

THE INTERNATIONALISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN SWEDEN

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The internationalisation of higher education in Sweden

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Foreword

The National Agency for Higher Education conducts four kinds of evaluations. In addition to the more traditional types – which include the evaluations of individual subjects and vocational qualifications – thematic evaluations are also carried out of specific aspects of quality. These are unique in their way. The first round was undertaken in 1999 and involved the ways in which the higher education institutions work with gender equality, student influence and social and ethnic diversity. Now two new themes have been studied: internationalisation and cooperation with the surrounding community. This report – which is a condensed version of the Swedish report – presents the results of the evaluation of internationalisation.

The common denominator of the thematic evaluations is that they are undertaken to provide a perspective on and information about how the higher education institutions work with certain aspects of quality. These aspects are also covered in all the evaluations of specific subjects and vocational qualifications conducted by the National Agency, but, as in this case, they are the specific focus of the evaluation.

The evaluations of gender equality, student influence and social and ethnic diversity were followed up in 2003. Gratifyingly, this follow-up revealed that a great deal had been done since the previous evaluations – considerable advances had been made. It is now the National Agency for Higher Education's hope that the evaluation and recommendations will have a similar effect where internationalisation is concerned.

The report provides a picture of the current state of affairs where various aspects of internationalisation are concerned. It describes, for instance, the extensive collaboration being undertaken with higher education institutions outside Sweden in the development of courses and programmes. Despite these positive endeavours it is, however, obvious that monitoring and evaluation in these areas leaves a good deal to be desired. Here there is room for improvement. On the whole, however, our evaluation reveals that the Swedish higher education institutions are making impressive efforts to internationalise higher education.

This evaluation will be followed up within three years. Then we expect to be able to focus to a greater extent on results and hope that the work of internationalisation will have developed even further!

Sigbrit Franke
Chancellor

Gunnar Enequist
Project Manager

Summary

Assignment and approach

The National Agency for Higher Education conducts thematic evaluations of specific aspects of quality in higher education. These are unique in their way and are undertaken to provide a perspective on and information about how the higher education institutions are working with specific aspects of quality. In the autumn of 2003, the Chancellor initiated thematic evaluations of this kind of the internationalisation of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in higher education in Sweden. This evaluation comprised three elements – cataloguing, appraisal and the dissemination of examples of good practice. The evaluation was also required to identify the best institution.

At the beginning of 2004, the panel of assessors distributed a questionnaire to all the higher education institutions. Four areas were dealt with in this questionnaire: objectives and strategies, organisation and support systems, ongoing activities and results. The assessors also met representatives of all the institutions to enable clarification and supplementation of the impressions they had formed.

This report provides a broad description and assessment of how the work of internationalisation is progressing. The report will be followed by a separate publication in Swedish containing examples of good practice from the higher education institutions.

Findings and recommendations

A major increase in the number of international students at higher education institutions in Sweden has been accompanied by the development of courses and programmes taught in English. Nearly three hundred master's programmes offered in the medium of English recruit large numbers of international students, and these numbers are increasing rapidly. The presence of international students on the campuses has made them more international. This has, for instance, led to increased international understanding among not only students but also teachers and other members of the staff.

There has been a falling off in the numbers of students leaving Sweden on exchange. To expand exchange programmes the higher education institutions should review their strategies and the information they offer.

Developments in higher education in Sweden point to an increase in strategic partnerships. International networks are expanding. If the higher education institutions are to be able to benefit from each other's experience there should be greater exchange of information in this field.

We have been able to determine that many of the higher education institutions have mission statements and strategy documents that are out of date.

They need to be updated, and this is being undertaken in many quarters. Our recommendation is that internationalisation strategies should be developed at the same time and clear priorities given to the various measures. We also recommend the higher education institutions to systematise the way in which they gather information on which to base their internationalisation procedures.

Routines and support for exchange activities have been developed as has the induction of international students. Here we find international offices, mentorship systems, the involvement of student unions etc. In the programmes themselves, increased mobility among students and teachers has led to the adoption of a more international perspective in the teaching.

In order to be able to offer periods of study abroad the higher education institutions have made numerous exchange agreements. However little priority has been given to monitoring and evaluating these agreements. We discern a tendency towards more effective quality assurance but a great deal still remains to be done in this area. We recommend that higher education institutions should devote more attention to monitoring and evaluating internationalisation in its entirety.

Far too many higher education institutions have opted to wait for indications from the government on implementation of the Bologna Process. The higher education institutions should take better advantage of the possibilities open to them, particularly in the areas where no central initiatives are required. The government should, in its turn, make decisions about the actions to be taken in Sweden concerning various aspects of the Bologna Process. -

One obstacle that prevents a rise in the number of incoming students is the lack of accommodation at some higher education institutions. We believe that considerably more vigorous measures could be adopted by the institutions in conjunction with the local authorities.

We have attempted to assess the total costs for internationalisation. Our conclusion is that there appear to be major differences in the costs incurred in this area. The institutions should undertake a joint study of this area in more detail.

Only a few higher education institutions have so many international students that Swedish students can work with them in smaller groups. This suggests that more emphasis should be placed on other measures that affect internationalisation in Sweden. The higher education institutions therefore need to formulate frames of reference and strategies for on-campus internationalisation.

There is a great deal of evidence for the importance of the role played by teachers in internationalisation and it is important to improve their possibilities of exchange. This may, for instance, require departments to make greater efforts to find substitute teachers than they have hitherto and improvement of the financial conditions offered at some institutions.

The objectives and the funding systems for periods of study abroad for graduate students vary widely at the higher education institutions. We recommend higher education institutions to enable all graduate students to complete part of their programme abroad and to guarantee funding for this purpose.

Internationalisation may lead to specific problems where diversity and gender equality are concerned. We therefore recommend the higher education institutions to pay particular attention to the quality aspects of diversity and gender equality in internationalisation.

Best higher education institution

In our evaluation we identify Uppsala University as the higher education institution that works most effectively with internationalisation. Second place is shared by the Karolinska Institute and Malmö University College.

Introduction

The background to the evaluation

The assignment

The National Agency for Higher Education has undertaken a thematic quality evaluation of the work of internationalising undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at higher education institutions in Sweden. This evaluation was initiated by the Chancellor and has comprised three elements – cataloguing, appraisal and the dissemination of examples of good practice.

The overall intention of the evaluation was to encourage practices at the higher education institutions that will enable development and improvement of the work on internationalisation. The aim of cataloguing these activities was to provide some conception of the form taken by these endeavours in Sweden at the moment. The appraisal was intended both to evaluate these endeavours as a whole and also to identify the higher education institution that is working most effectively with internationalisation. The dissemination of examples of good practice was intended to inspire the higher education institutions to learn from each other.

In its planning, the National Agency for Higher Education intends to review this evaluation within three years. The point of departure for this review will be the image of the current endeavours presented in this report, but on this occasion more emphasis will be placed on the results of internationalisation measures.

The National Agency's quality evaluations

The National Agency for Higher Education has central responsibility for higher education in Sweden. Its tasks comprise quality evaluation, supervision, studies and analysis of the higher education system, evaluation of foreign qualifications, support for the renewal and development of programmes and also the provision of information about higher education and its promotion. The National Agency is also responsible for the official statistics on higher education.

Since 2001, at the behest of the government, the National Agency has been undertaking evaluations of all subjects and programmes at higher education institutions. Both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes are being evaluated. One of several other forms of evaluation consists of the National Agency's thematic quality evaluations. These are unique in their way. The first round was conducted in 1999 and concerned the ways in which the higher education institutions were working with gender equality, student influence and social and ethnic diversity. Their findings attracted a great deal of attention and also led to a great deal of debate on these issues. Many measures were

also adopted by the higher education institutions. A follow-up was conducted in 2003 with particular focus on the results. This revealed that a great deal of positive action had been taken since the previous evaluation. This current study is an example of the continued focus on thematic quality evaluations.

The common denominator of the thematic evaluations is that they are undertaken to provide a perspective on and information about how the higher education institutions are working with specific aspects of quality. These aspects are also covered by the evaluations of specific subjects and vocational qualifications carried out by the National Agency, but here they are the specific focus of the appraisal. The thematic evaluations involve all the higher education institutions. This enables comparison and identification of where the most effective measures have been adopted.

The task of conducting a thematic quality evaluation of internationalisation is based on the idea that development is best attained by indicating successful institutions and examples of good practice. This will offer incentives to the other institutions to alter and improve their own activities. This fundamental idea also means that only the institutions which operate in the best way will be indicated. No complete ranking list can, or should, be produced.

Higher Education in Sweden

Governance and funding

Universities and higher education institutions in Sweden are public authorities. They enjoy a great deal of autonomy within the framework established by the Riksdag and the government. They decide, for instance, how to organise their offerings and allocate their resources, how they plan programmes (including postgraduate programmes) and what courses to offer and their contents. Responsibility for research and postgraduate programmes rests, according to the Higher Education Act, with one or several faculty boards whose members, on the whole, possess academic qualifications.

A number of Swedish agencies are working with issues relating to the internationalisation of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes under the aegis of the Ministry of Education. These include the National Agency for Higher Education in the course of its supervisory activities, the Swedish Institute and the STINT (The Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education), which is responsible, for instance, for certain scholarship programmes, and IPK (the International Programme Office) which administers Erasmus and other major EU programmes.

The operations of the higher education institutions in Sweden are largely funded by state grants. They are allocated funds for undergraduate programmes based on the numbers of students and their performance. They also receive specific funding for postgraduate programmes and research.

The funding for postgraduate programmes and research is allocated by the government to various disciplinary fields. The higher education institutions can also receive external funding from the research councils, foundations, lo-

cal and regional authorities and private companies. All the institutions receive fixed funding for research.

The higher education institutions and their programmes

There are 14 state universities in Sweden and 22 state university colleges. The smallest higher education institution has less than 50 students, the largest over 30,000, and the mean is 7,000. In addition, there are three independent higher education institutions which are entitled to offer postgraduate programmes. This thematic evaluation of internationalisation has covered these 39 higher education institutions. There are also a number of independent course providers that are entitled to offer certain undergraduate programmes.

All higher education is offered in the form of courses. These courses can vary in length but most commonly extend from 5 to 20 weeks. Several courses can be combined to form an educational programme. However, in many cases it is also possible to take courses one by one.

Enrolment

Certain qualifications are required for enrolment to higher education, consisting of general admission requirements and course-specific requirements. The general admission requirements have to be fulfilled for enrolment to all higher education courses. In addition, most programmes demand additional qualifications, the course-specific requirements.

When there are more applicants than places offered, selection has to take place. The applicants are first divided into different selection groups. Each group is ranked on the basis of qualifications, such as the grades awarded in school-leaving certificates. Those ranked highest are offered places.

At least one-third of the places offered in a programme must be filled on the basis of school-leaving qualifications, and at least one-third on the basis of the Swedish University Aptitude Test combined with vocational experience. In addition, the higher education institutions may determine selection criteria consisting of specified qualifications or other objective circumstances for no more than 10 per cent of enrolments.

Financial support and student fees

The Swedish system of financial support for students is organised to enable anyone to take higher education programmes irrespective of social background or financial standing. There is no means test or consideration in any other way of a family's financial status. Where people live should not affect their opportunity to study either. For many years, the financial support system has been designed to enable study abroad for those who wish it. However, certain requirements must be fulfilled, for instance programmes must offer full-time study, last for at least 13 weeks and be offered by an approved higher education institution or provider. Financial support for study is administered by CSN, The Swedish National Board of Student Aid.

All higher education in Sweden is free of charge. This also applies to international students, both exchange students and those taking complete programmes. However, a government commission is currently reviewing the issue of fees for students from countries outside the EU/EEA.

Qualifications

Qualifications in Sweden are divided into general qualifications and vocational qualifications. The general qualifications require the attainment of a minimum number of credit points, the lowest is the University Diploma for which the equivalent of 120 ECTS credits are required, i.e. two years of study. The requirements for the more advanced degrees (bachelor's and master's) include a minimum number of credits in a major subject and the production of an independent paper corresponding to between 15 and 30 ECTS credits. In addition to the general diplomas and degrees there are vocational qualifications in a number of areas such as engineering, the caring sciences, law and the arts. At the moment 43 vocational qualifications are offered.

The extent of Swedish master's programmes varies, from the equivalent of 60 to 120 ECTS credits.

Further information

More information about the National Agency for Higher Education and higher education in Sweden can be found on the Agency's web-site www.hsv.se.

Approach

This evaluation has comprised all of the 36 state universities and university colleges together with the three major independent higher education institutions. Its purview has been the internationalisation of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Research has only been touched on in exceptional cases.

A panel of seven individuals¹ was appointed to conduct the evaluation. The panel based its appraisal on the written responses to the questionnaire sent to all the higher education institutions, information acquired during the meetings that took place with all the institutions and also statistics.

The questionnaires were sent to the Vice-Chancellors and focused on conditions that applied to the entire institution rather than individual faculties, departments or areas. The questionnaire raised the following topics:

1. Gunnar Enequist, National Agency for Higher Education, Project Manager; Ulf Lie, Senior Adviser SIU (Senter for internasjonalisering av høyere utdanning) in Norway; Jimmy Magnusson, student, nominated by the Swedish National Union of Students; Nita Molander, Analyst, National Agency for Higher Education; Mari-Anne Roslund, Programme Director, STINT (The Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education); Minna Söderqvist, Senior lecturer and researcher, Helia, Helsinki Business Polytechnic, Finland and Clas Wahlbin, Professor, Jönköping University College.

- The premises on which the work was based
- Organisation, resources and approach
- The contents of the work undertaken
- Results attained
- Internationalisation's problems and opportunities

The institutions were asked to describe what was being done as comprehensively as possible, with the emphasis on the situation during the academic year 2003–2004. The responses were expected not to exceed 20 pages. We also asked for directives and offered to report a maximum of five examples of successful internationalisation measures from each institution.

After the assessors had read the responses submitted, short meetings were arranged between the panel and each institution. These meetings were arranged regionally, and took place in a total of eight localities. To save time and resources, the meetings were planned so that three could take place each day. Two hours were allocated for each meeting. In the invitations to the higher education institutions the panel asked to meet:

- The Vice-Chancellor or some other representative of the institution's governance
- One or more individuals working with internationalisation at institutional level
- One or two student representatives.

At each meeting 20 prepared questions were posed to each institution, of which just over half were the same in every case. The other questions were tailored for the institution concerned and dealt with areas where the panel required supplementary information.

The National Agency for Higher Education began planning this evaluation during the autumn of 2003 and most of the work was undertaken during 2004.

The Swedish version of this report contains appendices with brief comparisons of internationalisation in Sweden with two neighbouring countries – Finland and Norway. In addition, an account is provided of a few attempts to analyse the objectives adopted by institutions for the number of outgoing students, the impact of certain variables on the numbers of outgoing students and the role that incoming students can play in internationalisation. Finally a brief comparison is provided of the information offered in institutions' websites in Sweden and Australia.

