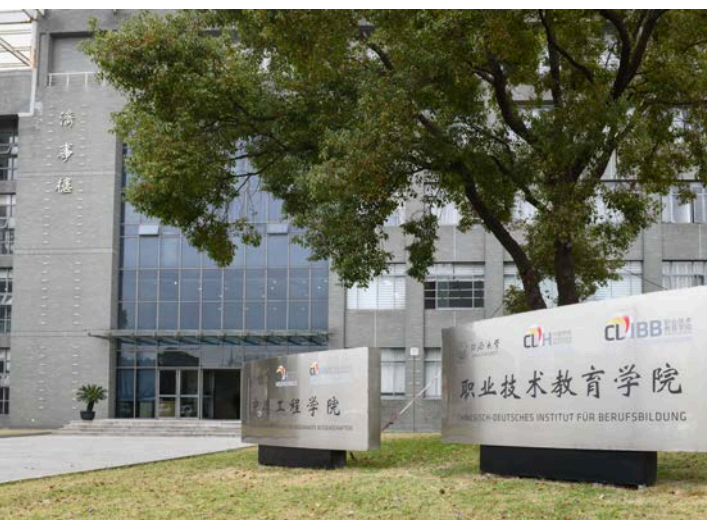


Figure 4: Chinese-German Institute for Vocational Education and Training at Tongji University, Shanghai

With around 73 partner universities worldwide and membership of various international consortia, Bochum University of Applied Sciences is generally well positioned to promote the mobility of students and teaching staff. Participation in the German University Consortium for International Cooperation (DHIK) has proven to be particularly valuable in recent years. Our cooperation with China, Mexico and India is of particular importance. The three exchange regions contribute to the further internationalization of Bochum University in different ways: India because of its full degree at the university, Mexico because of student mobility in both exchange directions and China because of its particular economic importance. Some internationally oriented degree programs provide for a compulsory year abroad, while other degree programs offer a mobility window in which elective modules can be completed abroad. However, not all partnerships are equally active and many are only available for one or a few degree programs. This means that there are degree programs that do not have attractive exchange partners for their own students. Despite these challenges and the often difficult economic circumstances of students, less than 3% of all students at Bochum University of Applied Sciences go abroad for a semester or internship each year. Further formats need to be developed to enable more students to gain international experience. Student mobility is currently supported by three pillars: Erasmus funding for stays at partner universities in the EU, DAAD Promos funding (DAAD Promos) for stays outside the EU and BO's own international scholarship for freemovers in other EU countries.

The forecasts of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) indicate that NRW will reach a low point in the number of new students in 2026, but that this figure will consolidate again thereafter (KMK, 2020). This takes into account the fact that the KMK not only includes prospective students who have obtained their university admission in Germany, but also increasing numbers of international students and the potential of prospective students with professional qualifications (KMK, 2020). In addition, the choice behavior of German students is currently shifting from traditional engineering sciences such as mechanical and electrical engineering to computer science and interdisciplinary courses (Destatis, 2024; Forschung und Lehre, 2024).



Figure 5: Library of the Tecnológico de Monterrey, Mexico



Figure 6: The new campus of the PSG College of Technology, India

In the primary qualifying Bachelor's degree programs of the Department, and soon-to-be Faculty, of Nursing, Midwifery, and Therapeutic Sciences (DPHT), international mobility primarily takes place through internships abroad, as well as through short-term mobility opportunities (Summer/Winter Schools, International Week). Among the five fields of study, midwifery and physiotherapy are particularly active. The international network of Midwifery Science includes 12 partner universities and 35 collaborating practice institutions. Since the university's founding, midwifery students have completed approximately 70 practical placements abroad. Physiotherapy has a similar network and has seen around 150 outgoing students so far. Over the last four years, the physiotherapy department has initiated five European projects with 14 countries and 25 cooperation partners, funded by programs such as ERASMUS+ and ERASMUS Capacity Building. The department also offers doctoral opportunities through international collaborations, such as with Teesside University and Utrecht University.

In the Department of Health Sciences, some of the Bachelor's degree programs include a mandatory semester abroad in the 6th semester. For other Bachelor's and Master's programs focusing on Community Health, semesters abroad can be completed as part of internship semesters or flexibly during the course of study, depending on accreditation. Since 2019, the Community Health major has been part of the International Study Program. An English-language course has been made available for international students in collaboration with the Protestant University of Applied Sciences Rhineland-Westphalia-Lippe (EvH RWL).

