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Action plan for internationalisation 2025–2026

Policy document Örebro University

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Background to the action plan

This action plan is based on Örebro University's (ORU) vision, mission statement, core values and approach, development areas, and strategies. It is a revised, elaborated but heavily scaled-down version of the previous action plan for 2021–2024. The period 2021–2024 saw a number of major events changing the prerequisites for the action plan: The COVID-19 pandemic; ORU joining the NEOLAiA alliance which was later given the status of a European University; and tight budgetary constraints have all largely affected the realisation of the previous action plan. In that sense, this action plan can be viewed as an extension of the previous one – an intermittent plan to finish what has been started. At the same time, the plan has been updated to bring it in line with the developments we have seen in the last few years, internationally, nationally, and locally. Although this action plan has been heavily pared down compared to the previous one, it is providing a clearer focus on the goals and activities that are a particular priority for university management. Ongoing efforts are, however, expected to continue to the extent possible.

Why internationalisation?

When properly managed, increased internationalisation can mean a significant improvement in the quality of a university's core activities and support processes, for example, through increased international networking, increased knowledge transfer, competence management and Bildung. Increased quality in education and research can in turn lead to improved reputation and positioning, nationally as well as internationally (eg through rankings), which can further lead to a positive quality trajectory for a higher education institution. Finally, internationalisation is also a prerequisite for certain programmes and research to be carried out at all. Knowledge development takes place all around the world and as a university, we must keep up with it. It is necessary for favourable prospects and for ORU to develop in harmony with the world around it. Having an international perspective on higher education is essential – and a strength – in attracting and retaining talent and employees with the right skills. The university, therefore, needs to strive to attract new employees and students even outside of Sweden. Additional perspectives can be found in Annex 1.

Organisation of internationalisation efforts at Örebro University

A cornerstone of the internationalisation work at ORU is that it must be conducted at all organisational levels: at university and faculty level; at school, division, study programme and research group level; as well as in administrative departments and offices. The internationalisation efforts must therefore be integrated into all activities at the university. To be effective, the right type of internationalisation work must be conducted at the right level and in the right organisation. Internationalisation efforts must also be coherent in such a way that activities have sufficient funding, allow easy overview, and that the support available for internationalisation efforts is easily navigated. Internationalisation efforts must be undertaken jointly by faculties, schools, and departments with the support of, for example, the pro-vice-chancellor, Executive Office, International Office, and the relocation and housing teams. What is important to consider is that heightened

ambitions in (parts of) the organisation can lead to an increased need for assistance from support functions.

A prerequisite for decentralised internationalisation work is that the internationalisation activities defined and broken down according to university goals, are considered in the operational planning at all faculties, schools, departments, and divisions, as well as at the central level. Measurable and qualitative goals at the faculty, school and department levels are to be defined in the operational plans of the respective organisation and will be followed up and redefined annually within this process. In addition, the central internationalisation function is to carry out follow-ups to attain a comprehensive picture of the internationalisation efforts carried out at ORU. Support for the work at the local level can be obtained through consultation with the central internationalisation function. Goals and support must be adapted to the conditions and needs at the local level and take into account quality, accountability, inclusion, sustainability, and equality. Internationalisation activities, as defined in the operational plans, are to be budgeted annually at the local level, insofar as they do not fall under central university funding. The priorities made locally must comply with the university's overarching priorities as well as with local circumstances and needs. Consequently, it falls on the faculties, schools, and departments to allocate time, funding for travel, and other resources to enable the realisation of this action plan.

Annually, schools are allocated approximately SEK 3 million in per-capita funding for outgoing exchange students. As of 2026, these funds will be paid into a designated pot managed by the pro-vice-chancellor for internationalisation. From this pot, schools, faculties, and administrative departments will be able to apply for funding for work that promotes outgoing student mobility.

Action plan structure

This action plan is structured according to ORU's three development areas: research, education and a stimulating place of study and work. In addition, one section relates to overall strategic internationalisation work. The plan is supplemented by an annex containing definitions of concepts and terms and considerations made in the preparation of the plan (Annex 1). The action plan as such is to be a starting point based on which faculties, schools and departments are expected to add their locally prioritised internationalisation activities to their operational plans. Each activity is to be added to the operational plan in the planning tool PUB and tagged "*Internationalisering*" under the tab "*Kategorier*". The action plan states who has the primary responsibility to ensure that the activities are carried out, even if other parties may be involved. The organisational entity listed first bears the primary responsibility for initiating and carrying out the activity.