Our concept of internationalisation

Many definitions of the concept of internationalisation have been proposed. What they all have in common is that they are very general. One example is the definition below, formulated by one of the most eminent scholars in this field:

“Internationalization at the national, sector and institutional levels is defined as the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education” (Jane Knight, *Journal of International Higher Education*, no. 33, Fall 2003).

Internationalisation has evolved over time and various elements have been stressed. This is shown, for instance, in the different statistics available. Thus, official statistics merely contain information about certain forms of mobility (number of outgoing and incoming students). This information mainly covers student exchanges in undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and teacher exchange under the aegis of various national and international programmes, such as Erasmus. On the whole there is no statistical information about periods spent abroad in shorter placements or field studies of various kinds. In the same way there are no statistics about the many different measures invoked to attain what is usually called internationalisation at home or on the recruitment of students to entire programmes in Sweden.

Despite our desire not to commit ourselves to a definition of internationalisation to soon, we did, of course, have some conception of what were more or less given elements in our evaluation. The main areas that we consider to be included in internationalisation are:

- Periods spent abroad by Swedish students, teachers and other staff
- Internationalisation at home
- Recruitment of students from other countries to entire programmes in Sweden
- International collaboration.

In addition to these areas, all the support functions required are also included.

There are major differences in the scope for internationalisation at the different higher education institutions. One difference is whether an institution is entitled to award postgraduate degrees or not. Other differences may be found in the profiles of the programmes adopted at an institution, the age structure of its student population, etc. We have endeavoured to take these differences into account in our appraisal. We have also made great effort to consider what is in fact being done, not what it is planned to do.

The international framework for internationalisation

The process of internationalisation in higher education in Sweden is taking place within the framework provided at an international, national and local level. Questions about this last level were included in the questionnaires to which the institutions have responded. The two other levels were not dealt with in the questionnaire but some description is probably still not out of place.

At an overall level a number of organisations are involved in providing the framework for internationalisation in Sweden. These include Unesco (co-finance for meetings), the OECD (various forms of recommendations) and the Council of Europe (Lisbon Convention). The greatest impact on Swedish institutions comes from the European Union and the Nordic Council, both of which are concerned with mobility incentives.

In addition to the organisations referred to, internationalisation is currently governed to a very great extent by the 'Bologna Process'. This is based on an agreement between states and institutions to achieve greater harmonisation of the European systems of higher education.

In the area of free trade, issues are being raised that may affect Swedish internationalisation measures. This is taking place within the framework of GATS (General Agreement on Trade in Services). These negotiations have not up to now had any major impact on higher education in Sweden but could very well do so in future.

National framework for internationalisation

The framework imposed nationally – and officially – for the internationalisation of higher education in Sweden is laid down in Sweden's Higher Education Act and the directives issued each year by the government to the higher education institutions. The Higher Education Act stipulates that

“The institutions of higher education should furthermore in their activities promote understanding of other countries and of international conditions.”
Higher Education Act 1.5.

The annual directives issued by the government specify this requirement, which has been developed during the years. In 2001 the objective focused on mobility. “the higher education institutions are to undertake active measures for internationalisation. These include both measures to raise international mobility and to increase the internationalisation of programmes offered to students on their own campuses”.

One regulation that has an obvious impact on the internationalisation of higher education in Sweden is the ban on charging fees for individual students. This regulation is not unique for Sweden, but still has a major impact on the scope allowed Swedish institutions to receive international students.

By and large, political control of internationalisation in higher education in Sweden must be considered relatively restricted – at least in comparison with other areas – and at the same time complicated. There is considerably more regulation of how institutions are expected to cooperate with the surrounding community. Where complexity is concerned, it can be pointed out that Denmark, Finland, Norway, the Netherlands and Germany each have only one agency dealing with issues relating to internationalisation. This probably means that control is both simpler and more explicit in these countries.

Alongside the explicit political goals, national Swedish programmes for exchange also play an important role. The most important in this context is the programme for Minor Field Studies (MFS) and the relatively new Linnaeus-Palme programme. The aim of the former is to enable Swedish students to acquire knowledge of developing countries and developmental issues through field studies. The Linnaeus-Palme programme is intended to enable Swedish teachers and students to work or study in the third world and teachers and students from the developing countries to come to Sweden. Yet another example can be found in the Swedish Institute's Visby programme, which is intended to create functioning and long-term networks in educational areas with other Baltic countries and certain adjacent areas.

The goals and strategies of the higher education institutions

Introduction

The higher education institutions we appraised are undergoing changes. This applies to most things today, but nevertheless we were able to determine that more than half of them were in the process of renewing their strategy, either for internationalisation or for the institution in its entirety, including internationalisation. Reality will therefore soon have altered.

Internal directives

The documents provided by the higher education institutions vary greatly in character. We do not know if they have evolved in interaction with every level of the organisation, if they have been discussed in various fora or if they have been drafted by the institution's international office and then adopted by the vice-chancellor. Only a few institutions account for discussions of the world around them that have taken place or are taking place. It has also been difficult to judge to any great extent whether the strategies reported are a description of the status quo, utopian visions or firmly focused on actions to which high priority has been given.

It is regrettable that about half of the documents are so out of date, in several cases dating from 1999–2001, in a few cases even older. Development is so rapid nowadays and changes in the rest of the world so extensive, that the institutions should have routines that enable continuous updating.

One interesting aspect is whether an institution's international strategy is incorporated into its overall strategy or if internationalisation is viewed as a separate activity. Barely half of the institutions have submitted their overall strategies and in more than 40 per cent of these cases they involved both action and development plans for the institution as a whole that also included internationalisation measures. In many cases there are strategies and policies at different levels in the organisation, often similar in form but applying to a faculty or a department. A third of the institutions submitted their "European Policy" statements.

We have not made any major use of these as most of these institutions also accounted for their strategies and plans. Only two institutions have submitted specific international policies that apply to their postgraduate programmes.

It may be interesting to study what types of internal directives exist. To illustrate this we have chosen two institutions with different kinds of directives.

At the Karolinska Institute the following documents govern its international activities:

- International Policy 2003–2005 (The institute’s overall international policy)
- Research strategy 2005–2008
- European Policy Statement 2003–2007,
- International policy for postgraduate programmes 2001–2005,
- Policy for international crises,
- Policy for administrative routines in connection with study abroad,
- Action plan for internationalisation of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes 2004–2006,
- Operational plan for the International Office 2004,
- Operational plan for the work of the International Group,
- Operational plan and budget for the various undergraduate programmes,
- Guidelines for the management of international cooperation agreements.

Uppsala University has these:

- Objectives and strategies for Uppsala University (2005–2010),
- Uppsala University’s objectives and plan of action for cooperation with the surrounding community (from 1999), including its European Policy Statement (revised 2003/04),
- Action plan for internationalisation.

We are able to determine that the documents submitted by the 39 institutions vary greatly in quality, that the objectives tend to be too general and therefore difficult to gauge. But even where the objectives are easy to quantify, for instance numbers of outgoing and incoming students and teachers or an increase in the number of alternative courses offered in English, far too often they are not attained. One partial explanation could be that instead of short-term objectives many institutions use what could rather be regarded as long-term goals.

Overall goals and strategies

The overall objectives most commonly cited by the institutions where internationalisation is concerned are:

1. *Academic quality.* This is mainly discussed in the same terms, but with somewhat varying emphasis. One frequent formulation is “... involvement in the international academic community”.
2. *Training for an international labour market.* This is formulated for instance as “... to provide students with the capacity to work in international environments”.

3. *Making programmes and research competitive* in comparison with programmes and research offered in other countries, often with reference to the Lisbon Convention.
4. *Fostering international peace and solidarity*. In this context reference is often made to the third world.
5. *Understanding and awareness of other cultures*. This point can often be linked to the features ascribed to the Humboldtian educational ideal of qualified and critical citizens.

The above items are worded in many different ways in the documents and some of them are so general that they must be described as visionary. One example of this kind of wording is “to improve people’s health”.

Many of the institutions have one or several items in their strategies that are linked to the goals of the Bologna Process and to the Lisbon Convention. Most institutions also include cooperation with the third world, with references to both solidarity and the global relevance of research and teaching.

Goals for international activities

It would take up too much space to offer an account of all the concrete goals submitted by the institutions. Indeed, we have identified more than 30 kinds of goal in the responses we received. Among them there are often references to the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Convention on the competitiveness of a knowledge-based Europe. One important element of internationalisation is what is called internationalisation at home. In this area there are many objectives. Making a campus international requires many different measures.

All of the institutions have – naturally enough – objectives for the numbers of incoming and outgoing students and teachers. Some also have goals for periods spent abroad and various goals for different degree alternatives. For instance, several have specific goals for master’s and postgraduate programmes. Goals relating to the quality of induction programmes for incoming students and teachers and their quality assurance are also common.

In the course of this appraisal we have analysed the links between quantitative and qualitative goals and their outcomes in the form of the proportions of students participating in exchanges. This shows that these links are either lacking or very tenuous. Our analysis also reveals that most frequently only about half of the quantitative objectives are attained, which leads us to wonder whether the quantitative goals are set with the consideration required and how they are monitored.

One goal that several institutions reported was that of integrating an international dimension in all programmes and courses. Other examples are the establishment of courses on international circumstances to prepare students and teachers for exchanges or for the international labour market. Several of the institutions had set themselves the goals of developing closer cooperation

with higher education institutions in other countries. Some adopted goals with a geographical focus, such as concentrating on the closest region, contacts with Europe or countries outside Europe. Other goals could include emphasis on the commercial sector in Sweden and abroad or on the whole of the surrounding community, including public agencies.

Other measures cited include participation in international conferences, inviting guest from other countries, appointing more teachers from other countries, acting as ambassadors or the process of educational renewal. One institution is developing a database of international contacts to ensure that they can be shared by its entire staff and not remain, as previously, the private property of various individuals.

The Bologna Process

About one-third of the higher education institutions have some form of working group discussing and preparing for issues arising from the Bologna Process and the 3+2+3 structure. Already many institutions have 2-year master's programmes, although there are many that last for 1 or 1½ years. Extending them generally to 2-year programmes may give rise to problems, especially for vocationally-oriented courses. There is some concern that such changes will "merely add to the cost" and prolong a programme that the appropriate professional group considers satisfactory. About 10 per cent of the institutions are still waiting to find out what the Swedish government intends to do. A typical comment is: "We do not want to make a decision that may later have to be reversed".

It is worth noting that most higher education institutions in Sweden have had bachelor's programmes (3 years) for a long time, but not in certain areas such as medicine, nursing and teaching, nor in certain programmes in engineering and economics. In these cases, the first degree has been a master's degree. Some institutions are now introducing bachelor's programmes for graduate engineers as well.

At all the higher education institutions in Sweden Diploma Supplement are now issued automatically without having to be requested, as the legislation requires. But few institutions have introduced ECTS certificates for Swedish students (even though they are given to international students). Several institutions are discussing how to apply the system and have organised courses or seminars for their staff.

Nothing is being done about the introduction of a standardised grading system (ECTS) but this is a complicated issue and the Swedish higher education institutions are probably wise in adopting a cautious approach. One aspect of the problem is that a grading system based on normal distribution does not take major qualitative differences between institutions, subjects and small student populations into account.

Nor has much progress been made in collaboration on the standardisation of qualifications, as changes in national legislation will be required before they could be awarded. Few countries permit such qualifications. What is happening is that joint degree programmes are becoming more frequent. i.e. degrees awarded by one university to which are attached Diploma Supplements, for instance, that specify what has been completed at another higher education institution.

This could be summed up by saying that even though Sweden's higher education institutions have not made much progress with the Bologna Process, in no single case is this cause for concern. But the lack of explicit signals from the government may result in a variety of solutions if Sweden's higher education institutions interpret Bologna totally differently. This does not, however, justify the inactivity we have noted in this respect. There are a number of measures that can be adopted without directives from the government.

Quality assurance

Quality assurance may involve many different approaches. One is to keep track of what is going on the world around. Just over one-third of the higher education institutions state in their responses that they do so. A few have submitted analyses of the Bologna Process as special reports, others their international recruitment policy and a few more have developed their own conceptual system for internationalisation at home.

The development of international strategies is only just beginning but growth is rapid. STARS (Study Abroad Report System) is being developed so that better information and statistics can be provided and is being used by an increasing number of institutions. However the scope for analysis provided by the information in STARS is still not sufficiently exploited. Later in this report we demonstrate how a simple analysis can be based on these data. A clear trend can be seen towards the development of quality assurance for international agreements and the formal structuring of international measures.

One way of organising quality assurance for exchanges, which all of the higher education institutions refer to first, is provided by the work of their own teaching staff. Contacts and visits to the partner institutions provides knowledge about the quality of the teaching that will later be offered to outgoing students. However, this appears to take place rather unsystematically, or at least we have not seen many examples of the use of check-lists or the like to help in this process.

As a rule, external evaluations of the activities of the higher education institutions also involve international aspects and both national and international project funding agencies regularly evaluate the participation of the institutions and their management of these projects. Various examples can be found of evaluation of international participation.

Finally we can determine that at a national level, Sweden is in the forefront where open and acknowledged structures and models for quality assurance are concerned. Locally however – at the higher education institutions – routines and methods vary considerably.

Discussion and conclusions

Our conclusion is that many institutions need to revise their strategies, goals and action plans if they are to serve as directives, especially when it comes to ensuring that goals are realistic, widely known and well designed. One area where most institutions totally lack policy is in the internal communication of strategies, for instance, goals and the examples of good practice that can be found in many quarters.

Even though the higher education institutions in Sweden have not made any great progress with the entire Bologna Process, this is probably not a major problem in any individual case. But the lack of explicit signals from the government may result in very different practices at Sweden's higher education institutions because of their different perceptions of the Bologna Process. The fact that it is taking time to provide joint guidelines should not, however, prevent the institutions from beginning active work on those aspects of the process where its direction is unambiguous.

As in other areas, it is hazardous to set goals without analysing the conditions that apply. However, in our opinion, analytical processes where internationalisation is concerned are not sound, which increases the discrepancies between goals and their attainment. It is also clear that on the whole internationalisation measures are rarely monitored and evaluated.

We believe that it would be beneficial to link the aims for outgoing students to the institution's overall goals and strategies. This provides the conditions in which more realistic goals can be set. In internationalisation, as in every process, priorities have to be assigned. It may well be that failure to attain goals makes it difficult to set priorities.

Our analysis of the relationship between the goals for exchanges and how well these are attained shows that the most important thing is to express aims clearly and assign priority to them, or at least establish explicit links, in the higher education institution's overall goals and strategies.

There has been a great deal of development of the quality assurance of inductions offered to international students. However, there are still shortcomings in this area.

It must finally be added that the panel of assessors has met administrators, staff and students who are both inventive and committed to internationalisation. The measures are admittedly only quality assured to a limited extent, but overall it can be seen that fantastic developments have been made in recent years in the internationalisation of higher education.

Organisation and support systems

Introduction

Educational cooperation is a relatively modern phenomenon. However it has undergone intense development in the last 10–15 years, especially through the EU and the Bologna Process. The rapid development of educational cooperation has meant that the higher education institutions have opted for different approaches to internationalisation and different ways of organising their support systems. Differences in the circumstances of the institutions have also played an important role in these choices. It is obvious that as a result of these differences support systems have to be adapted to the various higher education institutions and the programmes they offer, what they want to encourage, where they want to focus.

