

Internationalisation at the University of Szczecin

1. The University of Szczecin places internationalisation at the centre of its mission and vision for development. On the one hand, internationalisation is considered as a process encompassing all aspects of the university functions such as research, education, institutional cooperation, administration and academic culture, and, on the other hand, as a joint activity involving the university internal stakeholders, namely research staff, research and teaching staff, teaching and administrative staff, students and doctoral students.

2. Recognising the overarching impact of internationalisation on all areas of academic life, the University of Szczecin is constantly taking actions to expand its international cooperation, as reflected in numerous projects and initiatives undertaken and implemented jointly with foreign partners, both in research and teaching. The University is an active member of the European University Association (European University Association), the SGroup Universities Network (SGroup – Universities in Europe), the Baltic University Programme, as well as part of the Magna Charta Universitatum (MCU) and UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs communities.

3. The University of Szczecin recognises the importance of openness to the world and interculturalism as factors conducive to success in social and professional life. It also recognises its social responsibility as a higher education institution, both in a regional and global context. As a university open to new challenges, the University of Szczecin constantly takes steps to foster an open and modern academic community and attaches great importance to active participation in the changes taking place in European higher education.

4. Consistently developed international cooperation provides the basis for conducting world-class scientific research and achieving outstanding results, providing high-quality education based on modern programmes and teaching methods, as well as implementing the principles of sustainable development. Furthermore, the internationalisation of the University serves not only scientific and educational development, but also the implementation of the idea of social responsibility of the University, strengthening intercultural dialogue and building lasting relationships with the socio-economic environment on a transnational scale.

5. By achieving these goals, the University of Szczecin is increasing its competitiveness on the international stage, preparing its students and doctoral students to enter the global labour market, and provides its employees with opportunities for professional development in an international academic environment.

Development of international cooperation

1. The University of Szczecin recognises the need to continue and intensify efforts towards internationalisation.

2. Future activities should be multidimensional in nature and focus on expanding the active role that the University plays in the international associations and organisations to which it belongs (including the SGroup University Network, the European University Association (EUA), the Baltic University Programme, UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs, CoARA Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment), as well as aiming to join other organisations, networks and associations that pursue goals important for the development of the academic community.

The priority is both to strengthen relations with existing partners and to acquire new ones in various parts of the world.

3. The University activity in this area should aim not only to develop existing cooperation with foreign universities and research institutions (through the implementation of specific areas of cooperation, such as student exchanges and doctoral student exchanges, joint research, double degree programmes), but also to attract new partners from both European Union countries and other geographical areas.

4. Particular emphasis in this regard should be placed on developing tools to support the University employees in taking steps to establish a specific framework for ongoing or planned cooperation and creating appropriate mechanisms to support these activities, including in the organizational and administrative spheres.

5. International cooperation may also take on a more regional character and thus have an impact on the immediate environment of the University, especially in the context of the dynamic changes taking place there. In this regard, the University intends to actively participate in cross-border projects, especially within the framework of Interreg programmes, the Visegrad Fund, the German-Polish Foundation for Science and NAWA (Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange), which enable the combination of scientific potential with regional development and international cooperation within the European Union.

Internationalisation of science

1. International cooperation is an important dimension of the research activities carried out by the University. The University of Szczecin recognises the need to continue striving to expand cooperation in this area, both at the individual and institutional levels.

2. Important measures that the University should take in this context include support and motivation by the University authorities and heads of individual units to actively participate in international projects and publish research results in foreign journals, which will allow the University of Szczecin to contribute to changes taking place on a global scale.