In some cases, English-language module handbooks and course flyers, as well as presentations for information events focusing on internships abroad, are available. With regard to the development of professional, social, and intercultural skills, as well as increasing employability through international mobility, as emphasized by the European Commission, the Community Health degree programs aim to enhance students' competencies through teaching content specifically tailored to intercultural cooperation, among other things. Students should be able to act sustainably and without discrimination in various cultural contexts. This includes working with diverse and often vulnerable population groups and preparing students to develop and implement effective health strategies both regionally and nationally. The interdisciplinary GW department has various international collaborations and networks in the field of research (e.g., USA, Canada, Chile, Peru, Brazil, Jamaica, Hawaii, Africa, Australia, Pakistan, UK, Czech Republic, Denmark, Austria).



Figure 7: Department of GW with Prof. Dr. Christiane Falge during a field trip to Brazil for the project [SMAPL] Social Mobilization as Policymaking Lever.

Regular international students who complete their entire studies at Bochum University of Applied Sciences mainly come from countries such as Iran, Syria, India, Cameroon, and Morocco. They make up about 11% of the total student body, with the proportion varying significantly depending on the subject, from high in mechatronics to low in surveying.

In the field of research, the pressure on federal and state finances is increasing the need to acquire more EU third-party funding. EU funding programs, particularly Horizon Europe, offer significant funding for research and transfer. Horizon Europe is divided into three "pillars": "Excellent Science," "Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness," and "Innovative Europe" (BMBF, 2024). Programs such as the Green Deal, which fall under the second pillar, are especially relevant for universities with a sustainability focus. However, access to these funds requires strong international networking among European researchers, which is still being developed at Bochum University of Applied Sciences.



Figure 9: Carsten Keßler at the GeoAI Specialist Meeting in Vienna, October 2024.

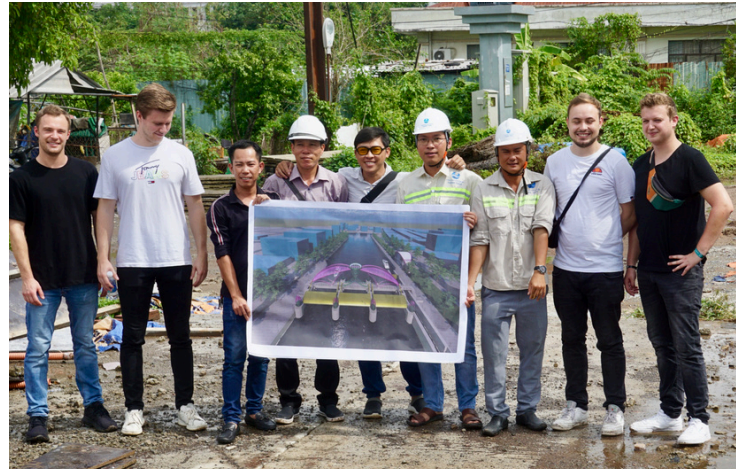


Figure 8: Excursion to Vietnam in November 2023: Students from BO visit the construction site of a floodgate in Cần Thơ, designed to protect the city from flooding during heavy rainfall. The city is already heavily affected by the consequences of climate change.

In terms of structures and processes, the university has already made progress in the area of visiting academics, but there is still room for improvement in many areas, including the handling of export controls and the implementation of training courses. In addition, the promotion of internationalization and the responsibility for maintaining collaborations are often still too dependent on individuals and not always supported by sufficient planning and resource allocation from those responsible.

The departments at the Health Campus are confronted with the same regional particularities as the departments at the Central Campus. Currently, there are a total of 9 IIA (Inter-Institutional Agreements) ERASMUS and 3 SEMP collaborations with international universities. In 2023 and 2024, 9 and 7 PROMOS scholarships were awarded across the university. Over the last 5 years, HS Gesundheit has been involved in 9 EU-funded research projects, some of which it led as the main partner.

Internationalisation goals in teaching

The internationalization of teaching at Bochum University of Applied Sciences is a central concern that is to be implemented on several levels. This not only strengthens our academic profile but also enriches the experience of our students and teaching staff. Based on the university development plan, we have formulated five primary goals:



Figure 10: Tec dance group in Monterrey

Second goal

In order to strengthen our German-language degree programmes, our second goal is an successful Internationalisierung@Home. Through intercultural modules and international guest lecturers, we want to increase the attractiveness of these degree programmes and offer our students the opportunity to get to know different cultural perspectives and teaching approaches—without having to leave the country. Initiatives such as Flying Faculties create space for intercultural experiences directly on campus and open up new learning and exchange opportunities for students, for example through interactive seminars and practice-oriented workshops by international guest lecturers.

