

Project form for faculty plans: International Classroom project

Deadline 1 May 2016

General information	
Project title	Internationalisation of FEB, 2.0: enhancing the International Classroom in the BSc International Business
Intended start date	1 September 2016
Intended period (1-2 years)	2 years
Projected budget	€ 202,700
Faculty contact person	
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Project plan	
<p>Summary (max. 150 words):</p> <p>The Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB) has been working on internationalisation for over a decade, with major achievements in many areas. However, FEB can still not guarantee that it provides all students with the necessary competences to function adequately as professional and citizen in a globalised economy. International and intercultural learning outcomes (ILOs) are lacking in most study programmes and consequently the achievement of those competences is not assessed. This project focuses on the enhancement of the international classroom in the bachelor International Business. Special attention is given to the development of a programme vision on the international classroom, the (re)definition of a graduate profile, and a review of the learning outcomes. In light of the new, enhanced learning outcomes, teaching methods, instruments and course materials will be adapted and assessment of ILOs will be introduced.</p>	
<p>FEB's vision on internationalisation</p> <p>We view internationalisation as a strategic response to the challenges of the globalising environment. This environment requires specific competences from our graduates, who have to be prepared to function in an international and intercultural social and professional context. In order to fulfil this task we strongly emphasise 'internationalisation at home', the increase of student and staff diversity and the employability of our students. We also recognise that the major problems in society have become global issues that can no longer be addressed at the national level only. To tackle these issues, a strong international focus and international collaborative networks in research and teaching are necessary characteristics of our strategy.</p> <p>Our ambition is to be a world class and truly international school of economics and business that excels in the global arena for research and education. A school that successfully competes in the global market for students, staff, and resources. We define our purpose in terms of our contribution to societal and economic innovation and to the solution of major global societal challenges like social sustainability, public health, wealth disparities and energy transition. In order to achieve these objectives we strive to offer an inclusive working and learning environment which enables all members of our community to realise their full potential without any major hindrance related to nationality, culture, race, gender or religion.</p>	
<p>Internationalisation at FEB: current situation</p> <p>Internationalisation has been a main focus in FEB's long-term strategy for over a decade. Guidance has come from three internationalisation plans: 2005, 2010 and 2013. Our strategy has so far resulted in, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A completely English-taught educational portfolio (only two exceptions, due to special requirements of the student market and the professional field) • Standards have been set for the command of English and staff members have received additional language 	

training whenever job-specific requirements were not met

- All curricula are designed and evaluated according to high international standards for research-driven education (frameworks of reference: quality standards of NVAO, AACSB and EQUIS)
- A considerable number of student exchanges take place (450 outgoing, 380 incoming on a yearly basis), twice as much as in 2005
- An offering of 18 international one-way and two-way double degree programmes from which, until now, more than 800 students have graduated
- More than 1000 international students enrolled at FEB for a bachelor's or master's degree
- An elementary course of Dutch is available for every international degree student
- We conduct world class research that occupies a top 100 position in several global field and subject rankings (e.g. University of Texas Dallas, ARWU, THE)
- 140 PhD students of whom 50% are foreign
- 30% of FEB's core academic staff are international and recruitment through the tenure track system and the Rosalind Franklin programme is global by definition
- FEB's physical work and study environment and support services are adapted to the growing influx of international students and staff
- Our websites and formal written communication are mainly in English, especially when the target group may involve non-Dutch language speakers
- We are recognised by the world's most outstanding accreditation organisations for business education and research, AACSB and EFMD (EQUIS).

