

INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY

## IMPRINT

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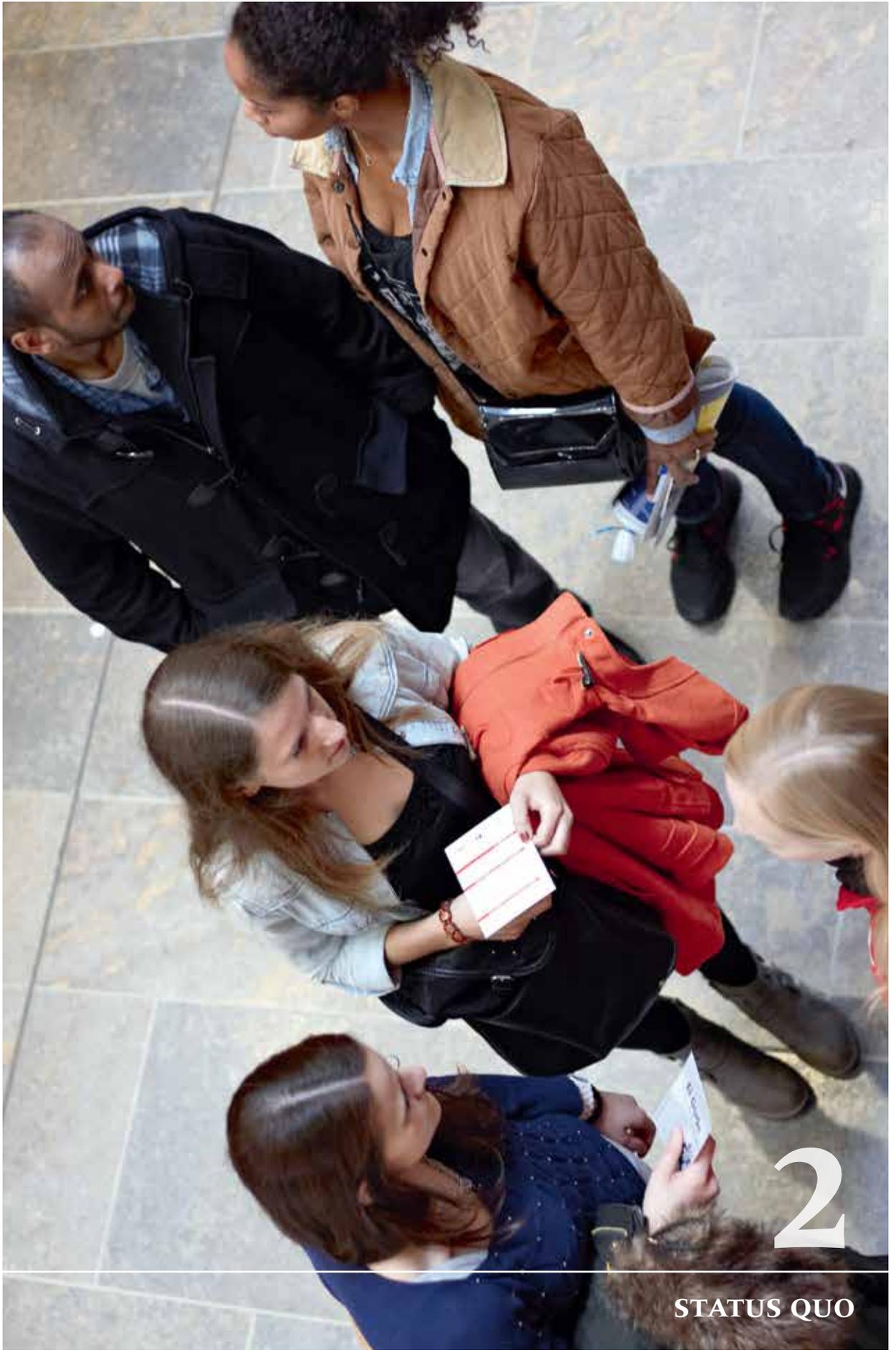
INTERNATIONALISATION

Internationalisation lies at the core of Goethe University's (GU) efforts in research and teaching. Having emerged from an act of civic foundation, guided by the principles of the European Enlightenment and the democratic rule of law, GU sees internationalisation as an opportunity to improve quality across the board, both at the institutional level and in terms of its staff. This thrust encompasses research, teaching, promoting talented young academics as well as further training. It is all the more relevant since a sense of social responsibility at the university in the past brought about new insights, and today in particular, the university is dedicated to tackling [global challenges](#). Increasingly too these days, innovation takes place beyond the boundaries of disciplines and cultures. Likewise, policy strategy and implementation have become cross-border issues. All this presupposes a great degree of [diversity](#) and [mobility](#) in high quality research and teaching. With such a variety of disciplinary and methodological approaches and ways in which they are applied, it is crucial that students, teachers and researchers look at what is happening beyond the borders of their own country. At the same time, GU aspires to attract the world's best 'brains' to Frankfurt. Goethe University also regards itself as an international institution since it is located in Frankfurt, at the very hub of European traffic and trade routes. Following its transformation into a *Stiftungsuniversität* (see Glossary) in 2008, GU now orients itself towards successful role models worldwide, with a view to remaining strategically compatible and operative in an increasingly international, knowledge-based society. For all these reasons, one of GU's most pressing priorities is strategic internationalisation, coupled with a welcoming and integrative ethos throughout the university. The responsibility for achieving this lies with all members of the university; it forms part of *all* university processes and is therefore a [cross-cutting issue](#).

The goal of internationalisation is to:

- recruit more international professors, academic and technical staff and students – from undergraduate to doctoral level,
- increase reciprocity in the exchange of students and researchers with universities abroad,
- promote research collaborations with international universities in a number of ways, preferably with strategic partners,
- establish a welcoming atmosphere to help the university's international guests to integrate more easily at the start of their stay in Frankfurt, and to offer them suitable accommodation,
- increase intercultural sensitivity and language skills in both students and staff,
- offer international visitors and members of the university constant bilingual support from university staff within faculties and the central administration,
- exchange information on a regular basis between the university management and international partners with regard to strategy, management and autonomy.