First goal

Our first goal is to increase the number of graduates and the number of first-semester students and to improve our resilience to fluctuations in student numbers in NRW by increasing our international focus. We are achieving this through a targeted increase in the proportion of international students on our Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes. By introducing English-language degree programmes or specialisations, we would also like to attract students with C1 or native English language skills. International students enrich our campus community and help to make our degree programmes attractive and competitive.



Figure 11: Start-ups from Ghana visit the Velbert Heiligenhaus campus

Thrid goal

Our third central concern is to increase the quality of foreign language education by integrating English as the lingua franca of most academic disciplines into the curriculum of Bachelor's degree programmes. This is done in a way that takes into account the cultural context of the respective subjects. This offer prepares our students better for the international requirements of the labour markets and at the same time improves their language skills.



Figure 12: Entry wall of the Chinese-German University of Applied Sciences (CDHAW)

Fifth goal

Another important component is the fifth goal, international mobility in teaching. This includes both student and teaching staff mobility in order to strengthen the exchange of knowledge and cultures and further expand the global networking of our university. To this end, further funding opportunities need to be developed and partnerships expanded.



Figure 14: PSG College of Technology

Fourth goal

We attach great importance to the international networking of our degree programmes and departments. They play a important role in providing our students with high-quality international experience at reasonable costs. The aim is to be able to offer at least 30 ECTS credits in English in each degree programme for international partnerships.



Figure 13: Monterrey city centre

These goals are not only milestones on our path to becoming an internationalized university, but are also crucial to consolidating our position as an attractive educational institution and offering students a high-quality, intercultural education.

Internationalization goals in research and transfer

Internationalisation is a cornerstone of our strategic development in research and transfer. By promoting international cooperation and intensifying cross-border dialogue, we contribute to the development of innovative and sustainability-oriented research and transfer projects. Due to the traditionally weak academic research associate level at universities of applied sciences (HAW), we are particularly dependent on the acquisition of third party funds. The new right to award doctorates for HAW via the Doctoral College NRW (PK NRW) also requires new structures in internationalisation. Four primary goals are derived from this:

Our first goal is to strengthen international research and transfer collaborations, particularly in Europe. We aim to enhance both the number and quality of our international research and transfer projects through targeted partnerships with universities and research institutes worldwide. International research and teaching should be considered together, particularly to promote problem-based learning and address global challenges in the area of sustainable development.

Our second goal is to increase the acquisition of third party funds from international sources and thus broaden the funding of research at the university. Programmes such as Horizon Europe (BMBF) and the Green Deal in particular offer interesting opportunities for research and transfer. A strong international network of our researchers, especially in Europe, is crucial for this.



Figure 15: Start-ups from Ghana attend a lecture at the Velbert Heiligenhaus campus

A special focus is placed on training in the doctoral phase in collaboration with international research contacts. The integration of international perspectives into the doctoral phase is the fourth key objective in order to offer early career researchers a comprehensive and global academic education. Through joint research projects, stays abroad and exchanges with international experts, we aim to provide our doctoral candidates with the best possible conditions for a successful academic career.

We are also endeavouring to increase the international visibility of research and transfer. This third goal involves increasing the presence of our researchers on international platforms and in global networks in order to raise the profile and recognition of the university as a research institute. Establishing a positive international profile is crucial in order to be perceived as an attractive partner for future collaborations and to attract talented international researchers and readers.



Figure 16: Prof Dr Markus Lemmen welcomes the visit from Ghana to CVH

Design and procedures for internationalization

In order to achieve the university's strategic goals in the area of internationalisation, terms must be clarified and responsibilities explained more clearly as part of the strategy to ensure the responsible implementation of international cooperation for the university and its partners. Clear processes and reliability strengthen trust in the university as a reliable and legally secure partner in the international education and research sector.

Bochum University of Applied Sciences recognises that successful internationalisation requires a systematic and structured approach. The current situation shows that responsibilities and processes are not clearly regulated or established in all areas. Our aim is to promote the freedom of research and teaching. At the same time, we strive to increase security when travelling and to improve the efficiency of applications and accounting for all parties involved.

Levels and types of international cooperation

For better organisation, we will distinguish between three levels of cooperation in future:

1. Individual Cooperations

This level comprises the collaboration of individual academics with specific researchers or teachers abroad. Responsibility for these collaborations lies at the level of the individuals involved. These collaborations are often project-based and limited in time, typically to a few years. They are primarily financed by budget funds or third-party funding. The university supports these collaborations, particularly within the framework of research sponsorship and the International Office. This flexible form of cooperation enables rapid adaptation to new scientific developments and research priorities and can serve as the basis for institutional or strategic partnerships.