Monitoring and analysis of the outside world

In our questionnaire we asked about the strategies of the higher education institutions, how they were developed and whether, for example, they arranged any monitoring and analysis of the outside world. Just under one-third of the responses describe how they monitor the outside world. This is mainly through teachers and administrative staff. There are also examples of experts of different kinds being invited to cast light on current issues, such as the Bologna Process. However, to a large extent, there were no descriptions of how this work – process – of monitoring is organised.

Intelligence is therefore acquired, in other words information is collected. However, we have seen no direct examples of this information being processed to provide an analysis. Nor is it claimed that analysis of the outside world is an important aid in the creation of strategies, action plans, etc. It is likely that quite a lot of work of this kind takes place but that it is not defined as analysis of the outside world.

There are also signs to suggest that the higher education institutions do conduct analysis of this kind. One institution had, for instance, produced a number of important documents for its internationalisation process, including a crisis and preparedness plan. It is likely that here both the institution's international office and any internationalisation groups it may have play an important role. However, the work does not seem to be particularly systematic. In addition, it is unclear how the information is circulated to other sections of the institution. The analytical process also seems to depend on one individual. To what extent this is the result of the lack of systematisation or its cause is difficult to say.

Our interest is not directed on analysis of the outside world in general but to how it can influence internationalisation. Examples of current issues that are worth monitoring and analysing can be found in the Bologna Process, the question of charging fees for students from countries outside the EU/EEA, funding that can be sought in various national and international programmes, negotiations taking place within the framework of GATS, the openings for strategic collaboration with higher education institutions abroad and activities in the immediate neighbourhood – particularly in companies and other organisations.

What the higher education institutions should have are suitable routines for compiling and/or reporting information acquired to the appropriate bodies – not least the institution's governance. It is also a question of ensuring wider circulation within the organisation itself. One problem is that much of what takes place in this area is the outcome of temporary initiatives. A great deal would be gained from systematising the process.

Resources and costs

Resources for internationalisation

In our questionnaire and during our meetings we only asked very general questions about the costs of internationalisation. The reason was that we did not want to burden the higher education institutions with too much work providing information which by its very nature is uncertain and difficult to compare. However, the responses we were given enabled us to form an impression of the general attitude to internationalisation. Some institutions could answer our questions because their international commitment was defined in their budgets. Others – about half – considered it impossible to estimate. This latter response is fundamentally positive and indicates – we believe – that at many institutions internationalisation is soundly integrated in the programmes.

The costs of internationalisation

Six higher education institutions not only account for the expenditure on their international office in the form of salaries and other costs, but also the cost of the time devoted to internationalisation by subject areas and departments and various projects within them. Coincidentally, four of these six institutions are twin pairs, i.e. are very similar to each other. The two pairs of twins have more or less the same number of full-time equivalents and the same proportion of outgoing students. One pair of twins consists of long-established universities and the other of more recent institutions, each entitled to award doctoral degrees in one discipline.

One of the two long-established universities reports that exactly twice as much of the resources allocated for undergraduate and for postgraduate programmes and research is devoted to internationalisation as the other. The same is true of the pair of more recent institutions.

Calculated per full-time equivalent the figures are between SEK 700 and 2,000. Per exchange student the resources vary between about SEK 7,000 and 20,000. Calculated in terms of total expenditure on undergraduate programmes they vary between 1 and 3.4 per cent.

Irrespective of which of the three ways we use to calculate, there are large differences between the institutions. This may of course be due to major differences in the standards to which they aspire, but they are large enough to warrant a specific comparative study. This should be carried out by the institutions themselves, perhaps as a benchmarking project. One cautious conclusion that can be drawn already is, however, that considerable resources could be freed for further development of internationalisation or for some other purpose.

Preparedness to charge fees

During the interviews we asked whether the higher education institutions were prepared to begin to charge non-EU/EEA students fees. The background here is that the Swedish government has held out the prospect of this being permitted. It transpired that about half of the institutions had not even discussed this question, while others were well prepared for the possibility. Here one can conclude that the higher education institutions in Sweden are as a whole not ready to be able to charge fees in the way currently under discussion. In this context, it can be pointed out that the government has appointed a commission to study the issue of fees.

Organisation

Student exchange in programmes

The EU programmes have come to play a leading role in the development of student exchange in Europe. These programmes have also had a major influence on the organisation of internationalisation in the institutions. Sweden has been able to benefit from these programmes and from its own, in particular the Linnaeus-Palme programme. Sweden's official statistics account for all exchanges in programmes that give credits, including the bilateral agreements of the higher education institutions. It is not, however, known how many higher education students in Sweden are taking courses alongside the exchange programmes, and study periods of less than three months do not figure in the statistics. Several of the institutions propose a review of the way in which statistics are reported, including the reporting of teacher exchanges.

Strategic international cooperation

One issue that has been central to this evaluation has been whether any strategic changes are taking place in international cooperation. Our conclusion in this context is unambiguous. We can see that higher education in Sweden is shifting from internationalisation where the emphasis has been on student mobility – and its extent – to strategic institutional cooperation. What char-

acterises this strategic cooperation is the focus afforded to academic collaboration and its inclusion of research cooperation as well as teacher development and academically well-organised student exchange.

In this new type of partnership it is easier to attain a balance in the exchanges. When institutions combine to offer programmes or courses, each can contribute its own disciplinary strength. When these are made explicit, students can plan their exchange periods well in advance. At the same time it cannot be taken for granted that a balance between outgoing and incoming students is in itself a goal.

Procedures at institutional level

At the smallest institutions, including some of the colleges of applied arts, student mobility is arranged at an individual level. It is managed directly between teachers. Nearly all of the other institutions have developed international offices. Their most important tasks include preparations for outgoing students and arranging the induction of incomers. Some of these offices have large staffs, the largest of course at the largest institutions. Staffing varies from only one or two part-timers to 20. Generally speaking their work is very well organised and they deal systematically with both administrative and pastoral concerns and are also responsible for a considerable production of brochures and the like. These offices provide services to the entire institution and also monitor current changes in the outside world that affect internationalisation.

Less than a quarter of the institutions have an international committee of some kind. Often this is a body appointed by the vice-chancellor, but ambitions vary. In some cases they are concerned with issues relating to policy. Then the international committee need not be linked to the international office and can be an advisory body for the governance or report directly to the vice-chancellor. At some institutions international committees deal mainly with the coordination of practical concerns.

At about one-third of the higher education institutions, the responsibility for internationalisation is vested in a pro-vice-chancellor or a vice-vice-chancellor. This of course affects the status of the international office. The governance of an institution may be so decentralised in general terms that responsibility for internationalisation lies with the faculties or departments. At some institutions many of the tasks have been delegated to each of the special schools or a disciplinary area.

Organisation of student mobility

During the early years of the Erasmus scheme, teachers and researchers were heavily involved in organising exchanges. Later, when student mobility became more extensive, this changed so that mobility became more of an administrative concern. What characterises Sweden (and Finland) is the great involvement of students, particularly in the induction of international students. In many cases the higher education institutions provide some payment for the

work of the students, but without this voluntary work the organisation of inductions would necessarily differ substantially at many institutions.

The shift to more strategic institutional cooperation will probably mean that once again student mobility will be more dependent on the direct involvement of teaching staff. We cannot say what organisational changes in Sweden will look like. We are however convinced that organisations will change in character.

Different types of agreements

International cooperation takes many different forms of expression. What applies generally at all the higher education institutions is that many of the agreements are Erasmus agreements, i.e. concluded for the exchange of a number of students, in some cases merely one. Other agreements have been signed between two professors or departments on research collaboration and/or the exchange of one or more students. Some of these agreements are totally inactive, some are active to some extent or are kept in reserve should some student display interest. The Swedish institutions say that they have now pruned, or are in the process of pruning, their agreements. Almost half say that they are dealing with these questions.

Some high-level agreements have been concluded by the higher education institutions and active use is made of them, often with special funds allocated to the agreement by the parties concerned. These – strategic agreements – often include more than two parties. They involve an undertaking and as a rule are long-term, in other words resources and reputation are at stake in the cooperation and there is some degree of dependence on each other. The agreements often involve several different aspects of the institution's resources, such as funding, infrastructure, students, researchers and administrative staff. The shift to more complex agreements like this will place new demands on the higher education institutions.

Quality assurance of agreements

Another outcome of this more onerous institutional cooperation is that quality assurance of the academic student exchanges will play a more central role than before. There are many ways of arranging quality assurance for the cooperation subject to the agreement. One method adopted by many institutions is to limit the period for which the agreement is signed. Another is to stipulate mutual review of the contents and workings of the agreement. Some institutions have included this kind of clause. Yet another possibility is to invoke external evaluation.

When asked about quality assurance several higher education institutions have stated that this is provided by the vice-chancellor's signature, as there are special routines that apply to entering into contracts, involving for instance review by lawyers. Another frequent method of arranging quality assurance of agreements is through various forms of reporting from students, teachers

and administrators. Elsewhere we have already mentioned that STARS offers one method of managing student evaluations. When the nature of agreements changes in the way described above, it would be reasonable for the higher education institutions to introduce various quality assurance systems depending on the nature of the agreement concerned. Despite the examples quoted here, our impression is that far too many of the current agreements lack time limits or any other form of quality assurance.

Information on the Internet

We have made a survey of the web-sites of the higher education institutions, in particular the information provided in English. This survey was made during the early summer of 2004 – or in other words no little time ago in this context. We would therefore like to add the proviso that some comments may already be out-of-date.

Information strategy and user-friendliness

If we take the institutions' web-sites in their entirety, in other words not just the sections in English, many seem to need to review their information strategies. When you go into the web-sites of the higher education institutions you wonder whether they are intended to recruit students or researchers, present their offerings or their research undertakings or offer an attractive environment for study and social activities? Or are they trying to do everything at once?

Many institutions present many of their important documents, for instance mission statements, on their web-site. In some cases these are encountered fairly soon after entering the web-site, in others they have to be sought actively. Here too which strategy to adopt is important. Some institutions have electronic forms on their web-site that can be completed and submitted directly. However, this is not very widespread in Sweden, nor is the possibility of submitting questions by e-mail. One reason may be the resources this requires.

What kind of user the web-site has been adapted for is not always easy to determine. The impression made is that the information is addressed to public authorities, to themselves or other higher education institutions and to colleagues. There need not be anything wrong in this, as long as the students are not left out. Even so we would recommend that sections of web-sites directed to other countries should be made clearer and thought through more thoroughly.

Internal information

One element in the overall information strategy of a higher education institution should involve the use of the web for internal information. Incentives can be provided for internationalisation by publishing experiences, comparative statistics and encouraging examples. These can be found at most institutions

in the form of information sheets and other printed material. In itself, this is fine but we would like to see more strategies adopted on the use of different media to circulate information.

Most higher education institutions, according to their own statements, do not make particularly systematic use of the web as a medium of information for their own staff. Some institutions present their staff with brief CV's, which is useful for both colleagues and visitors. It makes it more interesting and more personal when looking for a subject and department (when recruiting teachers it naturally has an obvious purpose). Our conclusion is that the web-sites can be used to considerably greater effect than today for internal information to encourage internationalisation, even though some specific institutions already do so.

Where internal information in English is concerned, great improvements can also be made. The number of higher education institutions with international students taking entire master's or postgraduate programmes is rising, as also those with foreign staff. However, many institutions have all or nearly all the information in English.

Presentations in foreign languages

The use of foreign languages, English in particular, naturally varies depending on the nature of the information to be communicated, the intended audience and the underlying purpose. However, it is clear that the higher education institutions want to present the courses they offer and make information available for students from abroad in foreign languages. Admittedly the progress made by the higher education institutions in this process varies, but it is positive that so many have nevertheless attained this objective.

The concentration on English on the web is almost total, even though there are one or two examples of other languages. This applies for instance to some higher education institutions that have large groups close to them that speak some other language, such as Spanish.

Support systems

Various types of support systems

As in many other contexts, support systems are required if internationalisation is to develop. These can take many different forms and in this evaluation we have chosen to divide them into two main groups, depending on whether they are internal or external in relation to the institution.

External support systems

External support systems consist primarily of exchange and scholarship programmes. Examples at national level can be found in the Linnaeus-Palme and Minor Field Studies (MFS) programmes. In addition to the Swedish and Nordic programmes, European programmes, Erasmus in particular, have in-

fluenced developments to a very great extent. Erasmus is now taken for granted to such an extent that few refer to it specifically in their responses to our questionnaire.

In addition to the scholarship programmes, Swedish, Nordic and European research programmes obviously make an important contribution to the development of internationalisation, and this applies not least to the EU Framework programmes. These programmes are dealt with elsewhere. International organisations such as the World Bank and UN agencies, Unesco, Unicef and the FAO, for instance, can also be mentioned in this context, as can the programmes of other countries like the Fulbright programme. One can also say that Sweden's financial support for Swedish students studying abroad forms part of the support system for internationalisation.

Internal support systems

The internal support systems at the higher education institutions take various forms and differ from institution to institution. They are, for instance, involved in marketing the institution itself, arranging inductions and preparing outgoing students, as well as the range of courses offered in foreign languages and in Swedish. Other examples can be found in cooperation on programmes and research with other higher education institutions in Sweden and abroad and the financial incentives that the institutions must provide themselves, such as courses offered free of charge and scholarships for students, teachers and administrative staff.

Internal support systems also comprise things like travel grants, fees for membership in international networks and for contacts with cooperation partners, programmes for guest researchers and guest teachers, support for the development of international programmes, funding for strategic research, paid leave and reductions in teaching loads for work with international issues, participation in conferences, etc. All higher education institutions offer incentives of some form. How many and what they are tell us a great deal about the importance attached by the institution to this issue and also which strategies are considered most effective.

Induction of international students

On the whole the Swedish higher education institutions have a very well developed system for the induction of foreign students and teachers. International students benefit greatly from the sound cooperation and division of responsibilities between institutions and student unions. The technical aspects of the induction procedure are well developed with manuals, mentorship systems, introductory courses, meetings and seminars, excursions and student accommodation. Even though a great deal works well, there are problems. One of them is, for instance, the lack of student accommodation.

Several institutions describe the introductory courses arranged for international students. Our general impression from these descriptions is that these courses are planned well. At our meetings with the institutions we asked, for example, how they introduced Swedish laws and regulations about such aspects as gender equality, student influence and drug policies. Some of the institutions described how they sought assistance in the community, from police officers, lawyers and social and medical workers, for instance.

Many institutions have well developed mentorship systems in which Swedish student volunteers introduce international students to the Swedish community and institution itself. Some institutions also mention mentorship systems that involve the institution's staff and others from the surrounding community.

