# Internationalisation at home

"Umeå University wants to expand the way staff and students understand the world, and provide them with the opportunity to develop their intercultural skills. This will take place through internationalisation at home, which is accessible for those who are unable to gain their own experiences abroad.

Internationalisation work must be incorporated into all courses and programmes, even if their starting points and representation in international networks vary, and their opportunities for international cooperation differ.

The international research and education environment at the University must draw on the skills and experiences of staff and students and be in keeping with the content and structure of the courses and programmes. Internationalisation at home must include alumni and collaboration partners in addition to the University's staff and students."

(From [the Internationalisation policy](https://www.umu.se/en/legal-framework/first--and-second-cycle-education/internationalisation-policy/))

## International subject perspective

An international subject perspective involves introducing students to the different ways they can understand their subject field. For example, integrating international research and tested scientific methods into teaching.

Students can gain awareness of current research through access to research articles in English or meetings with visiting lecturers and researchers with diverse subject perspectives and international experience.

By introducing and applying tested research methods to teaching, students are part of how knowledge is created, critically evaluated, and communicated within the field.

An international subject perspective can be promoted by organising online exchanges with other higher education institutions and selecting required reading that creates a broad perspective on the subject.

Active participation in subject-related networks is also important.

## Intercultural skills

Developing intercultural skills is a central objective for internationalisation at home. It aims to create inclusive and open learning environments and workplaces characterised by discussion and participation.

When diversity is seen as a resource, social and educational interactions are enriched and build upon a mutual respect for cultures and perspectives. The principles of intercultural skills apply for all teaching, regardless of the language of instruction.

**International cooperations at course and programme level**

International cooperations are a way of working with and strengthening the international perspective. The cooperations can involve online courses with shared components for one or more higher education institutions around the world, short or long-term studies abroad, internships and collaborations with industry and non-profit organisations.

[COIL](https://www.eaie.org/blog/coil-acronym.htm) and [virtual exchange](https://evolve-erasmus.eu/about-evolve/what-is-virtual-exchange/) are two concepts that have emerged in recent years. They involve online collaborations for a course or course component in virtual exchanges.

If you would like to learn more about the international cooperation possibilities for courses and programmes, visit [Erasmus+ partnerships (for EU exchanges)](https://www.utbyten.se/program/erasmus-samarbetspartnerskap/mer-om-programmet/) or [Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility (for exchanges outside the EU](https://www.utbyten.se/program/erasmus-international-credit-mobility/)). These are two EU programmes where you can apply for financial support for developing collaborations.

**Wide range of courses and programmes**

As part of internationalisation at home, it is important for international students to participate in Umeå University's courses and programmes. Attracting international students requires offering a wide range of first and second-cycle courses and programmes for this group. The courses should reflect the scope of the University and the research it conducts.

The international student groups at Umeå University are:

* Students from outside EU/EEA countries and Switzerland (fee-paying, independent applications, "free movers")
* Students from EU/EEA countries and Switzerland (no tuition fees, independent applications, "free movers")
* Exchange students ([via exchange agreements with partner universities](https://www.umu.se/en/student/study-abroad/exchange-studies/exchange-studies-outside-europe/where-can-you-go/)).

[Read more about the courses and programmes available for international students at Umeå University](https://www.umu.se/en/education/)

**Promoting Umeå University's range of courses and programmes**

If international students are to choose Umeå University, there needs to be active work with marketing and promoting the courses and programmes on offer. This can involve participating in fairs, organising information meetings, maintaining contact with prospective students, marketing programmes and ensuring a well-functioning website where information about the courses and programmes is up to date, accurate, and inspirational.

Successful student recruitment requires coordination at the University where experiences can be exchanged. It is important to mention that Umeå University's current students are ambassadors for prospective students and therefore have a vital future role for the University. Maintaining contact with alumni will influence and strengthen the image of both Umeå and Sweden as a nation of knowledge.

In addition to the range of courses and programmes available, it is important to highlight and promote student life and the research being conducted at Umeå University.

There is a network for the courses and programmes available in English to support the work with tuition fee-paying students and free movers from within Europe. Contact <mailto:komm.io@umu.se> to receive emails about network meetings.

There is a network for international contacts to support the work with exchange studies. Read more about the role as an international contact.