2. Institutional co-operations

At this level, larger units of the university, usually departments under the responsibility of the respective dean's office, enter into co-operations. These partnerships are more far-reaching and often more stable than individual collaborations and are accompanied by obligations that are often linked to degree programs or regulations. Funding is provided by the departments, third-party funds, and grants from central funds. Institutional co-operations are supported by the university and aim to establish sustainable and in-depth partnerships in teaching and research.

3. Strategic partnerships

These long-term co-operations are of great strategic importance for Bochum University of Applied Sciences as a whole, and the university management is largely responsible for them. Several units of the university benefit both in teaching and, ideally, in research and transfer. Strategic partnerships are funded from central and decentralised resources and should be long-term to increase the international visibility and attractiveness of the university. Such partnerships can exist bilaterally or via association structures and often involve an intensive use of resources.



Figure 17: Department W with Prof Andreas Merchiers visiting the Institut d'Administration des Entreprises (IAE) Clermont Auvergne School of Management in France

Initiation and development of co-operations

Strategic co-operations can be formed either by several departments and possibly also institutes of a certain size approaching the Executive Committee or, conversely, by the Executive Committee approaching the departments. The difference lies primarily in the initiative, while the result is always a long-term co-operation that encompasses several of the following areas:

- Student exchange related to incoming students
- Student exchange in relation to outgoing students
- Academic cooperation, e.g. including exchange of doctoral students
- Joint transfer activities



Figure 18: PHT department visit to the Cyberdyne test and training centre for the development of exoskeletons, among other things.



Figure 19: Department A on an excursion to Venice, Italy

Co-operations in which the costs for the exchange are kept within an attractive framework for the students, e.g. within the framework of Erasmus agreements, are considered to be particularly interesting. The DHIK network currently fulfils this strategic level.

Responsibilities and export controls

Internationalisation also entails responsibilities in relation to export controls. This applies in particular to arms embargoes, supply restrictions and financial sanctions as well as dual-use goods, which can be used for both civilian and military purposes and specific technologies. The university pursues a risk-based approach in which the scope of the measures increases with the level of co-operation. Collaborations like DHIK in relation to China illustrate this approach by focussing an exchange on a strongly teacher-related profile in the Bachelor's degree and developing and improving institutional framework conditions across universities through a nationwide organisation.

In case of individual co-operations, this takes place through regular training and sensitisation measures. New strategic partnerships with countries on the sanctions list of the Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control (BAFA) are not entered into. New institutional partnerships with countries on the sanctions list are assessed individually in advance with regard to risks and opportunities. Existing co-operations and partnerships are regularly evaluated with regard to risks and opportunities.



Procedure to achieve these goals



Figure 20: Prof. Dr André Posenau visiting the Ibaraki Prefectural University of Health Sciences, Japan, to exchange views on studying healthcare professions and visiting various institutions in the healthcare context.

In order to achieve the internationalisation goals of Bochum University of Applied Sciences by 2028, various measures will be implemented in the areas of teaching, research, technology and administration. These measures are intended to strengthen the international orientation of the university, promote the mobility of students and teaching staff, and establish Bochum University of Applied Sciences as an attractive educational institution in a global context.

Procedure to achieve these goals

Terms and definitions in the field of degree programmes

Three basic models are conceivable for future degree programmes that go beyond Internationalisierung@Home and focus on international applicants:

- German-language bachelor's degree programmes with English or international specialisations.
- International or foreign-language (usually English) bachelor's degree programmes.
- International or foreign-language (usually English) master's degree programmes.

The difference between 'foreign-language' and 'international' lies in the objective and therefore also in the target group.



Figure 21: The pyramids of Teotihuacán



Figure 22: Department A: Excursion to Stockholm

International Degree Programmes

An 'international' degree programme is geared towards the needs of the international professional world as well as research and development. It prepares students for cooperations with international partners after graduation and teaches intercultural key competencies as well as language skills. Such degree programmes are taught in English and include modules that focus on working in intercultural contexts as well as language modules to improve or develop language skills. Students with German as their first language improve their English language skills, while international applicants whose primary language of instruction is English acquire knowledge of German and the cultural characteristics of the country of study. This is advantageous for this group in order to be able to work for internationally active organisations and companies later on, particularly based in Germany.

Foreign-language degree programmes in English

By definition, a 'foreign-language' degree programme is taught entirely in a language other than German and differs from current German-language degree programmes only in the language of instruction.