Assuring the quality of incoming student's period of study

We asked all the higher education institutions what benefit they derived from the foreign students from an academic point of view – for instance if they had studied whether the content of programmes had been altered by the participation of foreign students. If so, this could provide evidence that the teachers are making active use of the international students to improve their teaching by making it more intercultural and comparative. Unfortunately only two institutions were able to respond positively to this, i.e. to say that they had studied the impact. Hopefully many changes are made even though these were not reported to us.

Where monitoring the international students is concerned only two institutions have a network of alumni that functions. They may possibly exist at other institutions as well even though we were not informed about them. In the Nordic countries as a whole this is not, however, particularly common.

One higher education institution reported that it was in the process of monitoring how things had turned out for its ex-students, including international students, and the relevance of their programmes. We believe that studies like this can be very useful for the institutions. As far as possible these should also include international students to see how important their stay in Sweden has been. In Sweden corresponding studies are conducted at a national level by the National Agency for Higher Education, but these comprise only Swedish students.

Outgoing Swedish students

Preparations

The vast majority of higher education institutions offer their outgoing students – and to some extent also teachers and other members of their staff – preparatory courses. These involve not only language training but also introductions to the customs and traditions of the country and what is expected of an “ambassador” for Sweden. The students often have access to reports from

other students who have previously visited the relevant country and the higher education institution involved. The most usual source of this information is STARS².

Assuring the quality of the period abroad

In addition to information for outgoing students, STARS also provides scope for a number of different analyses and information on which to base them. Over half of the institutions use the system, but, as already mentioned, our impression is that advantage is not taken of all the possibilities it offers.

Most of the higher education institutions have established a system involving 'learning agreements', i.e. written agreements about the courses students are to take and how these are to be credited on their return.

Virtually all the higher education institutions arrange meetings for outgoing students at which they can acquire practical information, for instance, before they travel. If possible, they are also given an opportunity to meet incoming students from the higher education institutions they will be going to. As a rule students also have someone at their home institution to contact if needed for health, social or academic reasons. We consider however that even closer cooperation between the institutions could provide better quality assurance for the periods abroad. This applies not least to collaboration between teachers at the students' home institutions and at their partners.

The return home and exchange of experiences

On the whole the international offices deal with the 'debriefing' of returning students. This takes the form for instance of asking the students to write a report on their stay based on a number of fixed questions, as in STARS, and it is not uncommon for meetings to be arranged so that returning students can exchange experiences and meet socially. Several institutions also organise meetings to enable outgoing Swedish students and incoming international students to meet and exchange information and experiences.

The responses submitted to our questionnaire yielded very little on which to base an assessment of the debriefing. The lack of information suggest that this does not take place particularly often. Some higher education institutions do, however, have routines in which returning teachers report on their stay. One institution offers special support in the form of templates for these reports.

Induction of staff

The induction of guest teachers and other visiting staff does not seem to be planned as well as the induction of international students. Nevertheless in most cases they are well taken care of, even if this is at a more personal level. In actual fact almost without exception these inductions are arranged by the

2. More information can be found at www.stars.liu

departments at which they will be guests. Some higher education institutions merely expect the most appropriate department or teacher to undertake this role. As a result of its belief that the way guests are looked after is important, one university has established a special training programme for its administrative staff – the individuals who encounter guest teachers and students. More extensive teacher exchange will probably lead to extension of induction systems for guest teachers.

Evaluation of qualifications

All of the higher education institutions were asked about the role of internationalisation in the context of applications to senior posts – is internationalisation work taken into account in the assessment of qualifications? All responded positively to the question, but in many cases these responses concerned periods spent abroad for research. Nevertheless we gained the impression that greater weight has been attached to internationalisation in the last decade. However, the question of the degree to which internationalisation is really included in the formal requirements must be raised. And if so, which aspects of internationalisation are taken into account? Is the same weight given to involvement in the organisation of internationalisation at home as to periods spent abroad?

The great majority of institutions maintain that traditional criteria such as academic qualifications, publication and teaching experience are most important when appointments are made and that international experience is a desirable extra qualification. But great weight is also given to foreign language skills, particularly English. Several institutions assert that competence in English is now a direct requirement for appointment to teaching posts.

Language courses for students and staff

Many higher education institutions pay for language courses for their own staff, usually teachers but also administrative staff in certain cases. Some institutions claim, however, that the number of courses they can offer in English is limited by the lack of staff with foreign language skills.

Some higher education institutions have a policy of only offering certain courses and certain levels in Swedish. At these institutions good introduction courses in Swedish are obviously vital for their international students, but courses of this kind are also offered at other institutions. Normally these courses will begin before the start of the semester and/or are offered in parallel with the normal courses. Some institutions systematically raise the proportion of courses in Swedish for their international students so that they are gradually introduced to Swedish. However, this is not particularly common.

During recent years, more and more higher education institutions have cut back on or completely dropped their regular language courses and language subjects. The reason is simple – there are no students. However, some institutions have pooled their efforts to be able to offer both language courses and

other language subjects. It seems reasonable to conclude that attention has been drawn to the problem of the reduction in programmes in foreign languages. At the same time we see a clear need of analysis of developments in this area, and also for well considered policies.

Students' language skills

As has previously been pointed out, the number of courses and programmes offered in English has risen and this has led to an increase in the number of international students. Several higher education institutions have observed that the more international students they receive, the greater the uncertainty in predicting how well they will be able to use English. Some institutions use tests, but by no means all do so or demand a specific level of attainment for enrolment.

It is interesting to note in this context that some higher education institutions claim to have greater problems with the shortcomings in English of their own students with foreign backgrounds than with incoming international students.

One circumstance that can be discerned from the statistics and which the higher education institutions have also noticed is that language proficiency determines where students go. Outgoing free movers studying at lower levels overwhelmingly choose countries where English is spoken.

Student influence

The content of the concept of student influence is often relatively unclear and it can signify different things to different people, even though the Bologna Process has clarified its meaning. Frequently it is interpreted to mean the official, representative functions of the student unions. Another interpretation may focus on direct discussion between teachers and students who want to change their courses. Between these two there are of course a great many alternatives. We have opted to consider official student influence, i.e. whether students are represented in the bodies involved in internationalisation processes at the higher education institutions.

Official student influence is laid down by law, but in addition there are a number of examples of institutions that take excellent advantage of the skills, commitment and expertise of their student representatives. One institution, for instance, has actively sent student representatives on its board to monitor various conferences and seminars. Another example of the way in which student expertise can be put to good effect is by always inviting them to participate in major international undertakings at the institution's expense.

There would appear to be students in virtually all the organisations that prepare or decide on issues relating to internationalisation. Based on this and on other observations, we consider that on the whole official student influ-

ence works well in the context of internationalisation measures at the higher education institutions.

Discussion and conclusions

Our evaluation shows that analysis of the outside world where internationalisation is concerned mainly involves collecting information. We have not, however, seen a great deal of systematic processing and analysis. Nor are the results circulated within the higher education institutions. That some analysis does take place is revealed by the reports received from the institutions.

The responses tell us very little about the amount of resources devoted to internationalisation. The simple comparison we have made suggests that there are great differences between the institutions. Our conclusion is that the institutions should jointly review the costs incurred for internationalisation.

We have asked the higher education institutions to what degree they are prepared for the possibility of charging non-EU/EEA students fees in the future. Our conclusion is that there is little preparedness.

Strategic changes in international cooperation are taking place. Higher education in Sweden is shifting from internationalisation where the emphasis is on quantitative, unrestricted, student mobility to strategic institutional collaboration. This does not mean that exchange agreements no longer have any role to play but rather that the range of types of agreements is expanding.

The quality assurance of agreements is an important aspect of the process of creating the best possible programmes for students. This is beginning to start, for instance as the institutions review their current agreements and prune those that are no longer used. We note also no use is being made of existing material that could in fact permit evaluation and follow-up.

Very rapid development is taking place of the information on the web. However, few institutions have any information strategy for the international sections of their web-sites. We are also able to determine that there is a great deal of variation between the web presentations that exist. We recommend institutions to review their electronic information.

The Swedish system for the induction of students is on the whole very good. Activities in connection with enrolment, before the beginning of courses and on arrival function well. What stands out is the involvement of the student unions. The preparations offered to Swedish students about to take part in exchanges are also good. Where teacher exchange is concerned, reception does not seem to be arranged as well.

The institutions say that great weight is paid to internationalisation – both exchanges and internationalisation at home – in the assessment of qualifications. They also describe the development of the language skills of their staff.

Cooperation in offering courses, especially in languages, is beginning to develop in several places in Sweden. It is important to avoid any major impair-

ment of language teaching. We propose that there should be more analysis of current trends in this area on which future action may be based.

Finally, our assessment is that official student influence on the internationalisation process works well.

Internationalisation of undergraduate programmes

Introduction

Many different activities are being undertaken to internationalise undergraduate programmes³ at higher education institutions in Sweden. Three of them will be described in this chapter:

- Offering students enrolled at the institutions the opportunity to take some of their courses at an institution abroad
- Offering an international environment to students taking courses at the institution, i.e. internationalisation at home
- Recruiting international students to entire programmes of study.

After this description we will attempt to provide an overall impression of what students think of their studies abroad. This information is based on STARS, which is used by just over half of the higher education institutions in Sweden.

Swedish students abroad

Extent

In 1989 considerably more liberal regulations came into effect for Swedish students seeking financial assistance to study abroad. This is probably one of the most important reasons why Swedish students began to study abroad on a large scale. Organised exchanges also expanded a great deal during the 1990s. Another reason for this is that from the academic year 1992/93 Swedish students were able to take part in the EU Erasmus programme. During the first year, just over 1,000 students travelled abroad as Erasmus students. In 1997/98 this figure was 3,000, in other words this exchange expanded threefold over five years. For outgoing students, however, this trend was interrupted and in 2002/03 the numbers travelling in the Erasmus programme – which accounts for about half of all programme exchanges – was under 3,000. As a proportion of all first degrees awarded – the key ratio used by the National Agency for Higher Education – outgoing programme exchanges have declined during the last year. In 2000 one student in five was travelling abroad on an exchange, in 2003 it was one in six. As can be seen below there are major variations between the higher education institutions.

3. The term denotes all higher education not leading to a postgraduate qualification, that is, everything from short professional degrees to advanced academic programmes (Master-level).

Most of the Swedish students studying abroad make their own arrangements as 'free movers'. During the academic year 1995/96 nearly 15,000 were studying abroad in this way and since then the number has increased to just over 23,000 in 2002/03. Considerably fewer students are taking part in exchange programmes. In the academic year 2002/03 just over 6,000 Swedish students travelled abroad on exchanges.

The development in the numbers studying abroad can be seen in table 1.

Table 1: Swedish students studying abroad

Academic year	Number of students	
	With financial support from CSN ¹	Of which on exchange programmes ²
2000/01	27,848	6,251
2001/02	27,406	5,988
2002/03	28,132	5,959
2003/04	26,699	6,434

1) Source: CSN. Total per academic year.

2) Source: National Agency for Higher Education. Total for the first calendar year in each academic year.

Why we have seen a decline in the early 2000s in the numbers studying abroad is uncertain. One explanation cited by a number of higher education institutions is that the reduction of the repayment period for student loans means that students are eager to borrow less and to reduce the time spent on their studies. The International Programme Office has suggested that lack of information to students may be one cause. The statistics presented above may be interpreted as indicating that the student exchanges have begun to increase once more whereas the number of free movers may be declining. However more time has to elapse before any conclusions can be drawn.

Distribution by country and discipline

The current statistics clearly demonstrate Europe's predominance for free movers and for students on exchange programmes. The United Kingdom is the European country that attracts the largest proportion of free movers – 24 per cent, which amounts to more than 5,000 every year. However, only about 11 per cent of exchanges go to the United Kingdom. For exchanges, Germany is the most popular European country.

In many of our meetings the higher education institutions have pointed out that their students are not very interested in the countries with which they have exchange agreements. The students mainly want to travel to more distant countries, preferably English-speaking ones. This is also shown by the statistics, where after Europe North America and Oceania predominate.

Nearly half of the free movers are studying the humanities and art. The social sciences, economics and law account for just under a quarter. The distribution of subjects differs in Erasmus exchanges. Here the social sciences, economics and law account for half, economics alone for 32 per cent. For Europe as a whole the proportion studying languages and the humanities is

considerably higher than for Sweden. The disciplines of the Swedish exchange students and the corresponding figures for all the countries in the European programme are presented in table 2.

Table 2: Outgoing students in Erasmus programmes 2002/03, per discipline

Discipline	Proportion (%) students from	
	Sweden	All countries
Economics	32	21
Technology	15	10
Social sciences	11	10
Medicine	8	5
Law	7	7
Language and philology	6	16
Natural sciences	4	4
Others	17	27
Total	100	100

Studies abroad in exchange programmes – especially Erasmus

Statistics exist for all exchanges in the exchange programmes, irrespective of the length of the period of study abroad. For 2003 the total was 6,434 students. Some key figures about student exchange are that

- 93 per cent are for 11 credit points or more
- 47 per cent take place within a EU programme
- 34 per cent form part of a bilateral programme
- 4 per cent take place within the Nordplus programme
- 15 per cent involve some other form of exchange

The extensive statistics on Erasmus exchanges make it possible to describe them in more detail in various respects. For instance we can see that Sweden accounted for 2.1 per cent of all outgoing students in 2002/03 and was host to 4.3 per cent. The number of international students who come to Sweden is therefore much larger than the number of those who leave.

During the academic year 2000/01 0.8 per cent of the Swedish student population participated in Erasmus programmes abroad. This is the same proportion as the average for all countries.

The average length of the stay of Swedish Erasmus students abroad during 2002/03 was 6.2 months. This has varied insignificantly over the years and is somewhat shorter than the average for all countries.

Participation in exchange studies – differences between institutions

There are major variations between the higher education institutions in the proportions of students taking part in exchange programmes, even if their respective sizes are taken into account. We have studied the institutions with a

mix of disciplines (in other words we have excluded the specialist institutions). The proportion of outgoing students at the institution with the highest figures is ten times greater than at the one with the lowest.

The higher education institutions have adduced many different possible reasons for these great disparities in exchanges. These include, for instance, the possible impact of the volume of research at an institution, whether postgraduate programmes are offered by the institution itself, the degree of specialisation in certain areas, differences between the profiles adopted and the composition of the student population and their family circumstances.

As we have already indicated, we made a simple analysis of the differences and this revealed that these circumstances do in fact vary but only to a small extent compared to the disparities in the proportion of exchanges. Our analysis suggests that the main reason for these discrepancies can be found in the level of ambition and allocation of priorities. It is important to aim high in this context and also to have clear priorities. It is probable that the value placed by students on their studies abroad depend on the priorities set by their institutions.

We consider that these aims should be included in a higher education institution's overall goals and strategies or should at least be clearly linked to these strategies. It is important that the aims and the priorities are expressed clearly.

Other periods spent abroad

Alongside exchange studies there periods may be spent abroad for other purposes. In this context we have already pointed out the most frequent way of studying abroad is to travel as a 'free mover'. Other important reasons for travelling abroad may involve placements, degree projects or theses, study visits, etc. These are difficult to describe using the statistics but we shall offer a number of examples.

