

# International partnerships from a quality assurance perspective

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european consortium for accreditation

True or false?

The more international institutional  
agreements – the better

True or false?

The more foreign students – the better quality  
of education

True or false?

Successful internationalisation can be  
quantitatively measured

# eQuatic research findings: HEIs

<http://www.equatic.ugent.be/downloads/>

- Most institutions do not have a policy for setting up, adapting or ending international partnerships.
- Inactive international partnerships are rarely actively ended.
- Data on mobility are not used in a systematic manner to inform institutions' policies and decision-making on international partnerships.
- Most institutions do not pursue a quality assurance policy on the formation, monitoring and withdrawal from inter-institutional agreements.

# eQuatic research findings: policies

- EU policy on internationalisation in HE recommends the inclusion of international institutional partnerships in national HE strategies, but without further guidance or follow-up.
- International institutional partnerships rarely feature in national internationalisation policies, and if they do the focus is almost entirely on measures to increase mobility; not complemented by qualitative objectives

## eQuatic research findings: policies (cont.)

- Very few national QA frameworks pay attention to international institutional partnerships; in such exceptional cases the framework typically includes specific quantitative criteria for mobility.
- International institutional partnerships may feature as part of the theme “internationalisation” in institutional audit trails or in voluntary assessments such as the ECA Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation (CeQuInt).

# Good practices in HEIs

- Co-ownership agreements of international office and faculties
- Identification of “super partners” (high mobility) and targeted visits
- Roadmap for entering new agreement based on specific criteria:
  - Monitoring
  - Evaluation at end of validity period
  - Faculty decision in consultation with department on renewing/amending/ending agreement



## Good practices in HEIs (cont.)

Regular evaluation of agreements on the basis of data, e.g.:

- Quick scan, screening report and audit review using quantitative and qualitative indicators on institutional and programme level
- Taking into account the balance between incoming and outgoing mobility
- After 5 years of inactivity the agreement is ended

## Main recommendations: *Data-informed policy making*

- Erasmus+ calls should stimulate the development and application of data-informed policies for institutional decision-making on inter-institutional partnerships.
- Connecting and combining different data sources (European Commission, governments, HEIs) and making these readily available to HEIs.
- HEIs should develop an institutional policy for their international partnerships, addressing the formation, monitoring and cancellation of partnership agreements based on available data and according to agreed (quantitative and qualitative) indicators.
- Professional development and trainings for staff members to improve digital skills and to work on data (statistics, data processing).

## Main recommendations: *Quality assured internationalisation*

- ECHE Monitoring Guide and the self-assessment tool for institutions to check ECHE compliance should be enhanced to include the quality requirements as stipulated in the Inter-Institutional Agreements.
- Internationalisation policies and QA frameworks should not focus on quantitative mobility requirements but on the question how international institutional partnerships can contribute to the quality of internationalisation and the quality of HE overall.

## Main recommendations: *Quality assured internationalisation*

- HEIs that perceive their international partnerships as important for their institutional strategy should also be willing to evaluate their international partnerships in a systematic and well-informed manner, and to include these regular partnership evaluations in the internal QA system of the institution.
- European Commission, governments, and HEIs should promote voluntary assessments of internationalisation, including inter-institutional partnerships

# About internationalisation

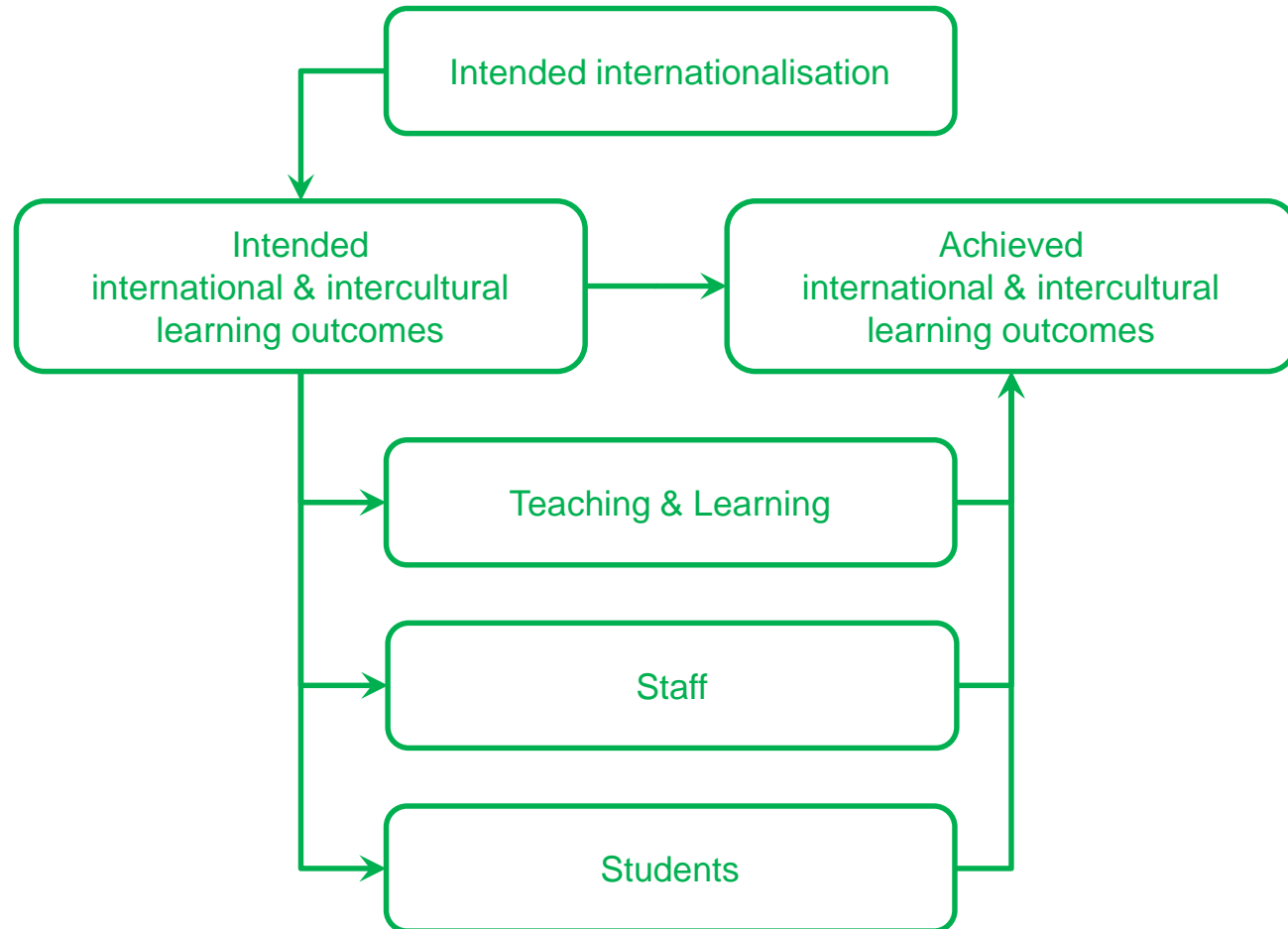
the intentional process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of postsecondary education, in order to **enhance the quality of education and research** for all students and staff and to make a **meaningful contribution to society** (de Wit, et.al. 2015)