Foreign-language bachelor's degree programmes are the most complex and involve the greatest institutional risk. Their advantage for the labour market in North Rhine-Westphalia is limited, as without knowledge of German, few employers will consider people with a bachelor's degree as a target group. Although English is spoken in more and more companies, a certain level of German is required in everyday life. For this reason, bachelor's degree programmes with international specialisations or degree programmes with an international focus that integrate basic knowledge of German are primarily recommended.

Foreign-language degree programmes are possible for master's degree programmes, but international degree programmes are preferred as they can include elements to promote the German language and are therefore more useful in terms of the shortage of skilled workers.



Figure 23: Department of GW with Prof. Anna Mikhof on a decolonial city tour with an Indigenous representative in cooperation with the University of Toronto, St. George Campus, October 2024, Toronto

German-language degree programmes with bilingual tracks

This model offers a flexible structure for Bachelor's degree programmes in which students can opt for international study elements during the course of their studies. The majority of courses are taught in German, although English-language modules can be chosen from the fourth or fifth semester onwards. This model is particularly attractive for international collaborations and double degree programmes. Ideally, the cooperation programmes should be designed in such a way that, as with the existing exchange with India via the DHIK, all international students obtain a full degree from Bochum University of Applied Sciences. The aim is to enable students to make a smooth transition and integrate into the international academic and professional world.

Measures in the field of teaching

In order to successfully implement the internationalisation strategy of Bochum University of Applied Sciences, we have identified and prioritised a series of measures. This prioritisation is intended to ensure that we achieve our goals efficiently and effectively. The measures are listed below in order of priority.

Integration of English-language modules in all degree programmes

In order to optimally prepare students for the requirements of international professional fields, it is crucial to strengthen their subject-specific as well as their language skills. We are therefore planning to introduce at least 30 ECTS credits in English-language specialised modules, which will be offered across all departments for related subject groups. The prerequisite for this is the integration of suitable English language courses into the degree programmes. This measure will not only improve students' subject-specific skills, but will also position Bochum University of Applied Sciences as an attractive Erasmus partner. The provision of English-language modules from the fourth semester onwards, which are offered either entirely during the summer or winter semester, will further promote the international mobility of our students. Among other things, this measure helps to improve the range of courses on offer by integrating English as the lingua franca of science.



Figure 24: The telescope at Mount Pleasant Radio Observatory. Excursion of specialist area G to Hobart, Australia

Increasing the proportion of international Master's degree programmes

We are aiming to significantly increase the proportion of international Master's degree programmes. These degree programmes are to be offered entirely in English and aimed specifically at international students. By expanding our range of international Master's programmes, we increase the attractiveness of the university for students from all over the world and at the same time create a diverse and multicultural learning environment. Among other things, this measure supports the goal of increasing student numbers by specifically increasing the proportion of international students.

Internationalisierung@Home

Integrating international perspectives and resources into everyday campus life is a central component of our strategy. Through events, guest lectures and the integration of international students and lecturers, we promote intercultural exchange and prepare our students for a multicultural working world. Approaches such as Flying Faculties are to be promoted and expanded as an instrument at the level of institutional co-operation and strategic partnerships. Taken together, these measures strengthen Internationalisierung@Home and thus also the local economy by equipping people who complete their studies with international experience and global skills. Furthermore, this supports the goal of making German-language degree programmes more attractive.



Increasing the proportion of Bachelor's degree programmes with international double degrees

In order to strengthen the international orientation of our Bachelor's degree programmes, we will increase the proportion of programmes with international elements such as specialisations and the possibility of double degrees. These programmes offer students the opportunity to complete part of their studies abroad and simultaneously obtain degrees from two universities. The focus here is on structures in which students receive a full degree from Bochum University of Applied Sciences.

Provision of module handbooks in English

To make it easier for international students to access our degree programmes and to increase the transparency of our course content, all module handbooks are provided in English. English-language module handbooks are made available for all degree programmes at latest with every new accreditation or reaccreditation.



Promoting international mobility

We will continue to promote the international mobility of our students through extended mobility programmes, the expansion of Erasmus collaborations and additional financial support opportunities. These measures will enable more students to gain international experience, which will contribute to both their personal development and improve their ability to adapt to diverse working environments. Due to the composition of our student body, who — as mentioned at the beginning — often have to finance their studies themselves, long-term stays abroad pose a particular challenge. This is particularly true for degree programmes with little structural freedom, for example due to professional regulations. This is why short-term mobility (e.g. summer/winter schools) and internships lasting several weeks (6-10 weeks) at cooperating institutions are of particular importance to us as part of international mobility. Among other things, this measure supports the goal of promoting international mobility in teaching.