Placements

Several higher education institutions state that placements for their students are arranged in other countries. This applies for instance to students on certain programmes in engineering, social work, nursing and the social sciences.

One example of these placements is provided by an institution where about 30 students on a three-year programme in engineering choose a 20-week course each year with international industrial placements. One of the larger universities points out that an increasing number of programmes include placements abroad, for instance some programmes in the social sciences. The institution estimates that about 100 students are found placements abroad every year.

Minor Field Studies

One special form of travel abroad is offered by the preparation for a degree paper arranged by the Swedish Minor Field Studies (MFS) programme. This

is intended to heighten the awareness of students and teachers in higher education in Sweden of the developing countries and increase understanding of development problems in various disciplines.

This programme awards travel bursaries to students for about two months to enable them to conduct a field study. During 2003 a total of 534 minor field studies were undertaken. This accounts for just over 8 per cent of the Swedish students involved in exchanges.

Field studies, degree projects, study visits and other periods abroad

Some institutions describe extensive field study programmes in other countries. One institute of education referred to a course entitled “The Changing South” which included field work for 5 credit points in India. Since 1994, about 500 students have taken this course. In the programme in environmental studies at another university a course is offered in which students can travel to Africa to undertake a project for 2 credit points. This course has been offered for five years and is taken by 10–15 students every year.

Study visits are also described by other institutions. One higher education institution in northern Sweden reports that for two years its mathematics department has been arranging an annual visit to Archangel for interested Swedish students in various undergraduate programmes. There they are offered the opportunity to take part in one week of intensive training in areas of specialised mathematics at a Russian university. A course in elementary particle physics at another institution enables about seven students to make a study visit to CERN in Switzerland every year.

One of the colleges of art has a studio in Berlin that can be used by students and by staff for their own work and to keep up to date with the international world of art. Another art college takes part in exhibitions all over the world and a college of dance has arranged guest performances in several different countries. One institution that offers film production takes part in many festivals in other countries.

Several higher education institutions also point out that placements or degree projects are the most normal form of stay abroad in programmes offering vocational and professional qualifications. One example of this is that about 20 per cent of the students in the Pharmacy programme go abroad in connection with their degree projects every year.

Finally we should add that the alternatives – or supplements – to regular exchanges cited here appear to be growing, even though there are no statistics. We also believe that this increase will continue and become a more important internationalisation feature.

Internationalisation at Home

Internationalisation at Home is a relatively new concept, even though the measures it comprises are far from new. When the government initiated mana-

gement by objective and outcome in higher education in Sweden the concept was introduced in the directives for 2004.

Internationalisation at Home is a concept that includes a great many different measures. For example students can be offered courses with international and/or intercultural contents, 'area studies' or courses in foreign languages; syllabuses and curricula can be given greater international content (for instance by the inclusion of comparative international studies); foreign students and teachers can be asked to make contributions in addition to their regular programmes; and cooperation can be arranged with students in other countries using the Internet. It is important to point out that in this report we consider the presence of foreign students in Sweden as part of Internationalisation at Home.

Strategies for Internationalisation at Home

Internationalisation at Home is a concept that has gained very rapid circulation since it was launched by Malmö University College in 1999. What was new then was the formulation of both a frame of reference and an approach to enable different strategies to interact and augment each other. The point of departure was Malmö University College's endeavour to create a profile of its own. To do this it focuses on extensive mobility and Internationalisation at Home as two elements of equal value. Mobility could provide experienced knowledge for some (including teachers) while Internationalisation at Home would enable everyone to acquire 'access knowledge' about languages, regional studies and global interconnections. A shared frame of reference makes it possible to consider detailed aspects of measures in a larger context. Not only teachers but also other members of the staff are involved. There is also considerable cooperation with the local community, involving contributions from immigrants with foreign backgrounds and the initiation of measures that can benefit them.

Some higher education institutions report specific strategies for Internationalisation at Home. One is to increase the number of incoming international students, and the institution involved also has twelve times as many incoming as outgoing students. Recurring international conferences are also arranged. Another institution bases its Internationalisation at Home measures on the multicultural area in which it is located. Large groups of Spanish-speakers in the area have enabled the development of programmes and courses intended for them.

Yet another example can be found in the institution which, within the framework of Internationalisation at Home, uses its intranet and lunchtime seminars to devote a great deal of attention to information about voluntary organisations such as the Red Cross for its staff and students. At a broader level there is reference to training courses in teaching in a multicultural university, courses in intercultural communication, annual international weeks, and lectures by students who have studied abroad on their experiences.

Overall we have observed that many higher education institutions want to extend their frames of reference and strategies for Internationalisation at Home, a few have begun the process, but that only one has a coherent strategy.

Exchange students in Sweden

The number of international students on exchange programmes in Sweden has risen uninterrupted since the academic year 1992/93. The most reliable figures refer, as has been pointed out, to the Erasmus programme. There the number of incoming students has risen from well under 1,000 in 1992/93 to 5,000 in 2002/03. The total number of students on all exchange programmes rose between 2000 and 2003 from just above 7,900 to almost 10,600, i.e. a rise of 33 per cent. This means an annual rate of increase of about ten percentage points. The number of international students on exchange programmes in Sweden is now considerably larger than the number of Swedish students studying abroad, which is about 6,400.

The statistics on Erasmus exchanges also make it possible to describe incoming exchanges in somewhat more detail. These figures reveal, for instance, that Sweden was host to 4.3 per cent of all Erasmus students in 2002/03 although only 2.1 per cent travelled from Sweden. The length of time spent by incoming students in Sweden is more or less the average for all Erasmus students, about 6 months. The largest group of Erasmus students in Sweden in 2002/03 came from Germany.

We have also studied the institutions that have a mix of disciplines (excluding therefore the specialist institutions). The proportion of international students at the institution with the highest figures was seven times larger than at the one with the lowest. This key ratio is calculated, as for outgoing students, by dividing the number of incoming students by the number of first degrees awarded.

Cooperation on their studies between Swedish and international students

A number of higher education institutions state they endeavour to mix foreign and Swedish students when grouping their students for projects or assignments. The aim is to offer the local students the possibility of meeting and cooperating with their international counterparts during their studies. Opportunities such as these will naturally depend on how many international students there are in relation to Swedish ones. We have made an analysis that shows that there are probably only a few Swedish institutions that can arrange for their students to work intensively with international students during the course of their programmes. With the current average number of international students, according to our calculations there are 7–10 local students per international student. This would mean that the project groups would have to be considerably larger than is normal in higher education in Sweden today.

This low interaction is also illustrated by the findings of a questionnaire survey conducted by the National Agency for Higher Education during the autumn semester of 2001. When asked to what extent they had been involved in a meaningful conversation with a student from another cultural, social or ethnic background, the frequency of the responses was as follows:

- Very seldom/never 31 per cent
- Seldom 35 per cent
- Often 25 per cent
- Very often 8 per cent

International students as an ancillary resource in studies

Both international students and teachers can serve as an important resource for internationalisation, alongside the normal teaching situations. Examples of this are reported by several higher education institutions. At one a diversity week is organised to which the entire institution is invited. International students are engaged to plan and implement it. Similar arrangements can be found elsewhere. Despite these reports we encountered surprisingly few examples in which incoming students and teachers had been involved more systematically. We had hoped to find more.

We asked what use was made of international students to develop cross-cultural and comparative perspectives in the teaching, for instance. The responses do not indicate any systematic use, which could otherwise offer one development approach. When it comes to the involvement of the incoming students in the (obligatory) course evaluations, responses offer a mixed picture. Some institutions say that they participate on the same terms as Swedish students but point out that the statutory course evaluations are not always adapted to the international students.

On the whole, there are probably good grounds for the Swedish higher education institutions to think more deeply about how interaction between incoming and local students can be increased in different ways, and how to derive benefit from the expertise of the international students without “treading on their toes”. The educational environment in the Nordic countries differs from those of many other countries. Not least in terms of the difference in relationships to those of higher status, such as teachers. It takes guidance and time to get used to Swedish culture.

Social contacts

Generally speaking the way in which international students are welcomed seems to be well thought out and organised. All the institutions have a system that provides advance information and arranges accommodation, inductions, courses in Swedish, etc. (see also the chapter on organisation and support systems). In addition, students are looked after during their studies in many other ways as well, often through social and cultural activities that are distinct from their courses.

Guest teachers and staff with foreign backgrounds

In the responses to our questionnaire no higher education institutions reported any explicit strategy the international recruitment of teaching staff or the extent to which this took place. However, several institutions said that they had a large proportion of staff with foreign backgrounds, some of whom were recruited from other countries.

The quality of the National Agency for Higher Education's statistics on periods of teacher exchange may be questionable because of deficiencies in the material submitted by the institutions. Despite these possible shortcomings we have opted to use the existing data as a basis. The figures for teacher exchanges lasting three months or more paint the following picture of the number of guest teachers at higher education institutions in Sweden.

Table 3: Incoming teachers, per year

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003
Incoming teachers	576	570	499	667

This table shows that the number of incoming guest teachers on longer exchanges amounted to 667 in 2003, i.e. considerably more than the 250 outgoing teachers from Sweden (see below). Half of the guest teachers in 2003 came from Europe. The EU accounted for 36 per cent, and the rest of Europe for 19 per cent. Only 6 per cent of guest teachers came from the USA.

Many of the higher education institutions interviewed claimed that short exchanges (of less than three months) were very common. One example of shorter exchanges can be found in the Erasmus programme. The average length of these exchanges is barely 7 days. During the academic year of 2002/03, just over 470 teachers came to Sweden on Erasmus exchanges, i.e. somewhat fewer than on the long exchanges above.

Another example of short teacher exchanges can be found in the Swedish Linnaeus-Palme programme, which focuses on the third world. In the 2003/04 round, 362 applications for teacher exchange were accepted. Of these, 184 were for incoming teachers to Sweden.

Several of the colleges of fine arts mentioned that they have a large number – up to 50 – guest teachers from abroad each year. On average they stay for only a few weeks.

The international experience and competence of Swedish staff

The quality of the statistics on outgoing teachers is also doubtful, but as there is no alternative we have opted to use it. According to these figures the extent of Swedish teachers' programme exchanges lasting more than three months has declined in recent years.

Table 4: Outgoing teachers, per year

Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Outgoing teachers	321	362	280	289	248

This table reveals that the number of Swedish teachers spending time abroad is only about 40 per cent of the corresponding figure for incoming teachers. On average about 1 per cent of teachers are involved in exchanges of three months or more every year. Closer study of the countries involved shows that a very high proportion go to the USA whereas the corresponding proportion of incoming guest teachers is much smaller (see above).

Support is also provided by STINT to enable Swedish teachers to go abroad. Its Excellence in Teaching programme offers teachers the chance of spending a semester at a Liberal Arts College. This is to enable them to acquire knowledge about how to maintain a high quality in teaching that has no direct research links.

As is the case for incoming teachers, the higher education institutions maintain that there are considerably more short exchanges than long ones. One example is offered by the Erasmus programme. During 2002/03 the number of Swedish teachers involved in these exchanges totalled 428, i.e. somewhat fewer than the number of incoming teachers (474). During 2003/04 there was a major upswing in this number to 511.

In terms of the total number of teachers, 1.5 per cent were involved in exchanges in the Erasmus programme during 2001/02. This is a considerably lower figure than for Finland (5 per cent) while participation in Denmark and Norway is more or less the same as in Sweden.

The responses to the questionnaire also provided examples of the difficulties that can arise when it is desired to increase teacher exchanges. For instance, teachers in programmes in the caring sciences who are also professionally active themselves find it difficult to get time off for an exchange. Another example is that small programmes find it difficult to earmark adequate resources for teachers to work specifically with internationalisation and there may be no teachers who can substitute for a member of the staff on an exchange.

Other staff

Most of the higher education institutions responded to questions about measures adopted for other members of their staff by saying that there should be more exchanges and other forms of in-service training. There are examples of successful measures but there are also difficulties. Many offer language courses and/or courses in international communication for teachers and for other members of their staff.

One institution describes the training offered to its own administrators, which includes a course in English for administrators and also one in international communication. It was also pointed out that cooperation takes place with two adjacent higher education institutions to enable administrators to

take part in exchanges. This was successful in arousing great interest: 22 administrators applied but only four were able to participate.

One higher education institution mentioned two in-service training projects within the framework of the EU Leonardo da Vinci programme. Seminars were offered between 2002–2004 to 60 individuals and 40 of them made study visits abroad. Another institution arranged a programme within the Erasmus scheme. Ten administrators spent a week at a partner university. Yet another institution described study trips for entire groups of administrators to the University of Bologna.

Several of the large universities report that international exchanges for other members of their staff are limited. What is referred to is the Nordic Cooperation for University Administrators (NUAS) and a web-based newsletter with international news.

Cooperation on programmes and courses

Networks and international strategic cooperation

Strategic cooperation may involve several higher education institutions pooling their forces to develop teaching or to cooperate with companies in commercial consortia. It may also involve cooperation on staffing or cooperation that is restricted to teaching and research. Networks like NOVA (the universities of agricultural sciences in the Nordic countries) are examples of strategic cooperation in higher education. This means yielding autonomy for the sake of cooperation and making major investments – risk is involved in other words. Networks have also evolved from Erasmus cooperation, for instance the Utrecht network can be included in this category as can the Coimbra and Santander networks. Networks also frequently provide a framework for the organisation of joint applications for international projects.

Support from the Nordic Council of Ministers and its Nordplus programme funds several networks. Nordlys is one in which all the Nordic universities are members, but more limited collaboration also takes place. One example is the cooperation between the Nordic colleges of physical education in developing programmes in outdoor life and between colleges of art that have always had a strong tradition of cooperation.

Most higher education institutions mention a large number of networks that they either coordinate or participate in. Some examples are the Runestone project, which has been in existence for seven years and in which just over 500 engineering students have completed 10-week degree projects with American students in groups consisting of three students from each university. The University of the Arctic network includes one Swedish institution among its 59 members, of which five come from the Nordic countries, and the remainder from Canada, the USA and Russia.

Strategic cooperation in Sweden or the neighbouring countries

To counter international competition, more and more strategic cooperation is coming into existence, either bilaterally between institutions, or regionally in Sweden. One example of bilateral strategic cooperation is the newly signed agreement between the two largest institutes of technology to analyse the conditions for long-term, joint strategic development. Regional cooperation can be found for instance in the Stockholm region, where six higher education institutions have established collaboration expressly to counter international competition.

Some of the collaboration taking place between higher education institutions in Sweden and the neighbouring countries has been established to coordinate, rationalise and share work. One example of this is the Oresund University, in which several Swedish institutions are involved. In several places the institutions are collaborating to be able to offer courses in a wide range of languages despite declining student interest. We expect this type of cooperation to increase and it is also encouraged by politicians and the central agencies.

There are examples to show that at the moment strategic cooperation is developing between many institutions. This kind of cooperation requires considerably more complicated agreements than those needed for student exchange. Diligent analysis of the terms and requirements is needed, but this falls outside the scope of our assignment. The higher education institutions are acquiring a great deal of experience that needs to be shared so that not everybody has to make the same mistakes. A forum has to be created therefore in which this is possible.