The International Office (IO) is responsible for implementing the strategy concerning internationalisation and mobility. It reports directly to the University Executive Board (*Präsidium*) and works closely with the faculties and their international officers.



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STATUS QUO

In its Development Plan for 2011, Goethe University set itself a goal to ‘attract the best researchers, create close links to outstanding universities and to create a lively international ethos on its campuses.’ And indeed over the past few years GU has already gained in worldwide visibility and appeal. In 2013 it reached a significant benchmark in the [Shanghai Ranking](#), becoming one of 6 German institutions to be placed among the world’s top 150 universities. The crux of making research more international lies in recruiting top researchers. These then become part of a network of academic contacts generating new research projects.

International collaborations typically arise ‘bottom up’, via bilateral [contacts between individual researchers or research groups](#) and their international colleagues. Most of these are subject-specific projects, which rely on committed individual researchers. Increasingly however, research is now carried out in ‘large formats’ such as clusters of excellence or EU collaborative projects, and these largely rely on multilateral contacts and on-going collaborations with external non-university partners and international colleagues. Here GU focuses on its seven strategic partner universities, since this is where a certain density of collaboration has already been established. This close involvement with strategic partners is regarded as long-term, and serves both to increase research output and quality and to train young academics.

In addition, in [teaching and study programmes](#), GU has already opened up possibilities both for and with international partners. Overall, an increasing number of visiting academics and students coming to Frankfurt and GU students studying abroad have already contributed towards boosting language skills and intercultural exchange. This stimulates language acquisition on both sides and promotes integration in the new social environment. These factors play an important role in student success rates and career prospects. GU summer schools may serve as successful examples. Yet there is also a need to improve the mobility of students by permanent activities such as programmes taught in English and modules offered jointly with international partners. In the medium term, GU – as a research university – needs to focus more

on the Masters and doctoral training programmes that offer attractive degree courses in cutting-edge areas of research. These also safeguard a constant flow of talented young researchers in the future.

An international and open university implies an administration that regards itself as [service-oriented](#), and one that offers assistance in at least two languages, if not multilingual. Form-filling and administrative processes need to be reduced to a minimum and all information should be delivered in a manner in which it can be readily understood. In addition there should be help available if problems arise, for instance, interactions with non-university bodies, the city, the state, and in matters of residence permits, the subsequent family reunification or the search for accommodation. Following the university’s conversion into a *Stiftungsuniversität*, the administration has already taken various steps in this direction. It no longer regards itself as an anonymous authority, but as an independent facility that focuses on helping individuals and assumes responsibility for its international academics and students. One successful instrument of internationalisation is the newly established *Welcome Centre*. In this respect GU also hopes to generate more ideas through its regular contacts abroad and by offering exchange programmes – also open to administrative staff.

International collaborations help in gaining a competitive edge. Building up such contacts therefore forms an essential part of any university’s international strategy when [staking out a position and setting down guidelines](#) for developments in the coming years. A similar strategy is expected on the part of the state of Hessen, as set out in the Hessen Higher Education Development Plan, (*Landeshochschulentwicklungsplan*), which promises attractive ‘locations for research and places to study in Hessen’ as well as ‘targeted ways of securing skilled labour’. The most important initiatives in teaching, research and management are outlined in the following pages.



TEACHING AND STUDY PROGRAMMES

Over the past five years the number of international students at GU constantly increased to the actual number of 6,700 students. This figure represents 16% of all students and is higher than the German average of 11.1%. In 2006 the proportion of international students reached 20%, but in the past years this has dropped again to 16%, due to the surge in overall student numbers. If students with a migrant background are taken into account, even one student in four has a foreign background. This indicates that Frankfurt's importance as an international traffic hub and trade centre is mirrored not only in the population as a whole, but also in our student body. The proportion of foreigners varies greatly according to subjects and types of degrees, ranging from 15% at Bachelor level to 31% in Masters programmes. Peak values are reached in the Masters programmes taught in English, where foreigners account for 30% to 84% of all students.

With regard to nationality, GU students are comparatively heterogeneous, and the resulting wealth of cultural knowledge, as well as disciplinary and methodological diversity contribute to GU's international image. More specifically, interaction between international students and their German counterparts increases language competence as well as cultural and professional skills, while also awakening the curiosity of German students to study abroad. Even so, those students who are unable to realise this goal still benefit from the presence of international students. They develop intercultural skills that will be of increasing importance later on in their professional careers.

Last but not least, an active recruitment of students from abroad, especially for Masters programmes, facilitates access to an international generation of talented young academics. In times of a global shortage of skilled labour, the city, the region and the state all stand to benefit if well-trained bilingual and multi-lingual graduates choose to stay in the Rhine-Main area after completing their degree. But how can the university attract more international students and ensure that they complete their degrees successfully? And how do we encourage GU students to go and study abroad?

### 3.1 ADMISSIONS AND PREPARATORY COURSES

Admissions policies and preparatory courses for international students do have special significance in ensuring their later academic success. Students should only be admitted if they have a realistic chance of completing their degree on time. In this respect faculties, together with the Student Service Centre (SSC), have been invited to develop and test out new, accurate and applicant-friendly admissions forms specifically designed to take into account the various requirements of Bachelors, Masters and doctoral programmes.

Many international students still are uncertain if their academic qualifications or exams are recognised in Germany – there is further need for improvement on this matter. Since the adoption of the Erasmus Charter, the obligation to deliver proof of qualification no longer rests on the part of the student, but on the universities. As it states: 'Where you choose to object, you must now prove that the student's attainment deviates from key requirements.' This is a clear message to abolish unnecessary hurdles. However it is still unclear whether the university – as an autonomous institution – is allowed to recognize the examination marks and acceptability of studies abroad, or whether this is still subject to guidelines set down by the federal-level German Centre for International Education Systems (*Zentralstelle für ausländisches Bildungswesen, ZAB*). Ultimately, where students plan to go abroad to study, learning agreements should be negotiated prior to their stay. The following objectives regarding the admission of foreign students and their preparation courses should be noted:

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The university will test out a new admissions policy and will take a more flexible stance regarding the accreditation of examination results and degrees from foreign students, as well as those of German students returning with credits earned during their studies abroad.