Developing a multicultural campus culture

Creating a welcoming and inclusive campus atmosphere is essential to supporting a diverse student and research community. Through regular intercultural events and initiatives, we promote understanding and co-operation on campus. A multicultural campus culture contributes significantly to creating an environment in which international students and researchers feel welcome and valued. Here, for example, informal meeting places could be created ('Café International', etc.) where a multicultural campus culture can also develop outside of courses.



Figure 25: Excursion to Vietnam in November 2023: Students from BO visit the Vietnamese-German University near Ho Chi Minh City. In the winter semester 2024/25, two students from Department B will complete a semester abroad there.



Figure 26: Indo German Centre for Higher Education [IGCHE] - Students in class at the PSG College of Technology

Establishment of at least two strategic partnerships by 2028

In order to further strengthen international networking and co-operation, Bochum University of Applied Sciences is aiming to establish at least two strategic partnerships by 2028. These long-term collaborations should create synergies in teaching and ideally in research and transfer and increase the university's international visibility. Strategic partnerships offer the opportunity to develop joint study programmes, acquire research funding and promote the exchange of students and teaching staff. Among other things, this measure supports the goal of strengthening the international networking of degree programmes and departments.

Measures in the field of research

In order to successfully implement Bochum University of Applied Sciences' internationalisation strategy and to strengthen our position as a leading research institution, we have identified and prioritised a series of measures. This prioritisation is intended to ensure that we achieve our goals efficiently and effectively. The measures are listed below in order of priority:

Increasing the international visibility of our research

In order to establish Bochum University of Applied Sciences as an attractive partner for international research collaborations, we will significantly increase the international visibility of our research. We will achieve this through the active presence of our researchers on international platforms and in global networks, as well as the increased use of social media. We promote the publication of research findings in high-ranking international journals and support our researchers in participating in international conferences and workshops. The university will also present its research findings in a targeted manner via platforms such as LinkedIn and YouTube. Series of publications, working papers, or research reports published by the university are published in German and English. The organisation of our own international conferences and scientific events at Bochum University of Applied Sciences will also be promoted in order to raise our profile and intensify international contacts.



Figure 27: Green hydrogen for Ghana: The GH2GH team installs the first decentralised system for hydrogen production and reconversion in Tema (October 2024)

Increasing third-party funding from international sources

Diversifying research funding by acquiring third-party funding from international sources is a central component of our strategy. We will systematically expand the intensive preparation and support for applications for EU funding programmes such as Horizon Europe and the Green Deal. This includes the expansion of counselling and support structures that help researchers and teaching staff to successfully acquire and manage international funding. At the same time, the necessary administrative capacities will be provided to optimally support researchers in the acquisition and management of third-party funding.

Integration of international perspectives into the doctoral phase

The training of our young academics is being further developed through the increased integration of international perspectives into the doctoral phase. As a member of the Doctoral College NRW (PK NRW), we support the gradual development of international doctoral structures. Together with the PK NRW, we would like to explore and promote the possibility of binational doctoral programmes during the coming years as soon as the organisational and legal requirements have been met. In addition, doctoral students will be supported in participating in international research projects and conferences in order to enrich their academic training with international experience.

Promotion of international mobility

The international mobility of our researchers is promoted through extended mobility programmes, support in acquiring the necessary third-party funding for international networking and additional financial support opportunities for doctoral students. For doctoral students this also includes the co-financing of conference trips and the presentation of research results on international platforms. Funding for practical and research semesters abroad also contributes to the international networking of our academics and strengthens the international exchange of knowledge and cultures.

Strengthening international research collaborations and networking between researchers

In order to increase the quality and quantity of our international research projects, we will initiate and maintain strategic research partnerships with universities and research institutions worldwide. We support our researchers in participating in international research networks and consortia and promote joint research projects and publications. Close collaboration with international partners and the active networking of our researchers will further strengthen the global visibility of our research and establish Bochum University of Applied Sciences as an attractive partner for future collaborations.



Figure 28: Visit to the Ghanaian partner university - Successful completion of the GIZ project 'E-Micromobility Ghana' at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) in Kumasi (November 2021)

General measures and those in technology & administration

In order to support the internationalisation strategy of Bochum University of Applied Sciences comprehensively and sustainably, specific measures are necessary in the fields of technology and administration. These measures ensure that all areas of the university are optimally prepared for the requirements of an internationalised educational and research institution.