Cooperation on distance teaching technologies

Several higher education institutions have developed cooperation with institutions abroad so that they can offer distance teaching. This can involve short courses from normal programmes at the institutions or specially developed distance teaching courses and programmes. Distance courses are offered primarily to Swedish students, but courses are also being made available internationally using the Internet, even though these are considerably fewer in number.

One example involved cooperation with universities in Spain and the Netherlands on a course in Analyzing Digital Journalism. This is offered as distance teaching using the Internet and also includes video-conferences. Another institution offers a master's programme in English in Adult Learning and Global Change as distance teaching. This is in cooperation with South Africa, Australia and Canada.

It seems as if several of the institutions that have specialised in distance teaching will increase their international course offerings and also establish cooperation with institutions abroad. One higher education institution located in an area where there are many Spanish-speaking inhabitants has established

extensive collaboration with institutions in Spain and Latin America. Some of this takes the form of courses offered as distance teaching.

Internationalisation of course contents

Courses on international subjects

Many higher education institutions describe courses intended to heighten understanding of other countries and cultures. A few examples will serve to illustrate what is offered.

One institution offers short courses such as the Paradoxes of Diversity, Global Ethics, Culture in Armed Conflicts and People, Power and Food. At another an obligatory course in the nursing programme deals with issues such as meetings between cultures, cultural competence and refugee questions. One of the largest technological universities offers, for instance, about ten courses in international understanding.

Encounter with a Developing Country is a ten-credit course offered each year in a teacher-training programme. Four weeks of field study in India is linked to this course. A nursing programme at the same higher education institution has developed a didactic model for training in transcultural nursing care.

Text books in languages other than Swedish

There are at least three reasons for requiring text books in languages other than Swedish. One is that an entire course is offered in some other language. A second is that no suitable texts exist in Swedish. A third is the desire to introduce an international dimension into on-campus programmes by using texts in another language.

In our questionnaire we asked whether text books in languages other than the Nordic languages and English were used. Two of the responses may exemplify the situation.

One of the largest universities reported that no use was made of texts in any language other than English or the Nordic languages except for language courses. It was quite simply impossible to create groups of students with a third common language in addition to Swedish and English.

Another institution demonstrated how other languages were used at different levels in the teaching of political science. In first and second semester courses 70 per cent of the texts were in Swedish. In third and fourth semester courses only 10 per cent were in Swedish and the rest, apart from two texts in other Nordic languages, were in English.

In other words there are almost no examples of the use of texts in any languages other than English and the Nordic languages. This is regrettable for several reasons. One approach that could be tried in this connection is to offer alternative texts. Students who have acquired knowledge through another language than English should be encouraged to use their language skills by offering the choice of alternative texts in other languages.

Programmes with an international focus

Many of the higher education institutions offer programmes – often at master’s level – with an international focus and there is constant development of new programmes. Here we can only offer a sample.

One of the largest universities describes a master’s programme corresponding to 90 ECTS credits in International Humanitarian Assistance. This is offered in collaboration with six foreign institutions. Each year 20 Swedish students participate together with students from other countries. One of the medium-sized institutions refers to a two-year international master’s programme at its school of textile studies, where one semester is spent at each of the participating European institutions. Another institution offers a master’s programme in tourism together with six foreign partners.

At a university with programmes in technology for some considerable time international variants of master’s programmes in engineering have been developed which focus on industrial economics. These permit specialisations in different language areas. During the first two years of introductory study the students take courses in language and area studies and then spend their third year abroad. The language specialisations are Japanese, French and German, and since 2001, also Spanish.

One higher education institution has worked with programmes in journalism in England and the Netherlands to develop a system of courses and material intended to raise journalists’ awareness about issues relating to prejudice and discrimination.

One university offering programmes in medicine has since 1997 been establishing and developing a European master’s programme in public health nutrition. A final example is offered by the institution that collaborates with two English universities to offer research-focused advanced programmes in mechatronics and industrial design. These programmes lead to the award of a double degree – a Swedish ‘magister’ degree in technology and an English MSc.

Courses in other languages than Swedish

The range of courses and programmes offered at higher education institutions in Sweden in foreign languages, especially English, is becoming very large. This applies both to master’s programmes and single-subject courses. A few examples of their extent will be provided here.

One of the older universities reports that in 2003 it offered about 250 courses in English and that next year the figure will approach 300. Another university accounts for 250–300 courses. Of these about 60 are always offered in English, the others when required. It is claimed that even if there is only one international student these courses are given in English.

If for the sake of calculation we assume that on average fifty courses are offered in English per institution, excluding the older universities, this amounts to 1,500 courses in addition to the more than 1,000 offered at the older uni-

versities. Together with courses at master's level, we estimate that the total number of courses offered in English at the 39 higher education institutions in Sweden may be in the region of 3,000–4,000.

As has already been stated, the policy at several higher education institutions is only to offer courses in English when international students require them. But there are cases where the language is not changed. Instead the institution ensures that international students can follow the courses even though they are offered in Swedish. English texts that correspond to the Swedish ones are provided along with extra tuition.

Courses in languages other than English are mentioned by only a few institutions. These concern courses in French, Spanish and German. Altogether these probably amount to no more than 10–20 courses. One exception is the Stockholm University College of Opera, which offers teaching in Italian, French and German.

Commissioned activities and other international undertakings

Commissioned activities offer one form of cooperation with the surrounding community, but when these are carried out for foreign clients or take place abroad they can also be seen as an aspect of internationalisation. International commissions provide teachers and other members of the staff with international experience which in the next phase can benefit teaching and students. International commissions can therefore be viewed as an element of Internationalisation at Home. The responses to our questionnaires reported many different commissions, a few will be described here.

One of the major universities has a special department to sell courses in English by Internet and also has its own company to supply commissioned courses. For instance, a commissioned programme in “European Affairs” is offered to a Chinese bank. An independent School of Economics has a subsidiary company through which it offers over 130 commissioned programmes to almost 80 companies, many of them foreign.

Commissions that are carried out abroad for Swedish clients are relatively frequent, above all those financed by public funds through agencies such as the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and the Swedish Institute. One example is a foundation course in business administration for 300 executives in Russian oil companies.

A large university reports in its response that it is taking part in the development of research and development centres in China and that it sees the possibility of future commissions there. Another institution describes cooperation with a multinational car manufacturer in which distance teaching is used to offer a course in crash safety in four continents. An institute of education offers a commissioned programme for teacher trainers in Tanzania, where 286 individuals have been awarded qualifications since 1998.

Our general assessment is that, despite the examples cited here, the higher education institutions in Sweden are not particularly active on the international market for commissioned teaching and other assignments. It is, however, clear that many are in the process of launching or planning commissioned activities. It is therefore likely that this development will speed up in the future.

International recruitment of students to complete programmes

Recruiting international students to undergraduate programmes is relatively new for the vast majority of higher education institutions in Sweden. However, many see this as one way of strengthening their footing in the international scientific and academic community and of recruiting the best students, from an international perspective, to the master's programmes and perhaps also to postgraduate programmes later on.

A few institutions report entire bachelor's programmes in English. There are more at master's level, probably over 250. There has been a major increase since last year, over 20 per cent. Several of the newer institutions have also invested in or are in the process of investing in a considerable number of master's programmes. One example can be offered by the statement from a recently founded college of technology that in the autumn of 2004 it will be offering 15 of its 19 master's programmes in English. The larger, older higher education institutions each offer about 20 master's programmes entirely in English. Each of them corresponds to 60–120 ECTS credits.

One specialist engineering institution offers 22 master's programmes, each equivalent to 90 ECTS credits. The number of foreign students enrolled in master's programmes in the autumn semester of 2003 totalled 538, a major increase on the preceding years with 203, 293 and 340. Some institutions report discrepancies between the numbers of international students enrolled and the numbers that arrive. One institution describes how 927 international students applied (either to programmes or courses), 426 of them were accepted and 116 arrived to begin their studies.

Few institutions account for the numbers of students on the programmes offered in English. This means that the numbers recruited abroad cannot be assessed with any reliability. If we assume that the figure is about 20 per programme (which is what one or two institutions report) the total number is about 4,000 students. If there are only 10 per programme, the figure given by another institution, they amount to about 2,000 students. In relation to the total of just over 9,000 master's degrees awarded in the higher education system as a whole in 2002/03, this is however a very considerable volume, 20–40 per cent.

We can see that programmes in English are a relatively new phenomenon in Sweden and that at the moment a great deal of experience is being acquired. The implementation of the Bologna Process in Sweden will play an important role in future developments. The responses to our questionnaire indicated no desire to reduce international recruitment but rather the opposite.

Student opinions on internationalisation

The follow-up provided by the STARS (Study Abroad Report System) database is used by 21 higher education institutions in Sweden. Its web-site provides statistics from the year 2000 and onwards. Altogether it contains responses to questionnaires from almost 5,000 outgoing Swedish students and (from 2002 and onwards) about 700 incoming international students.

The two main reasons for studying abroad are, according to the responses of both categories of students, the desire for change and new experiences and also the opportunity to use language skills. The availability of courses that are not offered at home comes well down on the list, for instance.

An analysis of the data presented on the STARS web-site yields a picture of an aware student who can see a value in studying abroad in terms of qualifications and labour-market benefits and wants to work abroad in the future. He or she also wants change, new experiences and to see another culture.

For outgoing students the “special difficulty” most often cited is administrative red-tape. Students coming to Sweden report considerably fewer special difficulties. This confirms that the Swedish higher education institutions provide good inductions.

Both incoming and outgoing students say that they are considerably more satisfied with their contacts with other international students than students from the country in which they are studying. This may be worth remembering when considering how to integrate international students into teaching and leisure activities.

Few institutions have made their own surveys of what students on campus think about internationalisation. One institution does, however, ask its students each term how they feel internationalisation makes an impact on their programmes. On a scale of 1 (far too little) to 7 (far too much) the value for the institution as a whole lies in the interval 3.5–3.8. Another institution has asked how international perspectives are dealt with in programmes. The responses from students have, with a few exceptions, been positive or very positive.

One possible conclusion that may be drawn from these assessments of student opinions about Internationalisation at Home is that there is no risk of students becoming satiated even if internationalisation increases considerably. Generally speaking, however, remarkably few analyses have been undertaken in this area.

Discussion and conclusions

The number of Swedish students going abroad on exchanges has declined somewhat in relative terms during the last few years. Proportions vary widely from institution to institution, however. Our conclusion is that the aims, priorities and strategies of the individual institutions and how they are implemented may offer the most important explanation of these differences.

The volumes involved in alternative forms of study abroad are considerably smaller than for exchanges, and they are shorter in length. In view of the obstacles that family situations may seem to pose, it may however be easier to attract students to make shorter exchanges.

In contrast to the numbers leaving Sweden on exchanges, there has been a continual rise in the numbers of incoming international students. From an Internationalisation at Home perspective this increase in incomers is positive. However, there are good reasons for the institutions to consider questions such as their interaction with other students, the possibilities offered to incoming students and how their skills are put to account.

Foreign guest teachers are a highly appreciated feature of programmes. Linked to the increase in intensified and more multifaceted forms of strategic cooperation it may be possible to hazard the guess there will be an increase in the number of long teacher exchanges.

There has been a decline in the numbers of Swedish teachers spending longer periods abroad in recent years. The number of incoming guest teachers has on the other hand risen, i.e. the pattern here is the same as the one seen for student exchanges. Other staff members have only limited possibilities of foreign exchanges as well. It may well be that the intensified strategic cooperation that is developing will offer possibilities of increasing staff experience of foreign exchanges.

One important task for the higher education institutions is to remove the organisational obstacles, for instance by providing substitute teachers and offering financial assistance in the form of travel grants.

The intensified strategic cooperation that is developing between Swedish and foreign higher education institutions often includes joint programmes and courses. These can involve distance cooperation between students, distance-courses offered by the various institutions in a shared programme, students "rotating" between institutions during programmes, study visits with some element of placement at the cooperating institution, meetings involving students from the different countries, etc. Here a great deal can be done and we are probably only in the early stages of development of features of this kind.

Courses on international concerns are an important feature of Internationalisation at Home. These can deal, for instance, with international understanding, intercultural communication, specific regional or country studies and the like. With some form of coherent frame for Internationalisation at Home it should be possible to increase the number of courses and develop their quality.

When student exchanges began to gain steam a fixed range of a limited number of courses in English was often offered to incoming exchange students. Now more and more institutions offer a very wide range of courses in English. In certain cases they are only taught in English if international students choose them, otherwise not.

Commissioned activities abroad paid for by foreign clients are unusual. More commonly commissioned activities are paid for by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and undertaken abroad. However many institutions report planning commissioned activities for foreign clients. Swedish higher education institutions have little possibility of funding the development of commissioned activities on their own. One idea might be to seek greater cooperation with international commissioning agencies such as the World Bank, the IMF and the UN.

Swedish higher education institutions are newcomers to a relatively well established international educational market. From a Swedish perspective the volumes involved are considerable and recruitment is expanding rapidly. Obviously future possibilities of charging internationally recruited students fees will influence continued development.

Few Swedish institutions have bachelor's programmes with international recruitment. The Bologna Process should increase the possibilities of recruiting to such programmes. This could support Internationalisation at Home. As students on these programmes would spend such long periods in Sweden they could be integrated more effectively – at the moment a weak point.

Incoming and outgoing exchange students feel the same about virtually every aspect of their studies. Their value as qualifications for future careers, language training and experience of other cultures and environments are stronger motives than the actual programme offered in the other country. This finding could provide a basis for measures, such as improving the quality of the studies themselves. Both groups of students are more satisfied with their contacts with other exchange students than with the 'local' students.

Internationalisation of postgraduate programmes

Introduction

In Sweden postgraduate programmes⁴ comprise course work, research and thesis work corresponding to 120 ECTS credits. The extent of the course work involved varies but has to correspond to at least 120 ECTS credits. In many subjects an alternative route is provided by the licentiate degree, for which the requirements correspond to 120 ECTS credits, of which at least 60 have to be awarded for a scholarly paper.

Different circumstances

Postgraduate programmes are offered by many, but not all, higher education institutions in Sweden. Those that either lack or have limited entitlement to award degrees may still have their own postgraduate students. The majority of active postgraduate students at institutions that are not entitled to award PhD's are enrolled officially at some other institution. Whether or not postgraduate students are actually working at an institution other than the one in which they are enrolled naturally affects the scope for internationalisation.

The National Agency's evaluations reveal that one in three postgraduate students have studied abroad or at some other institution in Sweden by the time they complete their studies. How large a proportion study abroad cannot be determined, but our survey shows that the different disciplines have evolved their own traditions about internationalisation of postgraduate studies.

In medicine and technology participation in some form of activity abroad during studies is taken for granted and in the natural sciences this is also considered fairly natural. In the humanities and social sciences there is, however, a great deal of variation. Some of these subjects have traditionally adopted an international perspective. This applies, for instance, to some extent to political science and economics, even if the perspective is often restricted to the USA and American models. In other subjects in this area, such approaches are lacking. Cultural subjects often adopt a very distinct international perspective.