3. The internationalisation of science should occupy a special place among activities aimed at implementing the strategy of the University of Szczecin and should include:

1) the continuation and intensification of individual activities related to international scientific exchange, including the mobility of researchers, participation in summer schools and workshops, participation in international research networks, as well as the exchange of methodological experiences in various organisational forms;

2) continuing and intensifying institutional activities related to the internationalisation of scientific research and creating mechanisms to support staff in their implementation;

3) development of green research methodology, taking into account the principles of environmental ethics, minimising the carbon footprint of research activities, promoting open science and applying environmentally friendly standards in research projects;

4) continuing and intensifying activities aimed at obtaining external funding (from institutions such as NCN, NCBiR, FNP, NAWA, the European Commission, Horizon Europe, Interreg) that

enables the University to participate in international projects, conferences and other forms of research activity;

5) organising training courses on obtaining research funding with the participation of domestic and foreign experts and developing the competences of researchers in the area of preparing international applications for research projects;

6) developing initiatives within the framework of internationalisation at home, including visiting professor programme, joint online seminars with foreign partners and international research projects;

7) organising international conferences and other scientific meetings and events promoting research results, which will encourage interdisciplinarity;

8) continuing and intensifying activities related to the networking of the University of Szczecin through participation in strategic alliances, scientific partnerships and research consortia;

9) acquiring projects that enable employees to actively participate in international research groups and systematically increase the number of publications co-authored with foreign partners.

10) strengthening the role of the University of Szczecin Doctoral School as a platform for international cooperation, a place for pursuing doctoral degrees in cooperation with other universities (cotutelle) and global research initiatives;

11) developing interdisciplinary research within the UNESCO Chair in Sustainable Social Development, with an emphasis on knowledge transfer, social responsibility in science, and the implementation of international best practices.

Internationalisation of education

1. Another pillar of the University's activity is education. High quality education occupies a special place in the strategy of the University of Szczecin, also in terms of internationalisation.

2. Activities aimed at internationalising education at the University of Szczecin should include:

1) updating, developing and promoting the range of programmes taught in English;

2) obtaining foreign accreditations or quality certificates for degree programmes, postgraduate studies and other forms of education offered at the University of Szczecin;

3) further provision educational services in a spirit of tolerance and openness to multiculturalism;

4) further implementation of the University's educational activities based on the idea of inclusiveness and barrier-free education;

5) continuing and intensifying activities related to internationalisation at home, including through the implementation of a programme for visiting professors;

- 6) continuing and intensifying efforts to increase the participation of foreign students in short- and long-term student exchange programmes (Erasmus+, freemovers), summer schools and workshops, and other educational services;
- 7) developing programmes based on cooperation within the framework of double degrees, which will enable students to obtain degrees from the University of Szczecin and partner universities;
- 8) continuing and intensifying the activities undertaken by the Doctoral School in the context of the development of international cooperation, further increasing the number of foreign doctoral students studying at the Doctoral School of the University of Szczecin;
- 9) continuing and intensifying efforts to increase the participation of foreign teaching staff in academic exchange programmes (including Erasmus+);
- 10) monitoring the fate of graduates of the University of Szczecin, including the professional careers of those living abroad;
- 11) increasing the role of digitisation in the education process, further implementation and effective use of digital technologies to facilitate interactions that overcome geographical barriers;
- 12) increasing the number of international educational and cultural events organised at the University of Szczecin, such as International Student Day co-organised by students from foreign universities, providing a space for meetings, cultural exchange and mutual learning;
- 13) implementation of educational programmes that take into account key international aspects;
- 14) introduction of microcredentials and learning modules addressing global challenges (sustainable development, green transition, digital economy, development of AI applications);
- 15) developing educational programmes and modules that take into account ethical, social and civic aspects at European and universal level;
- 16) linking educational content to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030), such as equal opportunities, combating inequalities, decent work, responsible consumption and production;
- 17) promoting responsible leadership and social engagement among students and doctoral students as part of the idea of an open civil society;
- 18) implementing teaching methods that promote pro-environmental attitudes and a sustainable lifestyle, taking into account the ideas developed within the United Nations system;
- 19) developing international partnerships in the field of environmental education and social responsibility, involving universities, non-governmental organisations and business.