Despite these major achievements, surveys among and interviews with international students and staff as well as relevant statistics reveal that our internationalisation is not completed yet. If we want to effectively address the remaining issues, it is not enough to concentrate on details of the current stage of development. A serious update (version 2.0) is needed to enhance scope and depth of our internationalisation. This observation has also been made quite recently by the EFMD, which holds internationalisation among the most important quality standards of its EQUIS label. Examples of shortcomings in FEB's current internationalisation practice include:

- The numbers of international degree students and staff are not sufficient yet to form a critical mass
- FEB needs to develop a more strategic approach to internationalising research and to cooperation with international business
- There is still a considerable degree of 'Dutchness' on campus which occasionally prevents international students and staff from feeling an integral member of the FEB community
- The academic and social integration of incoming international degree students is not well-enough supported in several programmes, in particular at master's level
- Access to FEB's study associations is still limited for international students and the activities organised by the associations too often focus on a Dutch audience, according to international students
- (Inter)national students and staff feel regularly excluded when another language than English is used in (formal and informal) study or work related situations
- International students and staff are considerably underrepresented in advisory committees, the faculty council and management or board positions
- Induction and integration of international staff are unevenly developed across FEB's departments. From an overall perspective, both are still seen as underdeveloped, according to a recent survey conducted by one of FEB's HR-consultants.

In order to maintain our international position and accreditations, we constantly work on projects that aim to eliminate these and other weaknesses. In doing so, we also contribute to the University's efforts to acquire the CeQuInt label for the quality of internationalisation in higher education in 2018.

In the proposal specified below we will narrow down internationalisation to the topic of international classroom (IC) and to one pilot programme: the BSc International Business. Later this year we intend to start a second pilot allowing us to also explore the possibilities and constraints of introducing the IC at the master's level. In parallel with these two International Classroom projects we have planned to run an ambitious Language and Culture Policy project that will address in particular culture and inclusion issues in situations outside the classroom.

The international classroom at FEB: current situation

We can best describe the current situation in FEB's classroom by focusing on the organisation of our education, on our didactic approaches and available educational material for lecturers and on employability.

Organisation of education

There is no doubt that FEB's education contains many international aspects: e.g. the vast majority of study

programmes are taught in English and use international textbooks, cases and journal articles; the numbers of international students and lecturers are substantial and growing; the student support desk is trained to assist any student, irrespective of nationality or choice of study. Nevertheless, FEB cannot fully claim yet “it has incorporated an intercultural and international dimension into the content of the curriculum, as well as the teaching and learning processes and support services of its programmes of study” (Leask 2009). A major indication for this is that currently intended learning outcomes of FEB’s bachelor’s and master’s programmes lack any reference to international and intercultural competences, except in two programmes with an outspoken international orientation (International Business and International Economics and & Business). As a consequence FEB neither assesses nor controls the achievement of such competences. As long as we stick to this practice we cannot guarantee, obviously, that we deliver graduates who are ‘prepared to function in an international and intercultural social and professional context’, as stated in FEB’s vision and mission. We also know that several master’s programmes, in contrast with our bachelor’s programmes, do not pay enough attention to introducing newly arrived international students to the rules, culture, applied instruments and routines of their curriculum. This creates unnecessary stress for these students and places them in a disadvantaged position compared to (Dutch) students who are familiar with the situation for having obtained their bachelor’s degree at FEB.

Didactic approaches and educational material

Despite the lack of relevant international and intercultural learning outcomes, several elements of the international classroom have been introduced at FEB. For example, many of our programmes have an explicit international focus, and some of them offer additionally a comparative approach: e.g. in the BSc International Economics and Business students attend courses in International Business Strategy, Globalisation – the Great Unbundlings, Foreign Direct Investment and International Trade. Also telecollaboration has been used by one of our lecturers to enable FEB-students to partner with international peers without physical mobility. In a few cases there is even attention to an inclusive environment aimed at developing intercultural awareness among students. For example, in the BSc IB programme, where first-year students work in mixed nationality groups in courses such as Comparative Country Studies and Cross-Cultural Management. We must, however, recognise that these examples are incidents rather than common practice, since counterexamples can easily be found. Currently, there is no teaching material or special methodology available at FEB for lecturers wanting to focus more explicitly on the international classroom. No surprise therefore that MSc students, reportedly, often opt for teamwork in a single-nationality group and are allowed to do so by their supervisor. Obviously, this is a missed opportunity to train students in international and intercultural teamwork. However, accidents like these will inevitably occur if guidelines or incentives for both lecturers and students to work on “an inclusive learning environment” (FEB vision on internationalisation) are lacking. To put it even stronger, in the absence of proper training of our lecturers combined with adequate innovation of curricula it is realistic to expect that, except in one or two programmes, the international classroom is and remains primarily an educational context in which English is the language of communication and where the diversity of students and staff is hardly used as a resource to prepare students for life and a career in a global society. This gap needs to be filled, if FEB wants to meet the goals as formulated in the IC framework.