## Exchanging experience and administrative support

Teachers and other staff can support each other and develop their intercultural skills and ability for internationalisation at home by participating in various experience exchange forums and skills development in internationalisation.

Well-structured administrative support for planning and following up on internationalisation work contributes to increasing the quality of research and education.

# International cooperation

"Umeå University believes it is important to support and develop international cooperation within research and education. Furthermore, it is important that teachers, researchers and other members of staff are part of national and international networks. Environmental scanning will be an important element of our work at Umeå University, and staff must be encouraged and given the opportunity to participate and influence international forums and contexts."

(From [the Internationalisation policy](https://www.umu.se/en/legal-framework/first--and-second-cycle-education/internationalisation-policy/))

**Long-term relationship building**

Long-term relationship building is a way for developing projects, establishing procedures, and deepening collaborations. Long-term relationships generate the opportunity for exchanging experiences, and shared engagement provides inspiration for realising common goals.

The University is currently a member of several networks and collaboration projects that meet these criteria and work to create and maintain long-term relationships.

Read more about international cooperations on this page.

## Project support

Umeå University supports international cooperation within research and education in several ways. Various funding types are available for internationalisation projects. Help and support is also available for national and international applications.

It is possible to apply for support via the Research Support and Collaboration Office and via the faculties

* [Support for research](https://www.aurora.umu.se/en/education-and-research/support-for-research/)
* [Funding calls and announcements](https://www.aurora.umu.se/en/education-and-research/announcements/)
* [Travel grants from the Wallenberg Foundations](https://www.aurora.umu.se/en/education-and-research/announcements/wallenberg-travel-grant/)
* [Travel grants from the Kempe Foundations](https://www.aurora.umu.se/en/education-and-research/announcements/travel-grants-from-the-kempe-foundations/)

Other good links to trend analysis, funding calls and announcements and project support:

* [The Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education](https://www.stint.se/omvarldsanalys/)
* [The Swedish Institute](https://www.si.se)

## Supporting established research and education collaborations

It is important that good and clear support is available for both research and education collaborations at various levels at the University. For example, each department has a research coordinator, director of studies (education coordinator), programme coordinator, international contact and financial support function.

Research needs to be long-sighted. Umeå University supports established collaborations – a basis for conducting outstanding research.

Support is available to the University's researchers for all stages of the research process. Furthermore, Umeå University makes it easier for researchers to apply for external funding from national and international funding bodies for international collaborations. The University also uses direct government funding for research to benefit and develop internal collaborations.

* [Support for education](https://www.aurora.umu.se/en/education-and-research/support-for-education/)
* [Support for doctoral studies](https://www.aurora.umu.se/en/education-and-research/support-for-doctoral-studies/)
* [Support for research](https://www.aurora.umu.se/en/education-and-research/support-for-research/)

## Developing new research and education collaborations

The Vision for Umeå University states that motivation, courage and risk-taking are essential for knowledge breakthroughs. Developing new research collaborations is just one way of novel thinking and creating open-minded research. New research collaborations are supported and consideration is paid to new partners from both ethical and strategic perspectives.

The importance of intercultural skills and international perspectives cannot be emphasised enough as regards education collaborations, which can also serve as a career boost.

Responsible internationalisation involves mutual creation of values, academic freedom, transparency and integrity with room for reflection on ethics, as well as cultural, political and legal contexts.

[Read more about trend analyses and strategic relationship building on the STINT (Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education) website](https://www.stint.se/en/trend-analysis/)

## National and international networks and arenas

It is vital that Umeå University's researchers are actively involved in international networks and arenas for education, research, and policy-oriented projects. Examples include projects that may relate to greater issues such as the practical implication of the Bologna Process, what the Dublin Declaration involves, and how we work with the quality of education.

Researchers who participate in national and international deciding bodies and research councils contribute with knowledge that is significant for the global research arena, and are able to influence the conditions around international research. Being part of where decisions and policies that affect higher education are established is being part of shaping the international landscape of the national, European and global arena. Networks offer invaluable experience exchanges and perspectives.

Umeå University has applied for membership of the European Universities Initiative (EUI) – the EU's major education alliance. The collaboration involves mobility, research and innovation. Europe's new higher education sector is emerging.