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### 3.2 IMPROVING STUDENT SUCCESS RATES

How well foreign students fare with their studies depends not only on admissions and accreditation policies, but also on how they are supervised. In spite of the fact that, up until now, the student-drop-out quota has been difficult to assess, preliminary data suggest that too many foreign students (63%) at Goethe University do not complete their studies. The International Study Centre (*Internationales Studienzentrum, ISZ*) therefore hopes to increase **foreign students' chances of success** by offering targeted measures such as a foundation year or preparatory courses, including German language tuition. It is already clear that participants in such courses benefit from language and academic support: they achieve better examination results. In addition, one should not underestimate the effectiveness of accompanying measures such as the Buddy Programme and departmental tutorials. These increase the international students' ability to integrate socially and thus the chance of completing their studies.

Of particular importance in the future is the **support students receive at the start of their studies**, e.g. via the federal/state-funded *Starker Start ins Studium* GU programme. This fosters integration, and students are encouraged to study together in small groups, where they can iron out differences in levels of knowledge early on. Some of this help is specifically tailored to the needs of international students, for instance at the Writing Centre, financed jointly by federal and state funds. This operates closely with the *ISZ*, where training in study-related language issues is on offer to students whose first language is not German. Another example of such support is the project entitled *Between Languages*, which helps German students studying to become teachers with verbal communication skills. It has however also gone beyond its original remit and, as far as is practicable, teaches Germans together with those with a migrant background. Where deficiencies are identified, targeted support is on hand.

Among study programmes leading to a professional qualification, one exemplary model is the **preparatory course in medicine**: a compulsory module taken by all applicants from non-EU countries wishing to study medicine. It not only influences the application-to-commencement conversion rates, but ensures that

only those students more suited to the subject are selected, and thus increases the success quota of international students at degree level. Currently pilot schemes are being set up with other faculties to offer foreign applicants more preparatory courses. Another positive move has been the introduction of a mandatory personal interview with those students who, after the first two semesters, are unable to produce any records of their academic performance. It would also be advisable to offer this type of regular feedback at the start of their careers.

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All these promising schemes will now be worked into a robust overall strategy. Here too, apart from the helping students during studies, other aspects indirectly related to teaching and study should be incorporated. While foreign student surveys report satisfaction with their studies, complaints are heard about peripheral aspects: social isolation, the scarcity of accommodation and over-complicated administrative procedures. For this reason the university and the city authorities need to propose a course of action with regard to both student housing and improving the integration of foreign students (see 5.2). In addition it would be desirable to introduce multi-lingual teaching and multi-lingual administrative staff across the entire university, and to provide bilingual documents (see 5.1).

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### 3.3 PROGRAMMES TAUGHT IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

As the numbers clearly show, **seminars and courses taught in English** are proving very popular. Although these courses mean additional working hours for staff at a time when student numbers are rising, the advantages are obvious: for foreign applicants such offers increase the allure of Frankfurt, promote intercultural skills, prepare German students for a period of study abroad and improve their career prospects. In short, these English language modules, courses, lectures and internships add to the international competitiveness of the university, especially when taught by native speakers. For this reason, the proportion of English-taught modules should be in-

creased to the greatest possible degree, and these should also be made available to those studying in German. In addition, faculties should consider creating other programmes taught in foreign languages for top candidates, which might prove especially attractive to students from partner European countries such as France, Italy or Spain. In general however, one would need to take into account the specific nature of the discipline, since it may be easier to implement English in the study of language or literature than in the natural sciences.

**Short-term study programmes** such as the International Summer University play an important role in increasing the numbers of exchange students; these programmes are popular with incoming students, i.e. exchange students from abroad. However there is also a possibility of offering short-term courses especially for incoming students from just those universities that attract GU students to go and study abroad, generally in North America, the UK, Oceania or Scandinavia. This would then make it easier to secure exchange places for German students at sought-after international universities. For this reason, GU will be extending the Summer Schools Programme throughout the university as part of its Strategic Partnerships arrangement. At the same time, the university also needs to be more aware that by increasing the quota of GU students going abroad, it needs to guarantee that a sufficient number of places are kept open for incoming students of partner universities.

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If the aim is to increase internationalisation in both staff and disciplines, a forward-looking approach to modules and courses is needed, especially for study programmes taught in English. These should be developed by faculties and closely coordinated with the IO, the International Study Centre and the Office of Teaching and Quality Assurance (*Stabsstelle für Lehre und Qualitätssicherung, LuQ*). In addition GU will increase its efforts to introduce International Summer Schools in other subjects.

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### 3.4 OPPORTUNITIES FOR MASTERS STUDENTS

Goethe University is a leading research university. As a consequence, one key objective is to offer research-based Masters degree programmes. Having built up Bachelors degree programmes, these Masters programmes will be introduced gradually over the coming years. The changeover to the new international Bachelors and Masters degrees is becoming increasingly common: both international and domestic students are at their most mobile **after** completing their Bachelors degree, according to German Student Service Organisation (*Deutsches Studentenwerk*) social survey no. 20. This suggests that it is precisely at this point that internationalisation in teaching should take effect, and here GU will need to continuously expand its **Masters degree programmes taught in English**. In order to increase its share of international Masters students, GU will need to work alongside strategic partners, funded by the Erasmus Mundus programme. In this regard it would be helpful to have more contact with equivalent counterparts at partner universities abroad.

In future it will be crucial to concentrate efforts on offering Masters programmes taught in English. A particular incentive here is that such courses have the potential to attract gifted students from the emerging middle classes in those developing countries with a long-established relationship to Germany – such as the Middle East, North Africa and Latin America. One advantage of offering Masters programmes in English would be if these formed part of a **continuing education programme** which, in the long term, might become an additional source of revenue. Charging compulsory fees would also set up competition with Anglo-American universities, where fees for non-EU students are always levied. But to attract this paying clientele, GU first needs to improve its welcome service. National and international Masters student applicants should also be offered financially attractive scholarships. In addition before the end of their studies, it would be appropriate to offer careers guidance specially tailored to the interests of international students, to help ease the transition into working life (or a doctoral programme).