Employability

Traditionally a high percentage of FEB’s students find suitable employment within three months after graduation. This labour market success is earned, not given¹ and it will only last if properly sustained. Several factors explain why, nowadays more than ever, we need active maintenance and innovation to provide our students with 21st century skills and competencies. First, there is globalization, which changes the nature and demands of the labour market. One of those changes is the growing importance that employers, worldwide, attach to international experience and intercultural skills of their employees.² Secondly, FEB attracts more and more foreign students who feel encouraged by new opportunities to apply for a job in The Netherlands after graduation instead of going back to their native country. In order to be employable on the Dutch market, however, they need an elementary Dutch language proficiency and knowledge of culture on the Dutch work floor, in addition to their disciplinary knowledge and skills as global professionals. The international classroom with its diversity of students and staff is the ideal context where students can develop the competences that shape their employability, regardless of their nationality or cultural background.

Choice of programme

¹ Several years ago already FEB has identified the strategic importance of employability as a key feature of its graduates. For that reason it has established a new unit, the Careers Company (CC), with the explicit mission to strengthen the links between the Faculty and the corporate world and to support students in preparing themselves for the (international) labour market. During its short existence the CC has already developed a host of activities that strengthen or complete the employability skills provided by FEB’s study programmes. This role will be continued in the project proposal outlined below and other project proposals currently prepared under the umbrella of Learning Communities.

² See, e.g.: QS Global employer survey report 2011: ‘How employers value an international study experience’.

This proposal concentrates on strengthening of the international classroom in the bachelor programme International Business. Why this programme?

- We want to enhance our understanding of the IC at bachelor's as well as at master's level (as mentioned before, a pilot around a master's programme will start later this year)
- We have a motivated and skilful team gathered around the BSc IB. For details, see below under 'Project Organisation'
- In the BSc IB international student exchange is compulsory and well developed³. Therefore the IC project can concentrate on additional, less explored methods, instruments and materials to generate the IC experience
- Although there is no coherent strategy behind, the IB programme has already several IC elements in place⁴. This is an excellent starting point if we want to create a sophisticated and appealing example of IC that can be used as a stepping stone and model for the remaining portfolio of programmes.

Objectives of the project 'Enhancing the International Classroom in the BSc International Business'

Overall objectives: 1) To adapt the BSc IB curriculum⁵ and the applied didactical principles in such a way that a) the programme's students, regardless of their cultural background or nationality, feel equally included and b) its graduates are well prepared to act as professional and citizen in the global society. 2) The resulting adaptations can serve as a model for the implementation of the IC in other study programmes of FEB.

In order to reach these overall objectives, which evidently takes more time and effort than available in this project to be fully completed, we propose the following *sub goals/intermediate results*:

- a. All members of the project team have received an appropriate intercultural competence training⁶, which guarantees a shared vision on intercultural competence as foundation of the IC (this training is scheduled as a core activity in the Language and Culture Policy project which will run in parallel with the IC project)
- b. Key members of the project team have been offered the opportunity to do the necessary literature research on the question how to take an international perspective in the classroom (e.g. B. Leask, *Internationalising the curriculum*, 2015; J. Carroll: *Tools for teaching in and educationally mobile world*, 2015)
- c. Key members of the project team have had the opportunity to attend, within or outside the University of Groningen, workshops that are relevant for the specific contribution they have accepted to make to the project (e.g. workshops offered through ESI or the Language Centre)
- d. The team has defined a programme vision on the IC and completed the available learning outcomes of the BSc IB with a set of International and Intercultural Learning Outcomes (IILOs) which preferably can be shared, to a large extent, with other bachelor programmes offered by FEB. The formulated IILOs clearly show what international competences (graduate profile) the students will have to develop in order to satisfy the employability requirements of the global economy.
- e. The team has matched the defined IILOs against all teaching and learning activities of the existing BSc IB curriculum in order to assess to what extent these IILOs, reasonably speaking, will be achieved in the current state of affairs and in what areas we see gaps. Rubrics that we also use in our AACSB quality assurance system can be a helpful instrument to assess whether learning outcomes will be achieved or not.
- f. The team has gathered/developed a first set of additional rules⁷, methods/didactic approaches, instruments, activities and course materials that are needed to fill the gaps identified during the exercise specified under sub goal e.
- g. The team has (provisionally) specified where in the curriculum assessment of the IILOs might take place.
- h. The team has carried out, in close coordination with the University College Groningen, a small pilot focusing on purposeful interaction between students in order to pre-test the methodology to be used (including evaluation) and boost the motivation of team members and stakeholders.
- i. The curriculum has undergone a first adaptation, i.e. new rules are approved and communicated, the involved lecturers have been introduced to and familiarised with newly developed methods/approaches and have been coached and supported by the team during implementation.

³ Although student satisfaction with incoming and outgoing exchange is high already, serious investments have been planned in the Language and Culture Policy project to increase the (intercultural) benefits that our students draw from their study abroad

⁴ See for example the first lines of the programme description on FEB's website: "Are you interested in management questions? And would you like to work in an international environment? [...] The BSc in International Business prepares you for a management position in an international environment [...] The programme has an international focus. It uses international cases and you will study abroad for one semester".

⁵ Curriculum in the broad sense, as defined by Leask (2015): everything (formal, informal and hidden) that shapes the students' learning experience

⁶ We opt for the training, developed by Milton and Janet Bennett of the Intercultural Communication Institute in Portland, Oregon

⁷ e.g. a Dutch and English language use protocol in (formal and informal) education related situations

- j. The team has conducted a first evaluation (do assessments give evidence for the achievement of ILOs?) and improvements are proposed
- k. Extra-curricular activities that play a role in the achievement of the ILOs are monitored and fostered (e.g. activities organized by the study association EBF or the Careers Company or introduction events offered by students advisors)
- l. The team has recorded its findings and solutions in such a way that transmission to other teams or programmes can be realised without noticeable loss of information. Some members of the team will serve on following IC projects within FEB.

Approach

In defining our approach, the conceptual framework for the IC developed on the basis of three pilot case studies carried out at the RuG and the Purposeful Interaction working model developed by Haines & van den Hende have served as frames of reference (See: Institutional Conceptual Framework IC RuG). The Good Practice Principles of Teaching across Cultures adjusted for RuG, published in the same document, have been leading. Although at first sight our approach may seem quite linear, the project execution phase will leave ample room for 'shortcuts', quick wins and small-scale pilots and experiments at moments deviating from the general planning (see below under 'Scheduling of project activities'). We expect this will help us to save time, engage stakeholders and boost motivation of the project team.

Project organisation

Stakeholders:

- Board of FEB, more in particular the Vice Dean of Education,
- Programme director of the BSc IB, and directors of the BSc Economics & Business Economics, Econometrics and Operations Research and Business Administration
- Lecturers of the BSc IB
- Students of the BSc IB
- Support staff involved in the BSc IB
- FEB's director for international affairs
- FEB's Advisory Committee for Internationalisation

Stakeholders are supposed to have a particular interest in the development and outcomes of the project and will therefore constitute a special target group in the project team's communication and dissemination strategy.