In the action plan, most activities can be found in those processes where internationalisation needs to grow if we are to attain higher quality in education/research/generally; fulfil our vision; and be prepared for the development underway internationally, nationally, within NEOLAiA, and at ORU. Processes that are already relatively strongly internationalised, such as research at most schools, should continue to develop, however, without special support from central university internationalisation funds.

There are many ongoing, centrally managed internationalisation activities at ORU, such as international research collaborations, participation in other international collaborations

(eg MIRAI and SAR), the HRS4R efforts, as well as student, teacher, and staff mobility. It is important that these continue even if they are not included in the action plan.

For some activities, faculties or schools are listed as responsible. This does not necessarily mean, however, that the activity concerns all faculties or schools. Instead, each organisational entity must determine whether the activity is relevant to them. Several of the activities are the responsibility of administrative departments, which is why it is extra important to emphasise the importance of local operational plans for faculties, schools, and departments, to enable effective planning. It is worth noting that certain activities are, in fact, prerequisites for achieving the goals. The level of activities in the action plan therefore varies from relatively detailed to more comprehensive.

Örebro University aims to offer an environment that is both international and inclusive. A basic prerequisite for our internationalisation work is therefore that, as far as possible, it is carried out responsibly, sustainably, and with equality in mind. These aspects have no separately assigned activities in the action plan. Instead, it is assumed that they are considered in all internationalisation activities.

At present, the most highly prioritised internationalisation efforts at ORU are the activities carried out within the NEOLAiA alliance. Since May 2023, ORU is leading the alliance, a role we will have until at least June 2026. Many of the activities found in the action plan relate to NEOLAiA to varying degrees. There is therefore a separate column specifying which activities relate specifically to NEOLAiA.

Action plan for internationalisation 2025–2026

Research

Goal	Activity	NEOLAIa	Responsible ¹
Increase the number of research collaborations within the NEOLAIa alliance	Participate in the NEOLAIa alliance's research-related activities.	Yes	Inst, Fak

¹ Avd = Administrative departments; Central = Pro-vice-chancellor for internationalisation and administrative support from the Executive Office; Fak = Faculties; HPC = Centre for Academic Development; HR = Human Resources; IK = International Office; Inst = Schools; KomSam = Communications and Collaboration Support; LS = Executive Office; UB = University Library

Education

Goal	Activity	NEOLAIA	Responsible
Substantially increase the number of outgoing exchange students (incl. placements, degree projects, study visits) on all cycles (first, second and third) and from all schools.	Overview of all study programmes at ORU in order to identify where there are mobility windows and how these are promoted in programme syllabuses and on the webpage. The aim is to identify study programmes that can create mobility windows or that can improve communication to students regarding existing mobility windows.	Partly	Inst
	Overview of our EMI (English Medium Instruction) course range to facilitate high-quality exchange agreements.	Partly	Inst
	Develop ORU's first EMI study programme at bachelor's level.	Partly	Inst, Fak
	Increased recruitment efforts geared at European freemover students.		IK, Central
Develop alternative and/or new forms for internationalisation within education.	Develop "internationalisation at home", "virtual mobility" and "shorter exchanges" (summer schools, blended mobility etc), especially geared at groups with limited possibilities for more long-term physical mobility activities.	Yes	Inst, HPC, IK

A stimulating place of study and work

Goal	Activity	NEOLAIA	Responsible
Successful international recruitment	Increase the prospects for successful international recruitments, eg through increased support for accompanying partners.	Yes	HR, Inst, Avd
Increase bilingualism among staff (multilingualism).	Offer members of staff courses in English and intercultural awareness; international study visits; and other activities to reduce barriers to internationalisation.	Partly	HR
	For international recruitments, draw up a plan for learning Swedish to the B2 level, eg by reserving funding for language courses and allocating time for skills enhancement.	Yes	Fak, HR

Overall strategic work

Goal	Activity	NEOLAIA	Responsible
ORU is to work actively with international rankings and accreditations.	Strategic choices are to be made at central and local levels in terms of the accreditations and rankings that are to be prioritised. Time and resources must also be allocated for this work to have maximum impact.		LS, UB, KomSam, Fak, Inst, Central