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In collaboration with foreign partners GU should build up attractive Masters programmes and continuing education courses taught in English and these should be professionally marketed – particularly if student numbers start to decline again. In addition, the university should set up careers guidance for foreign students to facilitate their transition into working life.

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### 3.5 STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Since 2010, Goethe University has been **pro-active in recruiting international students**. This is necessary because, despite the high numbers of applicants, not enough high performing, motivated students choose to come to Frankfurt. The university is greatly interested in attracting this very target group, however, internationally it is one that is in high demand. German universities are often only a ‘second choice’ for such candidates, and the main hurdle is language.

The Internet acts as the central platform for recruiting foreign students, in particular the GU homepage. In future the GU homepage should present all study programmes in English, and students should be given the possibility of applying on-line. Equally, it is important to target advertising at the school-leavers of the 140 International schools in Germany, as well as a further 870 schools abroad focusing on the German language, drawing on their network of *PASCH-Schulen*. In addition, the aim is to co-operate with Goethe Institutes abroad, since it is here that people who are inclined to be more mobile often begin studying German.

In the medium-term, GU needs to establish contact with a network of schools at home and abroad as well as the Goethe Institute, all of which can help to secure high calibre recruits to GU. Alternatively, the International Office’s recruitment manager could help recruit students by liaising with the departments and the GATE–Germany section of the German Academic Exchange Service (*Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, DAAD*), and by visiting international fairs and recruitment events. It would also help to improve the visibility of

the university abroad if, in collaboration with the *DAAD*, Frankfurt were to offer joint PhD workshops. Furthermore, the federal and privately funded national scholarship programme should be preserved, and even extended, since it binds high-performing international students to Frankfurt in a particular way.

The most popular subjects among foreigners at German universities are economics and mechanical engineering. Since GU only offers one of these two subjects, thought must be given to which other subjects might attract foreign students, and correspondingly to advertising these online. Overall, GU still lacks a modern university marketing strategy that might, through targeted measures, increase the university’s appeal to a global community of potentially mobile students, researchers, teachers and administrative staff.

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Efforts should be made to improve the recruitment of top international applicants from abroad. In this regard, the entire GU website must also be presented in English. The IO and SSC need to build up a network of contacts with international schools in Germany, as well as with German schools abroad and with those schools with a German focus.

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### 3.6 STUDYING ABROAD

What is true for foreign students is also true for Germans: **studying abroad** promotes foreign language fluency, intercultural and subject-related skills. It helps people develop individually and as ‘global citizens’. These skills have become key qualifications for careers, both in academia and the private sector. According to the first representative student survey at GU, 60% plan to go and study abroad, however only 25% of Frankfurt students manage to realize this goal.

The **Erasmus Programme** run by the European Union has proved to be the most effective instrument in improving the exchange of students between member countries. Here, Goethe University is well represented. Generally though, the mobility of German stu-



dents still needs to be increased. According to the IO, no more than 10% in any cohort of GU students go to study abroad, either on their own initiative or as part of an [exchange programme](#), whereas in Germany, taken as a whole, the figure is 18%. Although the figures vary from faculty to faculty, GU – considering its size – clearly still sends far too few students abroad. However the trend is encouraging: between 2007 and 2012 the number of students spending a period of study abroad rose by 25%. However, due to the sharp rise in student numbers overall, this had little effect on the total quota of stays abroad.

Here it is important to keep up the pressure, particularly since GU has committed itself – in performance targets agreed with the state of Hessen – to substantially increasing the number of exchanges, in particular ‘outgoings’ i.e. GU students spending time abroad. This proportion has to be increased by a further 15% by 2015. In view of a 17% increase in the number of students, to reach this goal the ‘outgoings’ would have to increase in real terms by 40%, i.e. by 10 percentage points per year. Given this context, one idea is to introduce double degree programmes in cooperation with international partner universities. These might, for example, involve intensifying the university’s affiliation with German higher education export projects in Vietnam (VGU), Jordan (GJU) and China (CDHK). Alongside all these reflections however, careful consideration should be given to whether the integration of a mandatory semester abroad in Bachelors, Masters and doctoral programmes is both sensible and feasible.

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There is an urgent need to increase the number of ‘outgoings’, not least to meet the target figures agreed with the state. What is true for international students coming from abroad (see 3.1) is also true for Germans studying abroad: hurdles have to be eliminated e.g. regarding the accreditation of academic performance from incoming students applying to GU from abroad. Here there should be more transparency, and the same applies to the process of recognising credits earned by outgoing GU students during their studies abroad. This process needs to be simplified.

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### 3.7 EXCHANGE OF ACADEMIC STAFF

Strategic partnerships with outstanding universities abroad (see 4.4) form the backbone of the internationalisation strategy. They not only offer long-term security for large research projects but provide an ideal platform for a [systematic exchange of lecturers](#). Since 2010 more than 20 foreign visitors have taught at GU in a total of 9 faculties. This has been made possible by the GU programme International Campus, funded through the Hessen Tuition Fee Substitution Funds (*Mittel zur Verbesserung der Qualität der Studienbedingungen und der Lehre, QSL-Mittel*). For guest lecturers, short-term stays have proved to be a particularly appropriate format, both at GU and at partner universities abroad. This exchange programme should be more widely advertised within the university, and the teaching content should be more closely targeted towards key areas of research at GU, particularly the ten large new centres that have existed since 2006 (see 4).

The lack of affordable accommodation in Frankfurt is one problem that hinders the mobility of lecturers to GU. University accommodation, with a total of 60 apartments, is continually booked out so that often the demand cannot be met. An effort should be made, together with the city of Frankfurt, to find new and unconventional solutions. Among these is a plan to build a new university guesthouse, offering young researchers a place to stay for a minimum of three months. Alongside the accommodation issue, another challenge is

how to provide care for the children of visiting academics. This is another reason why it is imperative to increase the number of child-care places on the university campuses.