Proposed IC project team:

- Henk Ritsema (senior lecturer and coordinator BSc IB: project leader)
- Disciplinary team of academic IB staff consisting of: Kees van Veen (associate professor IB and specialist in International Corporate Governance, Rian Drogendijk (associate professor IB, formerly appointed at Uppsala University, Sweden, specialist in Culture and Business), Liane Voerman (associate professor Marketing and specialist in International Marketing and Marketing Research), Robbert Maseland (associate professor International Economics and specialist in International Business Culture), Melih Astarlioglu (assistant professor IB, formerly Bogazici University, Turkey, specialist in Global Business Strategies and International Trade), Mariko Klasing (assistant professor International Economics, formerly University of St. Gallen, Switzerland, specialist in International Business Environment)
- Jenny Hill, international support staff member, secretariat GEM
- Three IB students, among whom one Dutch, one European/non-Dutch and one non-European
- Monique Kroese (trainer/coach intercultural communication and interactional skills)
- Jamie Snow (strategic advisor internationalisation ECS, formerly Global Education Office New York University and Duke University, USA)
- Linda Onderwater (former educational advisor ECS, project manager Career Services and Corporate Relations, Careers Company, FEB)
- Frans Rutten (former associate dean international, contact person IC and L&CP projects on behalf of FEB, general coordination internationalisation projects FEB)
- Kevin Haines (contact person for collaboration between FEB's and UCG's IC project)

Schedule of project activities

Step 0: End of August 2016

Team develops a more detailed design and planning of the project

Step 1: September-October 2016

Team receives Intercultural Competence training as part of the Language and Culture Policy project

(3 days/24 hours). Training provided in Groningen by dr. Janet Bennett of the Intercultural Communication Institute, Portland, USA. Monique Kroese will attend an advanced seminar for trainers on Intercultural Competence at the Intercultural Communication Institute (period, to be determined). Besides the Intercultural Competence training, several members of the team will participate in the international expert meetings (prof Betty Leask, dr Craig Whitsed and dr. Wendy Green) organised in the week of 19 September by the central IC project team.

Step 2: September-December 2016

Team members conduct literature research related to their specific contribution to the project (each member 20 to 50 hours, depending on topics addressed)

Step 3: November 2016 – December 2016

5 members of the team attend workshops on different aspects of IC: defining ILOs, assessing ILOs, developing an international curriculum by using the IC framework, developing and working on an international curriculum and courses (one to two half-day sessions/4-8 hours per workshop).

Step 4: November 2016 - February 2017

The team formulates a programme vision on the IC (based on FEB's internationalisation vision), redefines the available graduate profile, reviews the current set of ILOs for the BSc IB and identifies possible ways of assessing the achievement of all ILOs. This step as well as the next one will be taken in close cooperation with the coordinators of the involved courses/modules.

Step 5: March 2017

The team matches the ILOs against all teaching and learning activities and working rules of the 2016-2017 curriculum of the BSc IB. The goal is to identify those elements of the current curriculum that can be expected to contribute to the achievement of ILOs. Results will be registered in a matrix connecting Learning outcomes - teaching/learning activities – assessments. ILOs without a satisfactory number of corresponding learning activities or assessments will be qualified as gap to be filled.

Step 6: April-July 2017

The team, split up in sub teams, collects and/or develops working rules, methods, approaches, activities and course materials that enhance the IC experience of students and contribute to fill the gaps identified during step 5. All measures/improvements proposed need to satisfy one or more of the following requirements: interactions imposed on students must be purposeful⁸; new learning activities must contribute to inclusiveness and/or strengthen students' competences to act as knowledge worker and responsible citizen in a global, interconnected society and their effectiveness must be testable. In this stage of the project, as well as in previous stages, sub teams or individual team members may seek support from internal or external experts. The team involves lecturers of IB courses necessary for ILOs' achievement who are not member of the team.

Step 7: February – July 2017

Alongside step 4, 5 and 6 we carry out, in close coordination with the University College Groningen, a compact, complete pilot focusing on purposeful interaction between students, based on (international) diversity as a resource. The pilot serves several objectives: 1) try out and pre-test our methodology, 2) keep the team and stakeholders motivated with a quick, exemplary intermediate result, 3) create synergy between FEB's IC project and UCG's one.