Objectives and strategies

At the central level in the higher education institutions, the focus seems to be placed on student exchange in undergraduate programmes, while post-

4. The term denotes higher education leading a Doctorate/PhD or to an "intermediate" postgraduate degree, the Licentiate.

graduate students are the responsibility of the research groups. Despite this there are examples of policies and clear allocation of responsibilities where the scope offered to postgraduate students to gain experience abroad is concerned. In many subjects postgraduate students are also urged to spend time abroad. Here the underlying idea may relate to quality aspects – research is enhanced if postgraduate students can join or create their own international networks, and periods abroad can also provide important experience and add to the value of their own doctoral programme as a qualification. Participation in international academic workshops and conferences provides “acculturation to the research community”.

At a number of higher education institutions one of the objectives set for postgraduate students is that they should have international experience and they specify a minimum level of international contact. This may involve a stay of specific length, 1–2 months or a semester at a foreign institution, and/or participation in at least two international conferences during their studies. One example may be found in the inclusion in the study plans for postgraduate students at one of the larger institutions of the requirement that each student must have completed at least three months of study abroad and also participated in and presented a paper at an international conference. These requirements must be fulfilled before a PhD is awarded and are monitored carefully by the institution.

Organisation

Officially, the faculty boards are responsible for postgraduate programmes. However, at many institutions each department and research group is given a great deal of responsibility for its own postgraduate students, including the internationalisation of their studies.

At one of the large universities the dean for research is also responsible for the internationalisation of postgraduate programmes and at another the responsibility rests with a pro-vice-chancellor, supported by a committee for postgraduate programmes. Other institutions allocate responsibilities similarly. Another model is to give a pro-vice-chancellor overall responsibility for internationalisation at the institution, while an international coordinator takes responsibility for the internationalisation of postgraduate programmes and teacher exchanges. At yet another university the faculty boards act as advisory groups on strategy, analysis and evaluation for the administration on issues relating to both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Each faculty board also has one member with specific responsibility for internationalisation issues. Some institutions have a decentralised system in which the departments develop their own international contacts.

On the whole we see a clear difference between undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Responsibility for internationalisation in undergraduate programmes is centralised to a large extent, while for postgraduate pro-

grammes in reality it often lies with the individual departments or research groups.

Financing periods abroad

There are major differences between the systems used at the higher education institutions to finance periods of study abroad. One of the major universities reports substantial donated funds that enable postgraduate students to travel. One of the medium-sized institutions has an interesting and transparent solution. Each postgraduate student enrolled in the natural sciences is granted SEK 75,000 which is earmarked for travel and conferences. At one large institution, SEK 1.3 million has been set aside for travel grants to both outgoing and incoming postgraduate students. There are also several scholarship foundations and other external sources that offer various kinds of financial support for study abroad.

Periods spent abroad by Swedish postgraduate students

Every year the National Agency for Higher Education presents statistics about the periods spent abroad by postgraduate students. There are grounds for suspecting that there are shortcomings in these figures as the routines at certain institutions are less than perfect. Even so we have opted to use the statistics available.

Table 5: Proportion of outgoing postgraduate students, per year

Year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Proportion (%)	37	42	39	36	31	36	34

The figures given here apply to periods of three months or longer. The length of time spent abroad by postgraduate students varies a great deal in actual fact, from a few weeks to a complete semester. Short periods of a few weeks are most frequent. There are many reasons for this, for instance many students feel that the total time allowed for a doctoral programme does not enable them to include a long period abroad.

The National Agency's statistics on incoming and outgoing postgraduate students taking part in international exchanges of at least three months or longer reveal that during 2003 just over 810 foreign postgraduate students came to Sweden. During the same year the number of Swedish postgraduate who spent a period of study of at least three months abroad was 880. Of the foreign postgraduates at Swedish institutions, just over 320 came from EU countries. Somewhat more, just over 370 Swedish postgraduates chose to study in the EU. About 200 Swedish postgraduates opted for the USA.

Some higher education institutions point out that postgraduate students are older, which means that their family situation often takes precedence over

their own desire and opportunities to study abroad. For this reason priority is given to short periods for them. However, their family situation totally prevents some postgraduate students from travelling.

Foreign postgraduate students at higher education institutions in Sweden

Enabling foreign postgraduate students to study at higher education institutions in Sweden is regarded as “paving the way” for Swedish postgraduates to study abroad. But their stay here may create the circumstances that enable their own recruitment to senior research positions or of other senior researchers to Sweden at some later date. Similar mechanisms apply for the international master’s programmes offered in English. These have provided a useful recruitment base for postgraduate programmes in Sweden. In this way, there has been a considerable increase in the number of foreign postgraduate students at many institutions.

A number of graduate schools have a great many postgraduate students, such as the Baltic and East European Graduate School which started to operate in 2000. About half of its postgraduate students come from other countries, mainly Central Europe. Much of its teaching – one-third of all the courses, doctoral seminars, conferences and other symposia – takes place in English.

Cooperation in the Nordic countries is reflected among other things by the presence at one Swedish university of 14 Norwegian postgraduate students, who each have two supervisors.

Graduate schools and other forms of cooperation with universities abroad

There have been graduate schools at higher education institutions in Sweden since the 1980s. Their workings are based on cooperation between several higher education institutions. The responsibility for the graduate school rests with the host institution, but teaching is offered in collaboration with other partner institutions. The aim is to maintain close contacts with front-line international research. For instance, eminent foreign researchers are invited to take part in seminars.

One example of a graduate school is the European research training in the field of teacher-training. A large number of postgraduate students from a major Swedish university have taken part in doctoral courses corresponding to 15 ECTS credits offered in other countries in Europe.

One large technical institution describes how various forms of cooperation are encouraged, in European graduate schools, for instance, and also coordinates several of these. Summer schools for postgraduate students in research networks are another way of enhancing internationalisation. Another large institution takes part in a considerable number of cooperative projects with

institutions in other countries. These include a graduate school in pharmacy, a postgraduate project in history in a EU-funded network and programme in physics, chemistry and mathematics that supports the development of research capacity in developing countries, for instance by enabling their postgraduates to spend time in Sweden.

Language

English is the working language for postgraduate students at many institutions and most provide information about their postgraduate programmes mainly in English. Various forms of language support are provided for postgraduate students. At several institutions, for instance, courses are arranged for these students on writing reports in English.

A growing number of postgraduate students (and postdocs) of foreign origin have led to increasing demands at certain institutions for courses for supervisors offered in English. At one institution all the postgraduate students take a course in education that is taught in English.

Theses in Sweden are today written largely (almost exclusively) in English in the disciplines of technology, the natural sciences and medicine. In teacher-training and certain humanities and social science subjects theses are mainly written in Swedish. Swedish is also the language most frequently used in jurisprudence and law. Some institutions emphasise that a Swedish summary is required if a thesis is written in English.

Recruitment and degrees

More and more students choose to continue their studies outside their native country, not least after taking their first degree. The rise in the number of international master's programmes at Swedish higher education institutions seems in this context to be one way of attracting foreign students to postgraduate programmes, not least in technological disciplines.

Cooperation between Swedish and foreign institutions can result in the award of different kinds of qualifications. For instance, double doctorates are offered by some institutions. In this way students are able not only to acquire a Swedish degree but also a foreign degree of the same standing. A number of universities offer programmes in collaboration with universities in other countries that lead to the award of double degrees. During our evaluation several higher education institutions in Sweden have said that they would welcome measures to ease the difficulties and obstacles that currently exist with regard to the joint award of PhD's.

Discussion and conclusions

Internationalisation involves cooperation and exchange across national boundaries. A great deal is being done in this area but more is needed. More postgraduate students need to spend time abroad in the course of their studies. A period abroad should therefore be included in their individual curricula. They should also be required to participate at some time in an international symposium. The higher education institutions should endeavour to provide enough economic scope to enable the funding of such measures.

In order to attain the qualitative goals the higher education institutions must establish ways in which they can be monitored. One requirement is the availability of data. Statistical methods should be developed to provide figures on postgraduate student exchanges.

The government has laid down that the total number of postgraduate students should increase. In this context a larger proportion of foreign postgraduates is important. To provide greater knowledge in this area, better statistical information is required. Data on the number of foreign postgraduate students with first degrees awarded abroad could be one example of the kind of statistical area where development is needed.

In order to retain foreign postgraduate students after graduation so that quality can be enhanced in many disciplines, internationalisation supported, or Sweden's own labour force improved, they must be offered possibilities of staying here after the award of their PhD's. The current obstacles must be removed.

Diversity and gender equality

Introduction

In all of its evaluations the National Agency for Higher Education must pay particular attention to gender equality, diversity and student influence. When we posed questions about these aspects of internationalisation in our questionnaires, the responses were somewhat depressing. They were, in fact, very laconic, especially on diversity and gender equality. It therefore seemed important to devote a special chapter to these two issues, whereas the question of student influence is dealt with elsewhere in the report.

Our questions on these three aspects were deliberately broad. The responses mainly concerned student influence and had, moreover, only tenuous links with internationalisation. Instead they took up the work being done in general in this area. They often expressed, either explicitly or implicitly, the feeling that there was no particular need to pay special attention to these aspects in connection with internationalisation. We feel differently.

The concepts of diversity and gender equality in internationalisation

In previous evaluations conducted by the National Agency for Higher Education, both diversity and gender equality have concerned the capacity of the higher education institutions to make use of all the competence available. Gender equality in higher education is based on the principle that women and men, irrespective of where they are in the academic hierarchy, will have the same opportunities. Gender equality is also linked to gender studies, which involve for instance problematisation of the power relationship between men and women. Social and ethnic diversity is rooted in the possibilities and conditions offered to individuals from differing socio-economic and/or ethnic backgrounds of enrolment in higher education.

Internationalisation often gives rise to encounters between different cultures. This provides extra cause for vigilance to ensure that no individual's rights are violated in these encounters, but that they are observed and safeguarded. In our evaluation we have mainly been curious about the measures that the higher education institutions have adopted or intend to adapt to this end. In the same way, we have been interested in seeing how systematically the institutions have analysed the possibilities and the problems deriving from these three aspects.

One important factor is that different aspects of quality overlap. This is also the case where gender equality, diversity and student influence are concerned. The National Agency for Higher Education has previously been able to determine that measures to enhance gender equality also benefit diversity and student influence on the whole. At the same time there are examples of measures

undertaken to benefit one aspect having a deleterious impact on another. An increased intake of exchange students from a specific country, for instance, or a specific region may rapidly lead to a shift in the numerical balance among an institution's incoming students. Active and long-term diversity and gender equality measures can help the institutions to deal with situations like this.

How diversity and gender equality are dealt with in internationalisation

Our assessment reveals that the degree of awareness of the diversity and gender equality and their links to internationalisation processes varies greatly between higher education institutions in Sweden. It is often claimed that these issues have been so successfully mainstreamed that they no longer even need to be considered. There have been many positive achievements, but far too often they seem to be distinct and dependent on individuals rather than integrated in the way claimed by the institutions.

During our evaluation we looked for concrete links between the overall approach to internationalisation at an institution with diversity and gender equality on the one hand and internationalisation on the other. Our impression is that links like this are, generally speaking, unusual. Nevertheless there are good examples of approaches that institutions can use in dealing with one of both of these perspectives. One institution has, for instance, chosen to deal specifically in its international policy with the diversity aspect and another has opted to specify its attitude to working with diversity in the introduction to its report:

“It is the institution's ambition to seek diversity in several different respects: social background, different cultural backgrounds, the development of multicultural and multidisciplinary degree programmes, etc. This endeavour permeates all of the institution's activities and provides a shared point of departure for the institution's planning of the programmes to offer, recruitment, etc. Diversity is an integral element in the institution's profile.”

This institution can also point to concrete results on the basis of its diversity aims. For instance, it has been able to benefit from the large numbers of Spanish-speakers in its vicinity and has, for instance, with their help developed a network of contacts in Spain and Latin America. It has also affected both the range of courses offered and recruitment.

Course content and methodology

There are also examples of measures undertaken by institutions to ensure that diversity and internationalisation will impact positively on the contents and form taken by programmes. One institution asks students to present teaching ideas that they have come across during periods abroad, another informs in-

coming students that it uses student-centred methods and specially encourages them to discuss the contents of their programmes openly with their teachers.

One institution has invited staff, students and the general public to series of seminars with both intercultural and multicultural contents and another incorporates diversity as an important perspective in its ten-week courses for newly appointed teachers. Analysis and development of the concept of interculturality⁵ at one institution has evoked the proposal that competence development of this kind, focusing in particular on academic activities, should be offered to its staff.

Preventive measures

Most institutions refer to the active work devoted to the induction of incoming students. This includes, for instance, features designed to ease encounters between different cultures and prevent culture clashes. Some institutions have involved a number of parts of its organisation in the induction process, for instance the student health service provides training for the students who organise the induction week for incoming students. One university introduces preventive measures by inviting police officers, district nurses and priests to take an active part in the induction and another provides training for its mentors intended to raise their awareness of the cultures exchange students are coming from.

As we have already pointed out, there seems to be a lack of routines for the induction of guest teachers. Only a handful of institutions have, for instance, produced special information material for incoming teachers and often the receiving department or teacher is expected to provide information orally.

Two institutions have created special programmes for international visitors. These provide guest teachers and incoming students with contact with Sweden's countryside and its culture. The measures involved are simple and down-to-earth, for instance exchange students are invited to meals or to other activities by families living nearby.

One of the major universities has adopted the explicit goal that lack of knowledge of Swedish should not prevent participation in preparatory and decision-making bodies. Its policy is that as far as possible these bodies should reflect the ethnic diversity in the university and the community at large.

Measures are being adopted at a number of institutions to accredit and enhance the qualifications of immigrant graduates. One example is a specific project intended to raise the employability of immigrant graduates. Teaching is offered in Swedish and English, for instance, and to help bring their specialised knowledge up to date.

5. Sometimes defined as developing an approach that comprises mutual curiosity and heightened understanding of one's and other's knowledge systems, ways of thought, values, life styles and power structures.

Discussion and conclusions

We interpret the lack of information submitted on diversity and gender equality to mean that many are still not used to dealing with these issues. These aspects have probably not yet been mainstreamed into internationalisation. We lack analyses of what the diversity and gender perspectives may be in this context, we lack action plans dealing with the diversity and gender equality perspective in internationalisation, we lack any systematic development of competence in which diversity and gender equality are problematised in terms of working in an international context. We also lack to a very great extent verifiable objectives.

This can be summed up by saying that we see a great need for the institutions to develop a platform with regard to the perspectives of diversity and gender equality in internationalisation. Linking the concrete measures already adopted to an explicit idea of what it is intended to achieve would make it easier to provide incentives for this work.