To encourage visiting lecturers to stay in touch with GU after they have left Frankfurt, one long-term project is to build up alumni clubs. This network would be centrally administered and offer information on current developments at GU, research projects and job vacancies. The worldwide alumni network would also enable GU to link up with German researchers living abroad who may wish to return. Furthermore, associations would communicate with research-focused German universities belonging to the university networks 'U15' and 'TU9'.

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An expansion of the visiting lecturers programme International Campus appears to be necessary. To attract foreign lecturers, a university guesthouse must be built and in the medium term, childcare places need to be ramped up. In the long-term an international alumni network should also be created.

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From Canada:  
Prof. Atiya Mahmood teaches in Frankfurt for one semester.

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Cutting-edge research at Goethe University covers the entire breadth of disciplines. There are now more than ten major research centres that have attracted highly competitive funding from the state and federal government and funding agencies. These include three clusters of excellence, two National Health Centres, plus five centres financed by the *Landesoffensive zur Entwicklung Wissenschaftlich-Ökonomischer Exzellenz, LOEWE* (see Glossary). Scholars undertake their research in close cooperation with non-university partners, including six Max Planck Institutes, three Leibniz Institutes and a Helmholtz Centre. Alongside Munich and Berlin, Frankfurt is now regarded as one of the leading science locations in Germany. Research is increasingly characterised by **inter-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary** approaches that help to elucidate the ‘grand challenges’ of our time: complex problems such as climate change, equal access to education, the development of new therapeutic substances, and financial market stability. It is vital to continue delineating this particular profile even further and to intensify internal communication between disciplines and collaborations with external non-university partners, increasingly too with partner universities abroad. Co-operation could take place on a bilateral level between individual researchers or on a multi-lateral level with institutions abroad. One important aspect of internationalisation will be European institutional support for research and early-career academics, particularly through the new EU research programme Horizon 2020, for which GU intends to contribute its own European strategy. But what additional measures should GU undertake to increase its appeal for leading researchers and young talented academics living abroad?

#### 4.1 DOCTORAL STUDENTS

With the establishment of GRADE, the **university-wide graduate college**, Goethe University has already made progress in internationalising research at the doctoral level. GRADE advises doctoral students and their host institutes in close collaboration with the Goethe Welcome Centre (see 4.3), which offers an extensive range of language, academic writing, and integration courses. In order to promote internationalisation at doctoral level,

new academic formats need to be developed (see 3.4). This could include the possibility of awarding students a PhD at two universities simultaneously. In addition, Frankfurt should be marketed as a place for PhD training, concentrating on its research focus and infrastructure, and thus brought in line with the standards of Anglo-American universities. Close cooperation between all parties involved would then enable GU to present study programmes and university-run centres at selected international institutions, initially with strategic partner universities (see 4.4). However, the application process for foreign doctoral students still needs to be simplified and made more transparent, and to this end GU intends to set up a central online platform for foreign applicants.

Alongside making the PhD programme more international, the focus should lie on the **exchange of doctoral students**. When incoming academics return to their home institution, they act as ambassadors for the quality of research and infrastructure at Goethe University, and thus help to recruit talented young researchers at foreign institutes (see 4.2). Outgoing postdocs on the other hand, advertise the quality of teaching at GU, and on their return, contribute to enriching the university’s academic and research strategy. For this reason it is important to make even greater use of the German Academic Exchange Service, Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the German Research Foundation (*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG*) initiatives.

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To expand internationalisation at PhD level, more courses in English should be developed and these should be better promoted abroad. In addition, over the next years, funds should be made available to PhD students for periods of study at partner universities and other top research facilities abroad, and for incoming foreign PhD students to spend time at GU.

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## 4.2 ACADEMIC RECRUITMENT

Individual academics are essential for quality research. Nowadays, virtually every academic has had some international exposure and now over a quarter of all the professorial appointments at GU come from abroad. As impressive as these numbers may be on a national scale, they appear less convincing when compared to the European level. In the recruitment of **top international academics**, German universities – Frankfurt included – still lag behind European institutions in Switzerland, the UK, the Netherlands and Scandinavia. If this is to improve, two things need to change. Firstly, **professorial appointment offers have to become more competitive**, since temporary contracts or junior professorships are unlikely to attract the academic elite to Germany. As a *Stiftungsuniversität*, Goethe University – unlike most other German universities – has the flexibility to opt out of rigid wage and salary structures. It can also use foundation funds to supplement offers. However, certain limits are set, given the current decline in state funding. This is why in future, in addition to purely financial incentives, academics should also be enticed by structural packages and non-material incentives; for example by the **excellent research environment** in Frankfurt, and offers of tenure-track positions and sabbaticals. Secondly, by awarding foremost international members of regional research institutions in the Rhine-Main area the honorary title of Adjunct Professor, these individuals could be linked to the university even more than is presently the case. Secondly, the student-professor ratio – currently 75 students to each professor – should on no account be allowed to rise. Another option would be to encourage prominent academics and selection committee members to look out for promising young international talents at recruitment fairs such as GAIN. Where, in the past, recruitment of academics from abroad has been successful, this has been in part due to their inclusion in decision-making processes within the university, helping to combat the isolation that professors often face. Departments should also consider holding all internal meetings in English.