Step 8: September 2017 – June 2018

The results of step 5 and 6 are implemented in the curriculum. The team also takes into account results of FEB's Learning Communities projects (in particular 'FEB's Exchange Learning Communities', 'FEB's Prospective International Students', 'FEB's Multilevel Learning Communities projects' and FEB's Employability Learning Communities') and FEB's Language and Culture projects ('Getting more 'I' out of the study abroad experience' and 'Retaining, training and mentoring international staff and tenure trackers'). The team also considers activities organised by the study association EBF or the Careers Company as well as introduction events offered by student advisors and other support staff. Core members of the team monitor the implementation process and gives support (coaching and feedback) to the involved lecturers and non-academic staff.

Step 9: January 2018 – August 2018

(First) evaluation of all implemented improvements. Evaluation will target individual improvements as well as overall satisfaction of students and staff after the first year. Evaluation results will be used for continuous improvement. Main evaluation question will be whether there is convincing evidence for the achievement of

⁸ Purposeful interaction is the key concept examined in the IC project of the University College Groningen. Findings of this project will feed into our project and vice versa.

ILOs. At programme level this question will only be gradually answered. A conclusive answer cannot be expected before a full bachelor's programme has been completed, i.e. in 2020. For innovations at course level evaluation results will be sooner available.

Step 10: January 2017 – end of project

Team members contribute to dissemination of experiences, findings and results: e.g. participate in best practice demonstrations, collaborate with teams in charge of other IC projects, etc.

Communication with stakeholders

Communication on progress and project results will be twofold: online newsletters and a dedicated intranet website. FEB's management and the Advisory Board for Internationalisation will periodically be provided with progress reports.

Additional expertise from central level and/or external expertise.

We include in our planning collaboration with UCG (around the topic of Purposeful Interaction) and with FEB's projects on Learning Communities and Language and Culture Policy. We will also require the expertise of the central IC project team and of ESI and the Language Centre for their IC related workshops. We will contract dr. Janet Bennett (Intercultural Communication Institute, Portland, USA) for a thorough intercultural competence training of all team members. We will seek to benefit from external expertise, whenever opportunities present themselves throughout the project.

Sustainability and dissemination

Relevance of results for other programmes in the faculty

This pilot project is required to provide a model for the introduction of the IC in other bachelor programmes of FEB. The results of the project directly inform projects that FEB will initiate in a later stage in order to introduce IC in all bachelor programmes.

How results and expertise will be shared, developed and embedded in a structural way faculty-wide

We will maintain the core of the team (three to four members) to participate in follow-up projects and we keep record of main findings in progress reports and on a dedicated intranet site to ensure continuity of the expertise we have build up.

Synergy with the Language and Culture Policy project and/or the Learning Communities Project

FEB strongly advocates an integrated approach of its internationalisation. IC, Learning Communities and Language and Culture Policy are an integral part of this approach; they all serve the same objective: realise FEB's vision and mission and strengthen FEB's position as a world class international school of economics and business. As pointed out above under step 1 and 7 several Learning Communities projects as well as two Language & Culture Policy projects provide essential input for the Enhancement of the IC in the BSc programme International Business

Finances

The costs of the project, totalling 202.700 euro, can be specified as follows:

Step 0: more detailed design and planning of the project: 10 hours

Step 1: Intercultural Competence training (at the expense of the L&CP project): p.m.

Step 2: literature research: 300 hours

Step 3: workshops on different aspects of IC: 50 hours + 4000 euro (tuition fees)

Step 4: development of ILOs and assessment: 100 hours

Step 5: matching of ILOs against curriculum and gap analysis: 100 hours

Step 6: development of methods, activities, etc. designed to achieve ILOs: 900 hours

Step 7: pilot with UCG on purposeful interaction: 200 hours

Step 8: implementation of innovation results: 400 hours

Step 9: first evaluation: 200 hours

Step 10: dissemination: 50 hours

Project leader (Henk Ritsema): 160 hours (two years)

Share in salary costs for general project management (faculty contact person): 10.000 euro

Advanced seminar in Intercultural Competence for trainers (Monique Kroese): 40 hours + 5000 euro tuition and travel/living costs

Various costs (travelling, external expertise): 8000 euro

Total: 2510 hours x 70 (hourly wage) = 175.700 + 4000 + 10.000 + 5000 + 8000 = 202.700 euro