Maintaining the website and social media presence with a focus on international content

The university's website and social media presence will be strategically expanded to promote international content. Following the successful implementation of the international website, the necessary capacity will be provided in Division 3, which will offer the required technical support to the respective departments and divisions for the maintenance and updating of English-language content.

Ensuring sufficient English language skills for new appointments

When filling administrative positions with direct student contact or with contact to international academics, it is ensured that candidates have sufficient English language skills to deal with English-speaking students, teachers, and researchers. This is crucial to ensure effective communication and support for international students and researchers. Appropriate language skills are anchored as an important requirement within the job profiles. This may lead to a higher job evaluation when new appointments are made.

Provision of brochures on examination regulations in English

To help international students find their way around, brochures on examination regulations are available in English. These brochures are short, readable documents that explain the main points of the examination regulations. It is important to note that only the German examination regulations are legally binding and not the brochures that are derived from them.

Training programmes for teaching staff, researchers and administration

In order to optimally prepare all members of Bochum University of Applied Sciences for the challenges and requirements of internationalisation, comprehensive training courses are provided. This includes language courses as well as security and sensitisation in international cooperation (export controls). The aim is to strengthen the skills and awareness of all employees for the needs of an international community.



Figure 29: Further work of the W department with Prof Andreas Merchiers at the Institut d'Administration des Entreprises (IAE) Clermont Auvergne School of Management in France

Provision of translation and language software

In order to promote linguistic accessibility, software such as DeepL is provided as required. This technology supports teaching and administrative staff in translating documents and communicating quickly and accurately. This increases efficiency in day-to-day work and facilitates communication with international students and partners.

Conversion of the digital infrastructure to bilingual operation in German and English

The university's digital infrastructure is being converted to bilingual operation in German and English to facilitate access for international students and researchers. This includes adapting the Learning Management System (Moodle) and providing multilingual timetables and other digital resources.

Further development of the International Office and integration of a Welcome Centre

The International Office is being further developed and complemented by integrating the functionality of a Welcome Centre in co-operation with other departments of administration. The services being established include support for international visiting researchers who are working at Bochum University of Applied Sciences for extended periods of time. Services provide assistance with administrative processes, finding accommodation and schools as well as orientation for living in Bochum and the region.

Maintaining and expanding the acquisition of EU third-party funding

The administration actively supports researchers in acquiring third-party funding from EU programmes such as Horizon Europe. This includes targeted counselling and support services to facilitate the application and management of funding and to increase the chances of success in acquiring funding.



Figure 30: Excursion of the M department to Japan

Benchmarks and Timeline

Teaching

- 1 • Integration of English-language modules in all degree programmes
 - Benchmark: Proportion of degree programmes with at least 15 ECTS (from the 4th semester onwards) in English-language modules, consisting, for example, of elective or project modules that are anchored in module manuals.
 - Target: 100% of Bachelor's degree programmes by 2028, as long as this is not restricted by professional law or curricular restrictions.
- 2 • 30 ECTS per subject group for Erasmus+ cooperation programmes
 - Benchmark: Proportion of subject groups (similar degree programmes, e.g. Computer Science, Business Informatics, Applied Computer Science and Geoinformatics) with at least 30 ECTS in English-language modules.
 - Target: 100% of subject groups by 2028.
- 3 • Increase the proportion of international Master's degree programmes
 - Benchmark: Number of international or foreign-language Master's degree programmes.
 - Target: Three international Master's degree programmes at the university or under accreditation by 2028.
- 4 • Provision of translation and language software in teaching
 - Benchmark: Provision or sponsorship of translation software or comparable aids required for the internationalisation of courses.
 - Target: A licence for the conversion is available for teachers who convert a course.
- 5 • Internationalisierung@Home
 - Benchmark: Number of intercultural modules and guest lectures per semester.
 - Prerequisite: Recording of guest researchers, excursions, international events in 2025.
 - Target: Increase in the number of students reached by at least 25% by 2028.
- 6 • Increase the proportion of Bachelor's degree programmes with international specialisations and double degrees
 - Benchmark: Number of Bachelor's degree programmes with international specialisations, in particular those with double degree options.
 - Target: All Bachelor's degree programmes with capacity utilisation problems were systematically checked for this option during the re-accreditation process.
- 7 • Funding for ERASMUS+ partnerships until 2028
 - Benchmark: Erasmus+ partnership with English-language courses.
 - Target: One Erasmus+ partnership with English-language courses is available to students in each degree programme as an outgoing option until 2028.
- 8 • Promotion of international mobility
 - Benchmark: Proportion of students participating in mobility programmes.
 - Target: Doubling the proportion from the current 3% to 6% by 2028.
- 9 • Establishment of at least two strategic partnerships by 2028
 - Benchmark: Number of strategic partnerships.
 - Target: Establishment of 1 - 3 strategic partnerships by 2028.