Examples of organisations and networks where Umeå University could increase its presence and participation include:

* European University Association (EUA)
* The European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQUA)
* European Association for International Education (EAIE)
* Association of International Educators (NAFSA)
* The Nordic Council of Ministers and the Nordic Council
* The Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE
* European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education (ECA)
* European Universities' Network (SGroup).

# International experience

"Umeå University wants to support the students and staff who aspire to obtain international experiences. Both individuals and the University as a whole can benefit from new cultural and organisational experiences, as well as new knowledge about methods and approaches. Even though a great deal of international cooperation can take place online, physical meetings are essential to their success, and they are particularly valuable for new contacts.  
  
Students and staff at Umeå University are to have the opportunity to create their own international experiences by participating in activities such as studies abroad, internships, work shadowing, conference participation, network meetings and research periods abroad. The quality aspects of international experience are significant, hence it is important they are followed up and evaluated.”

(From [the Internationalisation policy](https://www.umu.se/en/legal-framework/first--and-second-cycle-education/internationalisation-policy/))

## Mobility windows

Study and internships abroad create unique opportunities for students to develop their own international experiences.

Mobility windows included in study programmes make it both easier and possible for Umeå University to provide students with the chance to gain valuable international experience as part of their degree.

Examples of mobility windows include a free semester or shorter period where students are able to participate in exchange studies.

Would you like help to implement mobility windows into a programme? Get in touch with the international contact at your department for tips and advice. Representatives from the International Office are happy to attend planning meetings or programme council meetings.

**Flexibility in staffing and incentives for periods abroad**

There needs to be flexibility with employment conditions if teachers and technical and administrative staff are to be able to participate in exchanges.

There needs to be an incentive for teachers to choose to go and teach abroad. International experience can generate indispensable input for personal educational and teaching methods, course development and opportunities for international collaboration in teaching. It can provide insight into how students from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds can be integrated into the classroom setting.

International experience can also enable personal development, training in teaching in another language, and the possibility to establish contacts at the partner university – not least in the researcher's own field.

Those who have taught abroad encourage and stimulate students by integrating the knowledge and experiences they gained into teaching. They are good ambassadors and inspire home students to participate in exchanges. There needs to be incentives that emphasise the University's desire to increase interest in teaching abroad.

Such incentives can include making teaching abroad part of the salary criteria and educational merit system, or placing special emphasis or consideration on a teacher's international teaching experience when staffing courses and programmes.

There needs to be an understanding of how time abroad for technical and administrative staff can benefit both the individual and the University. Job shadowing within the EU is a relatively simple way of developing new perspectives and establishing new contacts at other higher education institutions.

By seeing how other people with similar duties address their tasks, technical and administrative staff will receive a new set of tools which they can use at their own higher education institution.

## Partner university agreements

Exchange agreements with international higher education institutions for student, teacher, and staff mobility must be of high quality, and aim for mutual exchanges with incoming and outgoing staff and students.

There are three levels of university partnership agreements, each complementing the other: departmental level, faculty level, and university-wide level. It is important that when combined, all of these agreements create a varied and expansive portfolio of exchange agreements with international higher education institutions, as regards location and subject areas.

There needs to be thoroughly developed support for all forms of exchange agreement, and clear procedures for initiating, maintaining and terminating them.

[All partnership agreements can be found on Solemove](https://saas.solenovo.fi/move/destinationSearch/10220082).

## Information about international experience opportunities

In order for more people to discover and think about going on an exchange, information about the opportunities and how to apply for international experience is necessary. Students, teachers and technical and administrative staff are all offered the relevant information, guidance and service before, during and after their exchange period, which may involve studies, internships, job shadowing or teaching abroad.

It is also highly important that students and staff are encouraged and inspired to apply for international experience. Guidance and support with international mobility is particularly necessary for students who face certain challenges, as well as under-represented student groups who have no previous international experience, have reflected upon studies and internships abroad during their degree.

[Exchange studies for students](https://www.umu.se/en/student/study-abroad/exchange-studies/exchange-studies-outside-europe/where-can-you-go/)

[International exchanges for staff](https://www.aurora.umu.se/en/my-employment/skills-development/international-exchange/)

## Coordination

All departments at Umeå University have an international contact who is responsible for the department's agreements, information, and support for students, teachers, technical and administrative staff who are interested in spending time abroad.