Our conclusions are that not enough attention has been paid to gender equality in relation to internationalisation – most institutions have not reflected on gender equality where internationalisation is concerned. The same applies to diversity issues. Diversity and gender equality are also difficult to monitor – quantifiable goals are required

The best institutions

Introduction

In describing internationalisation we have been examining – technically speaking – the entire system of higher education. We have tried to describe what is being done, how, and to what extent. We have described it aspect by aspect and have used these descriptions of its constituents to try to portray the system as a whole. However, we provide no overall picture of any individual institution. In order to identify the best institution – which was also part of our task – we must however do just this, in other words study the overall state of affairs at each institution.

Overall impressions can be formed of higher education institutions in different ways. At the beginning of our evaluation we made attempts using two different methods. We each formed our own overall picture of the individual institutions and then graded them on a scale of 1–5. At the same time we broke internationalisation down into a large number of different indicators and assessed each institution on the basis of the number of indicators it demonstrated. Finally we matched our overall impressions with the “indicator totals”. It turned out that there was no relationship between the two forms of assessment.

The conclusion we drew from these initial attempts was that it is not productive to measure and balance various elements and then add the points as in an athletics contest. Overall impressions have to be formed differently. However, there must be some parameters, and these are described below. On the basis of our parameters, each member of the panel nominated up to 10 candidates for selection as the best institution. These were then discussed, to begin with in a process of exclusion and then – when only just over ten remained – in comparison with each other. These comparisons were based on individual overall impressions of the various institutions. We did not, for instance, invoke any predetermined weighting system for the various parameters. Any attempt to reconstruct exactly how we arrived at our results is therefore pointless – any description of the process like that would be purely a post-hoc reconstruction. However, we can see that overall systematic description we made acted well as a frame of reference for determining where each institution could be placed in relation to the whole. For this reason we delayed selection of the best institution to a late stage of our evaluation.

What we assessed

Our questionnaire to the higher education institutions dealt with four areas in principle:

- Goals and strategies
- Organisation of support systems
- Operations – what is done and to what extent
- What has been achieved

These are also the main areas in which we have made our assessment. In the first, we studied how up to date the goals and strategies are. We tried to answer questions such as whether internationalisation is one element in or at any rate linked to goals and strategies at “top level” in the institution, how the Bologna Process is being handled, intelligence analysis, how goals are established and strategies formulated, how close attainment of these goals lies and how measures undertaken are monitored and evaluated.

A strategy can also be seen as a route towards a goal. For instance, we assessed whether strategies seem appropriate in relation to the goals and if the separate aspects of what was being done supported each other or were carried out in isolation. We have also taken into account different kinds of international cooperation – both strategic and operational.

Organisation is a question of who does what. We have looked at the way tasks have been allocated, for instance, what is done for the entire institution and what is left to faculties, departments and various subject constellations and whether this allocation is suitable. Do the various efforts provide support for each other, is work being done twice?

In looking at the support systems we considered how support is provided, for instance in the form of preparation for outgoing and the induction of incoming students and teachers, and also how quality assurance is provided, information and communication processes.

Questions about what is done and to what extent are operational. In describing the internationalisation of undergraduate programmes as a whole we have distinguished between international recruitment of students for entire programmes, outgoing Swedish students and Internationalisation at Home. What activities are undertaken, what is being done and to what extent can be regarded as different kinds of outcomes. But the outcomes can also include changes in the content of subjects and how internationalisation enhances the quality of programmes. Although difficult to appraise, factors like this must be included or otherwise no complete impression of what has been achieved can be formed.

We are aware that the circumstances of the different institutions differ and we have tried to take this into account in our discussions. But, in our description of the entire system we have also seen that the differences in these circumstances seem, relatively speaking, not to mean a great deal. What is more important is what it is desired to achieve, what priorities are assigned and what process is adopted. For this reason, among others, we have opted not to categorise the institutions before making the assessment.

We have not studied how much is allocated to internationalisation as a whole, nor how efficiently these resources are used. However, it goes without saying that the best institutions probably devote more than others – at least this will give a greater chance of success. That could be related to the fact that they have more resources overall and therefore better circumstances.

The best institution

We consider that the higher education institutions that works best with internationalisation at the moment is Uppsala University.

Uppsala University has clear goals and strategies for internationalisation that are soundly coupled to the university's overall goals and strategies. These goals and strategies are based in perceptive analysis of its surroundings and its own situation. Outcomes are monitored and measured in relation to the goals in an uncomplicated and effective way. Basic information on internationalisation is well organised and the university knows where it stands in relation to others. It is working actively with the Bologna Process. However, work on strategic alliances has only just begun. Mission statements and directives are clear, related to each other effectively and cohere well.

The allocation of roles is clear and seems to be effective. What is undertaken at the level of the university as a whole supports what is being done by the faculties and departments without imposing detailed regulations, and cooperation between the different levels seems to work well. The organisation of different units involved in internationalisation is clear and seems to be well considered.

Support for these activities works well. The university cooperates effectively with the student unions and other agencies in Uppsala that look after foreign students in a multifaceted system.

The university has very well planned information and is now deliberately focusing on its web-site. This contains, for instance, information for incoming teachers. However, the web-site could be more effectively adapted to different groups of users.

There is a clear strategy with a high level of ambition that internal information should offer an overall perspective and the possibility of coordinating various initiatives in the organisation.

Uppsala University offers an extensive range of master's programmes in English. A large proportion of its own students take part in exchanges during their studies. More of the incoming exchange students are involved in Internationalisation at Home activities than is usual and these activities are in other respects lively and varied.

A feeling of international solidarity seems to thrive in the university and active work is going on for the developing countries.

Uppsala University is working purposefully and effectively with practically every element of internationalisation in a complex and in many respects historically determined organisation.

Equal second

Two institutions – Karolinska Institute and Malmö University College – have the next best internationalisation procedures. Our citations follow.

Karolinska Institute

Karolinska Institute gives priority to internationalisation and has well formulated and up-to-date goals and strategies. Goals are set for different sections, for instance, based on their different circumstances. Its work with the Bologna Process is active and well-organised.

The organisation for internationalisation is extensive and soundly represented in the various programme areas. Most of the programme boards have established international committees. There are clear rules and routines in many areas that seem to support this work. Operational plans are also linked well to the Institute's goals and strategies. Both external and internal information is well-structured and functions effectively. Induction of incoming students works well.

Work on Internationalisation at Home, which has relatively recently been given high priority, is developing well. Good initiatives are being taken to introduce a coherent strategy, for instance in nursing programmes. There are many good examples of how competence from other countries is being put to use. For instance international students present information about the health services in their own countries in the clinics and/or departments hosting them and returning exchange students lecture about and present teaching ideas from the countries they have visited. International students take part in course evaluations in the same way as Swedish students. One interesting idea is the use of students with foreign backgrounds as mentors for teachers.

For a number of years Karolinska Institute has been endeavouring to assure that members of its staff enhance their portfolio of qualifications, so that in this respect the value of international work and international experience is more explicit.

Karolinska Institute has an extensive organisation for internationalisation that provides support and structure to every element of its organisation and where the goals, strategies and action plans are highly coherent. This can also be seen in many well-planned details in its internationalisation measures.

Malmö University College

Malmö University College's priority is Internationalisation at Home. A structured and perceptive analysis provided the basis for the attainment of coher-

ent strategic control of all the elements that can contribute to the internationalisation of its campus and it coined the concept of Internationalisation at Home. In five years a great deal of progress has been made in developing its own environment and this has attracted attention nationally and internationally. These activities are evaluated and basic information is clearly organised, the institution has a distinct conception of where it stands and what has led it there, and it is also aware that it is far from achieving its goals for student exchanges. It also has a very effective network organisation that enables many individuals to take an active part in internationalisation.

On the basis of an inventory of programmes and syllabuses, Malmö University College has developed a wealth of courses and activities focusing on intercultural communication and the developing countries. Active cooperation is taking place with the surrounding community. This cooperation is based, for instance, on the fact that a high proportion of the population of the region have foreign backgrounds. One example is that about a hundred students every year devote three hours each week to acting as mentors for pupils in the multicultural schools in Malmö. It also has a deliberate language policy. For instance, a section for language and communication has been set up, as has a language workshop.

Malmö University College integrates perspectives such as diversity, gender equality and equal treatment into its activities in a natural and sound way.

Malmö University College has started and led developments in Internationalisation at Home and has set an example nationally and internationally. Thanks to its holistic approach, a well organised structure and strategy and the commitment it has managed to engender, it has continually been able to adopt measures that each have contributed to the development of the whole.

Recommendations

Goals and strategies

We recommend the higher education institutions to

- Develop their strategies for internationalisation and assign clear priorities to their measures.

Organisation and support systems

We recommend the higher education institutions to

- Systematise the analysis of the surrounding world made for internationalisation
- Place greater weight on monitoring and evaluating internationalisation measures
- Further develop quality assurance methods for cooperation agreements
- Undertake a comparative study to determine how resources for internationalisation are used
- Use their web-sites more effectively to foster internationalisation

Undergraduate programmes

We recommend the higher education institutions to

- Formulate a coherent strategy for Internationalisation at Home
- Remove the organisational obstacles that hinder teachers from spending periods abroad

Postgraduate programmes

We recommend the higher education institutions to

- Provide all postgraduate students with the possibility of completing some of their studies abroad and to guarantee funding for this purpose

Diversity and gender equality

We recommend the higher education institutions to

- Pay attention to diversity and gender equality as important quality aspects in internationalisation.

Appendix – questionnaire

Reg. no. 643-4872-03



Questions about the internationalisation of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at the institution

Introduction

The aim of evaluating the quality of internationalisation is to describe the current state of affairs in this area, assess which institutions have the most advantageous methods and also spread awareness of particularly successful approaches. In this way the National Agency for Higher Education hopes to contribute to the development and improvement of the process of internationalisation.

The most important basis for this evaluation will be the written responses from each higher education institution. The panel of assessors has therefore chosen to pose relatively detailed questions but assumes that the responses will nevertheless be tailored to suit the circumstances that prevail at each institution. The way in which the questions have been worded also indicates the views of the panel on internationalisation as a phenomenon. It should be added here that the focus must be on procedures that are systematic and sustained and not temporary measures or those that are totally dependent on some individual initiative.

The panel would like as comprehensive an account as possible of internationalisation in the institution. The responses should, however, be concise and submitted under the headings indicated below.

If the responsibility, resources and work involved in internationalisation are shared, either fully or in part, by different sections of the institution, this division should be described as well as the similarities and differences between them. In the same way any differences in the policies, strategies or objectives that apply for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes should also be accounted for.

The responses should refer to the situation during this academic year or – for instance where resources are concerned – the fiscal year of 2003.

I. On what premises does the institution base its work on internationalisation?

- What motives underlie the internationalisation endeavours of the institution?

- What internal documents – or sections of documents – regulate the internationalisation process, when were they adopted and to which periods do they apply? These documents should be attached.
- Describe the content and ideas that sustain internationalisation strategies and how they have been determined, for instance how the institution keeps in touch with contemporary developments and analysis.
- What objectives are there and what priorities have been established, for instance between different approaches or different measures?
- How has the institution planned its work on the Bologna process?
- Describe how student influence, gender equality and ethnic diversity are taken into account where policies and strategies etc. for internationalisation are concerned.

2. How is work with internationalisation organised, what resources are allocated and what methods are used in the institution?

- Describe how the work with internationalisation is organised (also in terms of informal organisation if there is any), including the roles played by various categories of staff.
- How do you make use of expertise from other countries? This can apply to every aspect from staff and students with foreign backgrounds to the representation of other countries in governing and advisory bodies.
- How is internal and external information about internationalisation organised? The response should cover both marketing (nationally and internationally) and the exchange and dissemination of experiences (including the experiences of outgoers and incomers).
- Where in the organisation and by whom are decisions made about the allocation of resources to internationalisation in the institution?
- What resources are allocated to administrative support for internationalisation? This can, for instance, include staff and funding for an international office (or the like). Describe what the resources accounted for comprise.
- Describe how you arrange quality assurance for the programmes at the institutions with which exchange agreements have been made.
- How has the work of following up and evaluating internationalisation been planned? Specify in particular if, and if so how, advantage is taken of the course evaluations of incoming students.
- Describe how student influence, gender equality and ethnic diversity are taken into account with regard to organisation, resources and methods in work with internationalisation.

3. What does the work with internationalisation at the institution comprise?

- Describe the internationalisation measures (“internationalisation at home”) addressed to all students and staff, such as cultural activities, courses in international understanding, guest lectures, adaptation of syllabuses and reading lists in languages other than Swedish and English.
- What cooperation is taking place with institutions in other countries in networks or any other way about entire programmes, specific courses, examinations, placements, degree projects, or in other areas?
- What incentives are there for teachers and other members of the staff to become involved in internationalisation?
- Are there any web-based activities, such as distance programmes addressed to students in other countries and cooperation on teaching, etc. with foreign institutions using the Internet? If so, provide descriptions.
- Describe the extent and focus of participation in and the organisation of international conferences and seminars (excluding those arranged for purely research purposes).
- Describe the work of your institution with regard to the exchange of students at undergraduate and postgraduate level, teachers and administrative staff. Also specify if there is any specific focus for these exchanges, for instance cooperation with developing countries.
- List the courses, programmes etc. that are given in foreign languages.
- What support systems are provided for exchanges, for example preparatory courses for outgoing students, reception of incomers (including courses in Swedish) and arranging accommodation.
- How are studies abroad credited in terms of credit points or sections of degree programmes? Does the institution use ECTS grades and/or credits?
- Describe the skills enhancement programmes offered to members of the staff, for instance in teaching in a foreign language.
- Describe any internationally commissioned programmes offered, for instance courses with an international focus for Swedish companies or organisation or those arranged for companies and organisations abroad.
- Describe how student influence, gender equality and ethnic diversity are taken into account with regard to the content of internationalisation.

4. What results have been achieved through internationalisation?

- Has the institution evaluated whether internationalisation has influenced the subject content or quality of its programmes? If so, what have been the findings?
- What results of the work with internationalisation would your institution like to draw particular attention to?

- Does the statistical data presented for the fiscal year of 2002 give a fair picture of exchange activities at the institution? If not, we would like to know how the statistics fail to reflect reality and why they do so. If there are grounds for altering the current definitions, routines, systems, etc., suggestions would be welcomed. Some of the basic data from the NU database is attached.
- The statistics on incoming students and outgoers (see the previous bullet) should include both those involved in exchange programmes and “free movers”. We would like a breakdown of the figures for these two groups.

5. How does the institution assess problems and opportunities with internationalisation?

- Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the institution in its work with internationalisation.
- Account for the possibilities, and also any obstacles, that you consider to exist for the institution to fulfil national requirements together with its own internationalisation policy and objectives. Examples of obstacles could be the accommodation situation for incomers (students and staff) and regulations concerning the time allowed for completion of postgraduate programmes.
- What is being done to take advantage of the possibilities and to deal with the obstacles perceived?

6. Good practice

The evaluation also involves collecting examples of successful measures in the field of internationalisation. We are interested in procedures that are already in place and also in projects. We would like descriptions of not more than five examples from your institution. The description of each example should occupy two A4 pages at the most. We reserve the right to edit the text before publication.

In case we need additional information and so that we can discuss publication, we would like the name and e-mail address of one or more contact persons for these examples.