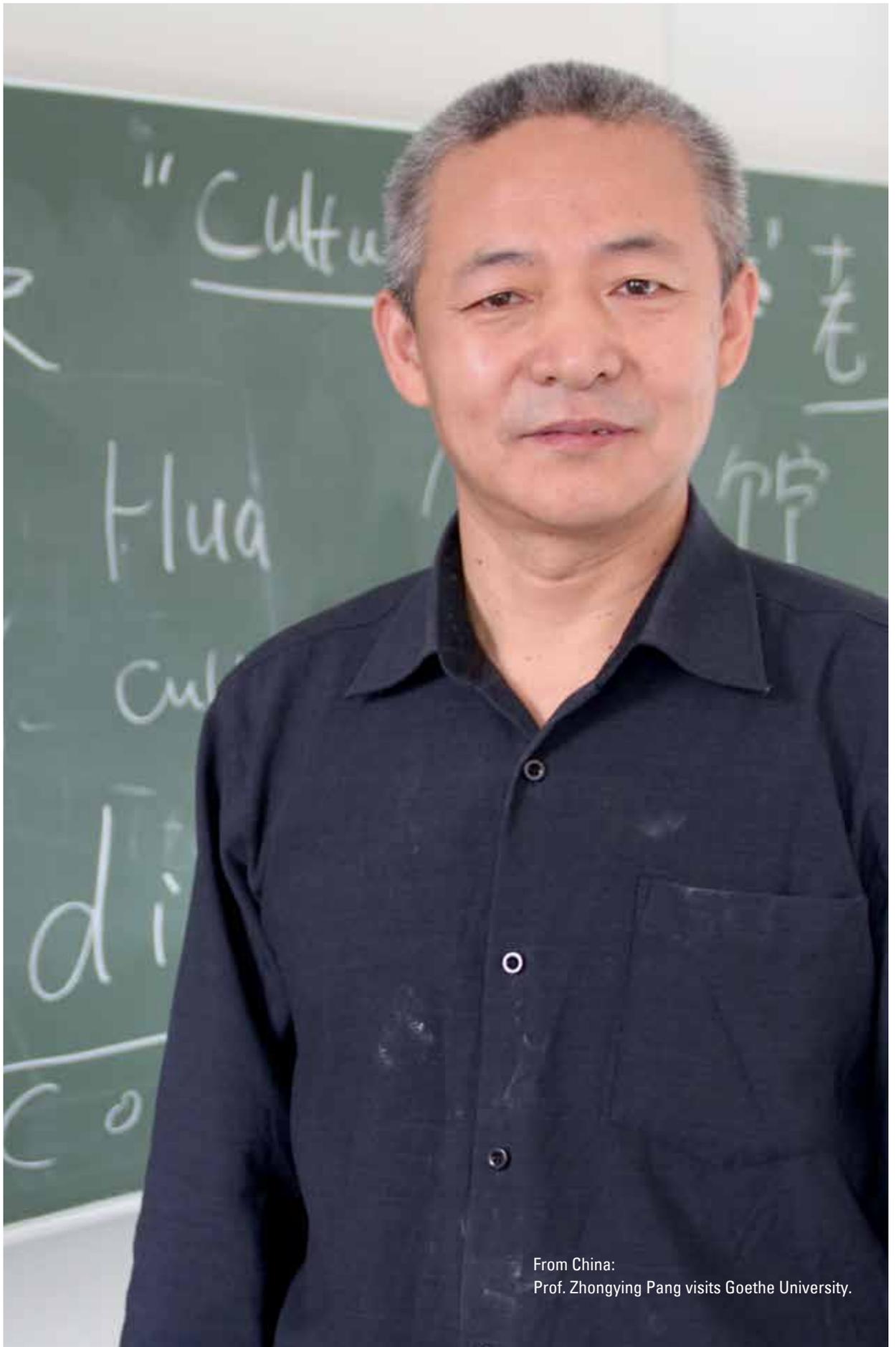
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Goethe University needs to undertake further measures to improve the student-professor ratio, or at least to keep it constant. Independent of this, GU must continue to be proactive in recruiting leading foreign researchers, offering them both financial and non-material incentives.

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## 4.3 WELCOMING FOREIGNERS

Hospitality and services are key elements that enhance the attractiveness of a university. For this reason, the Goethe Welcome Centre (GWC) was established in February 2013, initially funded for a three-year period. The GWC's central mandate is to assist international scholars at postdoc or professorial level with the bureaucracy of setting up in Germany – e.g. in dealing with immigration office and consulate procedures so that they can quickly begin to focus on their teaching and research. In a world of intense competition for top academics, many leading international universities now offer a relocation service as a matter of course. The Dual Career Service, based in the Office for Equal Opportunities, works closely with the GWC to assist the partners of newly appointed professors to find suitable work. This is complemented by a family service to help newcomers find appropriate childcare facilities. The nationally accepted guidelines of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation were followed in establishing and operating the GWC. In addition to helping with 'officialdom', GWC assists newcomers to the university in their search for accommodation, in registering for German language courses and in identifying leisure activities that might help them integrate socially. To this end, foreign researchers are invited to join Faculty Clubs, already established in several departments. In addition, the possibility of offering Germany-specific intercultural training is being considered. To help GU further develop its internationalisation strategy, the GWC also intends to provide reliable statistics on the international research community at GU.



From China:  
Prof. Zhongying Pang visits Goethe University.

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In the coming years the GWC needs to extend its remit and to act as a point of contact for researchers and teaching staff at all levels. The university also intends that these new services should become a permanent feature, augmenting student-facing services at the faculty level.

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#### 4.4 COLLABORATIONS

Usually, individuals or groups of researchers work together with their colleagues abroad in [bilateral research projects](#). These ad-hoc contacts are often highly productive but, for the university, they are mostly unsustainable or too low-profile to be widely visible. It is precisely in larger formats, such as clusters of excellence, that collaborative research with international partners – if it is to succeed – should be more systematic, and less dependent on individuals. Here, institutions such as the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, operating together with the Werner Reimers Foundation in Bad Homburg, can act as useful models. The Foundation considers itself a forum for experts from around the world, working together with colleagues at GU on contemporary issues in the humanities and social sciences.

However international contacts are also underscored by individual activities, such as hosting of global conferences or setting-up visiting professorships. External financial support is crucial for international collaboration, as exemplified in the successful application made to the Marie Curie COFUND project 'GO-IN'. To increase the number of academics participating in European and internationally funded programmes, the Office for Research and young Investigators (*Stabsstelle Forschung und Wissenschaftlicher Nachwuchs, FuN*) intends to expand its advisory service. However if international contact is to become more systematic, partnerships with top performing universities both in Europe and worldwide need to be established and expanded in order to promote excellent [research networks](#). Above all, these networks stand a good chance of success in international tenders such as the Horizon 2020 EU research programme. In-

creasingly applications for international funding opportunities necessitate links with a partner institution abroad.