Scientific research

- 1 • Increasing the international visibility of our research
 - Benchmark: Number of international Peer-Review publications.
 - Target: Increase per professorship by 25% by 2028.
- 2 • Increase in third-party funding from international sources
 - Benchmark: Amount of third-party funding acquired from international sources.
 - Target: Increase in funds raised by 25% by 2028.
- 3 • International research stays and exchange programmes for early career researchers
 - Benchmark: Every doctoral candidate should have taken part in either an international conference or a stay abroad at least once during their doctorate.
 - Target: 100% by 2028.
- 4 • Promotion of international mobility
 - Benchmark: Number of researchers participating in international mobility programmes.
 - Target: Increase by 50% by 2028.
- 5 • Strengthening international research co-operation and networking of researchers
 - Benchmark: Number of international research projects and collaborations.
 - Target: Increase by 25% by 2028.



Management and infrastructure

- 1 • International marketing of the university
 - Benchmark: Provision of marketing material for university presentations (PowerPoint template with content, promotional films, international trade fairs).
 - Target: 1 permanently maintained template, a general image film with elements for reuse in FB contexts, participation in interdisciplinary trade fairs at least every 2 years to attract co-operation partners and students.
- 2 • Improved support structures for lecturers/departments in the acquisition of third-party funding for internationalisation (mobility and teaching)
 - Benchmark: Number of Erasmus*, DAAD and comparable projects.
 - Target: At least 2 applications per year and at least one approved per year.
- 3 • Further development of student services to support international students, staff and guests (academic and organisational)
 - Benchmark: Formation of a team consisting of management, staff and students to identify needs.
 - Target: Creation of structures by the beginning of 2026 at the latest.
- 4 • Establishment of structures to support strategic partnerships in the IO by 2028
 - Benchmark: Takeover of existing partnerships and establishment of structures for new partnerships.
 - Target: Establishment of 1 - 3 strategic partnerships by 2028.

- 5 • Maintenance of the international website and social media presence with a focus on international content
 - Benchmark: Number of international content on the website and in social media channels.
 - Target: At least 36 international posts per year (on average 3 per month).

- 6 • Ensure adequate English language skills for new appointments
 - Benchmark: Proportion of new administrative staff with sufficient English language skills.
 - Target: 100% of new appointments in relevant areas.

- 7 • Provision of module handbooks in English
 - Benchmark: Number of module handbooks in English.
 - Target: All module handbooks for Master's and international degree programmes by 2025, all module handbooks for Bachelor's degree programmes by 2028.

- 8 • Provision of brochures on examination regulations in English
 - Benchmark: Number of examination regulations in English.
 - Target: All examination regulations in relevant degree programmes at the start of each degree programme.

- 9 • Training programmes for teaching staff and administration in English
 - Benchmark: Number of training courses attended per year.
 - Target: Offer at least one training course per employee who comes into contact with international students per year.

- 10 • Training programmes for researchers and administration on export controls and security
 - Benchmark: Number of training courses attended per year.
 - Target: Offer at least one training course per year for the group of people concerned.

- 11 • Provision of translation and language software in the administration
 - Benchmark: Provision of translation software or comparable assistance in the administration.
 - Target: For 100% of the relevant employees by 2025. Maintenance of an offer until 2028.

- 12 • Conversion of the digital infrastructure to multilingualism
 - Benchmark: Number of multilingual digital systems.
 - Target: Complete conversion of the digital infrastructure to bilingualism instead of multilingualism in German/English by 2026.

- 13 • Further development of the International Office to support the increased proportion of international students (academic & organisational)
 - Benchmark: Provision of additional capacity for the increasing demand for international student counselling and support during the study phase.
 - Target: Creation or reallocation of capacity by the beginning of the degree programme at the latest.

- 14 • Maintaining and expanding EU third-party funding support
 - Benchmark: Number of third-party funded projects acquired from EU programmes and consortium leadership in EU programmes.
 - Target: Increase in EU third-party funding by 25% by 2028, administrative structures allow support for consortium leadership.

- 15 • Development of a 'German as a Foreign Language' (DAF) programme at Bochum University of Applied Sciences
 - Benchmark: Existence of a DAF programme at Bochum University of Applied Sciences.
 - Target: Demand-orientated offer exists by 2027 at the latest.

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