Together with other people who work with internationalisation, the international contact forms a network of people who support each other with backing from the International Office.

The central functions can supply all University staff with information about the University's trend monitoring.

[International contacts](https://www.umu.se/en/student/study-abroad/exchange-studies/international-contact-persons/)

[International Office](https://www.umu.se/en/international-office/)

## The importance of international experience for a person's career

Once they have completed their studies, Umeå University students will be competing for jobs in an increasingly globalised world, where understanding and awareness as well as intercultural skills form vital components. International experience can make them more attractive to the labour market.

As part of their employment, staff should be able to participate in conferences and networks – and spend time abroad. All research positions should facilitate personal international experiences. Doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows are a priority group, as international collaborations early in their career can have a positive effect on research.

## Funds for personal international experience

University staff should be aware of that funding is available for internationalisation. Umeå University has set aside various levels of special funding for doctoral students, as building international relationships and being active in international contexts has been prioritised for young researchers.

[Funding calls and announcements](https://www.aurora.umu.se/en/education-and-research/announcements/travel-grants-from-the-kempe-foundations/)

# Hosting that benefits internationalisation

"Umeå University wants positive hosting to contribute to cutting-edge education and research environments. By hosting in a way that benefits internationalisation, we can continue to recruit the researchers of the future. Umeå University must provide a tolerant environment where research is allowed to grow and make itself seen and heard. The non-hierarchical structure that permeates Umeå University must be promoted to create great openness between staff and students."

(From [the Internationalisation policy](https://www.umu.se/en/legal-framework/first--and-second-cycle-education/internationalisation-policy/))

## High-quality and accessible research infrastructure

A good research environment with positive hosting generates creative environments. Access to [research infrastructure](https://www.umu.se/en/research/research-infrastructure/) such as equipment, databases, knowledge banks and other resources are essential to be able to conduct the highest quality research.

Good research infrastructure creates a positive research environment and contributes to a stimulating and well-functioning workplace. Consequently, high-quality and accessible research infrastructure is essential from an internationalisation perspective.

**Well-developed reception for international students and staff**

Positive hosting for international students and staff is essential. For international students or staff, these new study or work environments, culture and society may be unfamiliar, therefore helping them to find their feet can make a difference.

There are several levels involved in welcoming international students to the University. In addition to the support available from the central organisation and faculties, international contacts at the departments play a critical role as regards information and support for international students throughout their time at the University. The Umeå University Buddy Programme brings national and international students together and is an important component in welcoming international students.

Umeå University has a high level of service when it comes to welcoming international staff. New staff are provided with an introduction programme, which is held partly online and is coordinated by the Human Resources Office.

New staff are supplied with important information and an introduction to the University, its values and work culture. This creates a good understanding of what is involved when working at a Swedish university and provides new staff with a positive start to their new work at Umeå University. The programme is complemented by a number of seminars and social events that aim to integrate new members of staff and introduce them to other new employees.

A Dual Career Programme is available for partners accompanying international staff.

A popular Housing Office is available to international students and visiting research fellows to help them find rental accommodation.

Current Umeå University students and staff are also important ambassadors for welcoming those new to the university The Umeå University spirit as we call it, permeates the entire University with its positive community, generous collaborations where everyone can exchange their experiences, and a culture of openness and encouragement.

**The Language policy for Umeå University**

All international students and staff must be able to access important information. This is regulated in [the Language policy for Umeå University](https://www.umu.se/en/legal-framework/decision-structure-delegation-and-organisation/language-policy-for-umea-university/). Steering documents of great fundamental importance for staff and students must be translated into English.

The Language policy for Umeå University contains more information about how the University works with university-wide language guidelines based on plain language, the role of Swedish at the University, parallel language, and linguistic diversity.

**Facilitate recruitment of international staff**

The Human Resources Office has support for managers and HR officers who will be welcoming a new member of staff to their department, office or equivalent. Information drives, networks and training are ways for the host department, office or equivalent to provide good service and support when recruiting and with onboarding.

Umeå University also works with trend analyses and stays up to date with legislation and regulations concerning international staff. Where necessary, work is carried out to influence these areas in order to facilitate recruitment of international staff.