The Marie Curie Actions Research Fellowship Programme has proved to be an exceptionally effective EU instrument to promote the exchange of researchers and teachers between European universities. In terms of the number of scholarships awarded, GU lags behind other top German universities. The same is true in the case of scholarship-holders from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the German Academic Exchange Service. So here the target must be to encourage more researchers and teachers not just to apply for this programme but also to be successful. Here an incentive might be offered by the host institution, as is already the case with Humboldt and Heisenberg scholarships.

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To systematically enhance international research contacts, the following measures are planned: support for research stays abroad, the acquisition of international fellowships, hosting international conferences at GU and establishing international visiting professorships. Moreover, the number of the Marie Curie, Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and German Academic Exchange Service fellowships needs to be significantly increased over the next few years.

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University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, USA

UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

University of Birmingham, UK



Osaka University, Japan

UNIVERSITY OF  
TORONTO

University of Toronto, Canada



Tel Aviv University, Israel



Karls University Prague, Czech Republic



Fudan University, Shanghai, China

#### 4.5 UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships with foreign universities and departments form the backbone of all exchange efforts. The emphasis lies on **expanding** and **strengthening** existing collaborations rather than creating new ones. It makes sense to concentrate efforts on supporting those strategic partnerships where a certain bilateral 'critical mass' has already been achieved, rather than dissipate energy on a number of less intense collaborations. The goal should always be to create a synergy between projects in research, teaching and administration that contribute towards increasing internationalisation. That said, it is important to ensure that partner universities have sufficient exchange places to accept GU students. GU maintains a three-tier system of partnerships:

- **Strategic partnerships**  
Closely-knit, durable international collaborations with a small number of eminent universities,
- **Regional partnerships**  
In North America, East Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and Europe; involving four interdisciplinary centres with a regional focus, as well as cooperation with foreign cultural institutions and regional partnerships of the state of Hessen (see below),
- **Departmental partnerships**  
Led by faculties, these usually transpire as part of the 'Erasmus' programme within Europe.

Since 2009, GU has adopted a strategy of dovetailing its international activities with those of the city and state, and in this context it has signed a number of contracts with leading universities. It is these kinds of **strategic partnerships** that boost international visibility and help to improve the quality of research. Such partnerships also promote a range of projects in which diverse faculties are involved. Such projects improve cooperation with the city of Frankfurt and the state of Hessen, and increase the number of teachers and students participating in exchanges. Specifically, under the Strategic Partnerships initiative, GU is cooperating with seven eminent universities worldwide: the University of Toronto (Canada), the University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, USA), Fudan University (Shanghai, China), Osaka University (Japan), Tel Aviv University (Israel), the University of Birmingham (UK) and Charles University (Prague, Czech Republic). These strategic partners are among the leading universities in their countries and the range of subjects they offer matches that of GU. Almost all of them are located in global economic centres, in Frankfurt's twin cities, or in Hessen's partner regions.

It is not just strategic partnerships that help strengthen this international network, but also **departmental** and **regional** partnerships too. These include contacts with East Asia and Australia as well as GU participation at the German-Vietnamese University and in the state's partnership with Queensland. In addition, GU is engaged with Point Sud Centre in Mali as well as various other academic institutions in Malawi and North America, for example state partnerships with Massachusetts and Wisconsin. Furthermore, in the cluster of excellence 'Formation of Normative Orders' the focus of research is on developments in countries like Lybia and Egypt.

To leverage its influence with **international university networks** GU is an active member of the European University Association (EUA). It is also seeking contact with associations such as the League of European Research Universities (LERU). In view of the ongoing globalisation in academia, GU also needs to consider establishing regional offices at appropriate locations abroad. Such 'off-shore' activities might not only attract a new generation of students and researchers from abroad, but also allow courses to be established in selected countries. What this implies in terms of content and budget needs further careful consideration.

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Over the coming years GU intends to focus on maintaining relations with its seven partner universities abroad. The Strategic Partnerships Programme funded by the German Academic Exchange Service provides key support.

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From the U.S. to Frankfurt:  
Prof. Darrel Moellendorf researches at  
the cluster of excellence 'Formation of Normative Orders'.



## 5.1 ADMINISTRATION

For internationalisation to be successful, the university relies on **administrative staff who are approachable** and willing to welcome and support international students, teachers and researchers during their stay in Frankfurt. This ethos also mirrors the statutes at the self-administered Goethe University. These promote the principle of the individual contributing towards a common academic objective. But if the integration of international students, teachers and researchers is to succeed, institutional bilingualism is crucial. This applies both to spoken and written communication, and in particular to all relevant administrative documents e.g. professorial appointment agreements, employment contracts, examination marks and graduation certificates, as well as guidelines and administrative regulations. All this documentation needs to be clearly formulated and available in English.

Goethe University regards fluency in a **foreign language** – preferably English – as essential for all staff working in middle and senior management positions and for those who have frequent international contact. This requirement will be stipulated in all future job descriptions. In addition, the University Executive Board intends to maintain regular contact with its strategic foreign partners on matters of strategy, and on the topics of internationalisation, management and organisation. In this respect, the German Academic Exchange Service funded Strategic Partnerships Programme includes the provision for administrative personnel to spend a short period abroad in order to boost their language skills, as well as intercultural and professional competence.

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The GU website will gradually be made available in English (see 3.5). This applies to all fields, including central administrative departments. Successively, university staff are to undergo training seminars to raise their intercultural awareness. The focus should lie primarily on the units that constantly interact with international applicants, such as the Human Resources and Legal Department as well as the Student Service Centre. Finally, all administrative procedures will have to be reviewed – from job application procedures through to the setting up of personnel files – with a view to how well they fulfil the internationalisation remit.

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## 5.2 INITIATIVES

To lend weight to such internationalisation initiatives, a **system of incentives seems necessary**. When academic, technical and administrative staff are promoted, periods spent abroad and language skills should be taken into account, and should also be honoured when making new appointments. Similarly, GU encourages staff to undertake further training and language courses, and to forge and maintain institutional and individual contacts with international universities. Language training using existing services, and ‘virtual’ learning in high quality English language programmes such as massive open online courses (MOOC) should also be encouraged.