Internationalisation of the University administration

1. The administrative structure of the University provides indispensable support to staff, students and doctoral students in activities related to the internationalization of the University of Szczecin. An essential element of this process is communication that takes into account

multiculturalism, accessibility and inclusiveness. For this reason, particular emphasis should therefore be placed on developing the linguistic and intercultural competences of the University's staff. Given that the University's departments and organisational units are important points of contact for students and staff from foreign universities, particular emphasis should be placed on continuing and intensifying efforts to ensure that administrative staff participate in various types of training and language courses.

2. In order to improve access to information about the activities of the University of Szczecin for foreign employees and students, the websites of the University, institutes, faculties, the International Relations Department, the Doctoral School and other organisational units are maintained in English. The University should strive for bilingualism in all information concerning its areas of activity.

3. An important element will be the development of the concept of a one-stop office, i.e., a comprehensive service point for foreigners, where foreign students, doctoral students and employees will be able to obtain support in one place regarding recruitment, mobility, accommodation, legalisation of stay, cultural integration or administrative assistance in everyday life at the university and in the city.

4. Another important objective is to standardise and ensure accessibility in decision-making processes concerning internationalisation. In this regard, the University strives to develop clear procedures, digitise document circulation, and create concise and transparent instructions for students, doctoral students and employees participating in exchange programmes. The primary goal is to create a more flexible and friendly environment within the University for the implementation of international initiatives. The planned initiatives include innovative digital tools to support communication and services for foreigners, such as online platforms for mobility management, mobile applications for foreign students and doctoral students, and communication channels using artificial intelligence. The aim of computerising decision-making processes in the area of internationalisation will be to ensure effective service for foreign stakeholders, as well as to fulfil the pro-ecological and socially responsible mission of the university.

Internationalisation of academic culture

1. The University of Szczecin will consistently develop a sustainable academic culture based on the universal values of the scientific community, such as integrity, reliability, responsibility and openness to dialogue. In the context of activities aimed at internationalisation, the academic culture of the University should be a pillar of stability for the ethical and substantive framework of international cooperation, the education of students and doctoral students from different countries, and conducting research in global consortia. Building such a culture means combining academic traditions and values with openness to multiculturalism, diversity and international standards of quality in the activities of higher education institutions.

2. As part of the implementation of this objective, the following is planned:

- 1) strengthening the role of the Code of Academic Ethics in international scientific and educational relations so that it forms the basis for cooperation with foreign partners;
- 2) developing mechanisms to ensure the reliability of research and education at international level, including through the implementation of global best practices;
- 3) organising regular training courses on academic ethics and cultural diversity for students, doctoral students and staff participating in international mobility programmes;
- 4) developing academic mentoring and tutoring as tools supporting the integration of foreign students and doctoral students into the academic culture of the University of Szczecin;
- 5) promoting values such as social responsibility, transparency, sustainable development, tolerance and intercultural dialogue, which strengthen the trust of international partners in the University;
- 6) incorporating international standards in the field of research, education and publication quality into the value system of the University of Szczecin in order to create a sustainable academic culture of a universal nature.

Promotion of internationalisation

1. The University of Szczecin will strive to systematically improve its position and recognition through active participation in international rankings, which are an important tool for assessing the quality of research and education. At the same time, promotional campaigns will be conducted targeting foreign students and doctoral students, academic teachers and partner institutions, emphasising the modern character of the University, its multidisciplinary profile and commitment to the implementation of sustainable development goals.
2. The University of Szczecin will also participate in international educational and scientific fairs and conferences, which provide an excellent platform for presenting its teaching and research offer and establishing new contacts with stakeholders who share the same goals. A key area is the further development of digital promotional channels – such as social media, webinars and multimedia materials – which enable the University to reach audiences across Europe and globally in a modern and attractive way.
3. The activities described in this paragraph are aimed at building the brand of the University of Szczecin as a modern, globally-oriented university that combines high-quality education with social responsibility and an environmentally-friendly approach.