# What is CeQInt?

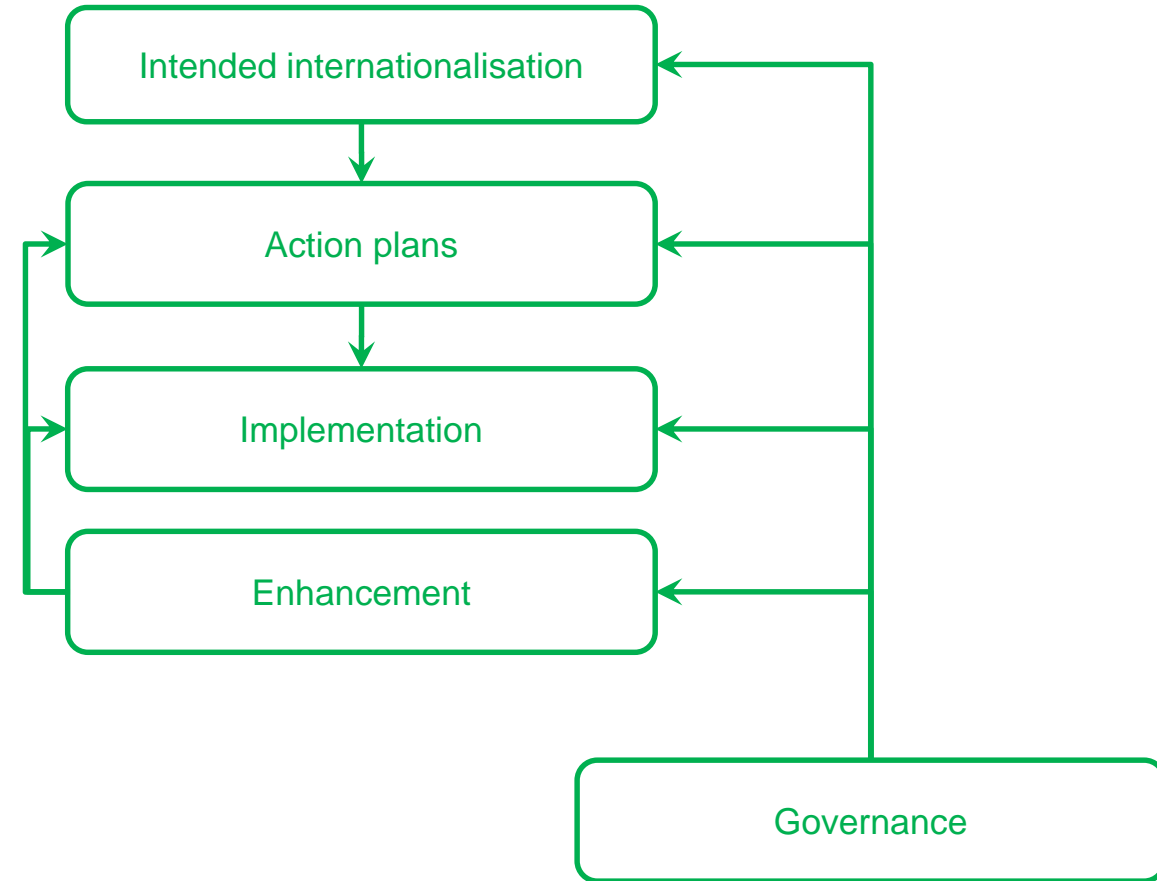
- Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation
- Based on NVAO distinctive quality feature
- demonstration of successful implementation of effective internationalisation activities which demonstrably contribute to the quality of teaching and learning

# Two frameworks

## Programme



## Institutional



# More information

Frameworks for the  
Assessment of Quality  
in Internationalisation



Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation

**e c a**  
european consortium for accreditation

The Guide for  
Assessing the Quality of  
Internationalisation



Axel Aerden

**e c a**  
european consortium for accreditation

An introduction to  
international and intercultural  
learning outcomes



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