One of the hurdles faced in attempting to attract international students, teachers, researchers and highly qualified administrative staff to Frankfurt is the scarcity of living accommodation in the city. In cooperation with the GU Foundation for International Relationships (*Stiftung zur Förderung der Internationalen Beziehungen der Goethe-Universität*) the university provides four **guesthouses with limited capacity** and demand far outstrips supply. The University Executive Board is planning a university guesthouse on the Campus Westend that would offer individual visitors and families reasonably priced, furnished and centrally located accommodation, short and long-term. This measure will go some way towards the university’s goal of doubling the number of units available to international

guests. A potential building site has already been earmarked but currently there is uncertainty regarding funding and operation. Furthermore the university hopes that additional space will be made available to house students from abroad. This however relies on active backing from the city. Finally, internationalisation has an urban dimension too: it is in the interest of both the university and the local community to produce well-trained professionals who will subsequently find employment with internationally active companies. In this respect there is a pressing need for more targeted [advertising](#).

Internationalisation is not an end in itself, but an engine for improving the quality of research and teaching, and a catalyst for intercultural dialogue. Designing and implementing this strategic process is a challenge that Goethe University is keen to accept. Nonetheless, the university's internationalisation strategy also needs external evaluation and here the German Rectors' Conference 'Internationalisation of Higher Education Audit' seems an appropriate tool. Last but not least, the successful implementation of the strategy depends on legal and financial [circumstances](#). Often, legal issues hinder the accreditation of transnational programmes between GU and its partners in neighbouring countries. Similarly, financial incentives for recruiting foreign students and researchers to the university or for building guesthouses and childcare facilities are largely absent.

As an autonomous university GU is eager to make a contribution to life in Frankfurt and to live up to its status as a civic university. This involves both attracting and helping to accommodate [foreign enterprise](#). Together with the city of Frankfurt, the university has published a brochure aimed at potential foreign investors regarding the possibility of establishing a presence in Frankfurt in the hope of attracting those German and international GU graduates who are both technical experts and multilingual. The assistance of the unusually high number of consulates located in Frankfurt would facilitate this process.

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[In response to the scarcity of affordable accommodation in Frankfurt, more units should be allotted to international students and another university guesthouse should be built. It is imperative that the university has a completely bilingual website, in German and English. Furthermore, an external evaluation of this internationalisation strategy and its ensuing implementation should be undertaken. Last but not least, it is the University Executive Board's mission to advance the university's legal and financial situation.](#)

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6

OUTLOOK

Over the past ten years Goethe University has made significant progress on internationalisation. Not only has it been possible to substantially increase the mobility of students but with the establishment and expansion of outstanding projects such as the three clusters of excellence, worldwide visibility of GU's research has also increased. The new Welcome Centre has marked GU's move towards a more service-oriented and welcoming ethos. This in turn has improved the attractiveness of Frankfurt and thus also of the state of Hessen for international academics, graduates and students.

Goethe University has already established a sound framework for internationalisation. This comprehensive plan will be translated into a manageable number of strategic and operational targets, with the International Office charged with the task of implementation. Alongside enticing leading researchers to Frankfurt with attractive offers, now the main goal must be to increase the rate of student and PhD candidate exchanges. To this end further steps need to be taken to augment the number of courses taught in English, and to provide assistance for students during their studies, including bilateral recognition of courses and examination results. In addition, the university needs to work harder to promote itself as a leading research university for Masters students.

In general, there is a need for more places where students may interact and mingle on the three campuses. This would not only help international students integrate into the urban society but would also hone the intercultural skills of German students at the university, who, as a result, might be motivated to go and study abroad for a while. An international meeting centre would also be of benefit, as well as additional reasonably priced living accommodation for international students, teaching staff and researchers. Administrative staff should take advantage of the opportunity to spend a period of time abroad.

The high degree of autonomy enjoyed by GU makes it easier to be less bureaucratic and to accelerate the process of internationalisation. In the final account, the university needs not only competitive structures; it should also be well-equipped to deal with the challenges and demands of internationalisation. For this reason, Goethe University should not cease in its efforts to win financial support from the large funding organisations; funds that will contribute either directly or indirectly to expanding international activity at the university.

## GLOSSARY

*Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, DAAD:*  
German Academic Exchange Service

*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG:*  
German Research Foundation

*Deutsche Zentralstelle für ausländisches Bildungswesen, ZAB:*  
German Centre for International Education Systems

*Landeshochschulentwicklungsplan:*  
Hessen Higher Education Development Plan

*Internationales Studienzentrum, ISZ:*  
The International Study Centre

*Landes-Offensive zur Entwicklung Wissenschaftlich-ökonomischer Exzellenz, LOEWE*  
A Hessen-wide initiative to develop scientific and economic excellence. The state of Hessen provides special start-up funds to make it easier for universities and research institutions to build up focused areas of research and thus establish a particular profile. The intention is to intensify interactions between universities, non-university institutions and businesses and, in cooperation with large research organisations, to prepare the ground for setting up further joint federal and state-funded institutions.

*Mittel zur Verbesserung der Qualität der Studienbedingungen und der Lehre, QSL-Mittel:*  
Tuition Fee Substitution Funds in Hessen

*Deutsches Studentenwerk:*  
German Student Service Organisation

*Stabsstelle für Lehre und Qualitätssicherung, LuQ:*  
Office of Teaching and Quality Assurance

*Stabsstelle Forschung und Wissenschaftlicher Nachwuchs, FuN:*  
Office for Research and young Investigators

*Stiftungsuniversität:*  
University Foundation under Public Law

On January 1, 2008 Goethe University became a Foundation under Public Law (*Stiftung öffentlichen Rechtes*). Although the university continues to operate under the state of Hessen, it nonetheless maintains a high degree of autonomy.

*Stiftung zur Förderung der Internationalen Beziehungen der Goethe-Universität:*  
Goethe University Foundation for International Relationships