

Intelligent Internationalization at work in The Hague, the City of Peace and Justice

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The City of The Hague as a Backdrop for Intelligent Internationalization

Intelligent internationalization, as outlined by Laura Rumbley in 2015, is a relevant notion to explore in specific institutional settings. The setting in this contribution is that of The Hague University of Applied Sciences (THUAS) and in order to understand intelligent internationalization in practice, the specific setting of the institution needs to be clarified first.

The Hague, with its approximately 530,000 inhabitants, is not the capital of the Netherlands, but is the seat of government and therefore houses the parliament, ministries, embassies, and is also the residence of the royal house. The Hague has a long tradition as the host of international institutions. The 1899 and 1907 peace conferences were held in the city and the Peace Palace, opened in 1913, is home to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial organ of the United Nations and to the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA). Since 2002, The Hague also houses the International Criminal Court (ICC). The city thus provides a learning environment for all students (both domestic and international) at THUAS, not only through the internships that are a key component of all programs, but also through engagement with cultural organizations and local communities.

The Hague University of Applied Sciences provides higher professional education to about 28,000 students, in more than 50 bachelor's programs, as well as in a limited number of applied master's programs. Nine programs are delivered in English. THUAS is an UNESCO institution and aims to be the most international university of applied sciences in the Netherlands by 2020, focusing on world citizenship skills, such as critical thinking, problem solving, and intercultural competence for all its students. THUAS' student body is highly diverse with approximately 40% of its students having a non-Dutch background.

The policies at THUAS culminate in three institutional themes: world citizenship, internationalization, and networking. These are captured in THUAS' *Educational Vision and Framework* (2017), which combines institutional policies and strategies and was co-written with a range of stakeholders in the organization.

For THUAS, the “common ground” that Laura Rumbley mentions for the interaction of leadership, policy, practice and research, is therefore rooted in the specific context of the Netherlands, the city of The Hague, the nature of a university of applied sciences, and THUAS' institutional policies and ambitions. A key notion is that THUAS does not aim to offer more programs in English than it does now and that, in line with Dutch national policies, recruitment of international students is considered a quality enhancement tool rather than an instrument for increased revenue generation.

Intelligent internationalization for All Students

At THUAS, intelligent internationalization first of all means including all students. Internationalized home curricula therefore form the starting point of internationalization. While study abroad at THUAS is available to all students, mobility in most Dutch medium programs is limited to a few percent. Therefore, the home curriculum is the instrument to achieve THUAS' aim to equip all students with world citizenship skills. For THUAS, providing internationalization to all students at home fulfills the ambition to deliver inclusive and equitable internationalization. Emerging practice at THUAS is to involve students and alumni in curriculum design, which may be considered an added dimension to intelligent internationalization.

Reaching All Students Through Lecturers

Delivering internationalized curricula implies focusing on lecturers as the key agents. THUAS aims not to rely only on the “champions” among lecturers. In order to engage more lecturers into internationalization, THUAS focuses on professional development for lecturers as well as involving educational advisors and curriculum developers in the internationalization process. THUAS attempts to sustainably change its curriculum design culture to include internationalization.

THUAS prioritizes professional development for lecturers, which is unlike most universities. As we know from the *EAIE Barometer* (Sandström & Hudson, 2018), only 10% of European universities prioritize professional development for internationalization. Rather than delivering traditional training at central university level, the preference is to focus on individual programmes of study and generate action research in those specific contexts. In these disciplinary spaces, researchers collaborate with lecturers, educational specialists, and internationalization practitioners. Together, they research which local and global developments will have an impact on professional practice and which international and intercultural competences will therefore be required from graduates. These competences are considered an integral component of the transversal skills of graduates. The researchers also facilitate an exploration of the meaning of global citizenship in the specific local and global context of the study programme. Finally, researchers and educational specialists, assist the lecturers in internationalizing the learning outcomes and assessment of the programme and of its modules.

Applied Research as a Key Component of Intelligent Internationalization

Dutch universities of applied sciences introduced professorships in 1999, focusing on applied research for societal impact and the enhancement of the quality of educational practice. The research is carried out by professors, in collaboration with research groups consisting of lecturers and practitioners. Four Dutch universities of applied sciences (in The

Hague, Rotterdam, Maastricht, and Leeuwarden) have research groups focused on applied research in internationalization, which is exceptional among European universities of applied sciences. Apart from lecturers, practitioners of internationalization (such as international officers and policy advisors), participate in the research groups. In many cases, researchers combine lecturing with tasks in internationalization.

Research policies at THUAS have led to the establishment of four research platforms, each consisting of several research groups. One of these is *Good Governance for a Safe World* and engages with the city of The Hague and its many international organizations in the field of peace and justice. Another, the research platform *Connected Learning* includes three closely linked research groups: World Citizenship, Inclusive Education, and Global Learning. The latter research group focuses on the skills of lecturers to teach internationalized curricula, with a focus on internationalization in Dutch taught programs. Research topics include the skills of lecturers to teach in international classrooms within Dutch medium programs, skills to design and facilitate Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL), and teaching visits abroad as an instrument for professional development.

The outcomes of the research feed into the professional development and training offers of the Hague Centre for Teaching and Learning (HCTL). The research group collaborates with international partners on professional development for internationalized curricula, notably with Coventry University, University College Leuven Limburg, OsloMet, and the University of Göttingen. Research on internationalization at Dutch universities of applied sciences fills a specific niche in the sense that it does not aim to compete with fundamental research at research universities but rather to fulfill its own role in the research landscape. At the same time, applied research into internationalization will look the same at research universities and universities of applied sciences.

A Learning Community for Internationalization as a Platform for Intelligent Internationalization

The Learning Community Internationalization, launched in 2018, constitutes a platform where leaders, practitioners, researchers, and policy makers in internationalization meet at regular intervals. The participants discuss trends in internationalization and their impact on the university and its programs. The Learning Community aims to move beyond merely discussing experiences and comparing best practices internally, although that is an integral element. In order to discuss internationalization policies and their effects, the Learning Community organizes meetings with policy makers at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and The Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences, both conveniently located in The Hague. These meetings provide lecturers and practitioners with opportunities to meet these policy makers, who normally only interact with universities at the level of institutional leadership.

Intelligent Internationalization in Summary

The Hague University of Applied Sciences is finding its way in intelligent internationalization. It has made choices that fit the particular context of an ambitious university of applied sciences in a diverse setting that incorporates applied research and focus on professional development of lecturers to facilitate internationalized curricula as the core of internationalization. For THUAS, this is what constitutes intelligent internationalization.

References

Sandström, A.-M., & Hudson, R. (2018). *The EAIE Barometer; Internationalisation in Europe*. Amsterdam: EAIE.

The Hague University of Applied Sciences (2017). *Educational vision and framework*. The Hague: Author.

